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CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO STUDENT LEADERSHIP IDENTITY FORMATION IN POST- APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

by
Heidi October
Student Number: 19396440

submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
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in the

FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Supervisor:
Prof. Derick de Jongh

August 2022
Date of submission

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DECLARATION

I declare that the doctoral dissertation, which I hereby submit for the degree PhD: Leadership Studies at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not been submitted by me for a degree at another university.

Heidi October
August 2022
Pretoria, South Africa

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Sybill and Josias –
This study is dedicated to you, my rock and safe place.

As you read this dissertation,
may you experience the joy of reaping the fruits of the seeds you have sown since November 1977.

Throughout my life, you have inspired, supported and challenged me to always speak and live my truth. You would often remind me that this might come at a price, but the cost of one's integrity is a far greater price to pay. You've encouraged me to swim against the stream and to create and follow my own path. You challenged me to explore this world and to be proud of my heritage. I don't think you realise your influence in my formative years, on my identity and later on my leadership identity. Your relentless support throughout this PhD journey, while I faced health challenges and juggled a demanding career, sustained me. Who would have known that this would turn into one of the most rewarding "Camino" experiences of my life – and for the Octobers of "Sol Y Sombra", Stanford?

Thank you for walking with me.
Always.

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For South Africa –
its past, present and future.

The finding of a shared humanity among victims, perpetrators and beneficiaries of privilege (and their children in post-apartheid South Africa) is needed for the sake of a transformed conception of society (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2020:146).

Our work has just begun.
And it starts with The Self.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My commitment to pursue PhD studies started in October, 2017 when I walked the Camino de Santiago in Spain. At that stage I wasn't sure about my research topic or who I wanted to approach as supervisor. I knew my research idea would be consolidated through my involvement in student leadership initiatives in South Africa – and this was exactly how this PhD journey unfolded. I therefore commence my acknowledgements with a Youth Month reflection I wrote in 2018, acknowledging the student leaders who crossed my path and who continue to inspire me to lead with authenticity.

…walking with who you are…

Somewhere between 1976 and 2018, forty-two years of "beings" have been unfolding around us, in us and with us.

So, who are you?

This remains one of the most complex questions when engaging with youth leaders across South Africa. The endless possibilities of the stories that would unfold often left me in awe and sometimes simply bewildered.

These stories would open doors and invite me along a myriad of pathways that would take me to a Thando, who is dreaming of becoming a doctor but a master in disguising his mental health challenges; a Fulbright scholar Sarah, who is homeless and ashamed because white people are privileged; Emma, transitioning from David, living her best authentic life and proud of the new NGO she's recently launched; Freek, questioning his proud Afrikaner heritage because Krotoa…well Krotoa was the catalyst for his weekly "let's talk taboo" sessions with friends; the twins Marcelle and Marcelino, realising the Extended Degree Programme is their only chance to escape their destined spot in a gang (and Pollsmoor prison) – they are ranked first in their class now; Tino, a 19-year-old dad, a bursary recipient studying engineering and founder of a support group for student-dads; and Priyanka, who manages her start-up, paying for her studies and sponsoring another student – her parents died as activists.

"Who are you?" would take me to urban households where intergenerational conversations about youth activism, agency and citizenship led to more questions. It took me to humble *plattelandse dorpies* and townships where "first generation", "designated groups" and "the missing middle" became more than phrases in higher education reports, another panel discussion… or a literature review for a PhD dissertation.

"Who are you?" follows me to interview panels, my walks down Victoria Street, 1-1s with my team, discourses and youth leadership summits. I recognise the narratives of Thando *et al.* ( ) and voices in the "Mail & Guardian top 200 young South Africans", at graduation ceremonies and as guest speakers at prestigious events. I recognise them in a simple note left on my desk, "Thank you for giving me a second chance and believing in my leadership ability".

So perhaps this year on 16 June 2018, regardless of our age, we should rather listen to our response to, *"Who are you?",* instead of grasping on to paperback rhetoric about youth development? Perhaps who we think we are…who we are becoming…forty-two years later in a country advocating youth agency will determine our answer to the question: Do South African youth have something to celebrate today?

What is unfolding around you, in you and with you? Do you want to go for a walk…with who YOU are?

heidioctober_13june2018

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A few travel partners joined me on this PhD journey.

Prof. Derick de Jongh – The "journey of a thousand miles" started with building the courage to write that first email. The decision to pursue a PhD while being employed full-time in a challenging job is not made lightly. Yet, when you have "an itch" to explore that research question, you're lucky if your path crosses with that of someone who believes that this "itch" is worth pursuing. You epitomise what leadership is – when you guide and support to let others thrive. I am grateful for all your time, words of encouragement, and supporting me through many timeline adjustments and health challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic, but mostly for your humility. You made this PhD journey bearable. You made me believe in my ability, and you showed a genuine interest not only in my research, but in my work as a leader, and in the integration of both to the benefit of student leadership in South Africa. I look forward to many future professional partnerships.

My participants (Phase 1) – Despite your busy academic schedules and the Covid-19 challenges, you immediately confirmed your willingness to participate in this study. The extent of this request went far beyond merely completing a survey. Your commitment to participate in four long interviews and a follow-up conversation, including journaling your most personal life events, truly made this study a real reflection of the diversity of our student population in South Africa. Thank you for trusting me with your thoughts and for allowing yourself to grow as leaders through this research process. Tahir, Chad, Helena, Emma, Johan, Agostinho, Ntando, Fundiswa, Khanyiso and Khethiwe, I am so very proud of you! You have already made your mark as leaders, but I'm convinced you will play a major role in the broader society to bring positive change in South Africa … for this generation and the next!

My participants (Phase 2) – Thank you for participating in the focus groups and the thorough preparatory work prior to that. You were honest about aspects of the research you found challenging, as you had to dig deep to define the contributing factors to your leadership identity. Raaida, Dawid, Zoe, Bridget and Olwethu, you played a significant role in confirming the data. May you continue to grow and to support others to do the same.

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My participants (Phase 3) – Being senior Student Affairs practitioners in South Africa, your plate is always full, yet you made yourselves available as you believed in this study and its importance for the South African higher education sector. Nkosazana, Vicky, Alistair, Ria and Sindiswa, thank you for your time and participation as you confirmed the data collected in Phases 1 and 2. Thank you for the important role you play in leading with integrity on your campuses.

My colleagues – my team at the Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert Institute for Student Leadership Development and the Student Affairs Research Committee at Stellenbosch University – thank you for allowing “time out” periods so that I could focus on the data collection and analysis phases. Dr Choice Makhetha (Senior Director: Student Affairs), your words, “your journey is our journey”, have been incredibly encouraging.

My friends – you know who you are. Only a few people knew about my research which consumed most of my late nights and early mornings over the past three years. I trusted you to join me on this deep reflective personal journey. Thank you for your love and support.

My dear friend, Ruben – our friendship, as old as South Africa’s democracy, started in 1994 with two teenagers having deep conversations on the school bus – eager to find answers to our existential questions. Although we were born four days apart in the same geographical area but with different backgrounds, prospects and demographic profiles in almost all aspects of our identity – except for sharing a love of Afrikaans – our friendship has become a beautiful, vulnerable place where we could grow together and challenge each other’s worldviews. An M thesis and PhD dissertation followed from these conversations. May our journeys…together and apart… lead to many more discoveries.

My parents – for the coffee, humour and keeping my eye on the “why”. *My pa se woorde, “Heidi, glo in God en glo in jouself”, sal my vir die res van my lewe bybly, en my ma se deursettingsvermoë as vrou en leier sal my altyd inspireer. Pappa en Mammie, julle liefde inspireer my om my drome te verwesenlik en gee my die moed om deur storms voort te swem as ek moet. Dankie vir julle onvoorwaardelike liefde.*

To God, all the glory!

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ABSTRACT

Although various studies have explored student leadership identity formation, no study to date has focused on the post-apartheid South African context and the potential impact of apartheid on their student leadership identity formation. This study investigated the potential factors contributing to the leadership identify formation of a selected group of student leaders in post-apartheid South Africa at a historically white Afrikaans university (HWAU). The qualitative study, with a three-phased triangulation process, utilised a series of in-depth semi-structured interviews with ten student leaders, followed by two focus groups with student leaders and senior Student Affairs practitioners at five South African higher education institutions. As part of the investigation, the participants explored their life stories through the identification of major factors contributing to their identity, leadership identity and, finally, the historical South African context as potential contributing factors to their leadership identity formation. Through the selected qualitative research design, various subthemes were explored, including intersectionality, group identity, role identity and social identity, which further contributed to the participants' understanding of their leadership identity.

The overall conclusion of this study is that identity formation factors were a strong underlying factor for leadership identity formation. In this, the country's history and intergenerational dialogue, and the impact of apartheid on their families, evidently played a significant role in the selected students' understanding of their role as "born-free" student leaders in post-apartheid South Africa. Identity salience and malleability permeated in the social context, further informed their leadership identity, group identity, social identity and role identity

This study contributes to two disciplines: firstly, to social psychology – as it explored the leadership identity development model (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella and Osteen, 2005) within the broader "identity" theoretical framework and, secondly, to a social constructivism approach to leadership studies – as it explored the social identity theory of leadership. The study contributes to the leadership studies literature as a reference for South African Student Affairs practitioners.

Keywords: *leadership identity development model/LID model, student leadership, leadership identity formation, identity, social identity, group identity, role identity, social identity theory of leadership, South African student leadership.*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
BEE	Black economic empowerment
CAQDAS	Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CHEC	Cape Higher Education Consortium
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
DA	Democratic Alliance
DASO	Democratic Alliance Student Organisation
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
EFFYL	Economic Freedom Fighters Youth League
HC	House committee
HBU	Historically black university
HDI	Historically disadvantaged institutions
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information System
HWU	Historically white university
HWAU	Historically white Afrikaans university
HWEU	Historically white English university
LID model	Leadership Identity Development model
LGBQTIAP+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transexual, intersexual, asexual, pansexual
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
PRIM COM	Primarii Committee
PSO	Private Student Organisation
SAASSAP	South African Association of Senior Student Affairs Practitioners
SRC	Students' Representative Council
SAUS	South African Union of Students
SACTU	South African Congress of Trade Unions

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SASCO	South Africa Students' Congress
SONA	State of the Nation Address
SIT of Leadership	Social Identity Theory of Leadership
SU	Stellenbosch University
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
TSRC	Tygerberg Student Representative Council
UoA	Unit of analysis
UoO	Unit of observation
UCT	University of Cape Town
UWC	University of the Western Cape
NWU	North-West University
WITS	University of the Witwatersrand

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Since South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, significant changes have been observed in the South African higher education sector. These have ranged from institutional mergers (Banda & Mafofo, 2016; Jansen, 2004; Wawrzynksi, Heck & Remley, 2012), rebranding of institutional identities (Barnes, 2006; Bryson, 2014; Goduka, 1996), inclusivity and equity in terms of student access (Cross, 2004; Cross & Carpienter, 2009: Waghid, 2003), and an increase in first-generation students and the impact of that on through-put rate (Fourie-Malherbe, 2013), to changes in the student body and student leader demography at historically white institutions (HWIs) (Jansen 2003; Singh, 2015; Swartz, Ivancheva, Czerniewicz & Morris, 2019). Historical legacies remain visible at HWIs (Metcalfe, 2022).

Despite these changes, South Africa's strong race-based history has, however, continued to play a significant role in student leadership engagement. Student leadership has always been interwoven with the national political rhetoric (Dorasamy & Rampersad, 2014; Jansen, 2004), and has remained as complexed structures within higher education (Getz & Roy, 2013; Luescher-Mamashela, 2013b; Pule, 2022). There thus is a strong link with student leadership, student movements, student politics and national politics (Altbach, 1992; Luescher-Mamashela, 2013c). As alluded to by Mugume and Luescher-Mamashela (2016), this phenomenon is not only visible in South African student leadership politics, but at other African universities, e.g. student politics at Makerere University which seemed to be interwoven with Ugandan politics. The patterns of student movements, similar to the apartheid student movements, e.g., the 1976 Soweto Uprising (students protesting against the compulsory use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction), have now also transcended in post-apartheid South Africa, with student activism addressing the inherited legacy of colonialism and apartheid, e.g. inequity, poor access to higher education and exclusion based on race and language. This opposition is expressed through national movements, e.g., #FeesMustFall and #DecoloniseTheCurrriculum, as well as campus-specific movements, e.g. #RhodesMustFall and #OpenStellenbosch (Badat, 2016; Luescher, Klemenčič & Jowi, 2016; Mbembe, 2010; 2015; Nyamnjoh, 2016, 2017).

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Getz and Roy (2013) and Logue, Hutchens and Hector (2005) posit that post-apartheid student leaders now have to demonstrate competencies as builders of cohesion, have an awareness of their personal identity in relation to others, and have a sound understanding of cultural differences. The post-apartheid student leader has been facing the complexities of navigating the inherited systemic and social challenges of the apartheid-era. In their navigation of social identities within a multicultural student context they have also been confronted with the enabling and challenging factors of their identity, which affect their student leader role and leadership identity. Based on the literature review of South African student politics and its strong link to national politics, influenced by South Africa's apartheid history, it therefore is clear that, to understand the changes in the post-apartheid higher education context, South African history should be considered as a backdrop and catalyst for post-apartheid student leadership engagement patterns and the potential influence on their leadership identity formation. *This is the central theme that underlies this study.*

As the literature review will confirm, Komives, Longerbeam, Mainella, Osteen and Owen (2009), Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella and Osteen (2006), Komives, Lucas and McMahon (2007) and Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella and Osteen (2005) have arguably made the seminal contributions to the field of research on leadership identity formation in higher education. However, while acknowledging this, Beatty (2014), Cohen-Derr (2018), Crandall (2017), McKenzie (2018), Moorosi (2014), Renn and Bilodeau (2005) and Schmiederer (2018) point out that more research is required on intersectionality and leadership identity formation. In addition, and in the light of this study, the researcher would argue that more research should be done on leadership identity and the relationship between a country's historical context (such as apartheid in South Africa) and its effect on identity salience and malleability. This also forms part of the researcher's recommendations for future research in this field.

In this study, the researcher explored the *factors contributing to a selected group of post-apartheid student leaders' leadership identity formation at a historically white Afrikaans university (HWAU), and the potential influence South Africa's history might have had on that*. This forms the main research question.

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To summarise: the significance of this study is that, firstly, it will not only provide insight into the factors contributing to post-apartheid student leadership identity, and secondly, the impact of the legacy of apartheid on student leadership identity; thirdly, this study builds on leadership identity theory by expanding on the Leadership Identity Development (LID) model constructed by Komives *et al.* (2005) in its exploration of identity salience and malleability. In other words, the study looks at the strong link between identity, leadership identity, group identity, role identity as well as the social identity acceptance, rejection and negotiation.

This chapter gives a brief overview of the study, the background that informed the research problem and research question, the theoretical framework and disciplines that underpin the study, and the research gap that it aimed to address through its research objectives. The researcher highlights the research design and related research process and provides the definition of terms explored in the study. The researcher alludes to her background and rationale for selecting Stellenbosch University as research setting, and finally shares the delimitations and limitations of the study, followed by the ethical considerations. Figure 1.1 indicates the chapter layout.

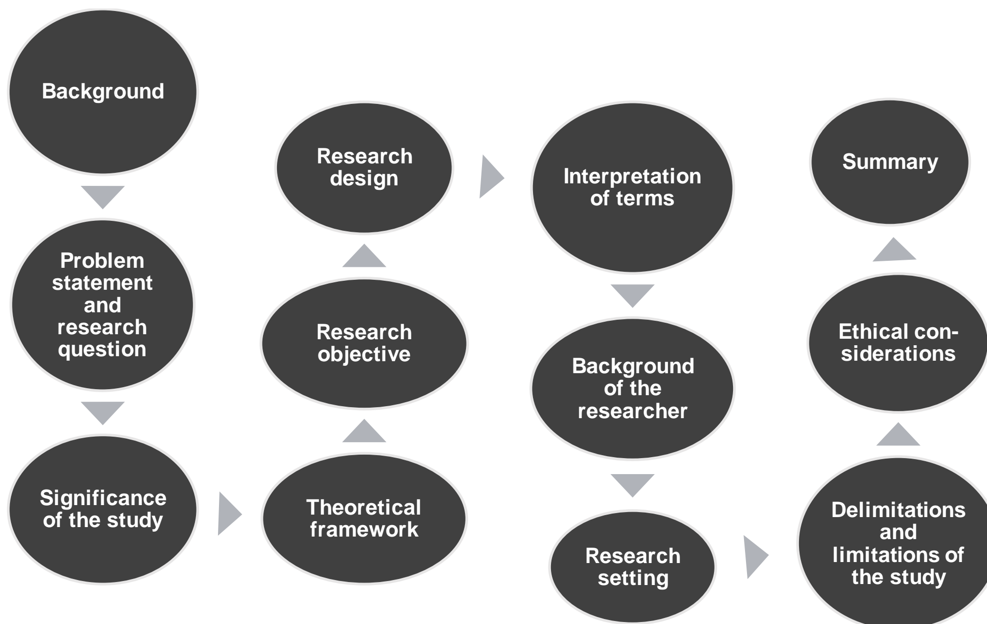

Figure 1.1: Layout of Chapter 1

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1.2 Background

The South African post-apartheid higher education context

Adonis (2016:1) observes that South Africa's long history of race-based oppression preceded the formal introduction of apartheid in 1948, i.e., it started with the onset of colonialism in 1652. This aspect is also referred to by the participants in this study during their reflections on the timeline of South African historical events that inform their leadership identity. Adonis (2016:1) further argues that "although democracy was finally achieved in 1994, colonialism and apartheid had severely damaged the social fabric of the South African society". This leads to the question: *How does the damaged social fabric of South African society translate into the higher education space, and specifically student leadership*? This question feeds into the main research question, as highlighted in the introduction. The post-apartheid student leader now has to navigate the complexities of the effects of South African apartheid history at their institutions with inherited institutional identities, while also confronting the legacy of their own inherited identity.

From 1996, post-apartheid higher education saw immediate policy changes. As part of the goal to eradicate the apartheid-era discrimination and inequities, the late president Nelson Mandela established the first National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE), with transformation as a central feature of its agenda (Githaiga, Gobodo-Madikizela & Wahl, 2017:774; National Commission on Higher Education [NCHE], 1996). Wyngaard and Kapp (2004) posit that, while post-1994 events could be divided into many categories, such as economic, social and political, most were formalised by new legislation. These higher education policies were informed by the South African Constitution (1996) as national framework. Transformation is enshrined in the South African Constitution (1996) and the Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education (1997) (Department of Education [DoE], 1997). This transformation focus was driven by a vision to "reshape" the system to serve a new social order and to respond to a context of new realities (Githaiga *et al*., 2017:774).

What should be added to the challenge of the initial NCHE goals is the observation of the complexity of these "new realities" (as mentioned in the introduction – mergers, rebranding of institutional identities, diverse student population, first-generation

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students, student access and success), and how the new post-apartheid generation, dealing with the long-term consequences of apartheid, also indirectly through their families' past experiences, would respond to it. This leads to one of the sub-questions explored in this research (linked to the main research question): *What are the effects of intergenerational transmission of trauma on student leadership identity formation?*

The changing landscape of the post-apartheid higher education landscape gradually started to reflect more of the national diverse ecosystem and that of South African citizens. Yet despite the South African Constitution as framework for higher education policy changes to address the needs of the diverse ecosystem, Andrews (2018:223) argues that the "post-apartheid student protests reflect the gap in the socio-economic rights embodied in the Constitution" and the realities of the lives of the majority black South Africans. This also translates into the realities of black students, and the Constitution being perceived by post-apartheid students as "irrelevant to their struggle for social and economic justice"(Andrews, 2018:224).

Diverse ecosystem – post-apartheid student leadership and citizenship

Following the question pertaining to the role of a diverse ecosystem in relation to the South African higher education context, and Andrews's (2018) observations, is the question of the role of leadership and citizenship, and specifically the role of the post-apartheid youth as active citizens driving positive change in the broader post-apartheid South African context. Buire and Staeheli (2017:173) emphasise that,

> great effort has been devoted to creating new practices of citizenship in post-apartheid South Africa which includes a new constitution, a new school curriculum, youth development policies, a host of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and social enterprises intended to guide the development of young people as citizens of South Africa.

Citizenship has therefore been reviewed and re-aligned with the South African Constitution (1996) as guide for the protection of South Africans, their identity(ties) and the so-called "Rainbow Nation" (Tutu, 1994) – a reference to the diversity of the South African population. The South African Constitution reflects inclusivity and the "Rainbow Nation" with its 11 official languages, affirmative action and citizenship

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extended to people of all backgrounds (Swartz, Harding & De Lannoy, 2012:27). Buire and Staeheli (2017:174) expand the understanding of active citizenship further as

> the collective effect of enacting a 'pedagogy of citizenship' in which citizens are formed who will be active in their communities and who will work together to create a nation that meets the challenges of contemporary South Africa, and a more equal, just society.

This refers to the youth leader or student leader being an enabler working towards creating this nation in contemporary South Africa. Carolissen and Kiguwa (2018:2) assert that notions of citizenship, belonging and social justice remain contested beyond the levels of theory and praxis in education and definitions (February 2018; Keet & Carolissen, 2010; Stevenson, Dixon, Hopkins & Luyt, 2015). Based on the key themes the post-apartheid student movements aimed to address, one could add to this statement that ways of addressing social justice remains contested among the post-apartheid youth. Static notions of citizenship have also changed, considering how the youth remake identities and produce narratives in the making of the self (Carolissen & Kiguwa, 2018).

This has also been the case in post-apartheid South Africa. The remaking of identities, or rather identity salience and malleability, therefore, is unavoidable for the post-apartheid youths, as self-identification beyond race and gender have now become more prominent than in the past. Linked to this are the aspects of their inherited intersectionality (see interpretation of terms in Section 1.8 in this chapter), which would either become enablers of the practice of leadership and citizenship, or a challenge, depending on the power and privilege associated with their identity. Based on the literature reviewed, the researcher observed power and privilege as recurring themes, as the post-apartheid student leader is now also confronted with addressing social justice issues related to equity and equality while dealing with remnants of apartheid.

Although equity and equality, as Beckmann (2008:775) points out, are often linked, they are not synonymous. This was clear at the onset – equity in post-apartheid South Africa refers to fairness, but this fairness would imply creating equal opportunities, e.g., in higher education, with a transformative recognition of differences (Scott, 2003).

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Embedding equity and diversity into a higher education institution would also require firm commitment from the leaders and stakeholders in that institution (Cassim, 2006). These stakeholders include students and student leaders driving institutional change. Yet, as Hammett (2010), Nattrass & Seekings (2001), Neff (2007), Pirtle (2022) and Seekings and Nattrass (2005), point out, despite all the hopes for the development of a non-racial citizenry in South Africa, race remains a salient factor in identity claims, and white supremacy continues to manifest in post-apartheid South Africa.

Furthermore, the development of citizenry also manifests through student leaders, but within higher education institutions, which have also had to redefine their identity (identities). As pointed out by Sternberg (2016) in the American context, and Amuwo (2004:70) in the South African context, one of the four raisons d'être of higher education, according to the 1997 White Paper on Higher Education, is the expected contribution to socialisation of enlightened, responsible and constructive critical citizens. Higham (2012:497) and (Walker, 2005:113) furthermore argue that universities have a specific post-apartheid contribution to make to create an environment where constructive citizens can socialise and contribute to public good.

From the brief background sketched in relation to the post-apartheid higher education context in which the post-apartheid student leaders and citizens must navigate their identities, the researcher aims to give context to the relevant literature reviewed for this study as it relates to the research question.

1.3 Problem statement and research question

In this study, the researcher's literature review commenced with an overview of the changes in the approach to leadership from an attributional perspective to a constructivist and identity-oriented approach. This is followed by the observation of the merging of leadership studies and social psychology disciplines in exploring the social identity theory of leadership. Leadership versus leader identity are highlighted, and specifically student leadership identity formation and intersectionality as these factors pertain to this study. *It is from this review (see Section 1.4) that the researcher identified the gap in the literature in terms of student leadership identity formation within a South African post-apartheid student leadership context.*

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The researcher's literature review further focuses on the South African post-apartheid higher education context, in which post-apartheid student leaders practise their leadership. The researcher alludes to student activism as a remnant of apartheid and the strong race narratives informing the higher education context in rebranding institutional identities and the identity exploration of the post-apartheid student leader. Finally, based on the strong race narratives observed in the literature, the researcher alluded to the potential influence of historical trauma on the leadership identify formation of the post-apartheid student. As mentioned in the delimitations (see Section 1.11) in this chapter, the researcher would like to confirm that, although reference is made to historical trauma in the literature review, it falls outside the scope of this study.

Based on the literature review discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, and mentioned in this chapter's introduction with reference to followed-up research done on the Komives *et al.* (2005), leadership identity formation research, the gap identified in the practice of student leadership in post-apartheid South Africa is linked to the gap in exploring the complexity of identity and leadership identity formation. Furthermore, the gap identified in leader identity theory, specifically as it relates to students in the South African higher education context, is the potential effect of apartheid on their leadership identity formation. The research question that consequently emerged from this literature review:

What informs student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa?

As suggested in its title, this study has a two-layered approach and, in its literature review, aims to demonstrate a potential link between these two identified aspects of leadership identity, namely leadership identity formation and South Africa's historical context. This study therefore aimed to apply the Komives *et al.* (2005) leadership identity development (LID) model as one of the theoretical frameworks as it translates into the understanding, self-perceptions, intersectionality and experiences of leadership of a selected group of South African student leaders post-1994.

Bell, Bryman and Harley (2019:9, citing Denscombe, 2010) describe various types of research questions. Two main themes/sub-questions have been explored in this study, as indicated by Denscombe's (2010) question types:

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- *Evaluating a phenomenon:*
    - Referring to the LID model and adopting the argument posited by Komives *et al.* (2006), namely that "identity is informed by two key families of developmental theory: psychosocial and cognitive", the sub-question posed is: *What is the participants' perception of the main factors contributing to their leadership identity formation (with reference to identity, intersectionality, group identity, role identity and social identity)?*
- *Explaining causes and consequences of a phenomenon, i.e., relation:*
    - Reflecting on the concept of "historical trauma", allowing the participants to reflect on South African historical events that contributed to their leadership identity formation and questioning its potential effect on the selected student leaders' self-perception and leadership perception. Reviewing the South African political timeline and leadership theory timeline: *What are the key themes in South African history and the intergenerational elements (e.g., the effect of apartheid on their family) affecting the leadership identity of the selected group of student leaders?*

1.4 Significance of the study

As mentioned earlier in the problem statement, the gap in the leadership literature identified by the researcher lies in current student leadership identity formation studies and how this particular study can contribute to the leadership discipline. In other words, little research can be found on the South African higher education student leader population post-1994; more specifically, no research could be found that focuses on identifying the main contributors to the leadership identity formation of positional post-apartheid student leaders and whether or not historical trauma had a potential effect on their leadership identity formation. As mentioned in the introduction, the seminal work of Komives *et al*. (2005, 2006, 2007, 2009) provided a theoretical framework for this study. The recommendations from studies (Beatty, 2014; Cohen-Derr, 2018; Crandall, 2017; McKenzie, 2018; Moorosi, 2014; Renn & Bilodeau, 2005; Schmiederer, 2018) following Komives *et al.* (2005, 2006, 2007, 2009) confirm that more research should be done on intersectionality and leadership identity formation.

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Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan (2007) refer to two main dimensions of theoretical contributions, namely theory building (an inductive model beginning with observations to generate theory through inductive reasoning) and theory testing (using a deductive model to formulate a hypothesis). While it could be argued that the development of the LID model devised by Komives *et al.*(2005, 2006), as a grounded theory, is considered an example of theory building, it was important for this study to investigate the relevance of the current theory within the South African higher education context. In short: the significance of this study therefore lies beyond theory testing and is extended to theory building and the expansion of the LID model (Komives *et al.*, 2005) and its potential influence on future research in the field of leadership identity research.

1.5 Theoretical framework

This study utilised theoretical frameworks from two main disciplines: the social psychology discipline (Identity Theory) and the leadership discipline (Social Identity Theory (SIT) of Leadership (Hogg, 2001a), as well as the student leadership identity development model/LID model (Komives *et al.,* 2005)). Considering the post-apartheid context in which this study was conducted, where the participants had to navigate multiple social identities within a multicultural setting (which formed a sub-theme within the interview cycle (see Appendix B: Interview Protocol), the researcher found it appropriate to draw from these two disciplines, as this would underpin the exploration of identity (within the identity theory framework) and leadership identity (within the SIT of leadership and LID model). The identity and social identity theory of leadership were included in the literature review and were applied in a supporting manner in this study, but the researcher drew mainly from the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model. These frameworks are discussed in Chapter 2.

1.6 Research objective

The purpose of this study was to explore *what contributes to leadership identity formation in the selected case studies in a post-apartheid context*. As explained in Chapter 4, the non-directional hypotheses formulated by the researcher prior to commencing with the data collection included the following:

- Students with a background of family members who were affected by historical trauma (such as family members who were anti-apartheid activists and incarcerated or died, the socio-economic influences on their family, dismantling

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of families) are most likely to engage in leadership transformation processes within the ecosystem they find themselves in, and even more when defined within Stage 6 (integration/systems) of the LID model;

- Students with a strong sense of self-concept, as referred to by Uhl-Bien, (2006:657) – "the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their relationships and with two distinct constructs: relational self, which emanates from relationships with significant others, and collective self, which is based on identity with a group or social category", are more likely to acknowledge the impact of their intersectionality and social identity on their identity and leadership identity formation. This means that these students will be able to differentiate the intersectionality of their profiles in Stage 2 (exploration and engagement), rather than only in Stage 3 (leader identified) or Stage 4 (leadership differentiated);
- Referring to identity formation, Stryker and Burke (2000: 286) emphasise that identity-salience is positively affected by the degree of commitment to its respective roles (in this study the student leadership role) and the degree to which its respective role is positively evaluated with one's performance (in this study by the student leader's followers or sphere of influence).

As indicated above, non-directional hypotheses were made prior to the data-collection phase, but the exact form of differences was not specific because the researcher did not know what could be predicted from the past literature (Creswell, 2009:135).

Table 1.1 gives a summary of the research objectives, and the research purpose reflected in the sub-questions *exploring* and *explaining* student leadership identity formation, along with how the predefined themes explored during the data collection phase gave insight into the main research question.

Table 1.1: Summary of the research question, sub-questions and research objectives

<table>
<tr><td>Research question</td><td colspan="2">What informs student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sub-questions</td><td>What is the participants' perception of the main factors contributing to their leadership identity formation (with</td><td>What are the key themes in South African history and the intergenerational elements (e.g., effect of apartheid on</td></tr>
</table>

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<table>
<tr><td></td><td>reference to identity, intersectionality, group identity, role identity and social identity)?</td><td>family) affecting the leadership identity of the selected group of post-apartheid student leaders?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Summary of research objectives per theme</td></tr>
<tr><td>Predefined themes</td><td>Objective</td><td>Outcome</td></tr>
<tr><td>Theme 1: Identity</td><td>To confirm the main contributors to the student leader’s identity.</td><td>Key contributors confirmed and alignment checked with leadership identity contributors.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Theme 2: Intersectionality</td><td>To confirm participants’ acknowledgement of their intersectionality (and intersectionality dominance).</td><td>Intersectionality confirmed and alignment checked as contributing factor to their leadership identity.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Theme 3: Leadership</td><td>To confirm participants’ initial understanding of leadership, and changes in leadership perception.</td><td rowspan="2">Aligned with the LID model (Komives et al., 2005) – a key shift in leadership perception and leader involvement confirmed.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Theme 4: Leader</td><td>To confirm participants’ perception, leader self-perception, leader involvement, role model trait adoption/rejection and mentor involvement.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Theme 5: Leadership identity</td><td>To confirm participants’ perception of leadership identity, leadership identity self-perception, role model and mentoring contribution to leadership identity and key contributors to their leadership identity.</td><td>Key contributing factors to leadership identity confirmed. Cross-checked with identity contributors. The effect of South African history on their leadership identity confirmed.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Theme 6: Group identity</td><td>To confirm participants’ perception and the significance of group identity.</td><td>Identity and group identity congruency confirmed. Effect on leadership identity confirmed.</td></tr>
</table>

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Theme 7: Social self-concept	To confirm participants' understanding of social self-concept in relation to group identity.	Social self-concept and effect on group identity significance confirmed.
Theme 8: Follower	To confirm participants' follower involvement and significance of the follower role.	Effect of follower role on leadership identity confirmed.
Theme 9: Role identity	To confirm participants' role identity perception, role identity association, role identity competition/enforcement and skills developed.	Role identity acceptance, rejection and negotiation confirmed. Cross-checked for identity, group identity and role identity acceptance/rejection patterns. Effect on leadership identity confirmed.
Theme 10: South African historical reflections	To explore what participants highlight in their recollection on South Africa's history and what/who influenced that recollection.	Main themes confirmed. Cross-checked with theme 11 for alignment with factors contributing to leadership identity.
Theme 11: Apartheid	To explore the effect of apartheid on participants' family, Self, identity, leadership identity and group identity.	Apartheid as factor contributing to leadership identity confirmed.
Theme 12: Student leadership themes	To confirm participants' understanding of the main student leader themes and how their identity and leadership identity either enable or challenge them in addressing these themes.	Participants' understanding of their identity and leadership identity as enabler or disabler in addressing post-apartheid student leadership themes. Cross-checked leadership identity self-perception.
Theme 13: Social identity	To confirm participants' perception of social identity and how they navigate social identities in a multicultural student community.	Cross-checked identity and leadership identity self-perception.
Theme 14: Student leader	To confirm participants' understanding of their student leader role, alignment/conflict with post-apartheid student leader causes.	Cross-checked identity and leadership identity self-perception.

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1.7 Overview of the research design

Table 1.2 gives an overview of the research design, which entails the research paradigm (ontological and epistemological position and theoretical perspective), confirmation of the unit of analysis (UoA) and unit of observation (UoO) of the study, the research methodology and the method employed in this study.

Table 1.2: Research design

Research design (Elements)	Description (How they were employed in this study)
Research paradigm **-Ontological and epistemological position** **-Theoretical perspective**	-**Constructionist ontology:** A social constructionist view of leadership was employed in this study. -**Interpretive research paradigm:** The researcher's understanding and interpretation of how participants draw meaning from their social worlds.
Unit of observation **Unit of analysis**	**-UoO:** The student leader **-UoA:** The factors contributing to the student leader's leadership identity
Research process: **Methodological approach** **Method**	-**Methodological approach:** Qualitative research design with multiple individual case studies -**Method:** A series of four in-depth semi-structured interviews including pre- and post-interview reflections.
Population and sample	Positional student leaders at Stellenbosch University
Triangulation	The study consisted of three phases: -**Phase 1:** 10 multiple case studies (10 positional student leaders) -**Phase 2:** Focus group with five positional student leaders. -**Phase 3:** Focus group with five senior Student Affairs practitioners at five historically white South African universities (HWUs).
Data analysis	**Coding:** A qualitative coding and categorising method was used (Merriam, 1998):

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The researcher followed a constructionist ontology whereby the social phenomena studied could be understood by their actions and the meaning the observer attached to them (Bell *et al.*, 2019:26). The researcher entered this study with a philosophical worldview that was social constructionist in its approach to leadership, from which the researcher assumed participants would "develop subjective, varied and multiple meaning of their experiences and which will lead the researcher to look for complexity of views rather than narrowing meaning into a few categories of ideas" (Creswell, 2009:8).

The theoretical perspective on an interpretivist approach entails the systemic analysis of a socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004:20; Neuman, 1991:88). In this study the approach is relevant to the way that the unit of analysis interacts and draws meaning from that interaction, and allows that interaction to affect leadership identity formation. The UoA, also referred to as the *what* of the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2007:84; Mouton, 2001:51), was, "*the contributing factors to the student leader's leadership identity"*, while *"the student leader"* was the UoO.

Finally, the research methodology employed in this study was a qualitative research approach with multiple individual case studies (10 positional student leaders).The research method was a series of four in-depth semi-structured interviews. A three-phase triangulation process was followed, with a combination of interviews and focus groups. For the data analysis, the researcher considered the three types of coding: open coding (condensing data into preliminary codes), axial coding (linking of codes) and selective coding (selecting relevant codes to categories) (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Atlas.ti, a CAQDAS (computer-assisted qualitative data analysis) program, was utilised to categorise the data according to 14 themes, with 82 predefined codes and subcodes emerging from the data analysis. The research methodology is explained Chapter 4.

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1.8 Interpretation of terms

The study explored various concepts within the leadership and social psychology disciplines. Although the researcher did not share a glossary of the constructs with the participants prior to the interviews (e.g., identity, intersectionality, leader, leadership, leadership identity, group identity), she did, however, as a point of reference, follow approaches from the literature review that served as guideline for this study (see Appendix B: Interview Protocol). The researcher would like to allude to the fact that although various recent interpretations of these constructs exist, e.g. Dunne (2016) or more recent reiterations by these scholars exist, e.g. Stets & Burke (2014), the point of departure was the interpretations of scholars such as Crenshaw (1991), Mead (1934), Erikson (1968, 1980), Stryker (1980), Tajfel and Turner (1979), Hogg (1992, 2001a, 2001b, 2003), Turner (1984:1996) and Turner *et al.* (1987), which still to date inform identity theory.

- **Identity:** Identity was approached as being grounded within social categories of gender and race (Hogg, 2001a). **"**Identity and self-concept are interlocked depending on the intra- and interpersonal processes mediated by the self-concept " (Markus & Wurf, 1987:305). Identity is informed by two key families of developmental theory: psychosocial and cognitive (Komives *et al.,* 2006).
- **Identity construction:** This refers to the process through which individuals come to define who they are, the result of which is identification, or the extent to which one internalises an identity (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016).
- **Intersectionality:** Warner and Shields (2013:804) posit that intersectionality applies to all identities and that no single intersectional position experiences only privilege or only oppression. The researcher therefore considered a wider range of categories (race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, ableism), while at the same time being mindful of Crenshaw's (1991) reference to intersectionality, which refers to the overlapping of inequalities where the intersection of two minority categories (e.g., black and woman) constitute a distinct social position (black woman) and disadvantage.
- **Leadership:** Leadership can be viewed as the outcome of mutual influence between leaders and followers, which eventually becomes diffused within a group and the broader social system (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Uhl-Bien, Marion & McKelvey, 2007). Supporting Allen and Cherrey (2000), Bennis (1989),

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Heifetz (1994), Rost (1993) and Wheatley (1999), this view of leadership argues that society has shifted to a knowledge-based networked world in which leadership functionality revolves around networking, relating and influencing change. The definition of leadership by Komives *et al.*(1998:21) supports this view, viz. “leadership is a relational process of people together attempting to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good”.

- **Motivation to lead (MTL):** Motivation to lead is defined as individuals’ willingness to engage in leadership training activities and assume leadership roles (Chan & Drasgow, 2001).

- **Leader:** The concept of “leader” is often discussed in terms of what a leader is (*characteristics*) and what a leader does for (*competencies*) and in relation to others (Bass, 1990). Hannah and Avolio (2011) refer to Bass and Bass (2008:219), who posit that the “character of a leader involves his or her ethical and moral beliefs, intentions and behaviours”. Bass and Bass (2008) further suggest that leader character is linked to virtuous *traits*, such as integrity, justice and fairness.
- **Leadership identity:** Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) idea of leadership development being identity development was utilised as adopted by Komives *et al.* (2005), where identity refers to the processes of making meaning associated with particular situations or roles that influence the way individuals perceive themselves or others as leaders.
- **Leadership identity construction theory (LICT):** LICT explains how individuals construct an identity as a leader or follower (Brown, 2015; Dinh, Lord, Gardner, Meuser, Liden & Hu, 2014; Marchiondo, Myers, Kopelman, 2015), and includes the role of social interaction and other organisational members have in the leadership identity construction process (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe & Carsten, 2014). The leader and follower identities are co-constructed over time through relational processes of identity claim and granting (DeRue & Ashford, 2010).
- **Leader identity:** This refers to the exploration of “being” a leader and “doing” leadership (Palanski, Thomas, Hammond, Lester & Clapp-Smith, 2021), or follower “granting” leadership and leader “claiming” leadership (DeRue &

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Ashford: 2010). Leaders and followers are motivated to act in ways in line with their identities (Lord, Gatti & Chui, 2016).

- **Leader identity construction:** Leader identity construction can take place in the complex interplay between organisational hierarchies or interpersonal relationships, but with the acknowledgement that there may not be a single method or site for the leader identity construction (Hammond, Clapp-Smith & Palanski (2017).
- **Group identification:** Group identification within social identity theory is typically limited to the personal choice of the individual about the extent to which they define themselves in terms of various social cultural categories (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Tajfel, 1978; Turner & Giles, 1981).
- **Self-concept:** Self-concept is negotiated from an available set of self-conceptions – a productive space or system of self-conceptions from which an individual constructs a working self-concept (Mead, 1934). Self-concept should be viewed as "a multifaceted phenomenon, as a set or collection of images, conceptions, theories, goals, and tasks" (Markus & Wurf, 1987:301). The social environment should be regarded as a contributing factor to the stability and malleability of the self-concept (Markus & Kunda, 1986:858).
- **Social self-concept:** Uhl-Bien (2006:657), with reference to Hogg (2001a) refers to self-concept as "the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their relationships". Social self-concept can also be described with two distinct constructs: relational self (emanating from relationships with significant others) and collective self (based on identity with a group or social category).
- **Self-identity:** Self-identity will be explored as "a collection of identities that reflects the roles that a person occupies in the social structure" (Whannell & Whannell, 2015:44). Furthermore, "self-identity focuses on the linkages of social structures with identities and the internal process of self-verification" (Stryker & Burke, 2000: 290).
- **Social identities:** Beech (2011:86) – with reference to Beech (2008) – posits that "Social identities consist of the self's projections towards others, other's projections towards the self and reaction to the received projections and are sites in which people draw on an are imposed on by external discourses". Tajfel (1981; 82) simply refers to social identity as that part of an individual's self-

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concept that derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group, together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership.

- **Role identity:** "persons are typically embedded in multiple role relationships in multiple groups and have multiple identities, these multiple identities could either reinforce or compete" (Stryker & Burke, 2000:290). Individuals who adopt a particular role identity and deem it important to their self-view, are more likely to integrate role-based behaviour and regulate their behaviour around that role (Farmer & Van Dyne, 2010; Farmer, Tierney & Kung-McIntyre, 2003; Leavitt, Reynolds, Barnes, Schilpzand & Hannah, 2012; Mathias & Williams, 2017).
- **Social identity theory of leadership:** The social identity theory (SIT) of leadership is a formal extension and application of social identity theory, in particular the social identity theory of the group (self-categorisation theory) and the social identity analysis of social influence (referent informational influence theory) to explain leadership as a social influence phenomenon (Hogg, Van Knippenberg & Rast, 2012:259).

1.9 Background of the researcher

Since the 1990s, when the researcher was a student, she has served on various student leadership structures at a historically white Afrikaans university (HWAU). She has been involved in the South African higher education environment for more than 20 years, serving in various divisions with extensive international benchmarking experience, and has held senior positions in alumni relations, later as consultant in higher education and currently as a senior Student Affairs practitioner.

The researcher's current professional role allows for extensive engagement with the student leadership community at the university where this study was conducted. (See Chapter 4: Researcher Positionality for a detailed background sketch and positionality as they pertain to this study). The researcher approached this study with an awareness of her positionality. She furthermore acknowledged a potential disposition, with her intersectionality as an Afrikaans-speaking, heterosexual, able-bodied, Gen-X, Christian cisgender female of colour. She also was aware that her interpretation of how Apartheid might have contributed to her leadership identity could have influenced

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the lens through which she interpreted the findings, especially in relation to the participants sharing similar aspects of her intersectionality.

1.10 Rationale for Stellenbosch University as research setting

Stellenbosch University (SU) in Stellenbosch, South Africa is a historically white Afrikaans university (HWAU), ranked second in South Africa and in the top three in Africa (Times Higher Education World University Rankings, 2022). SU has served as research setting for many post-apartheid institutional race-related studies on the #OpenStellenbosh movement (Mpatlanyane, 2018; Yenjela, 2021), other student movements, e.g. the exploration of activists' lives in #FeesMustFall at SU (Phillips, 2021), intersection of race, science and politics at SU (Walters, 2018), and producing a post-apartheid space (Yang, 2015). It has also been the site of case studies on university politics and societal transformation during the transition period from 1990 to 2010 (Baumert, 2014), racial discourse among white Afrikaans-speaking youths (Barnard, 2010), the petrification of racialisation at SU (Moradi, 2010), and on the identity politics of race and gender in post-apartheid South Africa (Dumiso, 2004).

Apart from the delimitations mentioned in this chapter, the rationale for SU as research setting for this study was based on three main reasons:

1) The first reason is its historical institutional alignment with the South African political timeline and delivery of graduates who later became prominent political figures, e.g. prime ministers Dr D.F. Malan (1948-1954), J.G. Strydom (1954-1958), Dr H.F. Verwoerd (1958-1966) and Dr B.J. Vorster (1966-1978), other prominent political leaders, e.g. General J.C. Smuts and General J.B.M. Hertzog, and anti-apartheid activists Anton T.E.A. Lubowski and Dr Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, who made a significant contribution to the development of democracy in South Africa before 1994. These prominent political figures who graduated from SU are acknowledged in the university's centenary publication (Grundlingh & Oosthuizen, 2019), linking the university with the country's political development from the early 20th century. Sharpley (2021:4), however, discusses the post-apartheid period from 2000 to 2018, which is neglected in terms of how this HWAU's living and social spaces intersect with the institutional culture. That study explored how the post-apartheid student leader navigates social identities within these multicultural spaces.

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2) The second is the launch of SU's new "Vision 2040" (Stellenbosch University, 2018) in its centenary year, 2018, in which it identified a "transformative student experience" as one of the six enablers in realising the university's vision: "Stellenbosch University will be Africa's leading research-intensive university, globally recognised as excellent, inclusive and innovative, where we advance knowledge in service of society".The transformative student experience encapsulates supporting the development of its graduate attributes, e.g., *enquiring mind*, *dynamic professional*, *well-rounded individual* and *engaged citizen*, amongst others through student leadership offerings to cultivate active global citizenship driving sustainable leadership in the 21st century.
3) The third reason, and perhaps the strongest motivation for SU as research setting is the university's restitution statement from during its centenary year:

> Stellenbosch University (SU) acknowledges its inextricable connection with generations past, present and future. In the 2018 Centenary Year, SU celebrates its many successes and achievements. SU simultaneously acknowledges its contribution towards the injustices of the past. For this we have deep regret. We apologise unreservedly to the communities and individuals who were excluded from the historical privileges that SU enjoyed, and we honour the critical Matie voices of the time who would not be silenced. In responsibility towards the present and future generations, SU commits itself unconditionally to the ideal of an inclusive world-class university in and for Africa (Stellenbosch University, 2018).

As mentioned in the background earlier in this chapter, one central question emerging from student engagement scholarship is the role of a diverse ecosystem in the post-apartheid higher education context and student leadership in general. In 1977, SU changed its policy to allow people of colour to be registered, but on the condition that the "character and identity of Stellenbosch as a white Afrikaans university would be maintained" (Grundlingh & Oosthuizen, 2019:55). Although the demography (institutional profile of staff and students) has changed over the past decades since the first enrolment of students of colour in 1978, SU is still considered a predominantly

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white university and not reflective of the diversity profile of the South African population.

However, the student leader diversity profile (with reference to formal student governance structures) has changed rapidly over the last 20 years (Studenteraad, 2004). One could argue that this is due to the institution's focus on transformation and cultivating thought leaders through an expansive range of leadership programmes within the co-curriculum environment. This includes a range of leadership short courses and critical engagement opportunities offered at the Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert Institute for Student Leadership Development (FVZS Institute) within the Division for Student Affairs. This institute honours the legacy of Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert as a thought leader and his contribution to South Africa's democracy (Grundlingh, 2021; LeMaitre & Savage, 2010; Slabbert, 2005), as well as a range of experiential learning programmes being recognised on the academic transcript. These competency-based programmes aim to naturally migrate student learning from the formal curriculum to the co-curriculum space as a method to support the SU graduate attributes mentioned above.

SU is the most relevant research setting for South Africa's first study focusing on post-apartheid student leaders and their leadership identity formation for a number of reasons. These include;

- the relationship with the country's political history;
- the strong race and language narratives associated with it in the apartheid and post-apartheid context;
- its intentional focus on the transformative student experience and transformation in its broadest sense (which is not limited to only changing the demographic profile, but includes the recognition of the need for institutional culture and systemic changes); and
- its repositioning as an African university. This also speaks to the rebranding of its institutional identity and its positionality in relation to apartheid – which will be included in the literature review (see Section 3.2.1).

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1.11 Delimitations and limitations of the study

The delimitation of a study is considered to be the limitations that the researcher intentionally sets prior to commencement of the study, which can include the definitions or interpretation of constructs, sample parameters and boundaries in terms of the scope of the study as it relates to the research question (Coker, 2022; Miles, 2019; Simon & Goes, 2013; Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018).

As part of the delimitation of this study, the researcher would like to highlight the following:

- **Research setting:** Based on the fact that no research on leadership identity in a post-apartheid context has been done to date, the researcher intentionally excluded a national student leader sample and limited the scope of this study to a HWAU (based on its relationship to the historical political context), as the researcher believed that this would form a firmer baseline for future studies on this research topic.
- **Sample:** The sample was limited to positional leaders only, as student leadership identity theory has been developed predominantly in relation to positional student leaders and not to the broader, non-positional student leader spectrum. The researcher believed that the interview protocol design would capture the relevant data for the sample's understanding of how non-positional leadership roles (such as the significance of their follower involvement) also contributed to their leadership identity.
- **Research methodology:** The researcher considered various research methodologies – a survey of all positional leaders at the chosen institution, a longitudinal approach (by using the same sample but reviewing their leadership identity development over a three-year period from first to third year), or mixed methods (a survey to all positional student leaders and interviews with a focus group as part of the triangulation process). The researcher considered a series of in-depth interviews as the best research methodology for this study. This is based on the nature of the topic and the depth it would have required to capture rich data, by exploring their narratives through a series of interviews viewed as a long-extended conversation with in-between deep reflections.

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Furthermore, limiting the sample to third-year and senior positional student leaders was more beneficial to answering the research question, as senior positional students would have had more experience to reflect on (e.g., student activism in 2015) than a first-year participant entering the university environment at the time. Finally, the researcher would like to acknowledge that the primary focus of this study Is not similar to the initial development of the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model, i.e. to ascertain *how* leadership identity is formed, but in this study rather to ascertain *what* informs or contributes to their leadership identity formation. For this reason, the researcher intentionally employed:

  - *Phase 1:* in-depth qualitative interviews;
  - *Phase 2:* a focus group of five positional student leaders (meeting the same criteria as the participants in phase 1) within the same research setting, as they would have been exposed to the same institutional environment;
  - *Phase 3:* a focus group of five senior Student Affairs practitioners at historically white universities, as these institutions would share the same racial institutional identity as the research setting.

- **Theoretical framework and research disciplines:** The researcher also reviewed Uhl-Bien's (2006:655) research on relational leadership as a potential leadership studies sphere to which this study could potentially contribute, as it provides an overarching framework for the investigation of relational leadership by identifying relational leadership as a social influence process through which emergent coordination (i.e. evolving social order) and change (e.g. new values, attitudes, approaches, behaviours and ideologies) are constructed and produced. The researcher eventually decided on two main disciplines, social psychology (social identity theory of leadership (Hogg, 2001a) within the broader identity framework), and leadership studies (leadership identity development model (LID) of Komives *et al.* (2005), as she believed this would provide a better framework for the social constructivist approach to leadership identity.
- **Research focus:** Since there is no research using a post-apartheid South African student leader sample, the researcher had to be intentional in the scope

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of the study as it relates to the research question. The researcher would like to highlight two specific boundaries:

- *Leadership identity*: The researcher made a clear distinction between the focus on leadership identity formation (*what* contributes to student leadership identity) and leader identity formation (*how* student leadership identity is formed). (See Chapter 3 for an explanation of the difference.) For this reason, the researcher consulted previous studies employing the Komives *et al*. (2005) LID model and concluded that 14 predetermined themes (some explored to a greater extent than others) would offer the best insight not only into testing the LID model theory, but also building on the theory based on the South African context.
- *Historical trauma*: Although historical trauma has been included in the literature review, it simply served to confirm the limited research done in general in the field of student leadership identity in relation to historical trauma, and specifically related to the post-apartheid South African leadership context. The researcher did not include a dominant focus on historical trauma in this study, as it would have required a detailed research design related to historical trauma literature, which would venture into the psychology discipline and beyond the scope of this study and the researcher's educational background.

  However, the researcher chose to incorporate the potential link between historical trauma, apartheid and student leadership identity in the post-apartheid context, as it would further support the recommendations for dedicated studies in this regard and also demonstrate how this study built on the current student leadership identity theory literature.

The limitation of a study often refers to the research design of a study (external validity (e.g., generalisability) and internal validity (study design) (Greener, 2018: Price & Murnan, 2004). Apart from the limitations shared in Chapter 7, the researcher would like to highlight her awareness of one of the key limitations of this study, namely that the title of the study, *"Contributing factors to student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa"*, might be perceived as already:

- positioning the study in relation to apartheid;

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- potentially inferring that there would be a difference in pre- and post-apartheid student leadership identity formation;
- guiding the participants into creating a deeper level of awareness of apartheid in their leadership identity (which they might not have had otherwise). The researcher would like to highlight, however, that this was evident in a few participants (phase 1 and phase 2) indicating that apartheid had little relevance to their identity and leadership identity formation. Although this was by far the minority in relation to the sample, it was important to acknowledge the deviation.

The researcher therefore was mindful of discrepancies and inconsistencies in the participants' responses in their timelines, interviews and final consolidation interview (when they could gain insight into other participants' inferences of apartheid's influence on their identity, leadership identity and group identity). Bell *et al.*'s (2019:458) reference to Atkinson and Silverman (1997) was taken into account, namely that qualitative interviewing could produce over-rationalistic accounts of the self in that it can "invite participants to narrate past behaviour by elevating individual perceptions and accounts of experiences and position them as authentic". This could potentially have been the case with theme 11 (Apartheid).

1.12 Ethical considerations

Since this study was conducted at Stellenbosch University, the researcher had to apply for ethics clearance from both the University of Pretoria and Stellenbosch University. In addition, the researcher had to apply for permission to use Stellenbosch University's student data. This process entailed submitting a detailed research proposal, interview protocol (Appendix B) and an example of a letter of consent (Appendix C). Due the Covid-19 pandemic, the researcher also had to refrain from any face-to-face contact during the data collection phase. The researcher would like to confirm that ethics clearance was granted by both universities, and permission was granted by Stellenbosch University's Institutional Governance Committee (Appendix D, E and F).

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1.13 Structure of the dissertation

Figure 1.2 illustrates the structure of this dissertation.

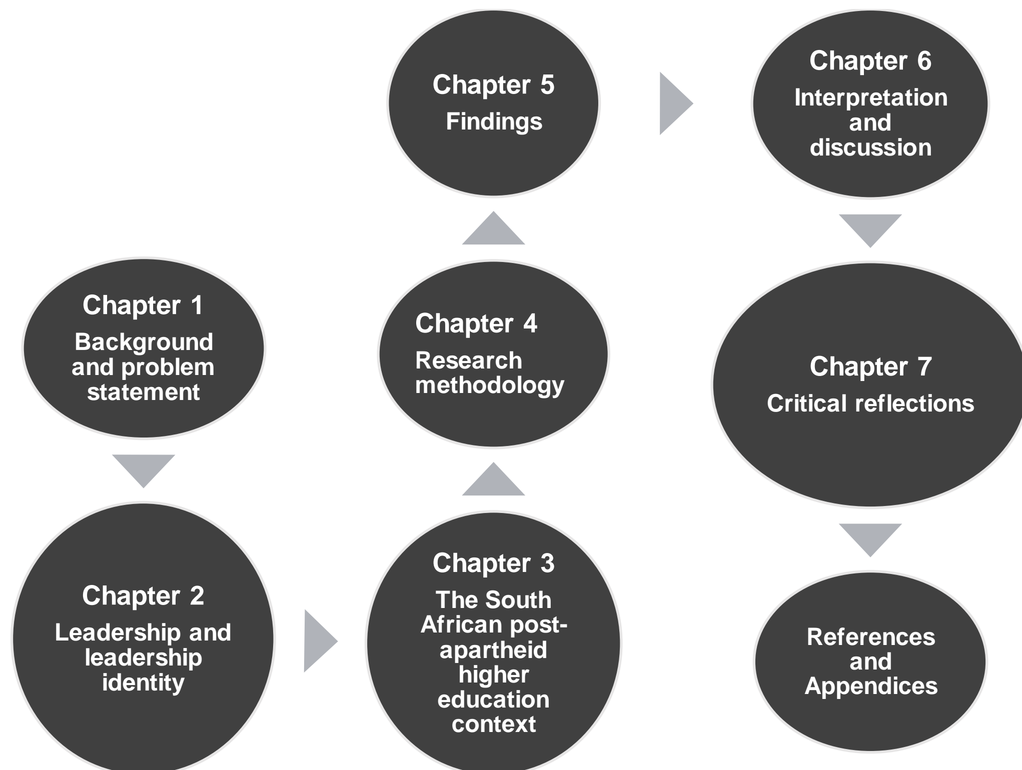

Figure 1.2: Structure of the dissertation

Chapter 1: Background and problem statement

This chapter has explained the background that led to the problem statement and research question explored in this study. It further highlighted the research paradigm and related research methodology in terms of which this research question was explored. The delimitation and limitations of this study, the researcher's background, and the background of the research setting were outlined. Finally, the researcher discussed the theoretical framework, and the two research disciplines (leadership and social psychology) that informed the study.

Chapter 2: Leadership and leadership identity

This chapter presents the literature review for this study, highlighting the change within leadership studies from an attributional towards a constructivist and identity approach. It further explores the merging of the leadership studies and social psychology disciplines in exploring the social identity theory of leadership. The researcher cites student leadership identity formation and intersectionality as they pertain to this study,

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and finally discusses the gap in the literature in terms of student leadership identity formation within a post-apartheid student leadership context.

Chapter 3: The South African post-apartheid higher education context

In this chapter, the researcher reviews the literature specifically as it pertains to the post-apartheid higher education context in which post-apartheid student leaders practise their leadership. The researcher refers to student activism as a mechanism to address the remnants of apartheid. It furthermore reviews the strong race narratives informing the higher education context in rebranding institutional identities and the identity exploration of the post-apartheid student leader. Finally, based on the strong race narratives observed in the literature, the researcher discusses the potential influence of historical trauma on post-apartheid student leadership identity formation.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

Chapter 4 gives an extensive discussion of the theoretical framework employed to explore the research question, the research paradigm confirming the unit of analysis (UoA) and unit of observation (UoO), the research design, the sample and the data collection for the three-phased triangulation process. The researcher also alludes to the research factors that were taken into account and how they were mitigated. The researcher explains the coding process and confirms the key themes, codes and subcodes as captured via Atlas.ti, a CAQDAS programme (computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software). The chapter ends with a detailed narrative of the researcher's positionality in relation to this study and confirmation of the ethical considerations considered, as required by both the University of Pretoria and Stellenbosch University.

Chapter 5: Findings

In Chapter 5 the researcher shares the data of the 14 predefined themes explored in the data collection phase. The researcher provides an overview of the findings per theme and indicates how patterns emerged from Phase 1 to Phase 2 and Phase 3. Although not relevant to the broader sample, the researcher also points out how specific identity and leadership identity contributors were case-specific.

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Chapter 6: Interpretation and discussion

In Chapter 6 the researcher offers an interpretation and discussion of the findings of each of the identified themes. The researcher also refers verbatim to segments of the participants' narratives (Appendix A) which indicates how specific life events contributed to their identity and leadership identity formation.

Chapter 7: Critical reflections

In the final chapter, the researcher confirms that the findings offer an insight into answering the main research question, and how the study contributes to addressing the gap identified in the literature. This is followed by a confirmation of the strengths and limitations of the study, the researcher's recommendations for further studies on this topic and conclusion.

1.14 Summary

In this chapter the researcher gave an overview of the problem statement and how it directly links to the post-apartheid context which will be explored in this study. The gap in the literature, specifically focusing on what informs leadership identity formation, and in relation to a country-specific history such as South Africa's race-based past, was confirmed. The researcher further indicated how this study does not aim to test the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model within a South African context, but that it was rather utilised as a theoretical framework within two specific disciplines, namely social psychology and the leadership studies discipline.

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Chapter 2: Leadership and leadership identity

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the evolution of the literature on leadership theory. The researcher will share the following key observations as relevant to this study.

1) *Leadership versus leader focus:* Leadership as a sense-making process was added to the romanticised view of leadership, followed by an attributional analysis phase of leadership in the 1980s. Contrary to the romanticised view of leadership, Pfeffer (1978:31) argues that leaders do not matter that much and that "leadership is the outcome of an attribution process in which observers – in order to achieve a feeling of control over the environment – tend to attribute outcomes to persons rather than to context, and the identification of individuals with leadership positions facilitates this attribution process". This stance was criticised by Burke (1979:121), as he viewed this as tending strongly towards iconoclasm, implying that Pfeffer supported the social belief in the importance of the destruction of icons (in this case, "the leader"). A leader is considered as an individual construct and leadership as a multi-level construct and a multi-level phenomenon (Gooty, Seban, Thomas, Gavin & Yammarino, 2012).
2) *Merger between disciplines of leadership studies and social psychology:* This refers to the merging of leadership studies (leadership theory) over the years with the discipline of social psychology (identity theory), i.e., with reference to the social identity theory of leadership (Hogg, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c).
3) *Leader identity versus leadership identity:* Leadership identity and leader identity are often loosely interpreted as being the same, but, as the literature overview will demonstrate, they are not. Leadership identity is defined as the extent to which one sees oneself as a leader, whereas leader identity, as referred to by Miscenko (2017:8), is a *process* by which individuals learn to perceive and define themselves as leaders. In other words, it is a sub-component of identity relating to being a leader, or having a knowledge structure of what leader skills and behaviour entail (Day & Harrison, 2007:367; Lord & Hall, 2005). Leader identity is a perception that has incorporated "self as leader" as a central component of their self-concept (Rus, Van Knippenberg and Wisse, 2010; DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Epitropaki, Kark, Mainemelis & Lord, 2017). Leader identity focuses on the process of becoming a leader. **The**

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researcher would like to confirm, for the purpose of this study, that the primary focus is on leadership identity and the factors contributing to leadership identity, hence the title, "Contributing factors to student *leadership* identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa".

4) *Leadership identity theory:* Despite various studies that have been undertaken in the field of leadership theory, and the expansion of current leadership theory, a gap has been identified in the literature and leadership practice within the research field on how leadership identity is formed, especially in the field of student leadership development (Komives *et al*., 2005). Although a leadership identity development theory was introduced by Komives *et al*. (2005) as a grounded theory (and the only grounded theory to date related to leadership identity formation within a student context), the application of this grounded theory is still under-researched.
5) *Leadership identity theory and the gap:* No research could be found on the application of this grounded theory to an African and South African context. Nor does there seem to be research on a post-apartheid positional student leadership sample. Such research could, firstly, test this grounded theory and, secondly, to build on this theory by investigating a potential link to leadership identity formation and the potential effects of historical trauma and intergenerational conversations on leadership identity formation in a post-apartheid student leadership sample.

This chapter presents a review of the literature that influences four of the five major aspects of this study: 1) the way that the interpretation of leadership evolved over time from attributes to leadership as a social construct; 2) the transition to a stronger focus on the interrelationship between identity and leadership through the exploration of identity, self-concept, leader identity and intersectionality, with reference to the social identity theory of leadership; 3) the development of a grounded theory, focusing on the leadership identity development model (LID model), specifically with reference to student leaders in higher education (Komives *et al*., 2005, 2006); and, finally, 4) the influence of intersectionality on leadership identity development. In Chapter 3 the researcher will highlight the gap in the literature on the leadership identity development model in the South African context.

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Figure 2.1 indicates the layout of Chapter 2.

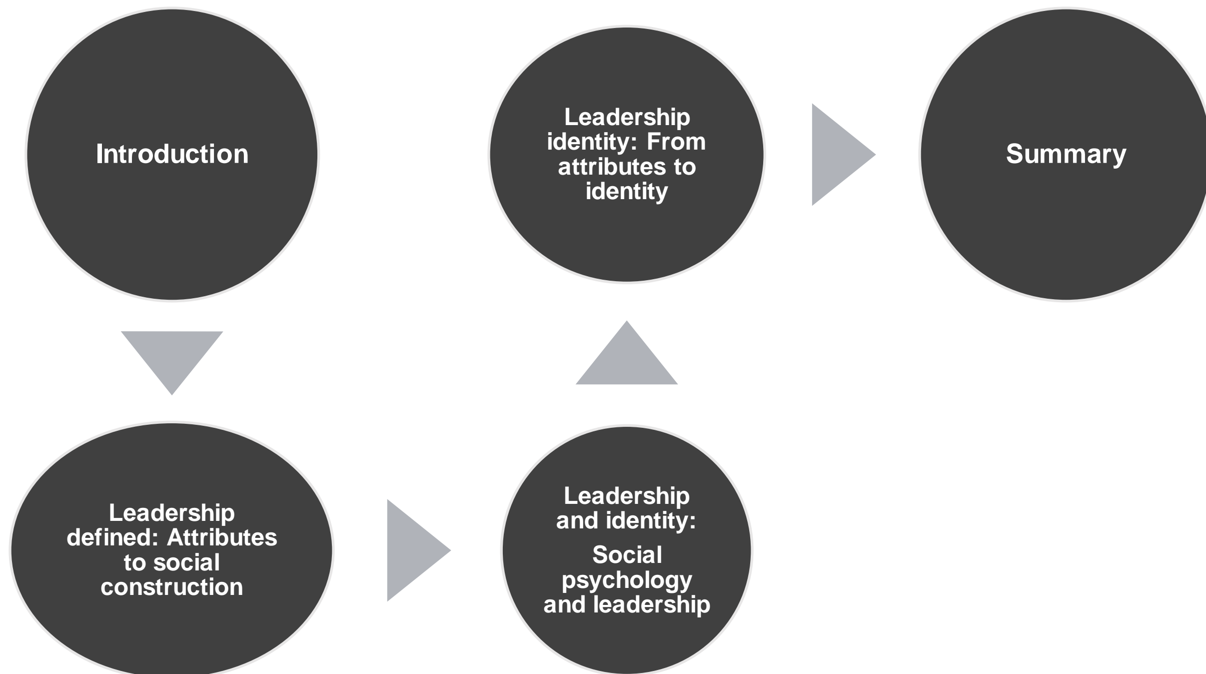

Figure 2.1: Layout of Chapter 2

2.2 Leadership defined: Shift in leadership theory from attributes to social construction

"Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth" (Burns, 1978:2; Wren, 1995:27). It remains largely "elusive and enigmatic" (Meindl, 1990:161) and as such has attracted "massive research interest from the 1970s to the present" (Badshah, 2012:49). Its relevance depends on the context in which it is applied (Khan, Nawaz & Khan, 2016).

An overview of the development of leadership theory over the last century demonstrates an expansion of theoretical frameworks in leadership studies. While leadership as a theoretical construct has existed since the 17th century (Stogdill, 1974), explicit leadership theories appeared in the 19th century, with focused research only commencing only in the 20th century (Bass, 1985). Explanations range from the Great Man Theory in the early 19th century, attributed to the historian Thomas Carlyle (1841), followed by Trait Theory (Tead, 1935). Then came popular leadership contingency

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models in the 1960s, e.g., the Fiedler contingency model (Fiedler, 1966) and the Blake-Mouton model (Blake & Mouton, 1964:1978). Situational models, e.g. the Hersey-Blanchard model (Hersey & Blanchard, 1979), followed by transactional and transformational theory, preceding the stronger focus on leadership styles and behaviours around the turn of the 21st century, with popular commercial management programmes including the Goleman leadership styles (Goleman, 2000).

Current leadership descriptors seem to be forming the basis of intellectual inquiry, namely Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Authentic Leadership and Responsible Leadership (House & Aditya, 1997). These theories are currently being reviewed within 21st-century leadership styles and “African leadership within the 21st century” from within local contexts. They offer an alternative to leadership studies that are viewed mostly from a Western-based historical perspective. Furthermore, process-driven leadership work is highlighted as a method to bring theory into context with popular theory-of-change approaches to leadership, e.g. ‘the fifth discipline’ (Senge, 1990) and ‘U theory’ (Scharmer, 2009), which focus on a leader’s agency to optimise systems, processes and people to implement change as leaders in the 21st century.

Despite the presence of the phenomenon of leadership being around since antiquity (Bass, 1990), House and Aditya (1997:409) point out that the scientific study of leadership started only in the 1930s. As the review of the main leadership paradigms will demonstrate, leadership studies are also multidisciplinary, e.g., covering social sciences (psychology, sociology), humanities (philosophy, history) and applied professional fields, e.g. education and organisational management (Shafique & Beh, 2017:134). Most of these studies reflect a Western, industrialised culture, and 98% are distinctly American in culture. Furthermore, the leadership literature, as pointed out by DeRue, Nahrgang, Wellman and Humphrey (2011:7), still lacks theoretical integration (Avolio, 2007), and is represented within and across the trait and behaviour paradigms. They argue that most research has been conducted within separate paradigms, either focusing on single traits or behavioural perspectives.

Before sharing an overview of the various paradigms, it is important to look at the various definitions of leadership. This multiplicity of definitions is an indication of the

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complexity of leadership studies, as there is no single common definition that scholars use as point of departure for their investigations (Bass, 1991; Lincoln, 2012; Stogdill, 1974).

Figure 2.2 indicates the layout of the leadership literature review (leadership styles will not be emphasised). Figure 2.3 indicates the progression of the main leadership paradigms.

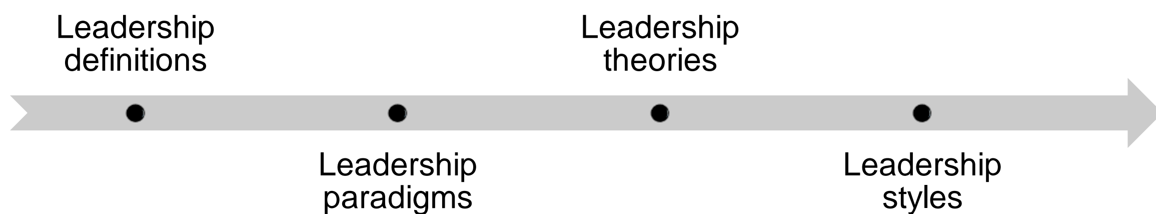

Figure 2.2: Section layout

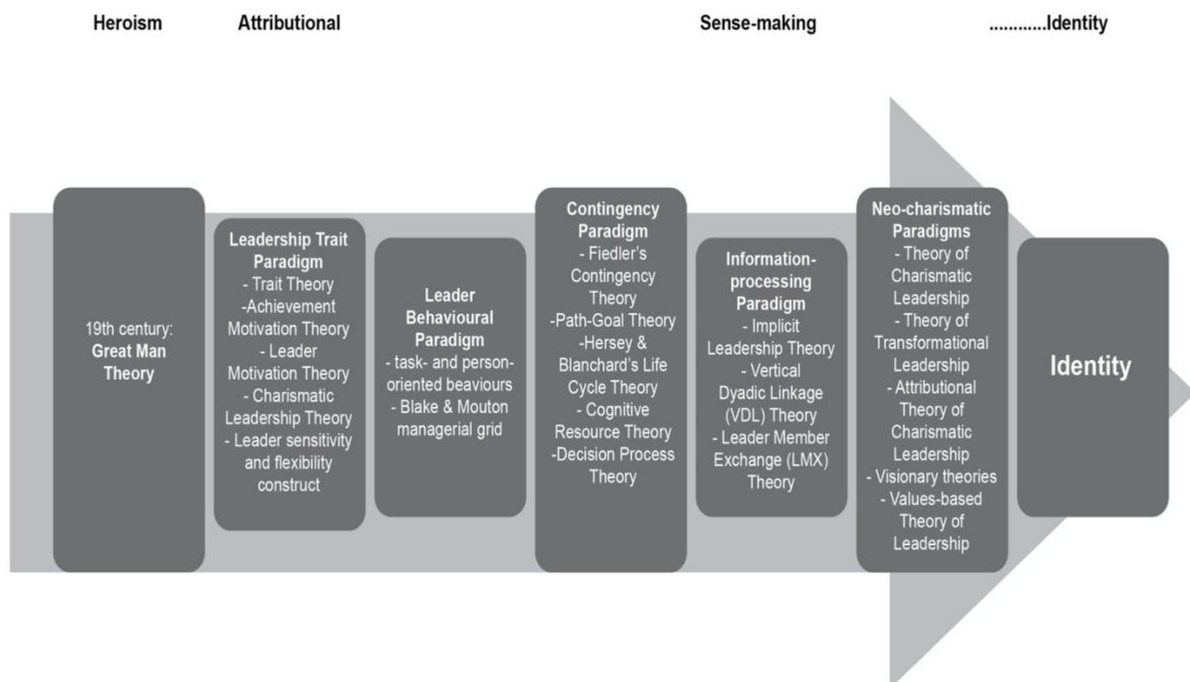

Figure 2.3. Evolution of leadership theories

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2.2.1 Definitions of leadership

Johns and Moser (1989:115), Ronald (2014:53) and Van Vugt (2006:355) discuss the many definitions of leadership that have arisen over the past few centuries. The following list presents some of the various interpretations of leadership in chronological order:

- Mumford (1906:221): "… is the pre-eminence of one individual in a group in the process of control …";
- Blackmar (1911:626): is the "centralization of efforts … in one person …";
- Bernard (1927) focuses on leadership as a process to focus the attention of group members on the desired direction;
- Copeland (1942) alludes to the art of influencing others;
- Knickerbocker (1948) highlights the relationship between an individual and a group;
- Stogdill's (1950) emphasis is on the process of influencing the activities of an organised group in its attempt to achieve goal setting and goal achievement. Stogdill's (1974) focus on leadership entailed personality as a factor in leadership differentiation, while not arguing for the adoption of trait theory. Stogdill (1948) treated personality in an "atomistic fashion", through which he aimed to modify the situational leadership approach, as he believed it denied the influence of individual differences, i.e., variations between people and environments;
- Bass' (1961) emphasised the individual's attempt to change the behaviour of others;
- Tannenbaum, Weschler and Massarik's (1961:24) definition of leadership focuses on "an interpersonal influence, exercised in situations and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal";
- Prentice (1961) refers to leadership as "the accomplishment of a goal through the direction of human assistants";
- Katz and Kahn (1966:334) refer to leadership as "any act of influence on matters of organisational relevance";
- The communication and influence focus shifted to the definition of Hesburgh (1971:764), which focuses on the moral and intellectual dimensions of

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leadership, i.e., moving beyond the intellectualisation of leadership to the humane level and taking morality into consideration;

- The above definition later led to Burns's (1978:381) definition of leadership entailing "leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values, motivation, aspirations of both leader and follower", i.e., the relational aspect of leadership (in relation to followership) became a focus;
- Hollander's (1985), Pondy's (1989) and Bass's (1990) definitions of leadership can be simplified to it being a process of social influence to attain mutual goals– a definition adopted by other scholars, such as Rost (1991), Wren (1995), Yukl (2002), Sudbrack and Trombley (2007), Vroom and Jago (2007), Jung, Heinzen and Quarg (2013) and Northouse (2014). Furthermore, as pointed out by Dugan and Komives (2010:526) and Komives, Wagner and Associates, (2009b:xii), leadership is viewed in this approach as "a purposeful, collaborative, values-based process that results in positive social change". From this, flows the congruency of the social change model with definitions of leadership focused on social responsibility and benefiting from its broad use on college campuses (Kezar, Carducci & Contreras-McGavin (2006). Strauss and Corbin's (1998) idea of leadership development being identity development was utilised as adopted by Komives *et al.* (2005), where leadership and identity merged and refers to the processes of making meaning associated with particular situations or roles that influence the way individuals perceive themselves or others as leaders;
- Finally there is leadership viewed from a leadership development perspective: Turner and Baker (2017:6) refer to Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturn and McKee (2014) and Gagnon, Vough and Nickerson, (2012), who view leadership from a leadership development perspective, i.e. "as a collective construct rather than being an individual construct, as being non-linear rather than linear, and involving complex interactions that involve people, social entities, and organisational environments".

At this point, the researcher would like to confirm that the interpretation of leadership by Komives *et al.* (2005) has been adopted for this study, namely, that leadership merged with identity, refers to the processes of meaning-making associated with the

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particular situations or roles that influence the way individuals perceive themselves or others as leaders.

2.2.2 Leadership paradigms and leadership theories

The main leadership paradigms are: the great man theory, the leadership trait paradigm, the leader behaviour paradigm, the contingency theory paradigm, the information processing paradigm and, finally, the neo-charismatic theory paradigm (House and Aditya, 1997).

Meindl, Ehrlich and Dukerich (1985) refer to the concept of leadership as an explanatory concept in an attempt to understand and improve organisations. Yet most of the initial literature in leadership studies focused on the evolution of leadership theories, individual characteristics/traits of a leader and leadership styles (Johns & Moser, 1989:115), while critics pointing out the deficiencies of these theories. Among these are overtones of elitism, which is an unpopular concept in democracy (Organ, 1996), and conceptual problems (Burns, 1978:3; House & Aditya, 1997:409). The observation by Meindl *et al*. (1985:87) is clear – leadership as a concept in the 1980s indicated an "entrenched part of the socially constructed reality" of society, and evidently also of organisations, and this social construct elevated the concept of leadership.

As Haslam, Platow, Turner, Reynolds, McGarty, Oakes, Johnson, Ryan and Veenstra (2001:193) assert, the focus in Meindl *et al*. (1985) was on 'the romance of leadership' but seen more from an ideological point of view than as something to be taken at face value. Charismatic leadership is not to be found in leaders, but "in the minds of followers" (Meindl, 1993:107). As the leadership timeline advanced over the decades, a stronger focus on followership emerged. For the purpose of this literature review, followership is incorporated into the timeline discussion, but it will not be the main focus.

2.2.2.1 The great man theory paradigm

Going back to leadership roots, heroic views of leadership, with reference to the great man theory, would historicise an individual – usually a man – who is held up and celebrated for the significance of his contribution (Ball, 2012:73). This focuses on the

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actions (of the leader) and outcomes (of leadership) or, as Shafique and Beh (2017:135) assert, an overemphasis on personality traits without solid explanation of or arguments for becoming a leader. Although the great man theory has been criticised, Grint's (2011) survey of leadership discourse acknowledges Carlyle as a foundational writer in the discourse on modern leadership. Mouton (2019:82) also points out that Carlyle simply endorsed the doctrine upheld by great men before this endorsement. Spencer (1873:30) pointed out that this theory was not "perhaps distinctly formulated, but everywhere implied" and was "tacitly asserted in all early traditions and taught to every child by multitudinous illustrations" (Spencer, 1873:32).

Mouton (2019:82) further refers to Spector's (2016:258) observation that the great man theory still influenced later paradigms, such as trait theories, and other traditions such as transformational leadership. By using the great man theory as an example, Ball (2012:80) introduces an interesting perspective based on the shift in psychologist-historians' cognisance of the nexus of social, cultural and institutional forces influencing historiography. She argues that this shift does not have to discard the notion of "greatness" but, using the Carlyle example, instead can be utilised for psychologist-historians to further contextualise current eminent figures. In other words, the past can inform the current and, by failing to acknowledge the great leaders of the past, we could fail to capture the true nature of the interaction between the personal and the social.

Ball's (2012) study was followed by Spector (2016:256), who argues that, despite its lack of scientific rigour, the great man theory is still relevant today as it adds an element of Freudian psychology. Following the point made by Meindl *et al.* (1985) above regarding leadership being an "entrenched part of the socially constructed reality", Spector (2016:256) adds that "leadership as a concept upholds human agency". Spector (2016) brought a critical perspective to the great man theory discourse by drawing parallels between Carlyle' and Freud's elevation of men – Carlyle by his gendered view derived from world history through the actions of men (i.e. the male figure by virtue of history and God as source of authority), and Freud, by his elevation of the role of "the father figure" as the head of the family who satisfied the primal need for protection, i.e. the male figure by virtue of patriarchal family structure and his position in the family (Spector, 2016:257). While not claiming this perspective to be

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rational, Spector (2016:258) concludes that, despite all rigorous scholarly research and theorising, “people seek a narrative structure that brings legitimacy to abstractions, offers coherence in response to apparent chaos and asserts human agency in the face of seemingly unmanageable complexity”.

2.2.2.2 The leadership trait paradigm

The earliest leadership paradigm is summarised in the trait theory paradigm (Tead, 1935), which focuses on the search for individual characteristics to differentiate leaders from non-leaders, with key traits being “intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity and sociability” (Northouse, 2004:19). Northouse (2004) further alludes to scholars opposing this paradigm, including Davis-Blake and Pfeffer (1988) and Schneider (1983), who present what they consider the biggest critique against the trait theory, namely that “traits must be stable and predict behaviour over substantial periods of time and across widely varying situations”.

House, Shane and Herold (1996) further point out that traits can predict behaviour in the short term, with long-term consequences even for unstable traits. Stogdill (1974) concludes that leader traits deliver no explanation for the associations between the traits and leader effectiveness, while House and Aditya (1997:413) summarise three salient points emerging from trait theory:

1) A number of traits consistently differentiate leaders from followers;
2) The effects of traits on leader behaviour and leader effectiveness are enhanced by the relevance of the traits to the situation in which the leader functions;
3) Traits have stronger influence on leader behaviours when the situational characteristics permit the expression of individual disposition.

Colbert, Judge and Wang (2012:680) reference House and Aditya’s (1997:413) salient points, as well as the later study by Judge, Bono, Ilies and Gerhardt (2002) to confirm House and Aditya’s (1997) conclusion through their meta-analysis, where they aggregate estimates of the effects of personality on leadership into five personality traits (also referred to as “The Big Five” or “the Five Factor Model” (FFM). This model is comprised of *neuroticism*, *agreeableness*, *extraversion*, *openness to experience* and *conscientiousness*.

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Colbert, Judge, Choi and Wang (2012) address the gap in trait theory by highlighting the importance of using a multitrait-multimethod approach to assess personality, as it increases the variance explained in leadership. Their findings question the use of self and observer ratings of a personality trait as influencing leadership, i.e. depending on the variance analysed, self and/or observer ratings might yield a difference in correlation strength.

2.2.2.3 The leader behaviour paradigm

The leader behaviour paradigm follows the gap identified by scholars regarding the limitations of demonstrating a link between traits and leader behaviour. The leader behaviour paradigm aimed to fill this gap left by scholars such as in the first study done by Lewin, Lippit and White (1939), and the studies of Bales (1954), Stogdill and Coons (1957), Kahn and Katz (1953), Likert (1961) and Mann (1965).

The **Blake-Mouton managerial grid** (Blake & Mouton, 1964) can also be included here and gives rise to the contingency paradigm. The grid proposes a very basic, fluid managerial approach to either a concern for people or a concern for production, depending on the maturity level of the subordinates, i.e. the separation of concerns (Landis, Hill & Harvey, 2014:99). Two major contributions to the field of leadership studies were made by these scholars:

1) The identification of two broad classes of leader behaviours, e.g. task-oriented and person-oriented behaviours. According to House and Aditya (1997), a third behaviour class was identified by Bales (1954), namely individual prominence (which did not receive the same prominence due to the social disapproval of individual prominence-seeking);
2) The refinement of the task- and person-oriented behaviours.

Further contributions to this paradigm include:

- An additional level of analysis was added by Katz (1955) and Northouse (2004), determining three skills-set groups (technical, human and conceptual), i.e. not limited to leader behaviour only;
- Where do we locate the “leader character” as locus of leadership? Strongly aligned with the leader behaviour paradigm is the reference by Hannah and

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Avolio (2011:979) to Bass and Bass's (2008:219) view that leader character "involves his or her ethical and moral beliefs, intentions and behaviours". Hannah and Avolio (2011:979) point out a gap in the leadership theory, viz. that the theory cannot be discussed without focusing on the character of the leader as locus of leadership, and that only limited research has been done on providing the levels of theoretical (i.e. how character is conceptualised) and empirical (i.e. how character is operationalised for testing) advancements needed to understand leader construction. Their contribution to leadership studies is the location of *leader character* as a locus of leadership, and the determination of the linkages between leader character as locus and leader character transmission (to followers) and reception (by followers). This also supports a study by Peterson and Seligman (2004);

- Yukl's (2012) contribution to this paradigm entails the development of a hierarchical taxonomy based on incorporating the research on leadership behaviour done between 1950 and 1980. This research mostly explains how leaders influence the attributes and performance of individual subordinates (see Table 2.1). Their work aimed to address the gap identified, viz. that two meta-categories are needed (change-oriented and external), apart from the initial task- and relations-oriented meta-categories in earlier studies.

Table 2.1: Yukl's (2012:68) hierarchical taxonomy of leadership behaviours

Meta-category	Behaviour
Task-oriented	Clarifying
	Planning
	Monitoring operations
	Problem-solving
Relations-oriented	Supporting
	Developing
	Recognising
	Empowering
Change-oriented	Advocating change
	Envisioning change
	Encouraging innovation
	Facilitating collective learning
External	Networking
	External monitoring
	Representing

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As with the trait paradigm, the leader behaviour paradigm has also faced criticism because the research mostly follows an inductive approach due to the lack of theoretical concepts at the time. The contribution by DeRue *et al*. (2011:10) to the field of leadership addresses this in their three-stage process by 1) developing a conceptual model by organising the current literature and models, 2) empirically testing the relative validity of select leader traits and behaviours through combining published meta-analytical data and meta-analyses, and 3) investigating an exemplary set of relationships from this conceptual model.

Figure 2.4 captures the integrative model designed by DeRue *et al*. (2011), which explains the integration of leadership traits, behaviours and effectiveness.

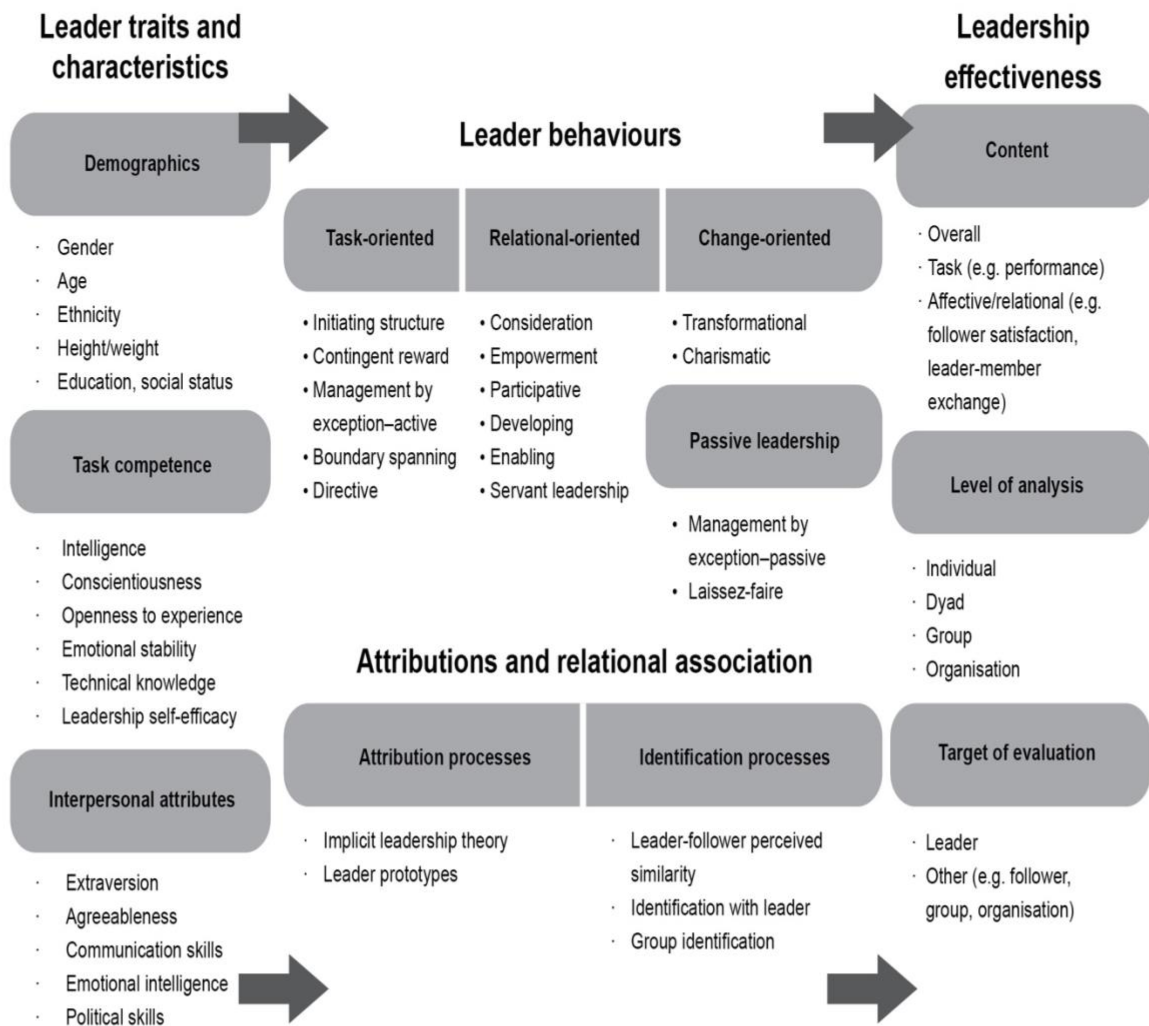

Figure 2.4: An integrated model of leadership traits, behaviours and effectiveness (DeRue et al., 2011:10)

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2.2.2.4 The contingency theory paradigm

The contingency theory paradigm encapsulates five theories, namely

- **Fiedler's contingency theory** (Fiedler, 1964, 1967, 1971) was the first to specify how situational variables interact with leader personality and behaviour (House & Aditya, 1997:415) on the basis of three identified major dimensions: leader-member relations, task structure and position power (Badshah, 2012);
- The **path-goal theory of leader effectiveness** (House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974) focuses on reconciling the conflicting findings of the task- and person-oriented leader behaviour. Ayman (2004) and House (1971, 1996) refer to the dependence of this theory on the leader's ability to use directive-path, goal-clarifying, supportive, participative and achievement-oriented tasks and relationship-related behaviour. In other words, the focus is on how the leader influences the subordinates' perceptions of their work goals, personal goals and paths to goal attainment (Badshah, 2012);
- The **Hersey and Blanchard life cycle theory** (1982) uses a situational leadership theory approach that is focused on leadership styles appropriate for specific situations based on the maturity level of subordinates;
- The **cognitive resource theory of leadership** (CRT of leadership), developed by Fiedler and Garcia (1987), comprises a person-by-situation approach with two person variables, viz. leader intelligence and leader experience, and one situational variable, viz. the stress experienced by leaders and followers. House and Aditya (1997:416) point out that the biggest gain for the field of leadership studies is that the CRT of leadership aids in answering the question: when is it more effective to be participative with followers and when is it more effective to be directive?
- The **decision process theory** of Vroom and Yetton (1973) highlights seven decision-making methods resulting in different outcomes (five relevant to group decision-making, i.e. consultative processes, and two to individual processes).

House and Aditya (1997:415) point out that, as with the trait theory paradigm and the leader behaviour paradigm, the contingency theory paradigm has been criticised on a multitude of levels. Although Fiedler's contingency theory has been supported by Strube and Garcia (1981) through their testing of the model, it was earlier criticised by Ashour (1973) and Schriesheim and Kerr (1977) for conceptual reasons and due to

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inconsistency in the empirical findings and its inability to account for substantial variance in group performance. The latter criticism by Vecchio (1983), who challenged Strube and Garcia's tests (1981) based on inappropriate statistical analysis.

Path-goal theory also received mixed reviews, as Evans (1996), Schriesheim and Nieder (1996) and Yukl (1993) concluded that the theory had not been tested adequately. The Hersey-Blanchard model, although popular for commercial management programmes, shows limitations with regard to the limited empirical testing pointed out by Vecchio (1987). Decision process theory has also attracted criticism pertaining to the bias in field studies in that the variables impacting on decision-making outcomes, were mostly sourced from managers and therefore indicating potential bias from correlated observations (House & Aditya, 1997).

2.2.2.5 The information-processing paradigm

Three theories can be highlighted within the information-processing paradigm:

- **Vertical dyadic linkage (VDL) theory**, regarded as a precursor to leader-member-exchange (LMX) theory, focuses on the dyadic relationships of followers with the same leader, leading to in-groups and out-groups (House & Aditya, 1997:419);
- **Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory**, which is based on the effects of separate dyadic relationships between superiors and subordinates; it also takes into account the argument that "effective leadership occurs when leaders and followers develop strong relationships with social exchanges or transactions in which each party benefits" (Burns & Otte, 1999; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; House & Aditya, 1997). This theory plays on the idea of "role making" as a set of processes in which the actor and functionally interdependent other 1) interlock behaviour by reciprocal reinforcement and 2) construct relationship norms (Badshah, 2012:55);
- **Implicit leadership theory** analyses the evaluations people make about leaders and the cognitive processes underlying these evaluations and perceptions (House & Aditya, 1997:423). It posits that the presence of leader behaviour would not make a leader without him/her being perceived as a leader by a follower.

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2.2.2.6 The Neo-Charismatic Paradigm

The neo-charismatic paradigm, or new leadership theories (Bryman, 1996), evolved around the mid-1970s and had a common leadership theory genre, including charismatic leadership, transactional and transformational leadership, and shared characteristics, e.g. a) explaining how leaders achieve success and social reform, b) explaining how leaders motivate followers, c) stressing emotionally appealing leader behaviour, e.g. role modelling and being supportive, and d) explaining the effect on follower self-esteem, leaders vision and values (House & Aditya, 1997:424).

Four leadership styles within this paradigm are prominent: transformational leadership, which is equated with charismatic leadership, transactional leadership and servant leadership. These will be discussed in turn below.

Transformational leadership, according to Tichy and Devanna (1986), is about the change needed in organisations to drive entrepreneurship and innovation with the purpose of utilising resources for improved productivity. Ronald (2014:60) alluded to transformational leadership and transactional leadership that were first differentiated by Bass (1985) based on the ideas (contingency principles related to transactional leadership) of Burns (1978) and inspired by House's (1977) charismatic leadership theory. Transactional leadership, as the name implies, involves mutual reciprocity which will influence the relationship either positively or negatively, depending on the mutual gain for both parties.

Hence, as Hansbrough (2012:1543) indicates, "while transactional leadership focuses on pragmatic and instrumental considerations as well as clear rewards, it does not foster a sense of connectedness with the leader" (Badshah, 2012:54). The biggest shift from Bass's argument is that followers become leaders through the actions of a transformational leader, i.e. through the leader recognising the needs (organisation) and abilities (subordinates) (Ronald, 2014:60).

At times, transformational leadership is also equated to charismatic leadership and as pointed out by Bligh, Kohles and Pilai (2011:1073), serves as the primary focus of the romanticisation of leadership. This supports Meindl's (1990) view that the consistent emphasis on these heroic views of leadership leads to a somewhat hyper-

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romanticisation of leadership in itself. Supporting Bass's (1985) argument regarding the followership influence, Hansbrough (2012:1537) posits that transformational leadership differs from charismatic leadership based on its impact on the follower relationship: she argues further that, although both transformational and charismatic leaders can apply personalised leadership (using power for personal gain) and socialised leadership (using power as a mechanism to empower others), transformational leadership is only demonstrated in the presence of socialised leadership (House & Howell, 1992).

Bass's (1985) development of the multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ) brought attention to four constructs of transformational leadership: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. This was later refined by Avolio and Bass (2004). Ronald (2014:61), points out, while scholars such as Shafique and Beh (2017:140) argue that transformational leadership should be considered as the most suitable leadership style to meet the current challenge of the business environment, scholars such as Bryman (1996) and Miner (2005) critique transformational leadership because of its apparent disregard for contextual factors, or the theoretical underpinning identifying the factors nurturing transformational leadership. Jackson's (2020) further critique is based on his historical analysis of transformational leadership, with limited research specifically relating transformational leadership theory to Ancient Rome's concept of gravitas – the latter considered as a personality trait for leaders, which is compared with the Big Five (see Trait Theory Paradigm, Section 2.2.2.2).

Servant leadership, proposed by Greenleaf (1977), is concerned more with the "have nots" (inequality) and recognises them as equal (Greenleaf, 1996). Berry and Cartwright (2000:345) note that the servanthood leadership theory has a theological pedigree and relevance to churches. The emphasis is on equality of persons in order to serve the greater good, i.e., going beyond the individual's ego. Berry and Cartwright (2000:345) argue that the servant leader can be viewed as rescuing the amoral rational leader in an attempt to justify asymmetric power relations. The critique goes without saying, i.e. that it is considered to be too idealistic for leadership to be functioning within the economic space of society (Badshah, 2012:57).

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What stood out in the literature are the following points:

1) The differentiation between leadership paradigms informing leadership theory and leadership theory informing leadership styles (Khan *et al*., 2016);
2) The leadership paradigms, while informing leadership theories within a particular leadership paradigm, points to the need for an integrated leadership meta-framework (Veldsman & Johnson, 2016). As alluded to by Veldsman and Veldsman (2020a), this fragmented approach to leadership, creates a silo-ed theoretical body of knowledge in organisational identity which is not practical to apply in a holistic practice or in a "mostly ignored context" such as South Africa (Veldsman & Veldsman, 2020b:8);
3) The formation of leaders is a social construct: leadership perception is mediated by the social context and interaction with followers (Berry *et al*., 2000:48);
4) Self-expansion theory and shared leadership: Self-expansion theory can be utilised to integrate traditional and contemporary approaches to leadership through shared leadership (leadership not limited to the status of one individual, but also the status of the aggregate of separate individuals (Dansereau, Seitz, Chiu, Shaughnessy & Yammarino, 2013:804);
5) The relationship between leadership and power: The assumption is made that leaders assert power, but without follower engagement power cannot exist (Badshah, 2012:57);
6) As leadership evolved, a stronger focus developed on the follower through the actions of leaders (Ronalds, 2014).

The leader-follower interaction leads to the next discussion on social context as mediator of the leadership practice.

2.2.3 Leadership as a social construct

The thinking on leadership slowly ventured into the realm of social psychology, with a stronger focus on the interrelation between followership and leadership. Or one might ask whether it is the other way round? Van Vugt's (2006:357) analysis of the evolution of leadership theories is undertaken from a social psychology perspective, with the inclusion of followership, and from the identification of the gap in the offering of an integrative framework for leadership studies between psychology and evolutionary science.

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Van Vugt (2006) differentiates between two main theories:

1) **Leadership as by-product of dominance:** the roles of leader and follower are by-products of adaptations for dominance and submission, and dominance hierarchies stem from competition among members (Buss, 1999; Wilson, 1975). However, according to Bass (1990), this might have held in ancestral environments, but he concludes that leadership can no longer be defined in terms of personal dominance.
2) **Leadership as strategy for social coordination:** leadership and followership are "social strategies selected to foster collective action" (Van Vugt, 2006:359).

The approach to leadership from a social constructionist perspective, with the added focus on identity, draws away from limiting the leadership discourse and its focus on mere attributes, "skills acquisition, and training instruments that have dominated the relational dynamics that structure such a space" (Carroll & Levy, 2010:227). Hall (2011:66) with reference to Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003), Fairhurst (2007) and Fairhurst and Grant (2010), furthermore adds that the value of the social constructionist orientation is that leadership is investigated in specific contexts, adding detail specific to the "more positivist, psycho-behavioral approaches to leadership". Yet, as Grint (2005:1471) points out, social constructionist work can be traced back to some of the seminal work of Berger and Luckmann (1966). It also drawn on further developments by Burr (2003) as well as Gergen's (1999) application to leadership in the work of Grint (2001) and Sjöstrand, Sandberg and Tyrstrup (2001).

The social construction of leadership draws from a range of definitions of social constructionism, as well as on multiple constructs, perspectives, approaches and methods (Fairhurst & Grant, 2010). Carroll and Levy (2010:211) alluded to social constructionism challenging us "to view leadership participants as subjects and objects", adding that it informs and shapes leadership development. Or, as Blaikie (2008:22) puts it, it focuses on "the output of people having to make sense of their encounters with the physical world and with other people". This offers an opposite approach to the traditional ones, as highlighted in Section 2.2.2 of this chapter.

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This approach to leadership, as Humphreys, Novicevic, Smothers, Haden, Hayek, Williams, Oyler and Clayton (2015b:1391) and Fairhurst (2009:1608), point out, highlights its interpretative stance, i.e. that the "constructionist lens is more social and cultural than individual and psychological". Furthermore, Carroll and Levy (2010:213) note that it shows that social construction is "ongoing interpretation of social worlds and phenomena (Pye, 2005), relational meaning-making (Hosking, 2008), the constitution and reconstitution of realities and identities (Cunliffe, 2009), and the centrality of discourse or language" (Deetz, 1992).

The social construction of leadership literature also allows for a deep dive Into the social construction of a specific leadership style, e.g. servant-leadership, as Burnham (2021:295) indicated, as well as reviewing the social construction of the field of leadership studies through "the textbook" as a construction space (Carroll, Firth, Ford & Taylor, 2018). Finally, as illustrated by Billsberry (2013) from a teaching perspective, this social construction suggests an alternative to traditional leadership teachings by providing a student-centred perspective. This is because the social constructionist approach to leadership studies provides the student with an opportunity to unravel leadership through his or her own lived experiences (perceptions and environments, i.e. including the focus on human behaviour modification as influenced by social interaction) – leadership from a praxis point of view, as illustrated in Figure 2.5.

As alluded to in the section on the definition of leadership in this chapter (see Section 2.2.1), the various definitions and interpretations of leadership have brought with them a range of challenges for the field of leadership, of which finding an agreed common point of departure seems to be the major challenge. According to Billsberry (2009; 2013:679), "the social constructionist approach to leadership have emerged as a response to the problems scholars have had in nailing down the concept of leadership". This is later also referred to by Fairhurst and Grant (2010), Grint and Jackson (2010), and Northouse (2010).

While emerging as an earlier response to problems in leadership, Grint (2005:1471) adds to the complexity of context by positing that "leadership involves the social construction of context that both legitimates a particular form of action and constitutes the world in the process". The dilemma highlighted here relates to the assumption that

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the context constructed would be considered successful and, if so, would limit alternatives. As Grint (2005: 1471) puts it, "we might no longer consider what is the situation, but how it is situated" as the social construction of context "both legitimates a particular form of action and constitutes the world in process". This would allow for the reintroduction of a proactive role of leadership in the construction of context – not by individual agents, but interdependent of human agency.

In an attempt to shed light on the various scholarship approaches, Fairhurst and Grant (2010:175) highlight two main distinctions in social constructionist leadership: a) a leader-centric approach and b) an approach to leadership as a co-constructed reality (see Figure 2.5). The first premises the "leaders' style, behaviour and personality influencing followers' thoughts and actions" (Fairhurst and Grant, 2010:175), and the latter comprises "processes and outcomes of interactions between and among social actors" (Fairhurst and Grant, 2010:175).

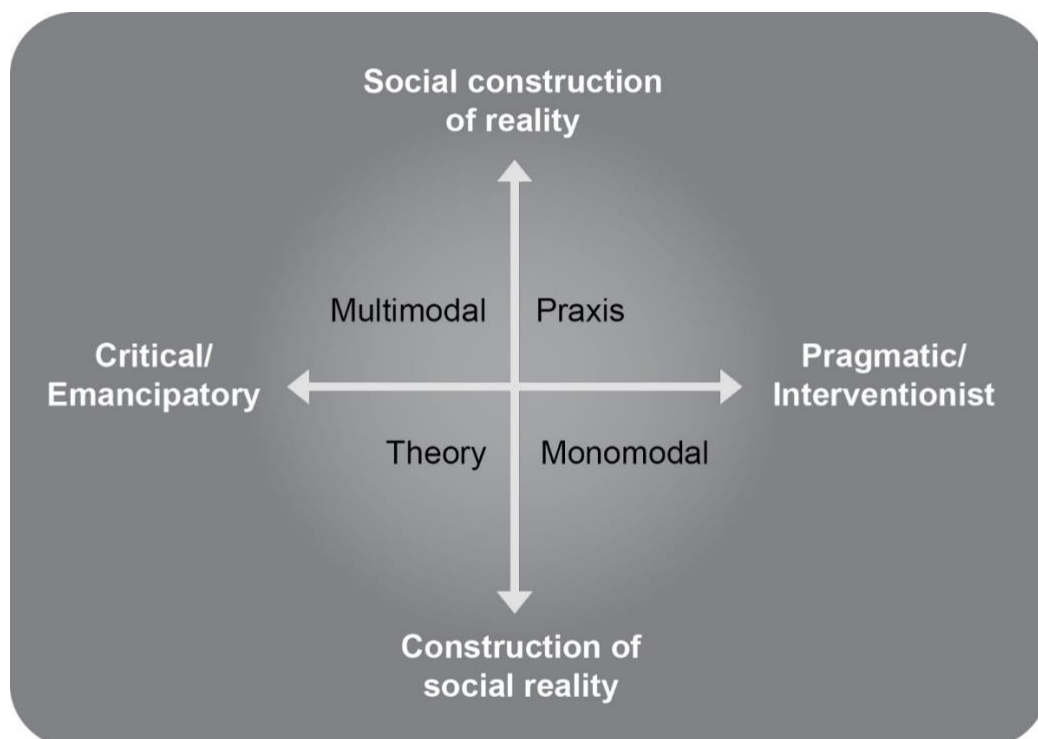

Figure 2.5: A sailing guide to the social construction of leadership (Fairhurst & Grant, 2010:177)

Fairhurst and Grant's (2010:177) dissection of the social construction of leadership builds on the literature by creating four dimensions which is illustrated in Figure 2.5. As indicated in Figure 2.5, Fairhurst and Grant (2010:177) further dissect the social

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construction in the leadership literature by creating four dimensions. In dimension 1 they build on Pearce's (1995) sailing guide by differentiating between the construction of social reality (focusing on perception and the cognitive processes of social interaction – implicit theories, attributions and sense-making) and the social construction of reality (focusing on action, i.e., the interactions in Itself, implicitly, explicitly or sociohistorical interactional).

They further highlight three more distinctions of the social construction of leadership. Dimension 2, theory versus praxis, is the first focusing on the actual theories and epistemologies – the ability of people to formulate linguistics (Shotter, 1993:149) or Grint's (2001: 2005) reference to leadership as "an ensemble of arts" which include history, identity issues ("who are we?") and vision issues ("what does this organisation want to achieve?") (Fairhurst & Grant, 2010:182). In other words, "leadership actors making their own history" (Fairhurst & Grant, 2010:182). This includes the discursive leadership approach of scholars, e.g. Alvesson and Kärreman (2000) and Fairhurst (2007). As Fairhurst and Grant (2010:184) point out, the opposite side of the spectrum has a "theories in use"/praxis approach (which is not practice sans theory), in which praxis scholars "are giving leadership actors and analysts a glossary in terms of applied social constructionism to hone their reflexivity skills".

Dimension 3 focuses on power between a critical/emancipatory approach (critiques forms of power and dominance as they relate to what leaders do and emancipation of the oppressed as an outcome of power and dominance) versus a pragmatic intervention approach (where issues of power are considered contingent). Finally, dimension 4 differentiates between a monomodal (language) versus a multimodal (material/institutional) approach to explain leadership. Fairhurst and Grant (2010:190) point to Ledema's (2007) observation that most constructionist leadership research remains predominantly language focused (monomodal). On the other hand, scholars who have adopted a multimodal approach consider language as one of many means of understanding leadership (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001).

The literature on the social construction of leadership tends to vary in its focus. For example, Sinha (2012:41) emphasises the social construction of followership and its construction of and representation of leaders. This avenue indicates the intricacies of

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leader-follower relationships in the social construction of the leadership process and the relational aspect of the construction process.

Adding to this complexity within the social construction realm of leadership, Grint and Jackson (2010:353), with reference to Shamir, Pillai, Bligh and Uhl-Bien (2007), allude to the assumption that lies within the social construction of leadership, that of followers being "the repository of leadership wisdom by virtue of the fact that they are more innocent" Just as transformational/charismatic leadership can be accused of romanticising leadership, this interpretation, could be perceived as romanticising followers.

To summarise:

- As leader and follower interaction became the focus point of leadership studies, it required a stronger focus on the social context in which leadership is practised;
- It also highlighted the need to analyse the leader and follower interaction from a social psychology perspective to explore the gap identified in the offering of an integrative framework for leadership studies between psychology and evolutionary science;
- The social construction of leadership further requires the acknowledgement of the participants of leadership (leaders *and* followers), as both "subject and objects" (Blaikie, 2008:22) informing leadership perspectives and the meaning-making of their social context influencing their leadership perspectives. This offers an opposite approach to the traditional ones, as highlighted in Section 2.2.2 of this chapter;
- For the purpose of this study in the context of post-apartheid South Africa, it is important to highlight identity construction in relation to the social construction of leadership and. For this purpose, the researcher would like to refer to the work of Carroll and Levy (2010:212), who argue that the broader social constructionist agenda would benefit from further research that recognises identity as project and product in the context of leadership development. Their work highlights four aspects:
    - Firstly, how social constructionist thinking is shaping contemporary approaches to identity within leadership. Here the emphasis is on how

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social constructionist identity research offers a range of choices along the traditional conceptual continuums with reference to the agency pendulum (Fairhurst, 2007:78) and the shifting from nouns (static) to verbs (becoming) (Carroll & Levy, 2010:213; Weick, 1995);

- Secondly, how identity has emerged within leadership studies – Carroll and Levy (2010:216) point out that, although identity approaches are not uncommon in the leadership field, scholars such as Lord and Hall (2005) have a more functionalist focus (i.e. the notion of identity as a tool) and Velsor and Drath (2003) a more constructivist one (i.e. that identity is to be considered as a personalised development journey);
- Thirdly, by focusing on narrative constructionist inquiry – here the utilisation of narratives indicates a method of "storying social construction", as this study will also elucidate;
- Fourthly, by framing leadership development as an identity space where communication constructs participants as subjects and as actors (exercising choice).

Carroll and Levy (2010) reference Cunliffe (2009) and point to the big difference between a functionalist and constructivist approach to identity and a social constructivist approach to identity. These differences lie in the latter not assuming neutrality as point of departure, but that it is "accompanied by a new idea of truth, one that lies in relationships not in the situation" (Carroll and Levy, 2010:217). This shift therefore acknowledges the influence of social engagement, or the relational aspect of the individual within the social context regarding the construction of identity and of identity within leadership – an important aspect to consider for this study and the potential influence the historical (social) context might have had on the current social context of the participants in which they practice their leadership.

2.3 Leadership and identity: Social psychology and leadership

As Section 2.2.3 has indicated, the social construction of leadership has also ventured into the social construction of identity, and directly into the social construction of leadership identity mediated by followership. Given the post-apartheid context in which this study was conducted, and with the participants having to navigate multiple social identities within a multicultural setting (which formed a sub-theme within the interview cycle – see Appendix B: Interview Protocol)), the researcher found it appropriate to

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draw from the social psychology Identity Theory and the Social Identity Theory of Leadership as theoretical frameworks for this study.

In this section, identity theory is explicated to highlight the various approaches to identity, self, self-concept, self-identity, social identity, social self-concept and role identity, following how social psychology intersects with the leadership discipline. Commencing with identity concepts is necessary to situate the discussion in the discipline of social psychology first before engaging with the discipline of leadership studies to demonstrate how these two disciplines have merged in the social identity theory of leadership.

2.3.1 Identity theory

As indicated in Figure 2.6, identity theory highlights the interconnectedness of identities, which includes, among others, self, self-concept, self-identity, social identity, social self-concept, role identity, group identity, leader identity, leadership identity and, finally, intersectionality underpinning identity.

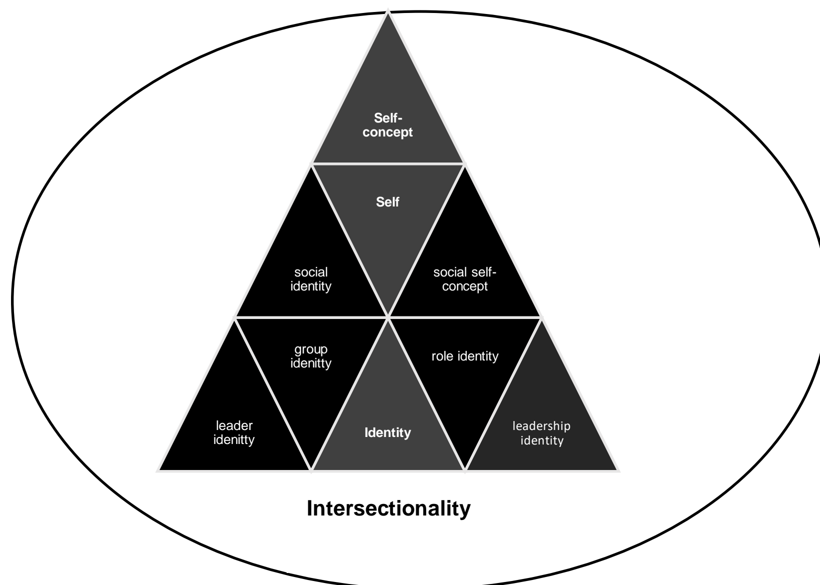

Figure 2.6: Interconnectedness of Identities

2.3.1.1. Identity, self and self-concept

When reviewing the literature on identity theory (and as illustrated in Figure 2.6), the first point to mention is that identity, self and self-concept are often used either as the same concept (Leary & Tangney, 2012; Middleton, Walker & Reichard, 2019), or as being discreet entities, with one informing the other through engaging within the social

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context. From an identity theory perspective, Oyserman, Elmore and Smith (2012:74) summarise self, self-concept, social self-concept, social identity and identity as nested elements, "with aspects of the "me"-forming self-concepts and identities being part of the self-concepts". Stets and Burke (2000:224) describe self as "reflexive in that it can take itself as an object and can categorise, classify, or name itself in particular ways in relation to other social categories or classifications" and that, in the end, these categorisation processes produce identity.

Cinoğlu and Ankan (2012:1116), with reference to Rosenberg (1979) and Stets and Burke (2003), summarise self as the "entity that is created out of the interpretation of the interaction between society and the individual by the mind". Self-awareness follows next, i.e. the self-concept stage, which entails the collection of meaning-making that we attribute to ourselves, including self-esteem, which is to be considered valuable in identity formation. This supports Stryker's (1980) approach of making a clear distinction between self and identity, as the latter refers not only to the social position of the self, but also to the internalisation process of that self, and self therefore precedes identity.

Oyserman *et al.* (2012:73) allude to identity as conceptualising the sensemaking of some aspect or part of self-concept (Abrams, D., 1994, 1999: Hogg, 2003; Serpe, 1987; Stryker & Burke, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 2004), while Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, De Cremer and Hogg (2005:496) point out that,

> core to the self and identity approach to leadership effectiveness is an understanding that the way we perceive our self-concept and identity (also pointing out that these terms are often used interchangeably) strongly informs our feelings, beliefs, attitudes, goals and behaviour.

Stets and Carter (2011:194) mention how, within identity theory, identity has been extended to a focus on the moral identity. Blasi (1980, 1984, 1993), considered to be a seminal scholar in this regard, posits that moral identity is experienced as the "real me", the authentic self and the deepest principle that guides an individual – what constitutes a moral identity – and which differs from individual to individual.

Oyserman *et al.* (2012:69) refer to identities (plural implying multiple identities in an individual) as "traits, characteristics, social relations, roles, and social group

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memberships that define who one is … and offering a meaning-making lens". They further posit, referencing Neisser (1993), Stets and Burke (2003), Stryker (1980) and Tajfel (1981), that "identities make up one's self-concept", "one's theory about one's personality" (Markus & Cross, 1990) and "what one believes is true about oneself" (Baumeister, 1998; Forgas & Williams, 2002). Oyserman *et al*. (2012:72) emphasise that self-concepts are structures that can include content, attitudes or evaluative judgements, but that these structures can also change. For example, the way that content domains are organised (positive or negative) or the way that people may choose how they structure their self-concept around specific domains, e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, age, may change. In this latter case, self-concept can be structured around intersectionality.

Depending on the significance of a specific domain, people will process information based on its relevance to their chosen domain (Oyserman *et al*., 2012:73). Just as people can have multiple identities, multiple self-concepts can be formed, and some are better organised and articulated than others (Banaji & Prentice, 1994; Epstein, 1973; Greenwald & Banaji, 1989; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Oyserman, 2001, 2007).

The significance of pronouns also comes into play when self-concept content shifts. Oyserman *et al*. (2012:73) state that self-concepts can be viewed from an individual ("me") and collectivistic ("us") perspective, or from the future self or possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986), or as viewed by others. From the collectivist perspective of self-concept, flow social identities as defined by Tajfel (1972:292) as "the individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of his group membership". Tajfel (1981) adds that it also relates to "one's feelings about group membership and knowledge of the group's rank and status compared to other groups". According to Cinoğlu and Ankan (2012:1125), referencing Oakes (1987) and Stets and Burke (2000), social identity(ies) can also be salient when identity "is functioning psychologically to increase the influence on one's membership in a group on perception and behaviour" (i.e. action and behaviour serve as change elements to contribute to membership acceptance).

The perception of self-concept and identity as they relate to leadership has a two-fold implication for the leader-follower relationship: firstly, that leadership is able to

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influence followers' self-concept, also later referred to by Hogg *et al.* (2012:267) as "leaders being the engineers of identity"; and secondly, that "follower self-conception may mediate the relationship between leadership and follower behaviour". Van Knippenberg *et al.* (2005:498) argue that the "leader self-concept", in particular, is a research area that should be explored more within the context of broader leadership theory.

Uhl-Bien (2006:657) refers inter alia to Hogg (2001a) in applying concepts of social cognition and identity to leadership that focuses on social self-concept – the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their relationships. She furthermore describes social self-concept on the basis of two distinct constructs: "relational self, which emanates from relationships with significant others, and collective self, which is based on identity with a group or social category" (Uhl-Bien, 2006:657). Whannell and Whannell (2015:44) cite Purkey's (1988) definition of self-concept as "the totality of a complex, organised and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be the truth about his or her personal existence". Whannell and Whannell (2015:44) furthermore cite Terry, Hogg and White's (1999:227) definition of "self-identity" as "a collection of identities that reflects the roles that a person occupies in the social structure". Stryker and Burke (2000), who offer two contrasting approaches to "self-identity", namely self-identity focusing on the linkages of social structures with identities and, on the other hand, self-identity focusing on the internal process of self-verification. Self-verification refers to the "pursuit of consistent self-knowledge through the affirmation of pre-existing self-conceptions" (Priest & Middleton, 2016:40).

In the literature on self-concept the earlier perspectives of the "self-concept" serve as a point of departure to illustrate the complexities to which Purkey (1998) refers; it is also evident in Markus and Wurf's (1987:301) argument that the "self-concept should be viewed as a multifaceted phenomenon, as a set or collection of images, conceptions, theories, goals and tasks". While earlier arguments about the self-concept still focused on its stability or malleability, Markus and Kunda (1986:858) steered the scholarship to focus on the "social environment as external contributing factor to the stability or malleability of the self-concept"; that is they were directly

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emphasising the fluidity of the self-concept, which can vary within the social environment.

Their findings support the view of Mead (1934) that there is no fixed-self-concept, only the current self-concept that is negotiated from an available set of self-conceptions (Markus & Kunda, 1986). In other words, self-concept perhaps should rather be seen as a productive space, or a system of self-conceptions from which the individual constructs a "working self-concept", for example (Lord & Brown, 2004; Markus & Wurf, 1987). This, as explained by Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, De Cremer and Hogg (2004:827), is the activated portion of self-concept/salient self-concept relevant to the social context in which it is functioning (e.g. the daughter in family context, or as leader in the student leadership context).

The above discussion leads to the consideration of the way that the self-concept is described, explained or approached. Markus and Wurf (1987:301) note that the ways in which the self-concept is explained are "varied, from the self-concept in relation to networks, spaces, hierarchies". However, with reference to Burke (1980), Lester (1984), Martindale (1980), Rowan (1983) and Stryker (1980), Markus and Wurf (1987) note that a similar trend can be observed in identity theory, i.e. that identity, just like the self-concept, being defined within its multiplicity of roles and varied social status. The self-concept and identity therefore seem to be interlocked, "depending on the intra- and interpersonal processes mediated by the self-concept" (Markus & Wurf, 1987:305), with people learning about themselves from others, both through social comparisons and direct interaction. This supports McGuire (1984) and McGuire and McGuire (1982), who argue that the social environment remains one of the most powerful determinants of self-conceptions.

2.3.1.2 Role identity and group identity

Self-concept and role identities are therefore interlinked, as are personal identities and role identities. According to Oyserman *et al.* (2012:74), "role identities reflect membership in particular roles (e.g., student, parent, professional)", but that it requires another person to play a complementary role; also, that "personal identities reflect traits and characteristics which may feel separate to one's social and role identity" or can be linked to all the other identities.

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Role identities (Thoits 1992) are defined as "socially constructed definitions of self-in-role" (Ashforth, Kreiner & Fugate, 2000:475), and "role identity salience as the subjective importance that an individual attaches to each of his or her multiple role identities" (Capitano, DiRenzo, Aten & Greenhaus, 2017:101). From an identity theory perspective, Hogg, Terry and White (1995:257) state that "role identities are self-organised hierarchically in the self-concept with regard to the probability that they will form the basis of action", and complementary to another role within the social context. This social context may include, for example, the professional work environment. Ibarra (1999) also alludes to how people adapt to new roles (e.g. professional roles) by experimenting with possible new selves which are, at the time, not fully developed professional (role) identities or leader role identities. In this case, part of the process of adaption includes the observation of identified role models (i.e., role models in themselves play an integral part in the development of the leader role identity). In this regard, Yeager and Callahan (2016) also investigated the development of provisional selves and how the experimentation with provisional selves included the evaluation of external feedback compared to internal standards.

The integration of individual identity and group identity has far-reaching consequences, as highlighted by Barrett (1998). These consequences arise not only from acknowledging the complexity of identity constructs and their effect on the individuals as social change agents (carrying a fuller identity construct into their roles as parents, partners, teachers and social change agents), but also provide a contextual frame for understanding identity in a diverse society. Perhaps the best explanation of the difference between role identity and group-based identity (which includes social identity), is offered by Stets and Burke (2000:226): "social identity means being at one with a certain group, and seeing things from the group's perspective", while "role identity means acting to fulfil the expectations of the role", which includes interaction with other role partners. Both identities have a strong social relational aspect. Further to the fulfilment of role expectation is also the inherent tension between role identities, e.g. leader role identities and leader role expectations (Gjerde & Ladegard (2019). This tension can be mitigated by engaging in a process of role crafting; some strategies for this include managing role expectations, complying and modifying to expected role behaviour, challenging expectations and navigating role establishment through trial and error.

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Identity adoption, rejection and assimilation within identity theory highlight the self-regulation and self-verification process of how individuals negotiate identities and, indirectly, group identities, based on a perception of that identity either by themselves, or within the social context. Walton, Paunesku and Dweck (2012:143), with reference to Steele (2010) and Steele, Spencer and Aronson (2002), allude to how people feel threatened when they are at risk of "being viewed through the lens of a negative stereotype about their group". Walton *et al.* (2012) posit that such a threat of being stereotyped can evoke a self that is defined in terms of opposition to the negatively stereotyped group identity. In other words, the other positive identities become irrelevant when the reputation of a valued group identity is at stake and therefore might change the active self. This leads to the narrowing of the self by way of distancing oneself from the negatively perceived group identity (Pittinsky, Shih & Ambady, 1999; Pronin, Steele & Ross, 2004; Steele & Aronson, 1995).

The study by Steele and Aronson (1995), for example, indicates that, when racial identity is perceived as negative, individuals resist being seen solely through the lens of race. Walton *et al*. (2012:144) cite a few strategies to either reduce stereotype threat or expand the active self. Stereotype threat reduction can be observed when individuals are reminded of their other positive group identities (Shih, Pittinsky & Ambady, 1999), and value affirmation of them improves people's functioning when facing stereotype threats (Sherman & Cohen, 2006). Although a study by Crocker, Niiya and Mischkowski (2008:746) concludes that affirmation "remind[s] people [that] what they love and care about may enable them to transcend the self", Walton *et al.* (2012:146) add that "affirmation allows people to transcend the narrow self, defined by threat at hand to respond to threat in a more adaptive manner". Kreiner and Sheep (2009) extend this argument by positing that in reframing identity threat the individual is not only adapting, but that individuals can grow in addressing the identity threat.

Table 2.2 indicates that reframing or transforming identities, is one of five tactics individuals can employ toward identity growth (Kreiner & Sheep, 2009:27). Reframing identity refers to "the act of transforming the meaning of a stimulus", in other words, changing the way one views something (Kreiner & Sheep, 2009: 33). While reframing identity can lead to individual growth, Kreiner and Sheep (2009) also allude to Ashfort and Kreiner's (1999) two forms of reframing, namely, *neutralising* (by neutralising the

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threat the identity is preserved) and *infusing* (by infusing the stimulus with a positive value creates opportunities for positive change). It is by infusing the threat, Kreiner and Sheep (2009) argue, that real opportunities for positive growth lies. Other tactics include, *developing a spiritual* identity as a way of finding meaningfulness, *searching for optimal balance* based on the need for inclusion and distinctiveness, the *experimentation with possible selves* motivated by the need for change and frustration with current identity, and finally, *leveraging (in)congruence* motivated by the need to adapt to the environment.

Table 2.2 Kreiner and Sheep's (2009:27) Identity work tactics toward identity growth

Tactic	**Positive Identity characteristics targeted**	**Typical motivations for tactic usage**	**Nature of tactic**		
			Ongoing	**Episodic reactionary**	**Episodic proactive**
Developing spiritual identity	Holistic integration Trancendence	Finding meaningfulness Development of inner life	Primary	Secondary	Secondary
Searching for optimal balance	Holistic integration Competence authenticity	Balancing need for inclusion and need for distinctiveness	Primary	Secondary	Secondary
Transforming identity threats	Resilience	Protection Safety Improving relationships	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
Experimenting with possible selves	Decreasing gap between real and ideal selves Authenticity Holistic integration Resilience	Change Frustration with current identity	Secondary	Secondary	Primary
Leveraging (in)congruence	Holistic integration Competence	Adaptation to environment	Secondary	Primary (for incongruence)	Primary (for congruence)

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Group identity further highlights the possibility of multiple identities. Ryan and Deci (2012:225) argue that individuals acquire (multiple) identities over time, of which the "origins and meanings derive from interaction within social groups", and that "identify formation is a process that continues throughout life". This also highlights the fluidity and commodification of identities over time, and the potential compartmentalisation of identities. Apart from merely confirming the existence of multiple identities, Ryan and Deci (2012:227) further explore the degree to which a person's multiple identities are integrated into the self, which is central to self-determination theory (SDT) – a theory focusing on the relative assimilation of goals, values and identity.

According to SDT, identities can vary in three ways: 1) by being forced on us by the contingencies of social context (oppressive and destructive); 2) by being assimilated partially as introjects (explicitly or implicitly motivated); and 3) by being well integrated into the self, i.e. being meaningful to one's life (Ryan & Deci, 2012:227). The acquiring of identities occurs through the process of integration (within a social context) and assimilation but is not always favoured by society or family and could involve dealing with social pressure and constraints, or receiving some form of reward (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2011). Ryan and Deci (2012:242) summarise that, within identity theory, SDT provides "an analysis of how identities are anchored within the selves of individuals as well as the social forces that produce these variations in the level and quality of internalisation".

To summarise:

In relation to the discussion on identity theory and as it pertains to this study, the researcher would like to allude to Stets and Burke's (2014) recommendations for further research required within the broader identity theory framework, namely, more research is required on

- the role of resources pertaining to self-verification processes and the meanings contained in role identity;
- negative and stigmatised or counter-normative identities. In this case the effect of two possible consequences on the self-verification process, a) when the individual holding a stigmatised identity does not view it as negative in the same way and b) when the individuals also view their identity in the same negative way;

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- the effect of the placement of identity within a social structure on identity change, which in itself lead to identity salience and malleability depending on the status of specific identities within the social structure.

The researcher would like to share the following key observations from the identity theory literature and indicate how they will be employed in this study:

- Reflexivity as described by Stets and Burke (2000) will be utilised in this study to enquire how participants (the self) categorise themselves in relation to other social categories and how these categorisations produced their identity;
- Through reflexivity (and timeline reflections), participants would have to employ self-awareness to interpret their meaning-making of their interactions with society and how they have impacted on their self-concept – a process to understand identity formation (Cinoğlu & Ankan, 2012);
- The way that participants are dealing with the impact of identity threats (Kreiner & Sheep, 2009);
- The effect of the stigmatised identities will be explored through the participants' self-verification process of identity change.

2.3.2 Social identity theory of leadership

The second theoretical framework within the discipline of social psychology in which this study was conducted is the social identity theory of leadership. However, before commencing with developing this, a discussion of social identity theory (SIT) and social-categorisation theory (SCT) is necessary as the basis for confirming why this has been employed as one of the theoretical frameworks for this study.

2.3.2.1 Social Identity Theory (SIT)

Islam (2014:1781) describes SIT (Tajfel 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) as a "classic social psychology theory attempting to explain intergroup conflict as a function of group-based self-definition", built on the premise that "individuals define their own identities with regard to social groups", and that these "identifications protect and bolster self-identity". The seminal work of Tajfel (1978) attempts to apply cognitive grouping to social groups (Hogg & Williams, 2000). These groups are viewed by the individual as either "providing a sense of belonging to a group (in-group) or not (out-group)" (Trepte & Loy, 2017:1).

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As may be inferred from the observations on identity theory, specifically with reference to Markus and Wurf (1987), this study also explored the participant's self-perception as it relates to their role identity, group identity and social identity. Stryker and Burke (2000:290) conclude that "persons are typically embedded in multiple role relationships in multiple groups and have multiple identities, [which] also allude[s] to the fact that these multiple identities could either reinforce or compete". It is the latter, as Stryker and Burke (2000: 290) point out, namely the competing multiple identities, which could hamper reciprocal relationships between identity salience, identity standards and self-relevant perceptions.

In a race-based society such as South Africa, Adams, Van de Vijver and De Bruin (2012: 377), further point out that self-descriptions – "a means of defining the self and contain information about an individual's conceptualisation of the self and identity" – can also give insight into culture-specific features in individualistic (Indian, White) and collectivistic groups (Coloured, African). The study by Adams *et al.* (2012) indicated how, in social identity theory, self-descriptions are important to understand group membership. Findings of their study, indicates the racial differences of self-descriptions in post-apartheid South Africa, and these varied from salient commonalities among the groups to the African group's self-descriptions, which were of a more explicit relational orientation and context-free specific. This could in turn be compared to the Coloured group's self-descriptions also being of an explicit relational orientation but conditional in terms of context, while the self-descriptions of the White and Indian groups were more implicit in relational orientation. According to Adams *et al.* (2012), concurring with Triandis (1995), what this implies also in relation to the post-apartheid context, is that in-group/out-group is of greater significance for groups with a collectivistic culture than for individualistic groups where this is of lesser importance.

Stryker and Burke (2000:286) further argue that "identity salience is defined as the probability that an identity will be invoked across a variety of situations, or alternatively across persons in a given situation". i.e. identity-salience is positively affected by the degree of commitment to its respective role and the degree to which its respective role is positively evaluated with one's performance". Whannell and Whannell (2015:50) emphasise the importance of social context, as it has the capacity to either support or challenge identity formation. The role of social context in the identity formation process

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is also emphasised by Stets and Burke (2003), who refer to the interconnectedness between self and identity. This in turn implies the existence of a reciprocal relationship between the self and the broader society or context in which the self functions or operates, i.e. also assuming the self's power over society and society's power over the self in its identity-formation endeavours.

At this point in the overview of identity, self, self-concept, self-identity, social identity, social self-concept, role identity and group identity, the researcher would like to bring back the focus to the selected theoretical framework, namely, the SIT of leadership (discussed in Section 2.3.2.2), within the broader SIT and identity theory framework.

Cinoğlu and Ankan (2012:1129) refer to three basic approaches to identity and identity formation within the broader identity research framework:

1) The first approach is from a social identity perspective, where "identity as a concept is explained through group membership". This also refers to social identity theory (SIT), first introduced by Tajfel (1978) and further developed by Tajfel and Turner (1979). Islam (2014:1781) highlights that SIT is a classical social psychology theory "attempting to explain intergroup conflict as a function of group-based self-definition". Self-categorisation theory (SCT), later proposed by Turner (1999), could be regarded as an extension of SIT, as both are rooted in social psychology, with the main difference lying in the split between personal and social identity. Trepte and Loy (2017:1) point out that SCT "posits that, depending on the relative salience or importance of a certain situation for social or personal identity, an individual's behaviour is driven either by social or personal identity processes". The main difference between SIT and SCT is based on the views on social and personal identity. As Trepte and Loy (2017:1) point out, "whereas SIT suggests a continuum of interpersonal versus intergroup behaviour, SCT pronounces that both – social and personal identity processes – may be at work simultaneously". It is important to note that, although the social identity approach (SIA) – relating to how psychological processes are influenced by social context – can also be clustered with SIT and SCT in relation to processes through which people define themselves as members of a social group, SIT and SCT are mostly discussed in tandem.

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2) A second approach is to explain identity through "the roles individuals take on or [are] assigned to" (Cinoğlu and Ankan, 2012:1129) – also referred to as identity theory.
3) A third approach highlights the importance of values – also referred to as personal identity theory. Stets and Burke (2000:224) explain the concept of identity in both SIT, SCT and identity theory as "the self being reflexive, regarding itself as an object to classify, categorise in relation to other social categories and classifications", and argue that an identity is formed through this process of self-categorisation and identification.

SIT indicates specific applications within leadership studies and approaches self, identity and identity formation from a group perspective, as group membership, and the activation of the self by the group (acceptance and approval), inform identity formation (Cinoğlu & Ankan, 2012:1123). SIT, for example, has also been applied to analysing how organisational culture shapes the prototypical attributes of a leader by highlighting the light and dark dimensions of leadership attributes (Latta & Whitely, 2019).

Trepte and Loy (2017:2) allude to seven basic principles underlying SIT:

1) *Categorisation:* determine the social groups to which you belong;
2) *Salience:* determine which social identity is relevant for positive social group membership;
3) *Social comparison:* determine how your in-group compares with other social out-groups;
4) *Positive distinctiveness:* the result of the social comparison. If your in-group is perceived as being more positive than the out-group, positive distinctiveness is experienced;
5) *Social identity:* the combination of self-categorisation;
6) *Self-esteem*: the result of the self-categorisation;
7) *Individual mobility, social creativity, social competition and stereotyping:* the strategy to re-interpret and change group membership.

These seven principles would evidently also influence social identity and its negotiation.

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However, each of these approaches to identity has limitations. Brown (2000:745) specifically highlights five issues related to SIT that are problematic; "the relationship between group identification and ingroup bias, the self-esteem hypothesis, positive-negative asymmetry in intergroup discrimination, the effects of intergroup similarity and the choice of identity strategies by low-status groups". The critique by Reicher, Spears and Haslam (2010:51) is linked to social change; the SIT approach is rooted in the assumption that social change occurs when people mobilise together on the basis of shared social identity, but power has not been taken into consideration, or at least how that power was generated.

However, it is on Brown's (2000) identification of the gap in SIT literature that the researcher would like to focus as it relates to this study, i.e. "managing social identities in multicultural settings", as a further avenue to explore, but in relation to leadership. This is relevant to a study investigating the leadership identity formation of a student population in post-apartheid South Africa, as the researcher was cognisant of the changes in social identities since South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994 and the systematic dismantling of apartheid. In the case of post-apartheid South Africa, Booysen (2007:1) refers to Bornman (1999) and Ivanova (2005) in describing a crisis of identity as "the phenomenon where social identities are in flux and generalised categories are not yet redefined".

Furthermore, a crisis of social identity occurs when a change in mass consciousness can be observed (Bornman, 1999; Ivanova, 2005; Korostelina, 2003; Malanchuk, 2005; Wasserman, 2005). In a country as diverse as South Africa, social identity structures have changed and evolved since the demise of official apartheid, with the most salient groups being race, gender, ethnicity and language (Booysen & Nkomo, 2005, 2006; Bornman, 1999; Cilliers & May, 2002; Cilliers & Smit, 2006; Ngambi, 2002). Booysen (2007:6) further notes that, unlike in the past, South Africans can now self-classify based on their self-perception with regard to race, for example. This adds to the complexity of social identities, as diverse social identity groups are major disruptive factors and "identity-driven conflicts are rooted in the articulation of, and the threats or frustration to people's collective need for dignity, recognition, safety, control, purpose, and efficacy" (Rothman, 1997:7).

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In the case of the South African post-apartheid context, the researcher utilised the SIT of leadership as theoretical framework to explore precisely this – how student leaders manage social identities within a multicultural context while being cognisant of their own social identities (and the associated limitations and privileges). This was done on the assumption that there is an argument to be made that "the past is continually re-interpreted in new contexts, rather than unequivocally invoked, in order to consolidate post-apartheid identities" (Wasserman, 2005:82). In other words, the present is influenced, but not necessarily determined, by identity categories inherited from colonialism or apartheid. This will be discussed in Chapter 3.

2.3.2.2 Social Identity Theory of Leadership (SIT of leadership)

In addition to the three approaches mentioned by Cinoğlu and Ankan (2012:1129), Hogg (2001a) expanded on the SIT and developed the social identity leadership theory (SIT of leadership), which is a formal extension and application of SIT, particularly the SIT of the group (also partially the SCT), and a social identity analysis of social influence to explain leadership as a social influence phenomenon (Hogg *et al.*, 2012:259). The SIT of leadership, developed by Hogg (2001a, 2001b) and focusing on emergent leadership, along with two studies focusing on the analysis of power (Hogg, 2001c; Hogg & Reid, 2001), highlights group processes that arise from social categorisation and depersonalisation – "prototype-based depersonalisation and the behaviour of followers play a critical role" (Hogg, 2001a:196).

This was further expanded on by Hogg and Van Knippenberg (2003) and Van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003), with a new focus on leadership and organisational management. As Hogg, Martin, Epitropaki, Mankad, Svensson and Weeden (2005:1002) point out, the social identity approach to leadership provides a new perspective that emphasises leadership as a group process pivoting on psychological group membership. In the Hogg *et al.* (2005) study, it is also demonstrated how the SIT of leadership could identify the conditions under which LMX (see description in Section 2.2.2) does and does not occur.

Prior to the SIT of leadership, Lührmann and Eberl (2007:115) point out that leadership was considered effective in the presence of reciprocal individual identities of leader and follower. With the SIT of leadership, the argument shifts to the assumption that

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people matching their group's social identity (i.e. fitting the prototype) are more likely to be endorsed as leaders (Haslam, 2001; Hogg, 2001a; Hogg, Martin & Weeden, 2003; Reicher, Haslam & Hopkins, 2005; Turner & Haslam, 2001).

As Hogg *et al*. (2012:261) mention, the SIT of leadership brought the social psychology and leadership disciplines (organisation and management sciences) closer to leadership research within the social psychology discipline by scholars such as Hogg (2007, 2010, 2013), leadership as a group process (Chemers, 1997, 2001), leadership focusing on power (Fiske, 2010; Fiske & Dèpret, 1996), leadership and gender (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Eagly, Karau & Makhijani, 1995; Wood & Eagly, 2010) and leadership, social cognition and social perception (Brown & Harvey, 2001; Lord & Brown, 2004).

Hogg *et al*. (2012:264) posit that the SIT of leadership premise, that "because groups evaluate and define who we are and how others perceive and treat us, prototypical members are influential over the life of the group", adding that traditional leadership studies overlooked the significant influence leadership has on defining the identity of others. Leadership therefore has an identity function, now highlighted by the SIT of leadership. The SIT of leadership further highlights the role of follower as a group member in configuring group leadership, as followers are more likely to follow leaders who are perceived to capable of constructing group identity (Hogg, 2008a, 2008b).

Finally, while the SIT of leadership gave insight into group membership-based social influence, Hogg *et al.* (2012:292) clearly indicate that the SIT of leadership is not applicable to all contexts and that it has boundary conditions. This means that it explains leadership in situations where social identity is self-conceptually central and salient, but does not apply or applies less in leadership situations where the group is not central or a salient anchor for the individual's social identity. This supplements an observation made by Brown (2000:768), that the most obvious areas of application of SIT would be in domains where groups (ethnic, national, religious) are in dispute with each other and where "SIT's main contribution is to complement those theoretical explanations that locate those disputes in objective clashes of interests".

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Although Steffens, Haslam, Reicher, Platow, Fransen, Yang, Ryan, Jetten, Peters and Boen (2014:1002) point to the gap in the SIT of leadership, viz. that, despite the multi-faceted nature of this approach to leadership, research to date still tends to focus on the importance of leaders prototypical of the groups they seek to lead and sharing characteristics of the ingroup. Steffens *et al.* (2014) further argue that two methodological weaknesses can be observed by the SIT approach to leadership, viz.,

1) firstly, that a validated measurement tool to assess various aspects of identity leadership was lacking; and
2) secondly, that there is confusion around the meaning of prototypicality, which results in inconsistency in measurement.

To aid the SIT approach to leadership, Steffens *et al.* (2014) introduced the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to assess and validate a four-dimensional model: identity prototypicality (being one of us), identity advancement (doing it for us), identity entrepreneurship (crafting a sense of us), and identity impresarioship (making us matter). The ILI dimensions will be discussed in Chapter 6 (see Section 6.4.6).

To summarise:

The contribution of this study to the broader discipline of leadership studies, motivated this researcher to select the SIT of leadership as a theoretical framework for this study. Another motivation for considering the SIT of leadership as a theoretical framework - other than the inclusion of identity, leadership identity, role identities and social identities - was the researcher's intent to also include group identification in the study (see Appendix B: Interview Protocol). As Hogg *et al.* (2005:1002) point out, "the social identity approach to leadership provides a new perspective that treats leadership as a group process pivoting on psychological group membership – people in psychologically salient groups categorise and depersonalise themselves and others in terms of the relevant group prototype".

This theoretical framework would provide the researcher with relevant guidance to analyse whether, for example, new prototypes of student leadership have been formed in post-apartheid South Africa, and what would have informed these new prototypes. Finally, Hogg *et al.* (2012:294) point out that most research within the SIT of leadership still focuses on how the individual can effectively lead individuals within a group, but

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not necessarily on how to lead "across deep and hostile intergroup divisions" – which the researcher believes this study will confirm through the experiences arising in the case studies.

2.4 Leadership identity: From attributes to identity

So far, this chapter has discussed leadership from an attributional perspective, a constructivist perspective and in terms of interlocked identities as they relate to the individual's self-concept. As noted by Sinclair (2011:509) and Ford, Harding and Learmonth (2008:28), leadership used to consist of tasks or characteristics, but is now regarded as part of an identity. The following section explores the interpretation of leadership identity and leader identity (often loosely referred to as the same, but as the literature overview demonstrates, they are not). Leadership identity is defined as "the extent to which one sees oneself as a leader", while leader identity is a "*process* by which individuals learn to perceive and define themselves as leaders" (Miscenko, 2017:8). This process of leader self-perception refers to leader identity as a sub-component of identity or a knowledge structure of leader skills and behaviour (Day & Harrison, 2007; Lord & Hall, 2005). In other words, the incorporation of "self as leader" as a central component of their self-concept (Rus, Van Knippenberg & Wisse, 2010). In short; leader identity focuses on the process of becoming a leader.

Although the literature refers to leadership identity and leader identity as if they are the same thing, the researcher would like to note the absence in the literature of a clear and consistent differentiation between leadership identity and leader identity. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the researcher would like to confirm that this study's primary focus was on leadership identity and the factors contributing to leadership identity - hence the thesis title, "Contributing factors to student *leadership* identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa".

At this point it is also important to remind ourselves of the difference between leadership development and leader development. The latter involves the process of leader identity development. Leader development can also occur in all stages of life (Yeager & Callahan, 2016:288); this view of human development assumes changes based on engagement in multiple contexts (Lerner, 1991). From a life-span perspective, the implication is that leader development begins from childhood and

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continues throughout adulthood, "occurring through life experiences as leader identities are forged" (Day *et al.*, 2009). Building on life experiences, leader identity development is also not a unidimensional event (Zheng & Muir, 2015), but a multifaceted process entailing three facets of identity development, viz. boundary expansion, recognition of interdependencies and defining purpose.

2.4.1 Leadership identity and leader identity

DeRue and Ashford (2010:627) argue that, for leadership to exist, a leader and follower identity have to exist – the leader *claiming* the leader role, and the follower *granting* the leader role. These identities influence the leadership relationship. While prior studies focused primarily on leader identity as a personal identity (Day & Harrison, 2007; DeRue, Ashford & Cotton, 2009), they do not explain *how* leadership identity is constructed. Leader identity is referred to within the scope of self-views (of the self as a leader), and the attributes, skills and leadership style applied. Therefore one of the first limitations of leader identity studies is related to the subjectivity of self-reported behaviours and self-views as a leader (Miscenko, Guenter & Day, 2017:618).

As highlighted in the literature overview (see Section 2.3), identity (single and multiple) develops over time, is fluid and influenced by social interaction. Furthermore, Lord and Hall (2005: 611) also draw attention to the "integration of leadership skills with identity", which later can add to the unique manner in which someone leads as well as to the development of other internal qualities that contribute to their leadership identity. Social context becomes a spatial contributor to leadership identity development. As Priest and Middleton (2016:38) assert, with reference to Jones and McEwen (2000), "one's self-view as a leader is only one of multiple intersecting identities, which are constructed and negotiated within social context". DeRue and Ashford (2010:628) state that research also shows that, once leader identity has been internalised, it becomes static and an enduring feature of that individual (DeRue *et al.*, 2009; Komives *et al.*, 2005); the same applies to follower identity (Collinson, 2006; Kellerman, 2008; Van Vugt, Hogan & Kaiser, 2008).

Lumby and English (2009:104) highlight the influence of social interaction on leadership identity construction. They posit that, apart from leadership identity construction not only being about securing a place within the social context, it is also

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about securing a place within the stratification, i.e. performing a significant role on stage (the stage being the social context in which the role is being played). Lumby and English (2009:112) therefore posit that leadership identity should be referred to in the plural form, i.e. as leadership identities, as contemporary leaders should have multiple identities to work with multiple groups. It therefore can be argued that the social construction of leader identity flows from the social construction of leadership (as discussed at Section 2.2.3) and, as pointed out by Middleton *et al.* (2019:496), builds on the foundation of symbolic interactionism.

Mead (1934) posits that people form a sense of self based on social information through daily interaction. As part of the leader development process while gaining social information through interaction, individuals could also experiment with provisional selves or provisional leader identity (Ibarra, 1999). See also the discussion on leader identity and leader self-concept in Section 2.3.1. Ibarra (1999) highlights role models as part of leader identity development, whilst Muir (2014) points out that mentoring can be a contributor to leader identity formation, and indirectly to the growth of social capital in an organisation.

While Brewer and Gardner (1996) state that identity may be construed on three levels – individual, relational and collective, DeRue *et al.* (2009:629) make the point that leadership identity is constructed on all three levels, which in itself supports the argument that leadership identity is about the construction of reciprocal relationships or the construction of relationships, as posited by DeRue and Ashford's (2010) leadership identity model. The three levels are:

- **Individual** – The internalisation on the personal level, at which leader identity becomes part of the self-concept (DeRue *et al.*, 2009; Gecas, 1982), which then evolves to assuming a leader role as a sub-identity (Hall, 2004:157). Otherwise, leader identity is integrated into the self-concept through purposeful attention to thoughts, feelings and behaviour, which entails a high level of self-awareness (Leary & Tangney, 2012);
- **Relational** – The recognition of the leader role, which implies the existence of a follower role and reciprocal role identities (Shamir & Eilam, 2005);
- **Collective** – The recognition of the leader within the broader social context, which includes the collective endorsement of the leader identity without the

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individual's personal recognition of that leader identity. DeRue and Ashford (2010:629) emphasise that, in the case of the latter, leadership identity construction is then initiated, or the process of socially constructing a leadership identity could "begin with a granting act" (DeRue & Ashford, 2010:638).

Priest and Middleton (2016:43) describe a shift in identities as the leader moves between these levels, which can include a shift in the individual's motivation to lead from self-interest to collective welfare (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). The motivation to lead will either be boosted or hindered based on the "individual's development of leadership prototypes informed by their own experiences" (Guillén, Mayo & Korotov, 2015:817). This observation is also confirmed by the LID model devised by Komives *et al*. (2005, 2006), as the college student leader moves between the six stages, moving from being dependent on the views of others to developing independent views, and then to interdependent views involving collaborative beliefs. The levels also highlight the complexities of the leader identity process on a single level, for example, the individual level dealing with internal conflict while claiming a specific leadership style as part of the leader identity. In this case, Nyberg and Sveningsson (2014:447) refer to how authentic leadership (or leaders striving to adopt authenticity as part of their leader identity) can lead to the production of metaphorical selves (e.g. "Mother Theresa", "Good Samaritan"). Which can either lead to a fragmented leader identity or the reframing of leader identity as a way to maintain leader identity.

DeRue and Ashford (2010:630) contribute to the discipline of leadership studies in three specific ways – by confirming

a) leadership identity construction as an integrated construction process on all three levels;
b) that leadership identity may differ from identities associated with intersectionality (race, gender) or role identities; and
c) that leadership identity construction also entails the social construction of leadership relations within a social context.

Following on from the above, the deconstruction of a leader identity (or temporary disengagement) can be observed in the "abdication of leadership roles and withdrawal of leadership processes" (Miscenko *et al*., 2017:617). This, however, is proposed as

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one of the stages in overall identity development (Lemler, 2013). On the other hand, as Middleton *et al*. (2019:495) point out, the more salient the leader identity is to the individual's overall self-concept, the more likely it is that they will intentionally seek opportunities aligning with their leader identity (Santee & Jackson, 1979) and set identity-related goals (Day & Harrison, 2007).

In this case, leader identity becomes an intermediary leader development outcome as it signals deeper identity-level changes (Day & Dragoni, 2015; Murphy & Johnson, 2011). Middleton *et al.* (2019:495) note an important change in the leader identity discourse, namely that leader identity, motivating leader behaviour and development activities led to scholars positing that leader identity may become more of a central and salient part of one's self-concept.

Leadership identity construction could also entail motivational risks, as Humphreys, Haden and Davis (2015a:1393) refer to the self-interest factor shaping behaviour. Miller (1999) points out that this is also relevant to the leadership domain, where the leader is motivated by intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (Van Vugt, 2006). In other words, where leadership identity could be pro-socially motivated (for collective benefit), and the leadership role facilitates the realisation of the common objective (Quinn, 1996). DeRue and Ashford's (2010) proposition in this regard would be that the more rewards are associated with leadership, the more likely leader identity would be claimed and follower identity be granted to others. Another risk highlighted by Humphreys *et al.* (2015b:1394), and linked to implicit leadership theory, is the "collective endorsement of a leader based on their fitting the traditional prototype of a leader". In this case, leadership identity is constructed through collective endorsement without the leader necessarily perceiving themselves as leader, or outside a formal leadership position (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012).

Finally, as part of the leadership identity discourse and the gap identified by Humphreys *et al*. (2015a), they use the example of James Meredith, who was the first black student at the University of Mississippi, who viewed himself as responding to a calling to lead, to highlight the notion of "calling" as it pertains to leadership, identity and leader identity; but they also note the disagreement among scholars about whether "calling" precedes identity or identity precedes calling (Markow, 2007:32).

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Humphreys *et al*. (2015a) posit that responding to "the call" to lead could prompt a sense of entitlement, but that too little research has been done to explore the role of entitlement beliefs in informing leadership identity. However, their analysis illustrates how over-entitlement could potentially lead to the social deconstruction of leadership identity.

The researcher would like to highlight the following observations in addressing the gaps in the leadership identity literature as they pertain to this study:

1) The observation by Humphreys *et al*.'s (2015b:1390) of a particular recommendation by DeRue and Ashford (2010:641) is relevant to this study, namely the utilisation of qualitative research methods, which includes narrative techniques to gather rich and in-depth accounts of the leader identity-construction process and, as pointed out by Duran and Jones (2019), the process of reflexivity throughout the inquiry process. This also happens from the researcher's perspective (Moradi & Grzanka, 2017), and was applied in this study relating to what informs leadership identity formation (see Chapter 4, and the discussion in Chapter 6 on the findings related to the case studies);
2) Moorosi's (2014) South African example of leadership identity construction through a leadership development programme was applied in this study. The programme was advocating for an intersectional analysis of leadership identity construction to be employed in gaining more insights into how gender, race, class and historical context inform leadership identity formation;
3) As argued by Zheng and Muir (2015), the gap in the leader identity literature is a failure to address *how* leader identity develops. Although acknowledging the LID model of Komives *et al*. (2005, 2006), Zheng and Muir (2015) expand on the observation of leader identity as a culmination of one's growing confidence in one's ability to lead by confirming that confidence has a direct relation to leader identity salience. This is discussed in Chapter 6;
4) As pointed out by Kapasi, Sang and Sitko (2016:354), the absence of the body as part of the leader identity analysis and development process, specifically in relation to female leaders and their bodies (where leadership is enacted) as part of the leader identity construction process. This issue will be discussed in Chapter 6 with reference to the female participants in this study.

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2.4.2 Student leadership identity formation: Developing the leadership identity development model (LID model)

As mentioned in the introduction, despite a large volume of research done in the field of leadership theory, little scholarship has focused on how leadership identity is formed (Komives *et al*., 2005) and, at the time, none related to student leadership identity formation. More focus is placed on skill-building or short-term interventions and leadership approaches to deal with management issues effectively. Leadership has been equated to management as this approach was regarded as appropriate for the industrial era. Allen and Cherrey (2000:1), as cited by Komives *et al.* (2005), observe that, "as time changes, a new emphasis is placed on the relational development of leaders within a knowledge-based society". This observation led to the application of a grounded theory to investigate the reflections on development of a selected group of students: the result was the identification of six identity development stages, culminating in a leadership identity development (LID) theory. Figure 2.7 depicts the LID model.

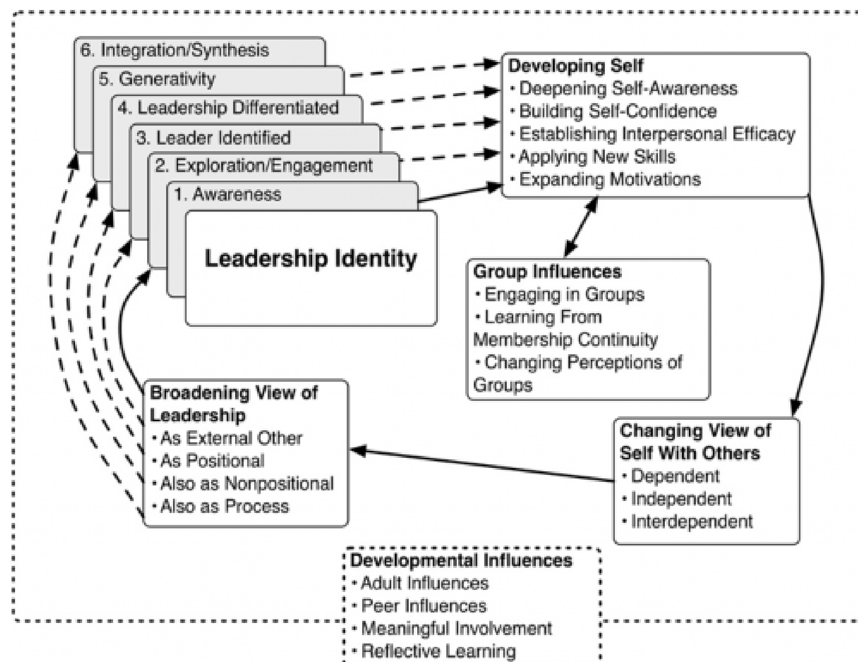

Figure 2.7: Leadership identity development (LID) model (Komives et al., 2005)

The six stages of leadership identity development (LID) theory are described as follows (Komives *et al*., 2005:606-607):

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- **Stage 1: Awareness** – This stage refers to the student's awareness of their perceptions of their identity or multiple identities (with reference to their intersectionality such as gender, race, language, religion, sexual orientation). In addition, this stage also refers to self-awareness as it relates to their personal values and sense of personal integrity;
- **Stage 2: Exploration/engagement** – This stage moves to the student's intentional involvement, although not necessarily as a positional leader or for the sake of a specific cause, i.e. there may be various group involvements. This stage also involves the observation of adults and peer models of leadership;
- **Stage 3: Leader identified** – In this stage, a clear distinction is made between leader and follower. This implies that followers engage and participate, but look to leaders as the people in charge, and that leaders are responsible for group outcomes;
- **Stage 4: Leadership differentiated** – During this stage, the student becomes more aware of leadership beyond positionality and the relational aspect of leadership among people. The shift is now the leadership role as a facilitator of processes (community builder and shaper of group culture), rather than the leadership role as a frontrunner. Komives *et al.* (2005) further differentiate between an *emerging* phase between stages 3 and 4 (clarifying how the student "tried on" the identity earlier in the phase) and an *immersion* phase (the practising of living the identity);
- **Stage 5: Generativity** – This stage of the leadership identity formation is known as one in which the student becomes more committed to a larger purpose/group or individuals who sustains them. This entails the ability to align their passion linked explicitly to their personal values, as identified in stage 1. Leadership growth becomes more apparent at this stage, in which they explore their interdependence as they accept roles, e.g. as peer mentors to develop others;
- **Stage 6: Integration/synthesis** – This stage refers to the active engagement with leadership as a daily process – as part of self-identity and not only as a positional leader, but as an active group member.

Komives *et al.* (2006:401) refer to Erikson's (1968) definition of identity as "the sense of a continuous self". This definition is explored by Komives *et al.* (2006:401), who

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argue in favour of an analysis of student leadership development in relation to the interdependencies of student development and relational leadership.

Following the grounded theory of the six stages of leadership identity development, as posited by Komives *et al*. (2005), they subsequently develop the implications and practical application of these six stages as they relate to the individual student, as well as the development of group capacity and their environments (Komives *et al*., 2006). This further research by Komives *et al*. (2006) of the grounded theory of Komives *et al*. (2005) led to the leadership identity development model (LID model). The findings of Komives *et al*.'s (2006), following the analysis of the psychosocial and cognitive processes associated with the six stages, led to the conclusion that capstone courses and activities across the six stages could assist students in reflecting on a congruent self and, ultimately in solidifying their leadership identity. Komives *et al*. (2009a:13) cite the explanation by Komives, Lucas and McMahon's (2007:74) that the LID model was designed as a post-industrial collaborative model to develop leadership in college students, emphasising the relational and ethical process of people collaboratively driving positive change.

It is important to note is that Komives *et al.* (2009a:22) state that the LID model draws from four student development theories in support of an integrated approach to leadership identity development. These four theories translate into the individual's various leadership identity development stages. They elucidate identity on a psychosocial, cognitive, developmental synthesis and social identity level. These levels are discussed in the motivation for why the researcher selected the chosen theoretical framework (see Chapter 4). Komives *et al.* (2009a:22) emphasise the movement within the LID model as directional, sequential and, at times, cyclical. This highlights the greater complexity of external factors affecting the individual's identity formation. Komives *et al.* (2009a) therefore argue in favour of the importance of designing programmes in alignment with the various stages of the identity development process.

At this stage of illustrating the development of this research question, namely *what informs student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa*, two aspects should be highlighted: firstly, that various external factors influence the

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individual's identity formation and, secondly, that individuals do not progress in the same cyclical manner. Consequently, individual in-depth case study analysis is required to determine the specific external factors that are major contributors to students' leadership identity formation. More to the point for this study is the complexity of the unit of observation (UoO), "the student", and the unit of analysis (UoA), which was identified as "the student's leadership identity formation process" (see Chapter 4).

A deep dive into the adolescent leadership experience is not within the scope of this study, but it has nevertheless been included as an important dimension. In this regard it is worthy to note Komives and Johnson's (2009:30) observation that little was understood of the pre-college experience (link between the adolescent and post-adolescent years) in relation to student leadership development. Limited research has been done in this regard (Brungardt, 1996; Day *et al.*, 2009; Lord & Hall, 2005; Murphy & Reichard, 2011). However, Komives and Johnson (2009:37) assert that both the high school experience and the nature of the leadership roles in high school, together with mentors, role models and purposeful reflection, all contribute to the relational level of leadership identity development.

Non-positional leadership within student leadership has attracted attention over the past few years, with an emphasis on leading-without-a-title within the social change model (Komives *et al.*, 2009b). Perhaps the single most important critique of the LID model, as noted by Shehane, Sturtevant, Moore and Dooley (2012:143), is that it has been conceptualised with a focus on positional student leaders, i.e. students who have had extensive involvement in the college environment. As Shehane *et al.* (2012) point out, the LID model data might be different with other types of students, e.g. non-positional student leaders. The researcher would like to confirm that the relevance of the LID model as it applies to this study was exactly because the selection criteria were limited to positional student leaders (see Chapter 4).

Katsioloudes and Cannonier's (2019:60) study, which focuses on the role of internship in developing leadership capabilities, evokes the stance of Komives *et al.* (2005) that non-positional student leadership is an ongoing process. Despite the limitations of the LID model, as highlighted by Shehane *et al.* (2012), Katsioloudes and Cannonier (2019: 61), with reference to Owen (2012:26), describe the role of leadership

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educators (or Student Affairs practitioners) as having to “create environments, opportunities and conditions that encourage more complex ways of being”. According to Owen (2012:26), the focus on the migration of non-positional student leaders to positional leaders through their leadership identity formation highlights another gap in the literature on student leadership identity.

To summarise:

The researcher would like to confirm that, to date, the Komives *et al*. (2005, 2006) LID model remains the only leadership identity model relating to student leaders within a social context (college student community). Since the formulation of the Komives *et al*. (2005, 2006) LID model, more student leadership identity research has been conducted in doctoral dissertations, for example by Cohen-Derr (2018), Crandall (2017), Schmiederer (2018) and Wagner (2011), with a sharper focus on intersectionality and student leadership identity formation within a student (college) environment in recent years.

Among these studies are Beatty (2014), Collins (2010), Cory (2011), Covarrubias (2017), Cullen (2022), Hays (2018), Pedersen (2022), Perkins (2020) and Poole (2017). While all the studies referenced were investigated at universities in the United Staes of America and adopt the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model, the approach to the model varied from merely testing the model within a specific context to limiting the sample to a specific race or gender or context. The findings varied and can be summarised chronologically as follows:

- **Collins (2010)** – This study recommended that more research be conducted to investigate the influence of race on leadership identity. The study’s findings indicated that race had a greater impact on how participants are received as student leaders of colour, but had less influence on their leadership identity development;
- **Wagner (2011)** – This study is one of the earlier studies to test the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model and concluded that more research was needed to determine the LID stages on the pre-college phase of the student prior to entering higher education. The study further questioned whether stage 4-6 of the LID model are truly distinct;

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- **Cory (2011)** – This study investigated the influence of fraternities and sororities on the leadership identity development of the student leader. It concluded that meaningful relationships cultivate the development of an identity as a leader for fraternity and sorority leaders;
- **Beatty (2014)** – This study focused on the negotiation of racial/ethnic stereotypes of the student leader and investigated the role of race in race and leadership perceptions by applying critical race theory. Five themes emerged in this study: 1) individual social experiences, 2) early transition challenges and responding by involvement, 3) understanding leadership as a process, 4)_ resisting and responding to racism and micro-aggressions, and 5) defining leadership for self. All five emerging themes had an influence on the student leadership identity development;
- **Crandall (2017)** – In this study the leadership identity development of tutors was investigated as well as the impact of the college's reading and learning association (CRLA) programme. The study concluded that the tutors exhibited interdependent relationships and those who registered higher on the CRLA programme's certification also showed leadership perspectives in the higher Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model;
- **Covarrubias (2017) –** This study focused on the racial and gender identity formation in student leaders and men of colour, and the sense-making of their leadership identity within a student leadership setting of predominantly white females. The findings were twofold: 1) race was the most salient identity, and 2) when men found themselves in a nurturing environment, they acknowledge their privilege as men;
- **Poole (2017)** – This study focused on female student athletes and concluded that positive relations (which includes peer influences, adult influences, meaningful involvement and reflective learning) influenced their leadership identity development;
- **Cohen-Derr (2018)** – The LID model was applied within an achievement-oriented context ("an elite university"). The findings conclude that this "achievement-oriented" environment had both implicit and explicit influence on student leaders' perception of their leadership identity development. In this

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case, social identities and social location mattered as these participants viewed leadership as an achievement;

- **Schmiederer (2018)** – This study combined the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model with the meaning-making of relational leadership as well as with threshold concepts. The study concludes by recommending a stronger focus on research related to meaning-making of life events influencing leadership identity;
- **Hays (2018)** – This study focused on students of colour at white Christian institutions and how racial identity shaped their experiences as student leaders. The study concluded that apart from being minorities (based on their racial profile), adding the Christian context and values added an additional layer of complexity in the student leaders' experiences of the pressure of tokenism as students of colour;
- **Perkins (2020)** – This study combined the Komives *et al*. (2005) LID model with student leaders' motivation to lead. It concluded that personal advancement and leadership as a vehicle for altruism served as some of the motivating factors to lead;
- **Cullen (2022)** – This study focused on undergraduate females and concluded that while intersectionality brings identity barriers, it can be leveraged from a strengths-based approach to leadership development and in relation to social identities;
- **Pedersen (2022)** – This study combined the notion of meaning-making and the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model, and produced similar conclusions as the Schmiederer (2018) study.

The summaries of the abovementioned studies illustrated why this study will be adding to building of theory on the Komives *et al.* (2015) LID model. The researcher would like to emphasise, that while the abovementioned studies employed the Komives *et al.*(2005) LID model, no study utilising the LID model as a theoretical framework to date has been conducted in post-apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, none of the studies included the potential effect of historical trauma to the student leaders' leadership identity development. None of the abovementioned studies explored the integration of all the 14 pre-defined themes of this study.

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2.4.3 Leadership identity and intersectionality

To illustrate the complexities of leadership identity formation even further, the question posed is what happens when leadership and individual identities intersect? This question acknowledges intersectionality in all its forms, e.g. race, gender, sexual orientation, language, ethnicity, religion, ableism, socio-economic status. As indicated previously, there has been more research in recent years related to leadership identity and intersectionality, but where did it start and what are the implications for leadership identity?

Crenshaw (1991) brought the concept of “intersectionality” into women’s studies by pointing out how African American women’s voices were lost in the broader field of women’s studies. At the same time, Reynolds and Pope (1991) started exploring multiple oppressions linked to multiple identities, or diversity with their multidimensional identity model. Their study built on Root’s (1990) biracial identity development to study multiple oppressions. Crenshaw (1991), however, gave rise to the concept of “intersectionality”. This involved the acknowledgement of minority within race, gender and all the “margins”. The “margins” reference the intersections of two or more minority categories, e.g. disabled queer women of colour, affecting the disadvantages associated with these social identities. According to Collins (2000) and Moorosi, Fuller and Reilly (2018), a challenge to white feminism “was based on its negligence of the experiences of African American women”. In the broader whiteness frame, as alluded to by Wale (2019:4), whiteness “intersects” or “interlocks” with and is mutually supported by capitalist and patriarchal systems (Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1995).

Crenshaw (1991) proposes intersectionality as a method to address the specific challenges women of colour experience apart from simply acknowledging their gender identity or separate identities. Corlett and Mavin’s (2014:260) elucidation of minority categories viewed by Collins (1990:276) – as historically contingent modes of exercising power – also alludes to intersectionality and its relationship to power and privilege within a social context. In these social contexts, the experiences of minorities differ on the basis of their identities and their relation to power and oppression. Intersectionality assumes multiple identities, although as interlocking identities, influencing unique experiences for the individual (Parent, DeBlaere & Moradi, 2013).

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Intersectionality, as viewed as interlocking identities, also alludes to "interlocking roots of inequality" (Holvino, 2010:257). Examples of this, as pointed out by Corlett and Mavin (2014:261), are the intersection of multiple social identities (race, gender, disability) on a micro-level of individual experiences, and on a macro-social structural level, experienced as racism, sexism and ableism (Bowleg, 2012). Furthermore, at the intersection of other multiple social identities (culture, race and ethnicity), it also pivots research within the broader identity framework towards analysing whether these intersections can be viewed as one collapsed identity, or rather making space for for race to be regarded as a biological construct than a psychological construct (Worrell, 2014). Race, as it pertains to intersectionality, and as viewed as a social construct, would however, also indicate its proximity to other intersectionalities such as culture and ethnicity (Worrell, 2014).

Corlette and Mavin (2014) also refer to intersectionality and identity work leading to the questioning of power and privilege as mediating factors within social contexts. The assumption that minority identities are experienced as oppressive is challenged. More research is needed to explore the mediating factors and social contexts in which minority identities are negotiated as forms of power. But intersectionality, as posited by Agosto and Roland (2018:279), with reference to Capper (2015:825), could as a concept contribute more than simply being a way of analysing the relationship between power and privilege, but also of designing and conducting studies. For example, it can situate intersectionality within the overarching framework of critical race theory or other social identities affected by power and privilege.

Apart from advocating for intersectoral analysis paired with intersectionality, for example to better understand the complexities of injustices, Agosto and Roland (2018) assert that, by situating intersectionality as Capper (2015) does, also positions intersectionality in relation to broader theoretically based political movements toward achieving social justice. Intersectionality could also transform public leadership as an analytical tool, for example, by exposing inequality even amid equal opportunities or access within the public leadership sector (Breslin, Pandey & Riccucci, 2017:177). Furthermore, in relation to transformation and diversity conflict, Mayer, Surtee and Mahadevan (2018:889) argue that an intersectional approach to diversity conflict could allow for diverse sense-making endeavours and moving away from binary oppositions,

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"particularly in times of transformational challenges" in socio-political contexts such as South Africa – a country known for its historical power imbalances.

Bringing back intersectionality to the field of student leadership and identity formation before Komives *et al.*'s (2005, 2006) devised their LID model, Jones and McEwen (2000:412), in their study of college students, asserted the importance of Student Affairs educators not presuming "what is most central to individuals but … instead listen[ing] for how a person sees" themselves. This is particularly relevant to highlight in relation to this study, as it was conducted during a time when "self-identification" became the norm in the day-to-day social interaction of student leaders, even in relation to how they would introduce themselves, for example as she/her/them. This indicates the fluidity of self-identity. The awareness of this fluidity, as Fuller (2018) points out, also is apparent at a much earlier stage and also through language, discourse and power fluidity. Furthermore, Jones and McEwen's (2000) suggestion for the student affairs field is to support majority identity statuses to understand the implications of "taken-for-granted" identities. This is demonstrated in the findings (Chapter 6) of this study.

Duran and Jones (2019) and Jones (2016) build on Jones and McEwen's (2000) conceptual model of multiple dimensions of identity, with a further focus on student leadership and intersectionality. According to Jones (2016), an intersectional view of (student) leadership provides not only a tool for student leaders in intercultural engagement, but also in the student leadership environment to provide culturally relevant leadership practices grounded in authentic leadership. Student leaders should become more aware of their social identities and the interaction of these with those of others. With an intersectional lens to view student leadership, Duran and Jones (2019:469) further challenge Student Affairs practitioners to review student development theory by becoming sensitive to the micro- and macro-levels of identity construction within higher education from a power-based perspective. Student Affairs practitioners therefore have an important role in acknowledging marginalised identities within the student community and their lived experiences.

Thus far, the discussion of intersectionality and social identities has highlighted the effect of experiences (power, privilege and oppression) within social contexts,

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extending the focus to the student environment. While Komives *et al*. (2005, 2006) have done extensive research on identity formation in student leadership, McKenzie (2018:3) and Renn and Bilodeau (2005:342) argue that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) as well as gender-specific studies are needed to design effective student leadership development initiatives to provide appropriate support for student leaders and to address the ways in which students understand socially-constructed views of both leadership and specifically gender or sexual orientation as student leaders.

Although Renn and Bilodeau's study, which applies the LID model to the identity formation process of LGBT student leaders, shows evidence of the application of the six stages of the model, they argue for more research on the interlocking identity development process of queer student leaders and the general LID model. On the other hand, McKenzie's (2018) research highlight to the fact that gender-specific leadership development programmes are needed in higher education to prepare female students for their postgraduation experiences in the workplace as female leaders.

Similar to the Komives et al. (2005) LID model, McKenzie's (2018) findings on the transitioning from one phase to the next, the latter study expands the gender construct and its effect on female leaders and analyses this across a four-phase process of leadership identity development, viz. the first four phases of the LID model. These phases are Phase 1: Awareness; Phase 2: Leader identified; Phase 3: Leadership differentiated; and Phase 4: Generativity. McKenzie (2018) makes a distinction between leadership and female leadership and highlights the effect of socially constructed views of both leadership and gender and their effect on female leaders' self-identity.

Five themes emerged in McKenzie's (2018) findings, namely influences, meaningful involvement, expanding views of leadership, changing views of leadership and reflective learning. These five themes form the foundation of the four-phased process, as mentioned earlier, similar to that of the LID model designed by Komives *et al*. (2006). They highlight in particular that, although the female participants in their study were actively engaged in the campus community, they were not challenged to question

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their gender identity and how that translated into their leadership self-perception. Consistent with the data analysis in relation to the various participants, it was only when reaching Phase 3 (leadership differentiated) that the female students started connecting their identity as women with how they lead, their self-perception and how they perceived themselves being viewed by others – as women AND as leaders.

Both McKenzie (2018) and Renn and Bilodeau (2005) emphasise the need for leadership educators to develop more leadership programmes that address intersectionality. On a strategic level, higher education institutions should accept responsibility for specifically preparing female/queer students to recognise their role in contributing positive change to the social construct of leadership. They also point out the need for future research to study leadership identity in higher education in the context of other identity-based groups, as well as across groups. To furthermore highlight intersectionality as a factor contributing to leadership identity formation, Beatty (2014:6) highlights this gap in the leadership identity formation research. He points out that, since the LID model was introduced to leadership development practitioners in higher education, only one PhD study has been done to test the LID findings (Wagner, 2011).

Beatty (2014) furthermore motivates the purpose of his PhD study by saying that "none of these studies have explicitly discussed race and the role that it plays in leadership identity development for students of colour on college campuses". Hence the motivation for his study was to specifically explore the LID model as it relates to the leadership identity formation of students of colour. Since then, as mentioned previously, more PhD dissertations (Cohen-Derr, 2018; Crandall 2017; Schmiederer, 2018) have addressed intersectionality and leadership identity formation.

To summarise:

This overview demonstrates that Komives *et al.* (2005, 2006, 2007, 2009a) have been the main contributors to the field of student leadership identity formation in higher education. This shows, as pointed out by Beatty (2014), Cohen-Derr (2018), Crandall (2017), McKenzie (2018), Moorosi (2014), Renn and Bilodeau (2005) and Schmiederer (2018) that more research is required on intersectionality and leadership identity formation.

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2.5 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the leadership literature as it relates to traditional leadership paradigms, the social construction of leadership, the intersection of the disciplines of social psychology and leadership, with a focus on leadership identity construction, and finally student leadership identity formation and intersectionality. The researcher has drawn attention to the gap in the literature as it pertains to student leadership identity formation.

The various interpretations of leadership shows the progression of the debate in the leadership discipline with the expanded focus on the influence of followership on the practice of leadership, as well as the influence of the leader-follower interaction on the social construction of leadership. The review of the various leadership paradigms illustrated the need for an integrated leadership meta-framework (Veldsman & Johnson, 2016). For an integrated meta-framework to be employed, the demarcation of a leadership definition would be necessary. The researcher commenced this chapter by illustrating the various definitions of leadership and confirmed that the approach to leadership to be followed for this study would be of the interpretation of leadership by Komives *et al.'s* (2005), namely, that leadership merged with identity refers to the processes of meaning-making associated with the situations or roles that influence the way individuals perceive themselves or others as leaders.

The demarcation was needed as the researcher anticipated the leader-follower roles, influenced by social interaction (and in this case also a race-based society and historical context), would potentially play a significant role in leadership perception and leadership identity. This necessitated the literature review of the identity theory. As stated in Chapter 1 and throughout this study, the researcher has acknowledged the various recent studies on identity e.g. Dunne (2016), and more recent reiterations by these scholars, e.g. Stets and Burke (2014). The point of departure for this study was the interpretations of scholars such as Crenshaw (1991) for intersectionality, Mead (1934) of self-concept and Erikson (1968, 1980) of identity, Stryker (1980), Tajfel and Turner (1979), Hogg (1992, 2001a, 2001b, 2003), Turner (1982) and Turner *et al.* (1987) of the broader identity theory reference. The work of these seminal scholars still informs identity theory research to this day. One example to illustrate: while the seminal work of Erikson (1968) is still widely referenced in identity theory, Syed and

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McLean (2014) argue that more research is required pertaining to the integration of ego identity, personal identity and social identity. Their question, “What happens when one’s personal story does not match the cultural narratives of one’s group (identity)” (Syed & McLean, 2014:566), is particularly relevant to this study as participants had to come to terms with internal contestations of culture and identity processes and their personal and group values. Linking culture, identity and historical changes would therefore be an important theme investigated in this study.

The literature review continued with an account of leadership identity theory and specifically the various studies to date where the grounded theory of the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model was employed. This illustrated the gap identified in the literature and where this study would contribute to, particularly in relation to a broader integrated approach to leadership identity within the identity theory framework – which none of the studies to date investigated.

The next chapter addresses the gap in the literature as it pertains to a South African student leadership context.

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Chapter 3: The post-apartheid South African higher education context

3.1 Introduction

This chapter builds on the review of the leadership literature discussed in Chapter 2 as it aims to draw attention to the gap in the literature by linking identity and leadership with student leadership identity in a post-apartheid context. This chapter focuses on the South African higher education context after 1994; the rebranding of institutional identities; race narratives influencing both institutional identities and student leadership identity; post-apartheid student leadership; student activism; and, finally, identifying the gap in the literature on how historical trauma could potentially be a contributing factor to the leadership identity formation of post-apartheid South African student leaders. This chapter therefore seeks, among other things, to show that there is a gap in the literature on leadership identity within the South African context, taking contextual influences into account.

The layout of Chapter 3 is indicated in Figure 3.1.

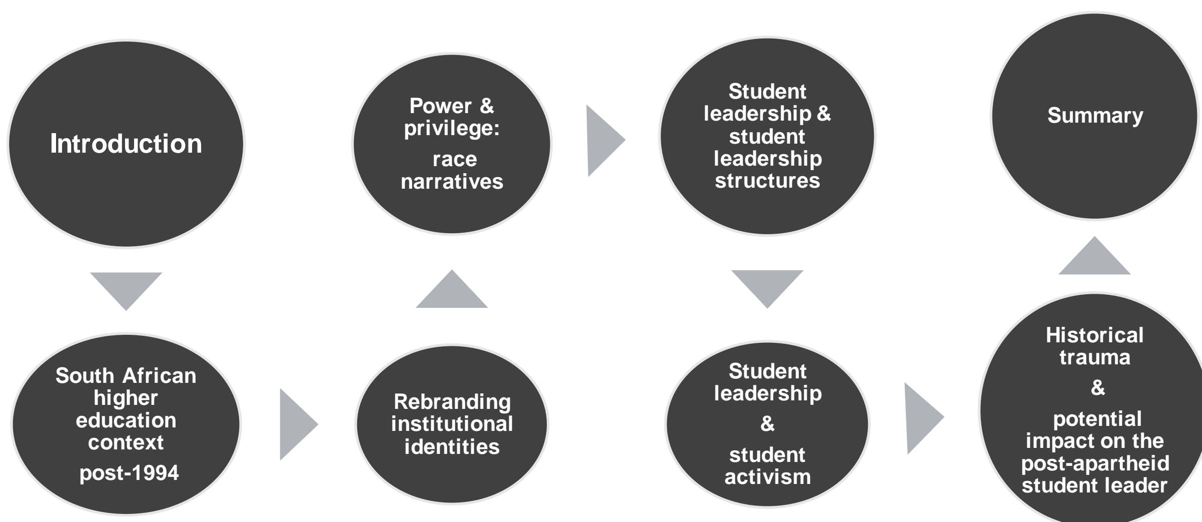

Figure 3.1: Layout of Chapter 3

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3.2 An overview of the post-1994 South African higher education context

The South African higher education sector has gone through extensive organisational changes since 1994, the landmark year in which South Africa became a democratic state. These changes can be seen in the more diverse demographic profile of enrolled students and specifically their level of participation, and the manner of their engagement in national and student leadership politics. The factors contributing to the changes in the post-apartheid South African higher education context will be explored from an institutional and student (leader) perspective. In this section, the following will be covered; the transformation of the post-apartheid higher education institution and the associated rebranding of institutional identities; the complexities of race-based narratives; student leadership and student leadership structures; student leadership and student activism; and, finally, historical trauma and the potential effects on the development of the leadership identity of the post-apartheid student leader. The researcher aims to demonstrate how these themes as apartheid legacies influence the post-apartheid student leadership platforms and the impact of these themes as potential contributing factors to the post-apartheid student leader's leadership identity.

3.2.1 Transformation of the post-apartheid higher education institution – rebranding institutional identities

The dawn of a new democratic dispensation gave rise to hope for a better educational future for the current generation – from building on the fight for basic education (pre-1994) to gaining access to higher education, also referred to as "the massification of the higher education system" (Soobrayan, 2003:95), to student persistence requiring an expanded network of support to students (Bitzer, 2003). Access to higher education did not necessarily lead to equal success, as illustrated by universities' throughput rates (Fourie-Malherbe, 2013). Expectations were that changes in higher education would lead to better job opportunities for the marginalised or previously disadvantaged groups. This would entail structural engineering and institutional redesigning of higher education to "constitute a social desideratum", promoting equity, sustainability and productivity (Amuwo, 2004:65). For much of the policy-making period from 1990 to 1997, discursive tensions were centred on equity, the discontinuation of the binary racial divide, and the development of a comprehensive and inclusive approach (Kraak, 2004:258).

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The birth of the new South Africa and the new Bill of Rights also challenged the "European dominance and hegemony in educational institutions" (Goduka, 1996:27). Adonis (2016:1) observes that South Africa's long history of race-based oppression "preceded the introduction of formal apartheid in 1948". Racial segregation started with the onset of colonialism in 1652 (also referred to by the participants in their timeline reflections of South African historical events informing their leadership identity; see Chapter 7, and Appendix A). Adonis (2016:1) argues further that although democracy was finally achieved in 1994, colonialism and apartheid had "severely damaged the social fabric of the South African society". Furthermore, repairing this damaged social fabric is hampered by the continuing fear, mistrust and anger often resulting in racial "othering" (Adonis, 2018:16). Ndimande and Neville (2018:931) support this observation, in that post-apartheid South Africa remains a race-based society despite the nation's efforts to "develop a collective identity", and particularly with college students' continued reference of race labels in relation to groups or individuals. Ndimande and Neville's (2018) further note the lack of research on the role of education (and directly basic and higher education) in the affirmation of racial identity situated in a racially hierarchical society, where economic power remains associated with whiteness and the black majority continue to represent negative social indicators.

After 1994 the signs of this damaged social fabric and its impact could also be seen in the context of South African higher education. Despite the diverse racial-ethnic character of South African universities, their origins are still considered Western and arguably not manifesting an African character responding to local contextual societal needs (Khotseng, 1992:88). South African universities, being public institutions are also at the "mercy of the state" (Wiechers, 1995:14). This also brought new questions into academia, for example, what constitutes an African university with an African identity (Horsthemke, 2009:4). Simultaneously students became important role players in the mechanism for the attainment of Africanisation and internationalisation of the post-apartheid higher education context (Iwara, Ndlovu, Obadire & Maduku, 2018). Others question whether African flagship universities are indeed preparing students for citizenship (Kgosithebe & Luescher, 2015).

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The biggest threat at this stage was that mental colonialism, referring to the need to decolonise the mind, continued and was most visible in academia (Muendane, 2006). Knowledge construction was needed through the "exploration of indigenous knowledge" (Horsthemke, 2009:6). This has gradually changed, with a stronger socially responsive focus emerging recently and a serious attempt to recreate the South African university to reflect its African roots. Key focus areas, however, remained research and teaching as measurements for international rankings. A shift from a Western approach to changing the role of the free post-apartheid university to a people's university would be just one of many key discourses in higher education after 1994. The mere question 'What is a people's university?' would unleash various reactions. Dlamini (1995:44) highlights that it is anything from the idea of "an open university where all people irrespective of their colour and race are admitted', to "a university that is different from the historically white universities", to "a university that would subscribe to a certain political ideology supportive of a particular political party".

Supporting Minister Sibusiso Bengu, the South African Minister of Education at the time (Bengu, 1995), Bawa (2001:13) argues that these changes demonstrate the "existential crisis" facing the higher education sector at the time. This was due to the lack of political and social legitimacy, which forced university-based intellectuals to become defensive in the absence of a clear social contract on what these changes should encompass. Jansen (2004) holds an opposite view on the problem in South African higher education being limited to race, but posits that the new problematic would include matters of background, class, regional character of the new student at urban institutions, and rural institutions remaining fairly marginalised in terms of racial character, institutional capacity and resources, and class status. Universities, as critical tools in the development of caring democracies and continuing to produce an educated elite, are at a crossroads in this neoliberal setting (Tronto, 2018).

Pule (2022:240), as alluded by Jansen (2003), Singh (2015) and Swartz *et al.* (2019), asserts that the transformation of higher education in post-apartheid South Africa is not limited to student leadership changes but also to changes as a result of mergers (Jansen, 2004) and contentious debates around admission (student access and student success) by a diverse student population (Cross, 2004; Cross & Carpienter, 2009; Waghid, 2003). Also, there are academics who enter into more robust

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discourses on the nature of academic freedom to enhance the possibility of achieving a democratic society (Wiechers, 1995:13). This would also entail a renewed focus on changes to a number of factors: general approaches to leadership in higher education (Zuber-Skerritt, 2007); gender inequality, e.g. the advancement of female scholars in academia and the leadership development support required (Louw & Zuber-Skeritt, 2009); institutional cultures serving as impediments to women's advancement to leadership in higher education (Toni & Moodly, 2019); people of colour leading at historically white institutions (Jansen, 2005); or the role of business schools in providing contextual leadership development taking the changing South African context into account (Magner, 2008).

As developments in the complexity of changes in post-apartheid higher education unfolded, students, staff, institutions and government soon realised that "universities cannot champion academic freedom yet condone intolerance and bigotry in its own corridors" (Wiechers, 1995:14). While transformational changes were inevitable and welcomed by previously disadvantaged scholars, a growing critique could be observed, as Jansen (2003:9) noted, namely the decline of the South African professoriate "to escalate the promotion of black scholars simply for the sake of equity numbers, but without a track record of scholarly output". While Jansen (2003) argues that this is the result of apartheid, he cautions against the long-term ramifications in post-apartheid South Africa to prove the credibility of black scholars in an already marginalised academia. The management of these changes in higher education institutions lies in the Vice-Chancellor's role as institutional leader, manager and academic leader, but at the beginning of the post-apartheid era in South Africa they were perhaps not well prepared to deal with rising conflict on campuses (Saunders, 2016; Smith, 1998) – this leadership role is often neglected in leadership studies (Neumann, 1990). To understand these changes, South African history should therefore be considered as a backdrop to, and catalyst for, post-apartheid student leadership engagement patterns and the potential influence of this on their leadership identity formation.

The nature of the post-apartheid higher education institution, as the knowledge system in which the student leadership context functions as a sub-system of that institution, highlights the importance of understanding the institutional profile and culture.

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Metcalfe (2022) states that historical legacies are visible in the white institutional culture prevalent at historically white schools and universities, which continue to entrench “a specific version of South African whiteness that maintains the dominant narratives of whiteness”. One could therefore argue, as Bryson (2014:10) does with reference to a historically white Afrikaans university (HWAU) as example, that “new South Africans are bringing all their identities to the project of creating a new national identity at the institution, but one should not forget that this entails the combination of multiple identities in one history, as the new South African students strive to remove themselves from past stereotypes as builders of a new institutional community”.

The mergers of institutions after 1994 necessitated the exploration of institutional traditions and culture and the repositioning of institutions in relation to their past. Given South Africa’s past, institutions were classified according to race, i.e. historically black, coloured, Indian and white universities, technikons and colleges. One of the major adjustments in the South African higher education landscape after 1994 was the changes proposed by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) to streamline institutions to share resources; this was done through the mergers of institutions based on either geographical commonalities or offerings (e.g. dentistry at the historically white Afrikaans Stellenbosch University and the historically coloured University of the Western Cape merged, with dentistry now only offered only at the University of the Western Cape). The changes included the renaming of technikons as “universities of technology” (e.g. the previously coloured Peninsula Technikon merged with the previously white Cape Town Technikon, now the Cape Town University of Technology (CPUT)), and colleges were renamed “technical and vocational education and training (TVET)” institutions. There also were complete name changes, e.g. the University of Port Elizabeth to the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

Race-based institutions in a country like South Africa further highlight the complexities of these mergers, as a diverse student body would now enter spaces previously unoccupied by people of colour, or by white students at previously black, coloured and Indian institutions. Student engagement or student involvement decisions could also be affected (Wawrzynksi *et al.*, 2012). Wale (2019:1) refers to Brunsma, Brown and Placier (2013:719) in defining the term, “historically white universities (HWU)” or

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"historically white institutions (HWI) as "an institution of higher education whose histories, traditions, symbols, stories, icons, curriculum, and processes were all designed by whites, for whites, to reproduce whiteness via a white experience at the exclusion of others". Adding language differences to this context further adds to the complexities of navigating these spaces, e.g. at a historically white Afrikaans university/HWAU or historically white English university (HWEU) (sub-groups of HWUs). Bunting (2006) notes that HWAU often showed high levels of support for apartheid ideology.

Another layer to this would be religion. Some HWAUs in the past would also include religion to their vision or slogan. An example is the former *Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys*/Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, now known as North West University (NWU) (simply referencing the geographical location of the institution). This would typically reflect the strong Calvinist theological roots of the institution.

Thus, race, language and religion were but a few of the factors that would influence the mergers and the concomitant transformation initiatives at these institutions. Another observation in terms of higher education changes after 1994 is the rebranding of institutional identities to acknowledge the historical positioning (or dispositioning) and to reposition themselves to fit the needs of contemporary South Africa. "Redress", referring to "rectifying the wrongs of the past", "reparation", "restoring equality" and "empowerment", would become the blanket code terms for an intentional effort to change HWIs (Barnes, 2006). Daniels and Damons (2011:194) assert that "when education is positioned as a vehicle for social transformation, then expectations are created that its institutions will seek to redress economic imbalances created by apartheid". The rebranding of institutional identities also highlighted the complexities of cultures and traditions, and the negotiation of these to support the inclusivity of a new, diverse student population. Banda and Mafofo's (2016) elucidation of three Western Cape institutional examples (the University of Cape Town, an HWEU, the University of the Western Cape, a historically coloured university, and Stellenbosch University, an HWAU), draws attention to the added responsibilities of universities as public institutions to mirror the government's post-apartheid social transformation

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agenda in order to construct distinct identities that are "locally relevant and globally aspiring".

By analysing mission statements (even though they might be largely for marketing purposes), Banda and Mafofo (2016) demonstrate how these three universities reconstructed distinct and recognisable identities while speaking to the segregated past, doing so in a post-apartheid voice of equity and redress, each in its own way.

- **Stellenbosch University (SU)**, as an HWAU, providing what has been called the Afrikaans-speaking *hinterland* of the Western and Northern Cape (Van der Merwe, 1998:108), had to acknowledge its contribution to apartheid and inequality in South Africa. It has now committed to transformation – not only to reflect the diverse South African population, but also to reposition itself as an "African university". In other words, SU has intentionally claimed Africanness, as it in the past had been deemed a "white utopia" far removed from the South African realities or African culture. "Rehabilitating Afrikaans" (Banda & Mafofo, 2016:188) now had to find expression in a community-centred application of academic excellence, which SU, just like UCT, still prides itself on.
- **University of Cape Town (UCT)**, as an HWEU, although it was considered one of the more progressive HWUs, had to acknowledge its role in the preservation of the white English elite in the 19th century through the South African College, which preceded UCT (Durrill, 2000). By reframing its identity through repositioning itself as part of the solution in the transformation agenda, and foregrounding quality of teaching and research, UCT has committed itself to academic freedom and critical scholarship (Banda & Mafofo, 2016:186). The fact that UCT is ranked as South Africa's top university in the Times Higher Education rankings has positioned the university to promote excellence through inclusion, and in so doing establish its transformational role.
- **The University of the Western Cape (UWC)**, as a historically coloured university, has always been confronted with the stereotype of being a "bush university" (referencing its location on the Cape Flats), while priding itself in producing a significant number of prominent coloured academics. UWC's rebranded identity is rooted in the fact that it was "the centre of opposition to the apartheid regime, hence better able to understand the need for open access

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to higher education to historically disadvantaged groups" (Banda & Mafofo, 2016:182).

To summarise:

As Goduka (1996:28) had already pointed out soon after South Africa's democratic elections, traditional white universities were to face two major challenges:

- to maintain their sense of history of education and their foundations (and acknowledgement of who it was that they were serving), and
- to affirm diversity in order to develop inclusive curricula that serve to restore human dignity.

Affirming diversity through the acknowledgement of the diverse nature of humankind would not suffice, as the repositioning of the marginalised and referencing terms such as 'previously disadvantaged' would lead to acting and behaving likewise – which can be observed in racial debates on who currently is disadvantaged. The next section will now focus on the impact of ongoing race-based narratives in higher education, and in the broader South African context.

3.2.2 Power and privilege: Complexities of the whiteness, black consciousness and people of colour narratives

On the dilemma facing post-apartheid South Africans (Gillespie, 2010:75) states:

> The question of what to do with race remains especially fraught. Racial discourse, in the public and the private spheres, lurches from white supremacy to black nationalism, from nonracialism to multiracialism to black consciousness, with all the permutations in between. It is intensely volatile. And this volatility feels both historically necessary and very dangerous.

Acknowledging student leaders' narratives as reflective of their world views, as well as the factors contributing to their world views, is important, as the student leader in the post-apartheid context would inevitably be confronted with their intersectionality and the power and privilege associated with that (see also Chapter 6). Bearing the brunt of labelling continued to have an impact on minorities at HWI, whether based on race (Daniels & Damons, 2011), or as experienced by the absence of their mother tongue at HWAU (Greenfield, 2010). Further adding to the complexities of redefining the

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identify of post-apartheid youth is the constant confrontation with one's indirect complicity through "the daily exposure to the legacies of apartheid in the lives of black South Africans and the inherited privilege – exerting an intolerable toll at a deep psychological level" (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2020:135). Milazi (2001:136), with reference to Maurice (1993), posits that, at the social interactive level, racial issues affect student life, because white, coloured and African students had limited social interaction outside of lectures before 1994. Power shifts in post-apartheid South Africa evidently also lead to a shift in social identities (Booysen, 2006) – with the post-apartheid youth being central to this shift.

The decolonisation of the curriculum (as will be discussed in Section 3.2.4), also highlighted the overflow of the decolonisation debates into the student leadership space, and specifically student leadership programming as student leaders of colour demonstrated the need for relevant student leadership training reflective of the African context. Student movements such as #DecoloniseTheCurriculum also inspired academia to expose the contradictions and subtext of what was considered normal. Maistry (2019:183) asserts that the focus on decolonising the curriculum exposed what the custodians and guardians of knowledge (those who vet peer-review processes) want, and questioned how decolonised knowledge gets published in a post-colonial institution.

This requires unprecedented radicality in higher education (Fomunyam, 2017), as knowledge construction can only be meaningful and progressive when university hegemony is broken down and power is given to the people for local experiences to be grounded. Despite resistance by the protectionists opposing the abandonment of Western higher education influences (Lebakeng, 2018), and the resultant confusion, anger, doubt and powerlessness, continued efforts to counter such resistance by faculty members in various research fields, for instance at Stellenbosch University as an HWAU, were observed. These set out to explore what a decolonised curriculum would look like in practice – with efforts to be driven jointly by students, staff and the institution (Costandius, Blackie, Nell, Malgas, Alexander, Setati & Mckay, 2018).

Contextualising student leadership became mandatory to remain relevant. Using narratives became an important tool to transfer the lived experiences of minorities,

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which also required a systemic approach to shift away from traditional institutional paradigms (Cross, Perewardy & Smith, 2019). “Power and privilege” (as highlighted in the discussion on intersectionality – see 2.4.3) became a significant theme in student leadership as student leaders navigated their multicultural student body as facilitators of often heated, emotionally charged conversations about equity and equality. It is also important to add that these students often did so without feeling empowered and informed to do so as a consequence of their limited prior knowledge of intercultural communication and engagement in general (Suransky & Van der Merwe, 2016).

This was brought to the forefront during the 2015 #FeesMustFall movement, with white students (financially needy) perceived by black students (financially needy) as still entering higher education with an advantage, simply by being white. “Whiteness”, “black consciousness”, debates around terms such as “coloured versus brown people versus mixed race”, and thus on the intergroups within the broader “people of colour/PoC” racial profile, gradually gained momentum in student politics.

The “born-free” students entering higher education, especially those entering higher education after 2009 with more exposure to diversity from a pre-school level since 1991, were now forced to acknowledge how the past and family legacies affected the present without them being directly involved in the past. As Yenjela (2021) points out, the “white saviour complex” theme became central in the South African higher education transformation discourse to disrupt the effects of colonialism and systemic racism. In her exploration of the emotions of white students’ experiential narratives about institutional attempts to transform racial demographics and relationships, specifically in the residences at a historically white university, Wale’s (2019) elucidation of the “whiteness” narratives of students in post-apartheid South Africa highlighted two additional themes related to “whiteness” – the “white victim” theme (Steyn & Foster, 2008) and the “out of my comfort zone” theme.

Like Gilson (2011), Wale (2019:15) posits that these narratives all served the purpose in dominant groups of denying the painful experiences of exclusion and suffering of marginalised groups. However, the second narrative, “out of my comfort zone”, demonstrates the development of emotional capacity to be susceptible to the experiences, suffering and exclusion of black students – “epistemic vulnerability” as

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Gilson (2011) refers to it. Wale (2019) further asserts that these three narratives within the "whiteness" discourse also highlight the interconnectedness of invulnerability and culture affecting students' resistance or willingness to engage in processes to transform "whiteness".

Power and privilege evidently also opened the discourse to other, interlinked discourses of minority groups in the student leadership context – those of the contestations within the PoC student leader community, i.e. black consciousness, coloured identity or the Muslim and Indian student leader. Race discourses still dominated the student life and identity experience at HWUs and transformation discourses at South African institutions, but institutions in post-apartheid South Africa also gradually observed the race discourses being shifted to address the social inclusion and identities of other intersectional minority groups, such as the LGBQTIAP+ student communities (October, 2006).

Black consciousness and the development of the black adolescent identity in post-apartheid South Africa is still influenced by the past, but also by the new political dispensation (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997:253). They have to define themselves according to many of the norms and values (derived from apartheid-based capitalism) rejected by youth in the 1980s, but to which they now have access, although these are unattainable due to the racist legacy. Stevens and Lockhat (1997) argue that the loss of role models such as Chris Hani and Winnie Mandela left black adolescents without direction.

A collective identity in the past was built firmly around communal experiences of oppression. In contrast, an ideological shift could be observed in post-apartheid South Africa, from collectivism to individualism, with the emergence of the "Coca-Cola" culture – embracing American individualism, competition, individualistic aspirations and the general US worldview (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997:253). A stronger emphasis on material wealth, encouraged further by BEE initiatives, led to a greater class divide between the rising black elite (sending their children to expensive private schools) and the masses fighting for #FeesMustFall.

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The collective identity of the black youths observed from 1976 (the Soweto Uprising) has shifted to post-apartheid black adolescents having to redefine themselves within their racial, community and group identity while being alienated from their own social realities. Bangeni and Kapp (2005) support this argument by alluding to the contestation of the post-apartheid black youth now having to navigate between different worlds – a university context where new knowledge is acquired, and the old world of the communities from which they come, filled with family and friends holding on to the past. The first-generation black student, as Bangeni and Kapp (2005:4) assert, entered into the judgement of the HWI with their educational past, highlighting "identities in transit" navigating roles of insider, outsider and colonised (Gee, 1990:155).

In terms of race discourses, the coloured, Indian and Muslim student leaders, for example, have been less prominent, as the discourses have been mostly dominated by the black and white narrative. Vahed (2021) highlights the racial contestations of situating Muslims within the broader PoC framework and indicates that, while Indians and coloureds (Malays) were considered being black in terms of the black consciousness definition during apartheid, their positionality is perceived as privileged, having benefited more than black Muslims, for example. Vahed (2021:54) refers to Pan-Africanism, which defined the native and citizen as black, "and everything that was not black having no place in claiming Africanity". This disposition continues to question the identity of Indian (and Malay) Muslims or non-African Muslims in post-apartheid South Africa, and cautions against continued prejudices accompanied by a narrow Africanist ideological orientation.

As with Vahed's (2021) elucidation of the Muslim positioning, Hammett (2010:257) asserts that race salience remains evident in post-apartheid South Africa. The complexities and contestations between individuals and the racial signifier of "coloured" is most evident in the movement between identifiers and how people "simultaneously embrace the racialist category by which they are objectified while refusing to be constrained by the meanings attached to that category" (Yon, 1999:627). The past positioned coloureds as both privileged and disadvantaged, which Erasmus (2001:13) posits has led to a "knowing I was not only white, but less than white, but better than black" (Hammett, 2010:249). Adhikari (2004:168) states

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that the coloured identity was remarkably stable during apartheid in the way it functioned as a social identity, but underwent rapid transformation in post-apartheid South Africa due to the complexity and fluidity of the coloured social identity. Coloured identity now had to be repositioned due to changes in the political order that questioned previous alignments as a minority group under white rule, but now with reference to a black political party.

Another form of exclusion experienced by coloured youths was by their own racial group when referred to as "coconuts" – perceived to be venturing into white spaces and not acting as coloured, i.e. "black external vs white internal colour of the coconut" (Githaiga *et al.*, 2017:782). It is also a derogatory term to refer to a black person taking on aspects of a white lifestyle and values and who may be seen to be serving the interests of white people (Jawitz, 2012:558).

The current generation of coloured youth leaders would find themselves in a position where they would either reject this disposition within the broader PoC student community, reclaim their identity by preferencing "brown" or "so-called coloured" instead of "coloured", or intentionally advocating for a "proudly coloured campaign", i.e. not referring to themselves as black. Others, however, claim their African roots and refer to themselves as "Khoi" or "San" – the first people of South Africa. "The Khoisan revivalism is both exclusionist and coloured rejectionist" (Adhikari, 2004:177). These observations, i.e., the "construction of the Coloured body" in either the proximity to whiteness and/or the distancing from blackness remains important to understand how coloured identity is located by the Self and how individual colouredness is defined (Le Roux & Oyedemi, 2021: 160).

Although high school and university students are initially decreasingly self-identified by race, Franchi and Swart (2003) say there has been a significant increase in students self-identifying by race. Hammett (2010: 253) posits that this "eraser" vs "reification" of identity for coloureds under specific historic conditions, served the colonial project in the past. But now it continues to be socially and politically manipulated in post-apartheid South Africa, in turn leading to some extent to the construction of an exclusive and defensive racial identity, "mobilised against a racial other" (Alexander, 2007). The "otherness" from the coloured perspective highlights the

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"otherness" as experienced within the broader PoC community, as well as the persistent perception of white supremacy, which shaped the formation of the coloured identity (Pirtle, 2022). As Pirtle (2022) asserts, the post-apartheid white/black perspectives continued to dominate racial discourse, but the neglected coloured perspective illustrates why racial hierarchy matters. It allows for an understanding of how individuals shape meaning around their position within this hierarchy. In the case of the coloured identity in post-apartheid South Africa, it further highlights the tension among coloured and black South Africans and their inability to mobilise as a collective to fully dismantle systemic racism.

Pirtle's (2022) elucidation of the function of racial hierarchy also highlights Steyn's (2012:10) reference to the "ignorance contract" as the "tacit agreement to entertain ignorance which lies at the heart of a society structured in racial hierarchy". This "ignorance contract", argues Steyn (2012:10), was entered into by both white and black, although the terms of the contract were set by white society, which had the power. White ignorance would entail the systematic ignorance found in knowledge constructed from positions of power and racial order, whether explicit or tacit (Mills, 1997) and narratives of childhood memories in relation to black nannies or maids (Steyn 2012:13), yet showing little understanding of the world of the black people outside of their white home.

From the black perspective, Steyn (2012:18) argues that the "ignorance contract" white people entered into during apartheid led to black people's "double consciousness" (see Du Bois 1994/1903), as they became adept at reading the meaning of such contract as "the way it is" in accepting their lot and their commitment to constructing the "not-knowing" necessitated by social distortions, or as a method to deal with their disempowerment. "Not knowing", ignorance, denial and internalised subjugation, Steyn (2012) argues, could further serve as avoiding the emotional turmoil associated with oppression. One thus would assume that the transcendence of these narratives via intergenerational dialogue would influence the positioning or repositioning of the post-apartheid youth, the negotiation of their identities, and the potential continuation of this "ignorance contract" to some extent.

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Self-identification brought further complexities for "born-free" South Africans. For children of mixed-race parents, self-identify was based on their own terms, but they might find themselves having to advocate for their space in the PoC community. The identity construction and racialisation of first-generation mixed-race people are arguably pervasive within the current dominant narratives of "whiteness" (Metcalfe, 2022). As indicated by Franchi and Swart (2003), in the early days of democracy the South African youth perhaps steered away from racial self-identification, but this changed over time. Various factors could have given rise to this, with seeking job opportunities being the most relevant one, as the "born-free" student would be confronted with the limitations or privileges associated with their self-identified racialisation.

Metcalfe (2022) highlights three key themes emerging from first- generation mixed-race youth related to their identity:

- a) *defying Rainbowism* – despite growing up as mixed-race in post-apartheid South Africa and symbolising the "Rainbow Nation" ideology, mixed-race youths are continuously confronting archaic racial categorisation and therefore forced to choose their racial identity based on historical racial categories. The "Rainbow Nation" ideology is perceived to "undermine the experiences of historical and intergenerational trauma of the oppressed" as far as racism under a white supremacist system (Metcalfe, 2022) was concerned – in which the first-generation mixed-race youths now find themselves in the middle. Linked to the notion of the "Rainbow Nation" is another question, namely whether diversity is the new apartheid (Goduka, 1996:31);
- b) *rejecting "whiteness"* – while dominant narratives of whiteness still regulate institutions (schools and universities), Metcalfe (2022) posits that while some first-generation mixed-race youths might benefit from the legacy inherited by a white parent (generational wealth, education and land), i.e. their proximity to whiteness enables them to navigate HWU spaces, others might experience exclusion and have to negotiate racial boxes as a strategy to construct their identities. This is because they are perceived as not being "pure white" and their mixed-race identity would disrupt the very notion of the purity of whiteness (which was protected at all costs during apartheid) (Van der Westhuizen, 2007).

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This would essentially "other" them in both the white and PoC youth community. The ability to be a racial chameleon still forces them to exist and assimilate within the status quo of White spaces (Metcalfe, 2022:13), which speaks to the conditional aspect of identity construction in post-apartheid HWUs;

- c) *policing identity* – the trademarks of historical policing of identity (based on external appearance and behaviour deemed as white) still exist today and are experienced by first-generation mixed-race youth or racially ambiguous coloured youth – the "revealing of self to the exhaustion around having to feel that you have to explain your racial identity constantly" (Metcalfe, 2022: 16). In these cases, "mixed-race" became a useful descriptor to negotiate the grey areas of racial identity.

The policing of identity also finds expression in intergenerational dialogue, which further highlights how identity is constructed based on the relational aspect of the post-apartheid South African youths versus the experiences of the older generations within their family context. Le Roux and Oyedemi's (2021) elucidation of intergenerational post-colonial narratives leads the discourse towards exploring intergenerational influence on the identity construction of post-apartheid youth. The proximity to whiteness and distancing from blackness also emphasise the construction of the coloured body in relation to ancestral lineage.

Le Roux and Oyedemi, 2021:160 posit that this would often be through the positioning of older generations to European and white ancestry and downplaying black ancestry in relation to external appearances. In the current context and in relation to coloured youth identity in post-apartheid South Africa, Le Roux and Oyedemi (2021:161) pose an important question:

> How can we describe a postcolonial and post-apartheid South Africa from the experiences of those that have internalised the colonial ideologies of a subordinate being, relegated self and a fickle identity that is always in the ontological process of becoming, but never achieved the aspired "being?

It is this question that confirms the binary forms of racial identity perpetuated by the colonial apartheid regime, but that still influences the power and privilege discourses

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youth leaders are confronted with as they navigate the negotiation of their own identities. Furthermore, these colonial ideologies still influence the construction of self and being (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013).

Yet, despite the ongoing dominance of the race-based discourse in higher education and the economic challenges in post-apartheid South Africa, optimism can also be observed. Fourie (2021:215), for example, questions whether Madiba's (Nelson Mandela's) long walk to freedom will ever end. He points out that, in 1996 (at the time of the first democratic census and the new constitution), only 22% of the top 10% of wealthiest South Africans were black (compared to 2% in 1975), while 90% of the poorest 60% of the population were black. This has changed over the last three decades, with the black elite increasing ten-fold and with poverty increasing within race groups instead of between them. Fourie (2021:216) ascribes this to the shrinking gap between white and black incomes (33% in 1996). Despite more resources allocated to previously black schools, outcomes in the post-apartheid period did not improve (Fourie, 2021:218), directly affecting higher education challenges for first-generation students.

To answer Fourie's (2021) question – whether Madiba's long walk to freedom will ever end; the statistics are positively in favour of South Africa's black elite. However, social integration and the quest for a racially-free higher education context are yet to be seen, and most likely will not be seen for a few generations to come.

To summarise:

This section reviewed the complexities of race-based narratives which the post-apartheid South African student leader could not escape from. These legacies of apartheid influence their worldviews and stretched across races. As indicated, some themes influence the narratives of all races e.g., "silencing contracts", rejection of or the contestation with race, or the questioning of the "rainbow nation" and "born-free" ideology. Intersectionality and the power and privilege associated with it, adds to potential labelling (regardless of race) and hampers the efforts to achieve social cohesion – one of the key capabilities for the post-apartheid student leader. The following section will now review how this has impacted the post-apartheid student leader landscape.

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3.2.3 Student leadership and student leadership structures

Pule (2022) cites Getz and Roy (2013) and Luescher-Mamashela (2013b) in pointing out that student leadership can be described in various terms – as a system consisting of a complex constellation of subsystems (political organisations, campus leadership structures) within the broader higher education system, or as another subsystem within the broader South African context. Student leadership played a pivotal role in the struggle against apartheid from the 1960s to the 1990s (Dorasamy & Rampersad, 2014). It continues to do so in post-apartheid South Africa, as student leaders fill critical positions as social change agents in the democratic dispensation.

Speckman (2015) discerns a few basic assumptions that are being made based on public statements through the media and interactions with public figures and students:

- Assumed commitment of the post-apartheid youth to social transformation
- Assumed interest in social cohesion
- Assumption that South Africans have a clear view on how to advance the Constitution in respect of reconciliation and nation-building and
- Assumption that the post-apartheid youth sector is a homogenous group.

As events unfolded on campuses, led by student leaders and experienced by students as a failed post-apartheid narrative (Seepe, 2015), it demonstrated how these assumptions were demonstrated to be flawed.

The Higher Education Act of 1997 brought students in higher education and training together for the first time (Amuwo, 2004:67). In the beginning, student leaders (through the Student Representative Councils (SRCs)) were involved in decision-making on issues such as mergers without prior experience of the complexities involved in such mergers and the accompanying initiatives at achieving social integration. In contrast, most of the student body was unaware of the details of these mergers (Wyngaard & Kapp, 2004:197) or of institutional governance aspects such as quality assurance (Luescher-Mamashela, 2013a). The expectations from post-apartheid SRCs as critical partners in co-operative governance (Bonakele, Mxenge, Thabakgale & Tabane, 2003) became compromised by the preoccupation with issues considered to be

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irrelevant to their constituencies, resulting in a disconnect with the student body they were serving (Tondi & Nelani, 2017).

As Jansen (2004:303) points out, student politics played a prominent role in apartheid resistance in the 1960s. Many political leaders rose to prominence through student leadership involvement. This changed in post-apartheid South Africa, when the focus of student organisations at historically black universities (HBU) shifted from protests against illegitimate government to demands for unrestricted access to higher education. Amidst the sense-making of leading in turbulent times, “African student leaders have to negotiate their own presence in white-dominated institutions”, i.e. “the postcolonial enactment of leading an organisation reflecting their national and cultural identities” (Karikari & Brown, 2018:448). The student leadership space had also been dominated by male students, which contributed to a renewed focus on gender equality in the student leadership space, with themes such as gender-based violence in post-apartheid South Africa further adding to the voice of the female post-apartheid student leader (Iwara, Amachi & Matshidze, 2019).

The disillusioned post-apartheid student leader now had to fulfil the role of negotiating access with government and mobilising a diverse student body, while experiencing new “perks”, e.g. cell phone allowances, impressive offices and partial fee remissions, to which their student leader counterparts in the 1970s were not privy (Jansen, 2004:304), indirectly removing them from the financially struggled student masses. At the same time, previously disadvantaged institutions (e.g. the University of the Western Cape), with large numbers of enrolled students who relied on state funding (also known as National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) students), expected stronger financial support from the government due to their historical disposition.

The regulation of student organisations towards greater discipline and conformity within the institutional managerial grid (Jansen, 2004:305) led to further contestations and complexity for the post-apartheid student leader role. On a postgraduate level, the student leader also had to advocate for a sustainable learning environment in a democratic state (Tshelane, 2014). The first-generation student (and even more so the first-generation student leader) needed support as they negotiated entry into the alienating terrain of an HWI (Vincent & Hlatshwayo, 2018).

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At the same time, apart from navigating complex social spaces, one of the major observations in higher education after 1994 was the changes in the role of student politics, with new, post-apartheid themes more prominent than what student leaders had to address during apartheid. These new themes included gender-based violence, gender equality, mental health, food security (Dominguez-Whitehead, 2015) and first-generation students (Bangeni & Kapp, 2005), to name but a few.

It is against this backdrop, using the CIBART model (conflict, identity, boundaries, authority, role, task), that Pule (2022) analysed the social construction of student leadership at a South African university. The key findings highlighted a number of issues that post-apartheid student leaders have been dealing with, e.g. the need for a collective vision, and navigating a complex environment in the absence of a collective vision while experiencing heightened anxiety characterised by transformation and decolonised agendas. Perhaps the most important finding of Pule's (2022) study in relation to the present investigation was the conclusion that student leadership identity was compromised, which complicated the role and task performance of student leadership. Thus, in fulfilment of their roles, the "born-free" student leaders (referring to young South Africans who had little, if any, first-hand experience of the trauma of apartheid and who probably voted for the first time in the 1999 election (Mattes, 2011)) would inevitably be confronted with the advantages and disadvantages of their self-perceived identity, and the factors informing their role identity acceptance, rejection or negotiation of their role identity. Student leaders would be confronted daily with their social identities when serving on formal representative structures, as collective student bodies now also had to make decisions on whether or not to continue the cultural identity of their student structures or to disrupt them (Dorasamy & Rampersad, 2014:805). This led to student bodies having had to critically assess the power contestations of self-serving agendas and representing the diverse student masses. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the student leader competencies required now were focused on building cohesion, awareness of personal identity, motivating different personalities (Logue *et al.*, 2005:399) and a sound understanding of cultural differences (Getz & Roy, 2013).

Student leadership functions in structured systems within the South African higher education space, which can be described as highly contested, extremely varied and

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politically driven in the different institutions. Student representation lies at the intersection of various research areas in higher education, e.g. student affairs, focusing on institutional practices in co-curriculum learning (Klemenčič, Luescher & Jowi, 2015). Just as the student leadership space underwent changes in post-apartheid South Africa, the South African student affairs profession moved to the heart of the higher education changes. MacMaster (2014:29) argues that, while the profession has a well-documented history in the United States of America, South Africa lacked evidence of the evolution of the profession, which the South African Association of Senior Student Affairs Practitioners (SAASSAP) aimed to address with a formalised organisation dealing with student-related affairs.

This highlights the often-volatile environment in which staff found themselves as practitioners employed by institutions, but with students as partners and student leaders regarded as fellow drivers of the transformation agenda in higher education. Student Affairs practitioners, with diverse academic backgrounds (psychology, theology, education), would now find themselves in the midst of social integration challenges of student life in residences, while facilitating leadership programming and counselling sessions, and at the same time serving as mental health practitioners. This also required a deep reflection on their profile and the historical legacies associated with it, and on how a diverse student community will perceive them. A change model was needed for South African student affairs practitioners, one that would incorporate an approach from a communication and participation perspective with commitment by both the staff and student body as partners in the quest for transformation in higher education (Lumadi & Mampuru, 2010).

A typical student leadership structure at a South African university, usually residing under "Student Governance" and within the Student Affairs Division, with a direct reporting line to a Deputy Vice-Chancellor, might include, but not be limited to, the following (referring to Stellenbosch University student governance structures; see Figure 3.2):

- **Student Representative Council (SRC)** – this is considered the highest decision-making body representing students on the university's council level (council being the highest decision-making body of the institution). Students are represented via the SRC in formal institutional structures, e.g. Council, Senate,

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Institutional Forum and other formal forums, e.g. Transformation, and involvement in formal task teams, e.g. mental health policies/plans, food security, transformation and equity, student access and welcoming practices. The SRC is formally recognised as a statutory body by the South African Higher Education Act 101 (1997), assuring it of freedom of operation and autonomy (Sebola, 2017, 2019; Sibiya, 2017). Its aim is to encouraging responsibility among students, liaising between students and management, acting on students' issues and protecting students against discrimination (South African Department of Education, 2002:103). Each university's SRC can be a member of the national South African Union of Students (SAUS). SAUS is regarded as the collective student union body that engages with the national department of higher education and training (DHET) on issues such as student fees, registration;

- **Student Parliament –** the role of the independent student parliament is to ensure accountability (of all student governance officials/student leaders holding official leadership positions) in adhering to the student constitution and university statute;
- **Student Court** – an independent judiciary body, led by a Chief Justice (usually a postgraduate law student with experience and knowledge of the Constitution) to investigate and monitor judiciary matters;
- **Student societies** – include a range of registered student organisations/societies on campus. Societies are represented on the SRC;
- **Academic Affairs Council (AAC)** – this body represents all academic-related student affairs and all faculty student committees. The AAC is represented on the SRC;
- **Prim Committee (PC)** – this body includes all the Primaria/Primarii of student residences, undergraduate and postgraduate housing facilities (equivalent to the USA's sororities and fraternities) and deals with all residence-related student matters. The PC is represented on the SRC;
- **House committees (HC)** – this body is elected by residents to serve on various portfolios within residences (e.g. critical engagement, leadership, welcoming, social impact, LGBQTIAP+ and gender matters). The HC is represented by the PC on the SRC;

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- **Cluster convenors (Stellenbosch University specific) –** commuter students are included in student life by integration into residences and being able to utilise residence facilities and participate in residence activities. Seven residences form a cluster. Each cluster has a student cluster convenor who is responsible for liaising with students to arrange activities to ensure inclusivity and joint academic support initiatives within the living spaces;
- **Student mentors –** students appointed in residences to offer mentorship related to academic and living conditions to support integration into student life and student support;
- **Men-Tuts** – students appointed in faculties to fulfil academic mentor/tutor roles, often in supplemental instruction roles (Smuts, 2002);
- **Student monitors** – student appointed for a period to observe elements such as welcoming practices to ensure alignment with SU values.

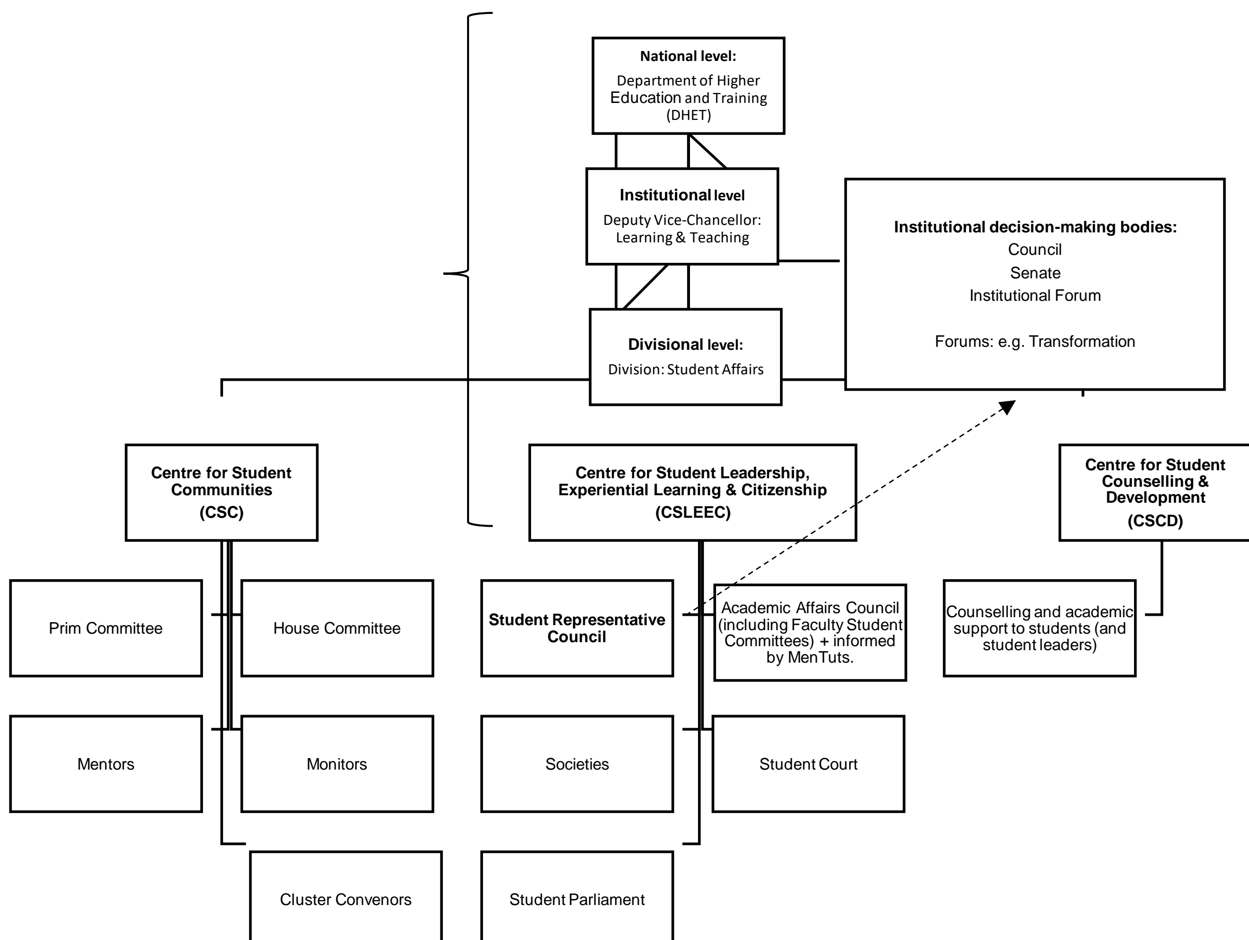

Figure 3.2: Stellenbosch University student leadership structures

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It is important to note that many South African universities have active student political parties (registered societies on campus). These include political parties represented on the national political level (e.g. African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL), Democratic Alliance Student Organisation (DASO), Economic Freedom Fighters Youth League (EFFYL), and national student bodies, e.g. South African Student Congress (SASCO) and societies related to field of study (Agri-society), interests (wine, dance, debating), activism-based (Amnesty International) or intersectionality-based (e.g. LGBQTIAP+, Muslim/Christian/Jewish, black lawyers society). At some universities, the annual SRC elections mimic national elections, i.e. students vote for a political party student leader, and not for an individual. This is not the case at Stellenbosch University, however, where SRC candidates may be affiliated with political parties but "run" as individuals. Student politics on the Stellenbosch University campus is therefore considered to be less party political than at other South African universities. Its student body is often critiqued as being too far removed from the plight of the other student bodies. At the same time, the manner in which the different student leaders on the different campuses address historical imbalances become contested in the sense that student leadership is perceived as misplaced vanguardism, not taking the masses of students along with them (Milazi, 2001:136). Mass-based radical student bodies also led to the questioning of the political tolerance of the new generation's student leaders.

Many South African institutions still experience race-based incidents, reflecting the continued racial tension among the student body, despite significant efforts by dedicated student leaders across races to commit to transformation by leading social integration efforts, whether it be crossing the racial, gender or authority divide (Jansen, 2005). These examples include the Reitz incident at the University of the Free State in 2008 (Buys, 2018), when white male students at a residence forced black residence workers to eat food on which they had urinated, to the most recent incidents at Stellenbosch University in 2022, when a white student urinated on a black student's belongings in his residence room. This led to a mass protest by the SU student community demanding an independent investigation into welcoming practices and systemic racism at this institution.

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This 2022 incident mobilised student protest on the Stellenbosch University campus, resulting in the postponement of the mid-year exams. Later in the year two similar incidents took place in male residences. This again highlighted the complexities of white students and student leaders, for example, feeling ashamed of the deed and frustrated by the association with their white legacy. At the same time, students and student leaders of colour proclaimed their continued frustration with navigating "the white space" as a minority within an institution that renounced racism and any form of exclusion, but still experiencing micro-aggressions of various sorts. This is perhaps related to the ongoing experience of "that space between us", with reference to the students feeling the social barrier due to racial and language differences and the vulnerability associated with building trust and attempting to cross the imaginary boundary line, with no guarantee of reciprocity from "the other" (Githaiga *et al*., 2017). From the university's side a formal commission of inquiry on racism on the Stellenbosch University campus was launched and led by the Justice Sisi Khampepe. The Khampepe report (Khampepe, 2022) concluded that racism indeed exists, which includes microaggressions. The report further concluded that student leaders are ill equipped to deal with the complexities to navigate, let alone lead, social cohesion efforts on campus and especially within the intimate living spaces shared by students of all races.

Ongoing incidents like these, support the observation by Nel, Nel, Adams and De Beer (2015), that culturally intelligent students will enable the university to create cross-cultural inclusive environments to transfer cultural knowledge in a social setting, exhibit leadership in a multicultural setting and not feel threatened when interacting with students from other cultures. Not only do these spaces serve to foster a culture of inclusion, but they create a space for sharing cultural practices. Cooper, Gonzalez and Wilson (2014: 313), argue that despite policy changes in South Africa, educational inequalities continue but that "students who could cross cultural boundaries" in both academic work and extra-curricular spaces are indicated as more likely to succeed in their academic work and racial-ethnic identities. An example of an institutional programme in Stellenbosch University's senior living residential space is the "Listen, Live and Learn" (LLL community). This programme was introduced to utilise a social living environment to encourage senior students to have informal critical conversations about diversity within their living space. The aim was to listen and learn from each

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other's lived experiences as a method to drive social change in the university (Dunn-Coetzee & Fourie-Malherbe, 2017; Smorenburg & Dunn, 2014). It also supports the observation by Elliker, Kotze and Coetzee (2017), that institutional desegregation is not integration – this requires investments by the students themselves to commit to multicultural educational practices to function not only in post-apartheid South Africa, but in a multicultural world. In this, the student leader is an important role player mediating between the student body and the institution.

To summarise:

Universities are often branded as being a "microcosm" of society and tension experienced within the student community are often a reflection of the tensions amongst South Africans in the broader society. While the Higher Education Act (1997) formalised student leadership structures as an official representative structure within public universities, these student structures are at best politicised at most campuses – Stellenbosch being one the outliers in this regard. This adds to additional tension for Stellenbosch University student leaders within the broader South African spaces on platforms such as SAUS, as their peers consider them to be out of touch with the real challenges of the average income student. On the Stellenbosch campus, other politics emerged which also have a racial undertone. As the Khampepe report (Khampepe 2022) indicated, the student leadership structures are now more divided than ever as the diverse SRC (mostly consisting of students of colour), is being perceived as less powerful and influential than the student leadership structures/ Prim Committee leading in residences and living spaces. Not only did this lead to greater fragmentation in social cohesion efforts on this campus, but the student leadership programming also differs for these student leadership structures. The following section will now review how student activism and student leadership meet, and the continued influence of apartheid in the post-apartheid student leadership space.

3.2.4 Student leadership and student activism

Student movements, as Altbach (1992) asserts, are closely linked to student politics and political development, and aim is to be "responsive of political systems and the appreciation of the peculiarities of the student community which both facilitates and hinder student movements" (Luescher-Mamashela, 2013c:5). Student activism during apartheid was inspired by an imbalanced and unequal system with different mandates

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created for two sets of educational institutions – white and black – with the purpose of black people's university education aimed at producing conforming intellectuals (Muswede, 2017). During this period (1960s), student activism conflated with party politics with campus branches established to drive political mandates (Mugume & Luescher, 2015).

Linked to the lack of transformation in higher education, black students being alienated by institutional cultures (Luvalo, 2019) and interruptions that necessitated the decolonisation of knowledge production (Elliot-Cooper, 2017), unrest and student movements became synonymous with student politics in 2015 (Griffiths, 2019; Jansen, 2018; Swartz *et al*., 2019). While the research of Badat (2016), Luescher *et al*. (2016), Mbembe (2010, 2015) and Nyamnjoh (2016, 2017) on the phenomenon of student movements in the South African higher education context should be acknowledged, Hlatshwayo and Fomunyam (2019) assert that there is a gap in the literature on student activism and student politics.

The year 2015 is regarded as "the year of the student", with the national #FeesMustFall student movement, also referred to as the "Fanonian movement", which expressed disillusion with "rainbow politics" (Gibson, 2017), being the biggest mobilised student movement since the Soweto Uprising in 1976. The latter was a protest against the mandatory use of Afrikaans as medium of instruction – symbolising the dissent against oppression beyond mere linguistic colonialism (Muswede, 2017). Student movements such as #FeesMustFall symbolised the frustration of the post-apartheid youth with the contradictions between the post-apartheid dream and the post-1994 reality (Oelofsen, 2020:191). They also highlighted the post-apartheid higher education context as a site of intolerance (Davids, 2019). Student activism as a form of student leadership, though often not equated with student leadership, also raises the question of institutional support for student activists (Evans & Lange, 2019).

This would be an opportunity to expand knowledge on the experiences of marginalised student groups and to advocate for "responsible campus citizenry" and the inclusion of competencies for social justice in the student and staff experience. Blackmur (2019), Frick (2018:107) and Nkomo (2019:285) assert that, while the motivations behind the protests were legitimate, vice-chancellors like Jansen (2017) – former Vice-Chancellor

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of the University of the Free State, and Habib (2019) – former Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand, Cloete (2016) and ordinary citizens failed to see the logic behind destroying "the very infrastructure whose purpose it was to facilitate not only the acquisition of knowledge, but the production of knowledge and consequent innovations" (Nkomo, 2019:285). Cloete (2016) and Mutekwe (2017), for example, argue against the feasibility of free education in South Africa, as it may lead to even greater inequality, compromise research standards, demoralise academics and curtail university offerings.

Student activism serving as "bridge leadership" (Stewart & Quaye, 2019:61) is one way of framing activist leadership in a contemporary context, yet also highlighting the potential exclusion of the student activist leader from traditional leadership roles as not ideal for how "respectable politics show up in academia". Role and role behaviour were now challenged. Another way of reframing activism as leadership can be observed in campus trends, for example, such as student leaders now tapping into their social capital and cyberactivism to drive movements, e.g. #BlackLivesMatter (Martin, Williams, Green & Smith, 2019), #FeesMustFall and #RhodesmustFall. In other words, social media was not only utilised as a tool to organise protests, but also to share information about the decolonisation rhetoric. Social media as learning spaces that are inclusive, egalitarian and decolonised added to the knowledge production (Francis & Hardman, 2018), taking on the character of an informal curriculum (Luescher, Loader & Mugume, 2017).

Luescher *et al.* (2017) assert that student activism in post-apartheid South Africa now took on the shape of hashtag-networked social movements, with students utilising social media platforms such as Twitter, WhatsApp, Facebook, blogs and YouTube as a new way of demonstrating political power (Luescher & Klemenčič, 2017). Luescher *et al.* (2017:241) add that the hashtag student movements also served as a method to indicate the dynamic relationship between the localised tags and the non-localised variants, e.g. #NationalShutdown and #UFSShutdown. They also allude to Castells' (2015) elucidation of the dynamic relationship between the space of the localised territorial movements and the virtual space, i.e. local movements virtually breaking the barriers of space and time.

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Student activism could also be observed as linked to the intersectionality alignment of the student, and also reminds student leaders of their positionality and “fitness” to take the ‘mic’, for example a “#MeToo campaign” (during #antiGBV/anti-gender-based violence movements), and when to support as an ally without having directly lived experiences linked to the cause at hand (Elkins & Elkins, 2019:43; Nyamnjoh, 2017). The intersectionality alignment of the student leader could also be observed in that the LGBQTIAP+ community, a sub-section of the marginalised groups, is underserved in relation to recognition of the inequalities and violence they have to endure (Ngabaza, Shefer & Clowes, 2018). The intersectionality of student activists is also addressed by Thomas (2018:106), with her plea to acknowledge minorities who form part of the student movements, “dear history, this revolution has women, gays and queers too”. The narratives of black women activists during the student movement processes (Mavuso, 2017), in particular, shone the spotlight on female bodies situated in the body politic, visible in the political sphere, but subsequent to the struggle against racism (Bradbury & Mashigo, 2018). Some narratives were privileged over others, with black African women being one of them (Ndlovu, 2017). What would be interesting to observe is the changes in who would consider themselves as marginalised in post-apartheid South Africa, and whether that would be different from the observations of Jogee, Callaghan and Callaghan (2018) in the context of the #FeesMustFall movement claiming that the marginalised were women, those older than their cohorts and black students and students from single-religion schools.

Student activism also raised the question of what constitutes a collective cause for the “born-free” student leader in post-apartheid South Africa, as the diversity of the student body emphasises the social identities at play within a multicultural context. It also refers to the complexity of political identity formation, as the “born free” will not be following the political parties of their families blindly based on historical loyalty, although this is not necessarily the case across the class strata (Kotze & Prevost, 2015).

A common perception is that “apartheid did not die, it was privatised” – a view held by a prominent youth leader, Dr Sizwe Mpofu-Walsh, one of the founding members of a non-partisan organisation, InkhuluFreeheid, aimed at forming a collective vision for the current youth population. Despite efforts to form such a collective vision in support of

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advocating for non-partisan politics, it also became apparent that, for the post-apartheid youth, South Africa had merely adapted, resuscitated and resurged apartheid. The hope that a new democratic dispensation would be a cure for apartheid had simply produced the antithesis of apartheid, and even “the enabler of a new apartheid” (Mpofu-Walsh, 2021:159).

Pule (2022:241), with reference to Akhtar (2018), attempts to address this by elucidating student unrest as being the result of “splitting defences after identity insecurity” which encourages an “us and them” narrative and/or an in-group/out-group phenomenon. This prompts another observation by Pule (2022:241), namely that the need for unrest speaks to protecting the in-group from the imposition of unwanted characteristics projected by the outgroup, i.e. maintaining the good character of the in-group. Group anxiety comes into play, as the student leader must now navigate complex systems while confronting their membership within the broader student community. According to Pule (2022:244), student leaders find common ground in the obstacles experienced in the (student leader) role, but diversity dynamics fuel anxiety, and anxiety becomes the driving force and system energy within student leadership. Furthermore, conflict relates to identity, the leader position and a sense of belonging (group membership).

Student movements further highlight complexities regarding identity, allyship and post-apartheid student roles, such as whistle-blowers on racial inequalities, to address institutionalised racial injustices. A Stellenbosch University-specific student movement, #OpenStellenbosch, or #OpenStellies, sparked by LUISTER (a documentary about the experiences of oppression of black students at Stellenbosch University) and linked to #DecoloniseTheCurriculum, highlights how students were confronted with the role of allyship in transformation. In other words, it highlighted how the post-apartheid student leader, the student as whistle-blower, liberal academics, and in particular white students, all negotiated their roles to disrupt environments identified as not inclusive and holding colonised ideologies, be they expressed in spatial or educational terms (Yenjela, 2021). These movements soon spread nationally, with #WitssoWhite and # RhodessoWhite (Trowler, 2018). Disruption has also been seen at other universities, e.g. the University of Cape Town, with the

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#RhodesMustFall student movement – students protesting against colonialism and institutional racism, also referred to as “black pain” (Nyamnjoh, 2017:261).

Movements can also hold the danger of becoming the very thing they are fighting against. As Nyamnjoh (2017) points out, the #RhodesMustFall movement, while emerging from the experience of alienation, demonstrated how certain behaviours within the movement also caused alienation. Adding to alienation was the danger of a notion observed during this period of “if you’re not in the march against racism, you must be a racist”, regardless of other contributing factors preventing participation (Nel, 2016). “Alienation” is understood as a “relation of relationlessness” (Jaeggi, 2014:1), but is interpreted by Nyamnjoh (2017) not as the absence of a relationship (with the cause), but rather a deficient relationship (experienced by some students during the movement). Nyamnjoh (2017) argues, however, that this alienation also provided an opportunity for self-discovery and the need for an understanding of intersectional injustice. In these cases, the identity of the activist is linked to their ability to participate, and those not participating fall outside the identity marker of activism, leading to alienation from the movement (Nel, 2016).

Postcolonial lessons became the best lens through which students, whistle-blowers and white allies could disrupt colonial spaces, (Yenjela, 2021:202), and further show how these disruptions “upset white supremacism” and often are met with threats and the questioning of loyalty to an identity – in this case, white allies being seen as traitors to “whiteness” or exemplary of a “white saviour complex” (Yenjela, 2021:202). This subtheme within the “whiteness” discourse would simply become part of “white talk” (Steyn & Foster, 2008) to maintain white supremacy, which is threatened by the zero-tolerance approach that universities are now implementing in the post-apartheid era. In other words, how does one maintain white privilege in a context where political power has been achieved by black people?

Another remnant of the apartheid era, as demonstrated by post-apartheid student movements, would be the continued pattern of police management of crowds, of anti-black police brutality, and private policing deployed against student protests (at HWI) (Mpofu-Walsh, 2021:176). Mathebula and Calitz (2018:177), Davids & Waghid (2016), De Vos, 2015 and Gillespie (2017), allude to the trend of police brutality and the

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presence of the military and private security guards on campuses which received international media attention. This was demonstrated at HWIs during student movements such as #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall. Students of colour were reminded by their parents of having to write exams during the apartheid years with the police outside the exam venues. This would lead to the observation that the security staff employed by HWIs, mostly people of colour simply doing their job, could perhaps have been dealing with their own reflections on not being able to afford sending their children to higher education institutions, and yet having to protect the buildings from students fighting on behalf of their children for access to higher education. This also forms part of the findings (see Table 5.3 in Chapter 5: Student Leadership themes, which are the same in post-apartheid South Africa).

The race narratives described in this chapter form part of a strong theme in the rebranding of institutional identities, student movements and student leadership in general, and raise the question of how historical trauma could potentially affect the post-apartheid student leader, their identity and their leadership identity.

To summarise:

This section reviewed the continued influence of apartheid in the decolonising issues addressed via various student movements of which the 2015 #FeesMustFall is undeniably the biggest national student movement since the 1976 Soweto Uprising. Post-apartheid student movements brought some form of solidarity for the post-apartheid student leader, and in understanding the student leader themes or issues faced during apartheid. This section further highlighted to the “born-free” student leader that their positionality would probably always matter in a country facing ongoing inequality – a theme explored in this study. The next section will now review the potential effect of this “coming to terms with positionality” on the post-apartheid student leader.

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3.2.5 Historical trauma and its potential effects on the development of the leadership identity of the post-apartheid student leader

The literature review in Chapter 2 gave an overview of the LID model as it relates to student leadership development. What is evident from the leadership literature and the South African higher education context with a strong race-related theme is the limited research done on historical trauma and its potential effects on post-apartheid youths and the development of their leadership identity. The researcher would like to emphasise that historical trauma and its effects on post-apartheid South African youth are not the main focus of this study. However, based on the review of the literature on identity theory, the South African post-apartheid higher education context, student leadership context and the strong race-based themes emerging from the literature, the researcher incorporated historical trauma in the literature review to draw attention to the gap in the literature as it pertains to student leadership identity formation and its relevance to this study.

The researcher would like to highlight the following definitions:

- **Trauma:** Maitlis (2009: 49) describes trauma as an "extremely upsetting event" that "at least temporarily overwhelms the individual's resources" (Briere & Scott, 2006:4) and presents "significant challenges to the individuals' ways of understanding the world and their place in it" (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004:1);
- **Historical trauma**: Brave Heart (2003:7) with reference to Denham (2008: 396) refers to historical trauma as "the cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma". As earlier noted by Brave Heart & DeBruyn (1998), Crawford (2013), Evans-Campbell (2008) and Gone (2013), Mohatt, Thompson, Thai and Tebes (2014:129) further highlight the aspect of identity by referring to historical trauma as "a complex and collective trauma experienced over time and across generations by a group of people who share an *identity*, *affiliation*, or *circumstance*";
- **Transgenerational transmission of trauma:** Adonis (2016:2) notes Volkan's (1996) definition of transgenerational transmission of trauma as "denoting the way in which the unresolved traumas of the past are subliminally transmitted

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from one generation to another, and, in the process, come to play a pivotal role in future conflicts" (Adonis, 2016:2);

- **The generational aspect of historical trauma** (Mohatt *et al*., 2014:129), is described by scholars as either *transgenerational*, *intergenerational*, *multi-generational* or *cross*-generational (Bar-On, Eland, Kleber, Krell, Moore, Sagi, Soriano, Suedfeld, Van der Velden & Van Ijzendoorn, 1998; Kellermann, 2001). However, it is important to note that intergenerational trauma refers to the specific experience of trauma across familial generations, but is not necessarily a shared group trauma. Or, in other words, a collective trauma may not have a generational or historical aspect.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher would like to confirm that "historical trauma" will be referred to in relation to the historical events, e.g. apartheid in the South African context, which affected people of colour, and potentially affected current post-apartheid South African student leaders regardless of race. Furthermore, with reference to this study, the researcher would like to refer to Kirmayer, Gone and Moses's (2014:309) illustration of the transgenerational transmission of historical trauma in Figure 3.3 in relation to historical trauma and its potential relevance to identity and leadership identity formation by post-apartheid South African youth.

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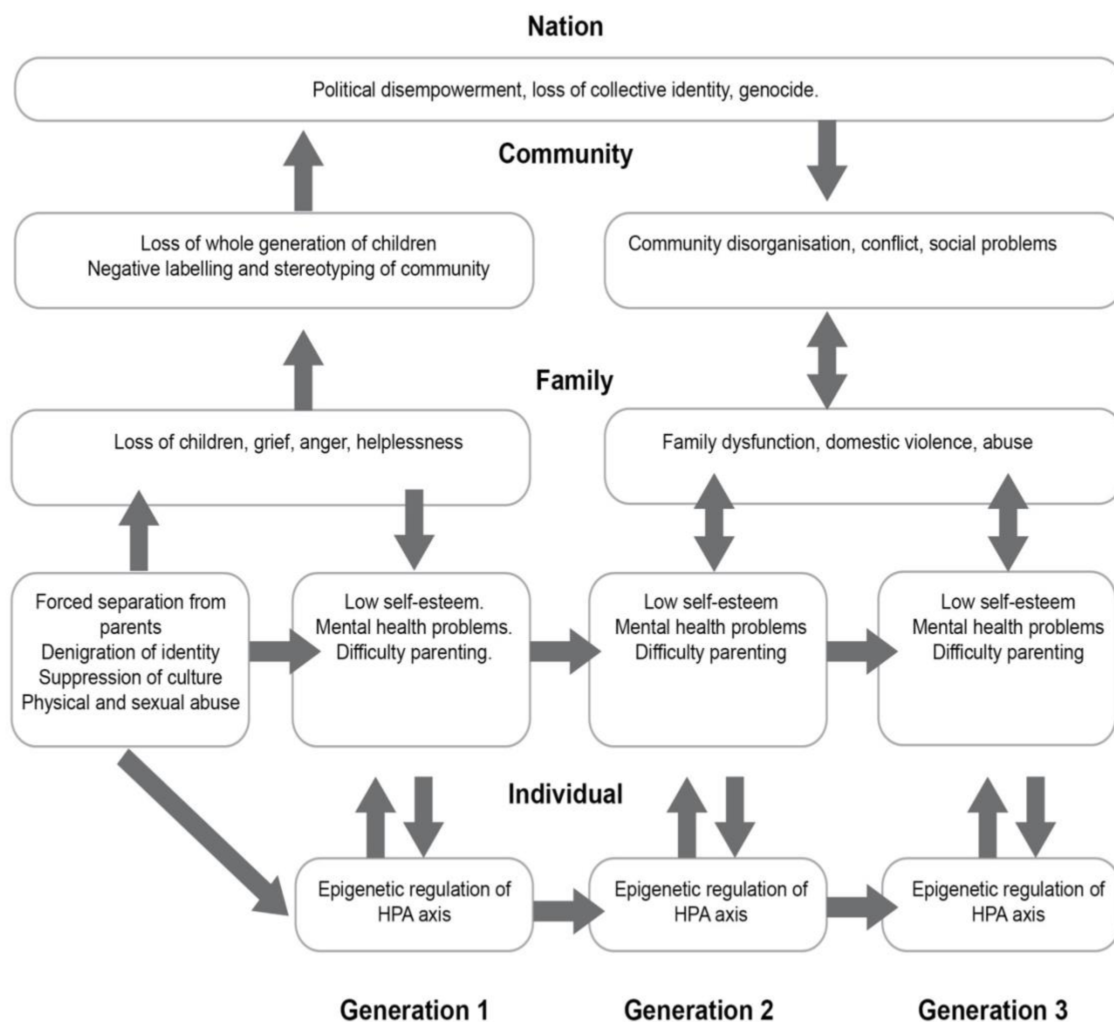

Figure 3.3: Transgenerational transmission of trauma (Kirmayer* et al.*, 2014:309)

Figure 3.3 refers to hypothetical pathways through which the effects of historical trauma can be transmitted across generations at multiple levels, including self-esteem, cultural identity and the continuity of identity (adapted from Kirmayer, Brass, Holton, Paul, Simpson & Tait, 2007). In the South African context, the effects of apartheid filtered down from a national level (political disempowerment due to apartheid legislation, i.e. "the exclusion of 80% of the South African population from any sense of belonging or citizenship – national, cultural, political, social, sexual, and emotional" (Barbalet, 2007; Swartz *et al.*, 2012)). But the effects were also felt on a community level (negative labelling and stereotyping related to race) as well as on an individual level (e.g. poor self-esteem, denigration of identity). Furthermore, in the South African context, the transmission of historical trauma is further highlighted in the social-

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relational ethos of "ubuntu" (Swahili word meaning "I am because we are"), implying that one's subjectivity is bound to the community of others, or the accountability for and responsibility towards others that transcends being "empathically unsettled", and bound to the pain of others (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2020:130).

While the ongoing recalling of historical narratives could lead to the recurrence of trauma for the current generation, Duncan, Stevens and Canham (2014:286) with reference to Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) and Sonn, Stevens and Duncan (2013), assert that stories matter because of their pivotal functions in the construction of identities, subjectivities and collective narratives, and our individual stories give meaning to and construct our lives Furthermore, as observed by Krog (in Villa-Vicencio, 2004) the telling of our personal stories allows us to take control of the past and future. Narrative modes of interpretation and sense-making, as alluded to by Kamsteeg (2016:3), make no claims of truth, but suggest endowing experience with meaning through association of (bottom-up) stories historically situated (Boje, 1995; Brown, Gabriel & Gherardi, 2009; Czarniawska, 1997; Gabriel, 2000; Tsoukas & Hatch, 2001:983). In the post-apartheid context, the contribution of self-identity narratives told by the post-apartheid youths is significant not only in identity work, but for transformation in higher education.

The discussion in this chapter has demonstrated the strong race-based themes in higher education in general, as well as the influence of these themes on student politics, identity politics for post-apartheid youth, and the post-apartheid leader's role in navigating a racially-based student space. Adonis (2016) asserts that, given South Africa's history, it is a reasonable expectation that transgenerational transmission of trauma will manifest in the black community. However, there are limited studies to date- and even less literature on other races – in the South African context, on the white and coloured/mixed-race post-apartheid youths.

As Simpson (1998) confirms, some studies have been conducted on historical trauma in South Africa. Among these are studies focusing specifically on the impact on black children (Lockhat & Van Niekerk, 2000), on the rebuilding of fractured societies as South Africa has transitioned to democracy (Simpson, 2000), on forgiveness in post-apartheid South Africa (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2008), on forced removals e.g. District Six (Schramm, 2011), on intergenerational transference of history through the

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narratives of grandmothers to grandchildren (Frankish & Bradbury, 2012) and on “a qualitative study exploring the salience of intergenerational trauma among children and grandchildren of victims of the apartheid-era’s gross human rights violations” (Adonis, 2016). However, little research can be found on the link between leadership identity formation and historical trauma.

Most of the literature on historical trauma refers to its link to health and mental wellbeing, i.e. within the psychology discipline. Kirmayer *et al.* (2014:312) refer to how “historical trauma” as a construct has been deployed in recent years, not only in mental health, but also in politics and in public projects of identity, i.e. “how processes like e.g., in South Africa’s case with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), legal claims for compensation and formal government apologies can be a vehicle for restorative justice where social injustices warrant redress”. The sharing of stories of the direct impact of apartheid on generations is gradually coming to the fore, with the children of freedom fighters shedding light on the impact of the loss of a freedom fighter parent (Calata & Calata, 2018). Kirmayer *et al.* (2014) furthermore argue that “political recognition as a measure of public acknowledgement can strengthen awareness by building an archive and influencing the education of subsequent generations” – all relevant to post-apartheid South Africa, where these mentioned models have been implemented since 1994 as methods for restorative justice.

In the South African higher education context, the only study that could be found was that by Githaiga *et al.* (2017), which was done at the University of the Free State and focused on students’ experiences of transformation and integration in campus residences. Student leaders were part of this qualitative study, but it was not directly linked to leadership identity formation. What this study did highlight, however, was post-apartheid student leaders finding themselves in positions of fulfilling the role of facilitator in a multicultural context filled with prejudices informed by intergenerational dialogue (conversations with parents and grandparents sharing their experiences and perceptions of other races with their children). These student leaders played a crucial role in institutional transformation efforts and need to be empowered to challenge the viewpoints of parents, grandparents and teachers, for example, in order to disrupt indirect knowledge (Githaiga *et al.*, 2017:785).

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This notion of indirect knowledge refers of the indirect transmission of racial attitudes across generations due to limited peer contact with youths from other races before entering universities (Jansen, 2005). This continued peer contact with other races among post-apartheid youths allowed the entrance of microaggressions into current race narratives. Mohatt *et al.* (2014:136) allude to personal reminders as experienced individually through social interaction, and individual narratives related to historical trauma, and that these reminders can include daily discrimination, personal life difficulties and microaggressions – "the brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative racial slights and insults" (Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, Esquilin, 2007:273).

Post-apartheid white youths remain potent carriers of the memory of their parents' racist attitudes, while black students carry with them cultural and political narratives of the white oppressor. In the post-apartheid student leader context these memories and narratives can be changed through direct experiences of "the other" (Githaiga *et al.*, 2017). Yet the reframing of race remains problematic for the post-apartheid white student leader, as the white student is in fear of being called racist or colour blind, and hence labelled ignorant, or avoids the term race, instead using "culture as euphemism for race" (Githaiga *et al.*, 2017:786).

The example from the University of the Free State reinforces the status quo and shows that, despite the development of friendships across racial groups, this does not necessarily lead to a reduction in racism, but perhaps makes it more subtle (Lima, 2007:470). On top of this is the persistent intergenerational influence as default to fall back on when conflicts arise – the family context being the primary site where the transmission of psychological legacies and experiences of trauma are transferred (Hoffman, 2004; Jansen, 2009; Naidu & Adonis, 2007; Weingarten, 2004).

Frankish and Bradbury (2012:305) elucidate the "active silence and nostalgic articulation" hinged to political traumas, which further highlights the complexities that post-apartheid youths face in navigating their own lives in the present and future with the remnants of the past. This holds for all students, regardless of race. The default family context holds the narratives of the past, and the university context allows

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exposure to wider discourses, thereby forcing the post-apartheid student (and student leader) to challenge past narratives. The constant transitioning between the two worlds also confirms the expectations of these environments – to contribute to a better future for the next generation, while at the same time honouring past trauma.

Bangeni and Kapp (2005:17), with reference to Bhabha (1994:122), assert that, although post-apartheid students (black) become adept speakers of institutional discourse and academically successful, they are not fully at home because boundaries of ethnicity, race, class and language constantly serve as reminder of “otherness”, rooted in the past, yet symbolising a rite to power enacted in the site of desire. These experiences of racism and socio-economic inequality, also highlight their impact on student wellbeing at universities in post-apartheid South Africa, despite them having access to higher education (Young & Campbell, 2014). This is because HWIs are now providing surrogate homes away from largely broken homes (Van Zyl, 2014).

Adonis (2018) confirms the lack of information in the literature on how historical injustices affected current generations and potentially future generations and argues that victimhood in post-apartheid South Africa through the lens of the current youth manifests in their experience of continued socio-economic marginalisation stemming from the structural legacy of apartheid. This victimhood stems from unmet expectations and has two origins: a) continued racism and b) lack of accountability and social justice (Adonis, 2018).

The claiming of victimhood is problematic in the sense that its ubiquity makes it difficult to dispute it in its political context (Jacoby, 2015), a post-apartheid context that denounces racial subjugation but where the legacy of subjugation remains in the form of implicit systemic racism, discrimination and social and economic disadvantage (Degruy-Leary, 2005). These are the lived experiences of present-day South African youths. Although their experience is secondary (Adonis 2018:49), the present-day South African youths relive the experiences of the primary victims’ (their parents) (Danieli, 1998) through the collective memory of the population and first-hand through continued discrimination, injustices, poverty and inequality (Sotero, 2006). This flows from nation to community to family to individual (in this case the post-apartheid student leaders) (see Figure 3.3).

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Despite the narrative of freedom or "the born-free", the South African youths question this freedom given the lack of economic freedom. They are still suffering marginalisation, unemployment and the same hopelessness as their parents. Intergenerational wealth transference is limited to white youths (Albertini & Radl, 2012), while white youths are confronted with the prospect of limited future opportunities due to black economic empowerment (BEE) initiatives. Adonis's (2018) elucidation of the victimhood theme supports the salient themes identified by Adonis (2016): a) secondary traumatisation (as experienced by the present-day South African youths); b) the socio-economic impact of the legacy of apartheid (and the ongoing limitations on them); and c) the sense of powerlessness and helplessness (in dealing with the traumatic and economic effects that apartheid violations had on their families).

What the literature review highlights thus far is the lack of research, particularly on the effects, if any, of historical trauma on the current generation of student leaders. Furthermore, it has been observed that the effects of historical trauma would mostly be referred to in relation to black youths; the effects on white youths are not explored (as the children of the perceived perpetrators), with potential salient themes such as guilt, shame and silencing (Adonis, 2016), nor is the impact on other youths of colour, mixed-race, Indian, Muslim investigated in the continued intergenerational positioning of themselves in the binary spectrum of the race discourse. This was also evident in the sample in Adonis's (2018) study being limited to black youths only.

Having reviewed the literature in this regard, the nature of the white post-apartheid youth/student/student leader (perhaps even more specifically the "white male student leader") is under-researched in terms of the effect of historical trauma. The themes of guilt, shame and silencing were evident in the experiences shared by them during recent student movements such as #FeesMustFall. Here, the researcher would like to indicate the potential link between guilt, shame and silencing as a contributing factor to identity and leadership identity formation, as the post-apartheid student leader, regardless of race, would daily find themselves in situations where they have to position themselves in relation to either the social context or the topic of discussion. If one argues that the family unit is one of the key providers of past narratives and transmits cultural identity and collective memory to their children (Denham, 2008:398), one can assume that the approach to past narratives (whether it be guilt, shame or

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silencing) would influence the present-day post-apartheid youths' perception of self. Collective memory would therefore be integral to understanding the transmission of identity between family members (Denham, 2008; Halbwachs, 1992).

With this background, the researcher would like to highlight guilt, shame and silencing, and would like to elaborate specifically on silencing in relation to guilt and shame:

- *Guilt* – referring to the guilt of the perpetrator group in relation to the past;
- *Shame* – referring to the shame of the perpetrator group and the collective shame and guilt transmitted across generations (Adonis, 2016);
- *Silence* – referring to the recurrent reaction to the experiences of violence (the victim) (Schramm, 2011), and the contribution to the enactment of that violence (the perpetrator). It can also act as providing the preconditions for not knowing injustice, therefore becoming appropriate containers for ignorance, and even a form of self-regulation (Steyn, 2012:16). In relation to guilt and shame, the researcher would like to allude to Schwan's (1998) assertion that the silencing of guilt damages the political culture of democracy in two ways in that it 1) hinders the realisation of common values of a polity, and 2) damages the psyches of the perpetrators as well as their children, resulting in identity loss and, indirectly, loss of citizenship (Adonis, 2016:10).

Silencing within the family context, as noted by Frankish and Bradbury (2012:296), functions as a way of communicating the rules, myths and metamessages to which families adhere (Ancharoff, Munroe & Fisher, 1998). This can also be found in black families choosing to avoid sharing past traumatic experiences with their children and instead passing on nostalgic stories as potential resources of strength and hope for the younger generation (Frankish & Bradbury, 2012).

Coloured parents' avoidance of sharing historical experiences of apartheid (e.g. forced removals) due to it being too painful leads to coloured youths' ignorance – "it's like you're living in a country but you don't know the history" (Wale, 2020:213). The forced removals of coloured people resulted in "spaces being haunted by people and events no longer being present" (Wale, 2020:214). Present-day coloured youths only have insight into this based on the fragmented narratives shared by older generations.

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Silencing in this regard (by the victim and not the perpetrator) leads to a distortion of past memories being transferred to the next generation.

Denham (2008:397) goes even further, referring to Kidron (2003), who says that the transmission of trauma is found in untreated or unspoken survivor trauma and, if not treated, is passed on to future generations. As Denham (2008: 398), with reference to Aarts (1998), points out, this leads to the perception of historical trauma as a “conspiracy of silence”. Silencing, or “the unstated taboo” (Denham, 2008:398), would therefore result in the children of survivors receiving fragmented information, thus further ”perpetuating a narrative void surrounding the subject experience” (Abrams, M.S., 1999). The “leave it alone and move on” approach observed in political talking spaces (Oelofsen, 2020:197) spilled over from the family context into the public space as a method of intentionally wanting post-apartheid youths not to be bound by the past. Alternatively, it is used as a method to silence victims due to the embarrassment of complicity.

This delicate political balance is therefore between remembering (creating a healthy balance between present and past) and forgetting (not centring the bitter divisions and experiences that divide the nation) in a quest to recover childhoods for children (second- and third-generation victims) to claim the world as their own (Prager, 2003:180). Oelofsen (2020) asserts that what is needed going forward for post-apartheid youth as second- and third-generation victims is to embark on journeys with others to “re-find” and “redefine” the lost language of a South African politic absorbed in silencing, for whatever reason. The finding of a shared humanity among victims, perpetrators and beneficiaries of privilege (and their children in post-apartheid South Africa) is needed for the sake of a transformed conception of society (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2020:146).

Based on Adonis’s (2016) observation that research in this field focuses mostly on the influence of historical trauma on the black youth, and that there is a lack of studies on the effect of historical trauma on specifically the post-apartheid white youths (Wale, 2019) and youths of colour (Pirtle, 2022), the researcher observed the enactment of silencing being experienced by the youth of all races. Adding to guilt, shame and silence is the employment of *nostalgia* as a method of sense-making of current and

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past lived experiences. This observation, and the often-binary race narrative of white and black, gives rise to the question of where the post-apartheid coloured and mixed-race youths find themselves in the context of transgenerational transmission of trauma and the narratives they are being exposed to, whether accepted or rejected. These narratives include remembrance of forced removals due to the Group Areas Act, when people were moved from white areas to government low-budget housing schemes in designated coloured areas such as the Cape Flats or in the countryside, typically on the outskirts of towns and villages.

Coloured narratives also include a sense of nostalgia about the past, claiming that coloured people were better off (safety and freedom) during apartheid. Typical phrases used by second-generation victims are that “those days” were better than “nowadays”, when they live in fear and insecurity (Wale, 2020). The theme of *nostalgia* has been observed in these narratives and is “generally understood as a longing and desire for a lost place (home) or a lost time (the past)” (Wale, 2020:206). Nostalgia is utilised differently by races, e.g. by black grandmothers as a form of protection (Frankish & Bradbury, 2012) and as a mode of critical reflection instead of expressing a longing to return to it (Dlamini, 2009). It is also used by white people to defend their uncertainties following the transition to democracy (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2012). In the coloured community of Bonteheuwel (perceived to be apartheid’s dumping ground for coloured people and key site for anti-apartheid resistance), for example, nostalgia expressed by second-generation victims relates more to a longing for a past that they were not part of, but perceived as being more ideal for coloured youths than the post-apartheid time (Wale, 2020).

Wale (2020) indicates that these nostalgic narratives by coloured youth originate from their experience of current violence (gangsterism) and suffering (unemployment), and furthermore asserts that nostalgia can be utilised as a defensive collective identity based on idealised views of the past in the face of present insecurities and social change (Davis, 1979). Wale (2020) asserts that their experience of collective trauma as it manifests in their communities today also generates forms of insecurity – and arguably in relation to the perceived black government favouring job opportunities for black youths above coloured youths, which further strains racial relations between coloured and black youths. Nostalgia in relation to violence also draws from the

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structural violence of apartheid, which Farmer (1996) describes as "the institutionalisation of social processes that differentially cause suffering through organising unequal access to social resources ". In this case, the post-apartheid youth longing for a past in which physical violence is deemed to be less also highlights the complexity of the structural violence contributing to current unequal access to resources, i.e. the progenetic function of legislated inequality in the past. The term 'progenetic" is used metaphorically here, as it refers to parasitic worms that leave behind viable eggs, even though they themselves die in the body of the host – in this case the death of apartheid in 1994, and its remaining effects giving birth to new social problems (Swartz *et al.*, 2012:30).

The narratives of nostalgia have an additional purpose for present-day youths in that they also serve as encapsulating their loss of socio-economic opportunities, ethical care, safety and pride (Wale, 2020:221). Perhaps one should also ask whether, if this study had been conducted in an affluent coloured community with coloured youths raised in a politically involved family, the responses would have been the same? Arguably not, as one would assume that, having access to intergenerational privilege (even as a minority group), it would have afforded these coloured youths opportunities to access private schools and higher education institutions, as well as job opportunities as part of the "designated groups" preferred for employment. In this case, progressive families who were involved in anti-apartheid activities would not share the same nostalgia as their coloured counterparts in poor coloured communities. This highlights how current class divisions also serve as a potential contributing factor to the acceptance of nostalgia narratives within coloured communities today.

To summarise:

Guilt, *shame*, *silence* and *nostalgia* are experienced to different degrees by post-apartheid youths of all races. A general observation by Naidu and Adonis (2007:15) is that, because of the shared sentiment among post-apartheid youth, forgiveness is necessary while remembering the past, although it is difficult due to a lack of trust among races. In other words, remembering is viewed as necessary for the recognition of the sacrifices made by the previous generation and is central to the development and understanding of individual and collective post-Apartheid identities. It is this hopefulness among post-apartheid youth for better prospects, and the realisation of

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their dreams (which include the unfulfilled dreams of their parents and grandparents) that makes them even more vulnerable (Swartz *et al*., 2012:33). Failed dreams can return as a form of structural violence against young people by excluding them from the nation and citizenship, thus threatening the potential of establishing a sense of belonging desired by the South African post-apartheid youths.

This leads to the final observation of how this particular study can contribute in addressing the gap in student leadership identity formation studies. Little research can be found on the South African higher education student leader population after 1994, more specifically there is an absence of research focusing on identifying the main contributors to their leadership identity formation as positional student leaders, and whether or not historical trauma potentially affected their leadership identity formation.

With reference to the Komives *et al*. (2005) LID model discussed in Chapter 2, the influence of historical trauma on the post-apartheid student's leadership identity could be explored in terms of all six stages of the LID model.

- **Stage 1: Awareness**. In addition to their awareness of their identity and intersectionality, also awareness of how the perception of their identity has been shaped by their parents' experiences of apartheid.
- **Stage 2: Exploration/engagement**. The observation of adults and peers as role models (and their role models' activism in addressing the social injustices of the past).
- **Stage 3: Leader identified**. The leader and follower differentiation as it relates to their understanding of when to lead and when to follow based on their demographic profile (and the heritage of power and privilege associated with it).
- **Stage 4: Leadership differentiated**. Understanding how their perception of their identity influences their role as facilitator in a multicultural context while being cognisant of their group, social and role identity.
- **Stage 5: Generativity**. Understanding what influences their commitment to a specific cause. Given the South African historical context, how does their perception of the influence of apartheid on their family, their own identity, their

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leadership identity and group identity drive their commitment to addressing social justice, human rights, democracy?

- **Stage 6: Integration/synthesis**. Finally, the integration and congruency of their identity and their leadership identity in viewing themselves as change agents, regardless of a formal leadership position.

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Perhaps the current post-apartheid student leaders' dealing with the remnants of the past and how they manifest in their identity is best depicted in Zèwande Bk. Bhengu's poem (Mbao, 2021:144):

#FeesMustFall

I am the heir of broken 1994 dreams.
Democracy doesn't know me.
I am still held back by my skin
And the scars of my history.

I am that savage
Who still has to beg for education
While you swim in your privilege.
My whole family works fingers to the bone
Chasing my certificate,

My feet are anchored in debt.
My destiny is uninhabited.
My body is drenched in sweat.
My economic movement is limited.
So excuse us for disrupting the systems
But we are veteran victims of empty promises.
We are being systematically excluded
Using university fee creases.

We will not be silent
While the government propagate economic violence.
Their bodyguards bring in live ammunition
Against young adults and minors.

Remember,
Making peace impossible makes violence inevitable.

So call us what you will:
Savages, delinquents, monkeys and 138reliterate
We are the generation that stands appalled.
That unrelenting and immovable wall.
We will stand from dusk till dawn.
These fees will fall.

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3.3 Summary

This chapter has highlighted the transformation in South African higher education after 1994, and the impact of this on post-apartheid youth and student leaders as mediators in a multicultural context. It has demonstrated that, despite efforts to deracialise the post-apartheid higher education context, students and student leaders are inevitably confronted with their link to the past and its influence on their identities.

The birth of the new democratic state in 1994 and the broadening of access to higher education brought hope for a transformed socially cohesive society. Universities as institutions with three major domains - research, learning and social impact - are considered to have a social responsibility to create mechanism to address the needs of social cohesion in the broader societal context. One of these mechanisms is through its faculty and students, and in particular student leaders as citizen leaders. It is assumed that universities as microcosms of society, would therefore reflect the opportunities and challenges of society on economic, political and social levels.

The student leader as driver of social change would therefore find themselves on platforms where they not only have to navigate their own sensemaking of institutional and societal changes, but also as facilitator of collective sensemaking for the student community. The confrontation with their positionality linked to their intersectionality highlighted key themes which will be explored in the discussion of the findings (Chapter 6). These themes include: the response to identity threat and how themes such as guilt, shame, silencing, nostalgia and the policing of identities are utilised as tactics for reframing positive identity. The chapter finally drew attention to the gap in the literature that can be addressed by providing insights into the influence of transgenerational transference of trauma on the identity and leadership identity of post-apartheid youths, specifically as it relates to other races apart from black youth. The following chapter provides an extensive discussion on the research methodology applied in this study.

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Chapter 4
Research Design and Methodology

4.1 Introduction

While leadership identity development theory was introduced by Komives *et al.* (2005) as a grounded theory, and the only grounded theory to date related to leadership identity formation within a student context, the application of this grounded theory is still under-researched. Furthermore, no research could be found that is related to student leadership identity formation within a South African or African context, and specifically with a sample from the post-apartheid context of the South African higher education environment. In addition, no research could be found that explored the potential contribution of intergenerational trauma to student leaders' identity formation. This chapter aims to describe the research design and methodology chosen for this study. This also explains why qualitative approach was favoured to deepen the understanding of factors contributing to the selected participants' leadership identity formation. Figure 4.1 illustrates this chapter's layout.

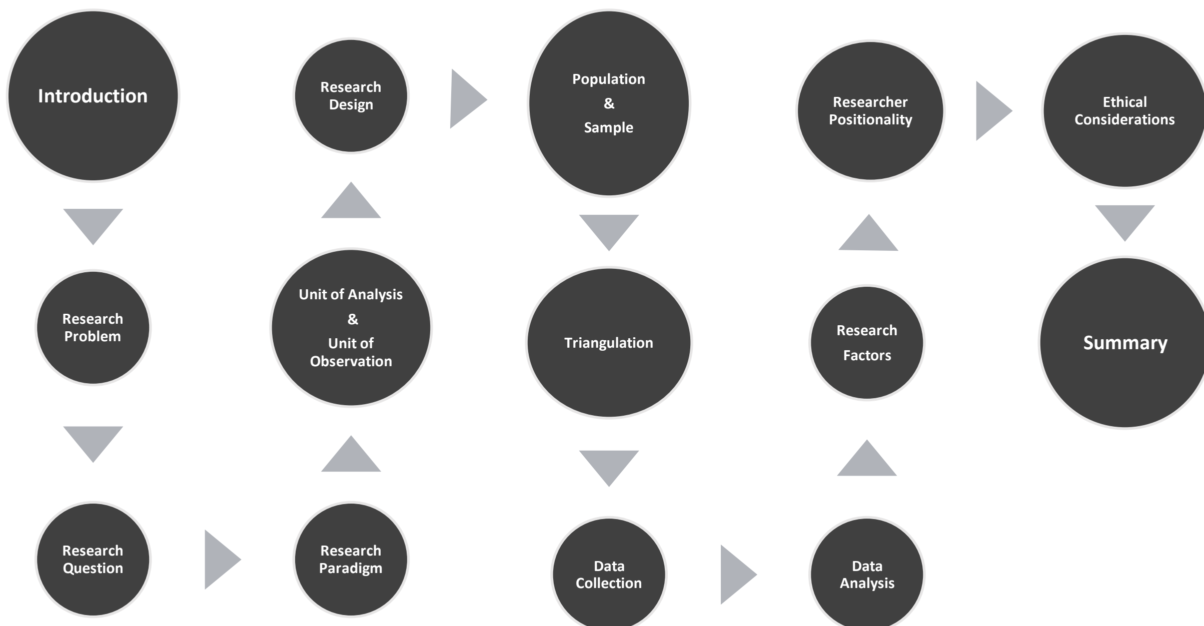

Figure 4.1: Layout of Chapter 4

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4.2 Research problem

Based on the literature review discussed in chapters 2 and 3, the gap identified in the literature on the practice of student leadership is linked to the complexity of identity formation. Furthermore, the gap identified in leadership identity theory as it relates to students in South African higher education, is the factors contributing to students' leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa.

The research question emanating from the gap in the literature has been formulated as: *What informs student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa?* As suggested in the title, this study used a two-layered approach and aimed to demonstrate a potential link between these two identified aspects of leadership development, namely leadership identity formation and the South African historical context.

4.3 Research question

The research problem as stated above informed the main research question:
What informs student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa?

This study therefore focused on a critical assessment of the leadership identity development (LID) model as it translates into leadership understanding, self-perceptions, intersectionality and experiences, although that of a selected group of South African student leaders post-1994.

Bell *et al.* (2019:9) cite Denscombe (2010) by providing various types of research questions. Two main themes/sub-questions were explored in this study in relation to Denscombe's (2010) question types:

- *Evaluating a phenomenon:*
    - Referring to the LID model and adopting Komives *et al.*'s (2006:401) argument, namely that "identity is informed by two key families of developmental theory: psychosocial and cognitive", the sub-question that was posed is: *What is the participants' perception of the main factors contributing to their leadership identity formation (with reference to identity, intersectionality, group identity, role identity and social identity)?*

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- *Explaining causes and consequences of a phenomenon, i.e. relation:*
    - Reflecting on the concept of “historical trauma” allowed the participants to reflect on South African historical events that had contributed to their leadership identity formation, and questioning its potential effect on the selected student leaders’ self-perception and leadership perception.Reviewing the South African political timeline and leadership theory timeline: *What are the key themes in South African history and intergenerational elements affecting the leadership identity of the selected group of student leaders?*

4.3.1 Theoretical framework

Merriam (1998:44) argues that the set of questions to be answered in a study is derived from what is referred to as the theoretical framework or conceptual framework (in the case of a grounded theory) of the study. This theoretical framework enables more precise definition of the research problem. Merriam furthermore refers to the disciplinary orientation of the study and a set of interlocking frames guiding the researcher. This study was guided by two main disciplines, a) that of social psychology (identity theory and social identity theory) and b) leadership studies (social identity theory of leadership).

Creswell (2009:64) points out the importance of identifying where the theory will be situated in a qualitative research study, i.e. as an up-front explanation, as an endpoint or as an advocacy lens. In this regard, the researcher was clear about the contribution of the leadership studies discipline, i.e. the SIT of leadership. However, based on the fact that this study aimed to build on a grounded theory, the plan was not to share the specific identity theory up front; this is because it was anticipated that the theory could give rise to an interchange between the mentioned identity and the identity formation theory approaches, as explained earlier. Figure 4.2 illustrates the interconnectedness of the theories that guided this study.

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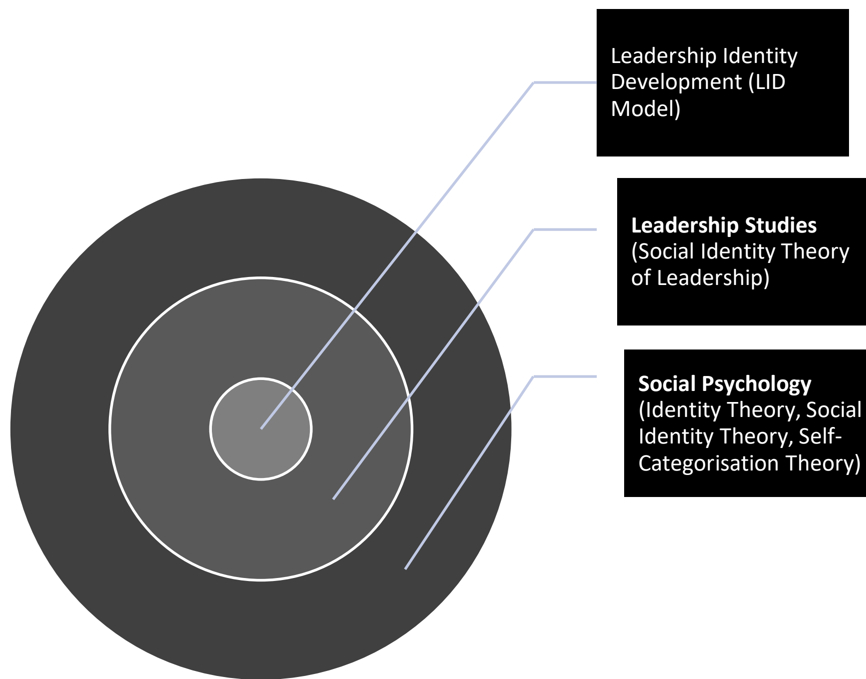

Figure 4.2: Interconnectedness of the theoretical frameworks informing this study

4.3.2 Context

Johns (2006:396) defines context as “situational opportunities and constraints that affect the occurrence and meaning of organisational behaviour as well as functional relationships between variables”. He differentiates between an omnibus context, favouring journalistic thinking with a typical story-telling mode (who, where, when, why), and a discreet context favouring social and environmental psychological thinking (situational, environmental and social variables).

This study focused on student leadership in South African higher education in the post-1994 context at an historical white Afrikaans university (HWU), where the profile of the student community and student leader community had changed (Studenteraad, 2004). At the time of this study, Stellenbosch University did not have statistics available of the demographic profile of student leaders in formal positional leadership positions. The researcher would like to acknowledge that the nature of the research problem and the context of the selected research pool predisposed to both thinking preferences being considered (omnibus and discreet) in relation to the data being analysed. A journalistic approach came into play in the analysis of the personal timelines of the selection pool in Phase 1 and Phase 2, but the researcher took cognisance of the environmental, social and situational factors dominating the context of this research.

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4.3.3 Proposition

Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan (2007) refer to two main dimensions of theoretical contributions, namely theory building (an inductive model beginning with observations to generate theory through inductive reasoning) and theory testing (using a deductive model to formulate a hypothesis). While it could be argued that the development of Komives *et al.*'s (2005, 2006) LID model is considered an example of theory building, it would be particularly important for this study to investigate the relevance of the current theory within the South African higher education context. Theory building and expanding are likely to follow from more research on the link between historical trauma and leadership identity formation in South Africa.

In short: although qualitative research normally follows a more inductive approach, in which hypotheses are generated as recurring themes emerge from the interviews, from a theory-testing perspective, the non-directional hypotheses formulated by the researcher prior to commencing with the data collection included the following:[1]

- Students with a background of family members who were affected by historical trauma (family members who were anti-apartheid activists and incarcerated or died, the socio-economic influences on their family) are most likely to engage in leadership transformation processes within the ecosystem they find themselves in, and even more so defined within Stage 6 (integration/systems) of the LID model;
- Students with a strong sense of self-concept (as referred to by Uhl-Bien, (2006:657) – "the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their relationships and with two distinct constructs: relational self, which emanates from relationships with significant others, and collective self, which is based on identity with a group or social category") are more likely to acknowledge the effect of their intersectionality and social identity on their leadership perception and identity formation. In other words, these students will be able to differentiate the intersectionality of their profiles in Stage 2 (exploration and engagement), rather than only in Stage 3 (leader identified) or Stage 4 (leadership differentiated);

[1] In the research process, the researcher made a prediction, but the exact form of differences was not specific because the researcher did not know what could be predicted from the past literature (Creswell, 2009:135).

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- Referring to identity formation, Stryker and Burke (2000: 286) emphasise that identity-salience is positively affected by the degree of commitment to its respective role (in this study the student leadership role) and the degree to which its respective role is positively evaluated with one's performance (in this study by the student leader's followers or sphere of influence).

The discussion of the findings in Chapter 6 will indicate if these propositions were confirmed.

4.4 Research paradigm

The researcher applied an interpretive research paradigm. This study supports the interpretive social sciences as it was concerned with how the unit of analysis interacts with others with different intersectionality profiles, draws meaning from that interaction and allows that interaction to affect their identity formation. Neuman (1991:88) summarises: "the interpretive approach is the systemic analysis of a socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds". To expand on Neuman's (1991) summary, and as further motivation for the selection of the interpretive theory approach to the qualitative research method, is the observation by Henning *et al.* (2004:20) that, with interpretive theory, the researcher tries to understand the phenomena through the mental processes of interpretation. These processes are influenced by and interact with social contexts and therefore interrogate the *way* in which people make meaning in their lives, not just *that* they make meaning and *what* meaning they make. This was indeed the approach used in understanding and analysing the unit of analysis/observation in this study.

4.5 Unit of analysis and unit of observation

Mouton (2001:51) refers to the unit of analysis (UoA) as the "what of the study". This study focused on "the student" as the unit of observation (UoO) and the "student's leadership identity formation process" as the unit of analysis (UoA). Mouton (1996) developed a three-world framework as a method to understand the levels of analysis. In this study, the object of analysis resides in "world 1" (the world of everyday life and lay knowledge", where human beings interact with others in multiple contexts and

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knowledge is gained through learning, experiences and self-reflection (Mouton, 2001:138). As anticipated, due to the reflective nature of the research methodology (e.g. in-depth multiple case studies via interviews), the study eventually moved to "world 3" (the world of meta-science, in which continuous reflection, self-criticism and justification take place). Furthermore, the unit of analysis focused on the process of leadership identity formation and the influences (historical events, external and internal influences) on their leadership identity formation process.

It is important to note that, although it is possible that the UoA and UoO could be interpreted as the same, and in this case "the student's leadership identity formation process and the various developmental stages observed through the phenomenon, investigated through an empirical study" – the researcher decided, after careful consideration, to keep the UoA and UoO separate. The researcher is therefore aware of the complexity of the study and has been cautious not to confuse the research method and the unit of analysis and unit of observation. Merriam (1998:27) points out that "often the confusion surrounding case studies is that the process of conducting a case study is conflated with both the unit of study (the case) and the product of this investigation".

Figure 4.3 illustrates the layout of the research design, as discussed in section 4.6.

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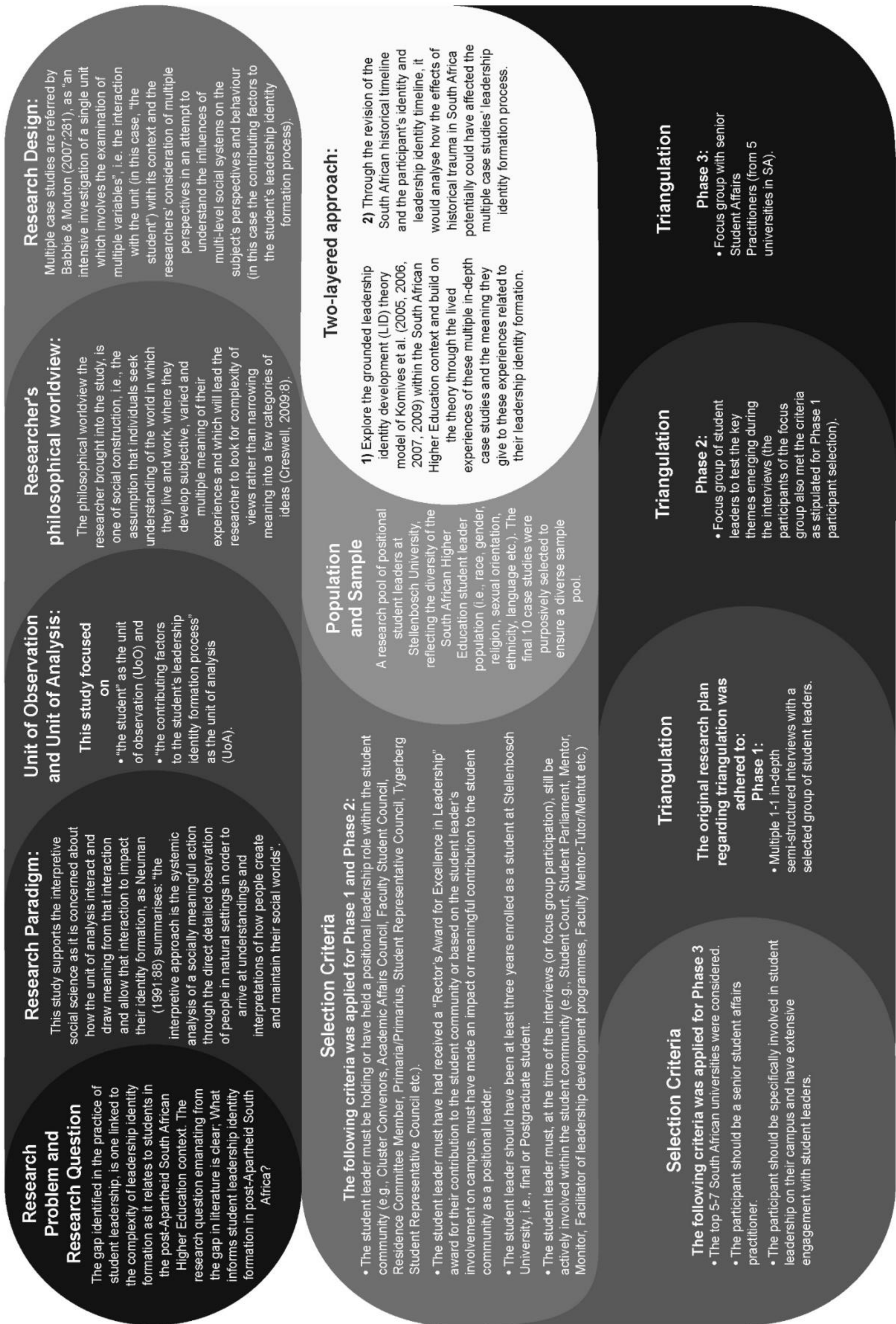

Figure 4.3: Layout of the research design

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4.6 Research design

Creswell (2009:5) refers to the research design as "the plan or proposal to conduct research which involves the intersection of philosophy, strategies of enquiry and specific methods". He further points out that the researcher should be aware of the personal philosophical worldview assumptions they bring into the study. The philosophical worldview the researcher brought into the study is one of social construction, i.e. the assumption that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work and where they develop the subjective, varied and multiple meanings of their experiences. These lead the researcher to look for complexity of views, rather than narrowing meaning into a few categories of ideas (Creswell, 2009:8).

The chosen research design, "multiple individual case studies", is described by Babbie and Mouton (2007:281) as "an intensive investigation of a single unit which involves the examination of multiple variables". I.e. the interaction of the unit (in this case "the student") with its context and the researchers' consideration of multiple perspectives in an attempt to understand the influences of multi-level social systems on the unit's perspectives and behaviour (in this case the student's leadership identity formation process). The research design furthermore had a two-layered approach:

- Firstly*, leadership identity formation* was to be analysed to demonstrate the findings of Komives *et al.* (2005:593), namely that, despite numerous research done in the field of leadership theory, behaviours, effective practices, or on particular populations (e.g., women, youth, ethnic groups), specific settings (e.g., civic leadership, business leadership, church leadership), and diverse outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, effectiveness, social responsibility), little scholarship focuses on *how* leadership identity is formed. There is even less scholarship on student leadership identity formation. This study therefore explored the grounded theory model of Komives *et al.* (2005, 2006, 2007, 2009) within the South African higher education context and built on the theory through the lived experiences of the multiple in-depth case studies and the meaning they give to the experiences related to their leadership identity formation;

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- Secondly, through a revision of the South African historical timeline and the participant's identity and leadership identity timeline, it analysed how the effects of *historical trauma in South Africa* potentially could have affected the multiple case studies' leadership identity formation process.

The abovementioned two-layered approach to the study illustrates the appropriateness of the chosen research design, as it follows Crotty's (1998) three basic assumptions about constructivism referred to by Creswell (2009:8):

- Meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting, and qualitative researchers use open-ended questions for participants to share their views;
- Humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspectives, and qualitative researchers seek to understand the context of the participant and interpret their findings. This is done with cognisance of their own experiences and background (see comments regarding reflexivity in Section 4.10.1.1);
- The basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community. The process of qualitative research is largely inductive, i.e. generating meaning from the collected data.

4.6.1 Narrative Inquiry

As indicated, this study explored 14 key themes through the narratives of 10 student leaders (Phase 1), followed by a focus group of five student leaders (Phase 2). The discussion by student leaders (Phase 2) and senior Student Affairs practitioners (Phase 3) of the key themes that emerged from Phase 1 are included in the discussion of the findings per theme in Chapter 7. See Appendix A for the researcher's fieldnotes and segments of the participants' narratives. Their narratives were important for this study, as the pre- and post-reflections gave insight into the factors contributing to their identity and leadership identity formation.

Narratives refer to the continues stories or accounts of people's experiences and could relate to a complete life story or a discrete life event (Bloor & Wood, 2006:119; Bold,

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2012:15). One of its strengths is that, through life stories, humans not only reveal their experiences but also their identity (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber, 1998).

> People shape their daily lives by stories of who they are, and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful (Clandinin, Caine & Lessard, 2018:15; Connelly & Clandinin, 2006:477).

The researcher chose narrative inquiry for the following reasons and made an assumption of how it will add value to this study:

- Given the South African historical context, and its effect on contemporary student leadership in the post-apartheid context, narratives would display the experiences of the participants as an account of their "lived experiences", potentially contributing to their identity and leadership identity formation. By incorporating timeline exercises prior to interview 1, 2 and 4, the researcher allowed participants to connect past, current and present. Finally participants would through this process gain a stronger awareness of the dimensions of their identity and leadership identity narratives (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010) – a culminating process of creating a leader identity narrative, also alluded to by Clapp-Smith, Hammond, Vogelgesang Lester & Palanski (2019);
- Narratives would also demonstrate the participants' recollection of South Africa's past, and how it affects "their present". i.e. that narratives are parts of larger interactive activities, grounding and functioning them in vivo and in situ in relation to the larger context. The referential world of the participants would also open up that world, in this case the lived experiences of the participants and the actors in their world (Bamberg, 2015);
- Narratives could also shed light on the complexity of identity formation (Ding & Curtis, 2020). I.e. that narratives would give insight into the identity practices of the participants, resulting in a better understanding of their self-concept (Bamberg, 2021);

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- Narratives could aid in the understanding of sense-making of identity(ies) in periods of reform, specifically leadership identity (Reyes, 2021);
- Given the South African context, narratives can be fundamental in gaining interpretations and meanings between self and others. The individual and their families, clans and communities can construct stories relevant to contemporary identity construction in South Africa, as individuals are challenged on how they want to be known and accepted (April, 2021:15);
- The "narrative structure of stories can illuminate real life situations", and how these real-life experiences are connected to the individual (Webster & Mertova, 2007: 19). In this study the participants' time line (and what they constituted as contributors to their identity and leadership identity), would not only give insight into real life situations in post-apartheid South Africa, but the effect of apartheid on their post-apartheid student leadership experience;
- Finally, the individual life stories of the selected participants in this study would also reflect the broader story of the post-apartheid student leader and the inherited post-apartheid South African context. The implication of this broader context is that it serves as referential content for narratives (Bamberg, 2021) and as inherited stories, as stated by Baddeley and Singer (2007:198): "at the start of our lives we inherited a story given to us by our culture through our parents".

This led to six observations in the literature regarding the use of narratives in the identity and race context that the researcher was constantly aware of:

- The avoidance of neo-liberal progress stories serving to enforce silence about racism, which is endemic in education systems (Pratt & Rosiek, 2021);
- Narrative pessimism reproducing and reinforcing racial oppression (Pratt & Rosiek, 2021);
- Narratives can expose the dilemma of ideologies, viz. the observation that stories are told within a specific rhetorical context within the wider themes of ideology (Stanley & Billig, 2004:160). For example, student activism perceived as the aftermath of apartheid and racism experienced within the broader post-apartheid systemic racism rhetoric, or the distancing of minorities from the broader narrative created for and by the dominant narrative (Smart, 2010:100).

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In the latter case, as experienced by minority post-apartheid student activists during the #DecolonisingtheCurriculum protests;

- Understanding the purpose of narratives, especially on what is deemed sensitive topics (in this case the recollection of apartheid and its impact on the participants and their family), i.e. to heal, to empower or to gain insight (Hydén, 2013);
- The impact of narrative inquiry on the researcher's identity (Norton & Early, 2011). I.e. that the researcher's identity as displayed in her narrative could potentially be affected by the participants' narratives. It further serves as a reminder that the researcher (of narratives) works in a three-dimensional space: 1) the personal and social (interaction), 2) the past, present and future (continuity) and 3) the notion of place (situation). The researcher's notes and interpretations would therefore address both the personal and social issues of the past, present and future (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000:50);
- The selected sample reflects the diversity of the post-apartheid student leader profile, but their narratives should not be interpreted as a representation of the post-apartheid student leaders sharing their intersectionality, i.e. narratives cannot offer generalisation (Josselson, 2011:238).

The researcher have included some of the verbatim narratives shared in the pre-interview life history timeline reflections and the series of interviews in her "researcher's fieldnotes (see Appendix A).

4.7 Population and sample

This study included a research pool of positional student leaders at Stellenbosch University, reflecting the diversity of the South African higher education student leader population (in terms of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language.). Bell *et al.* (2019:63) argue that, with a case study, the case (in this study a person/individual) is an object of interest and the researcher aims to provide an in-depth elucidation of it. Merriam (1998:27) cites Yin (1994) and defines case study in terms of a research process, viz. "a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident". For the purpose of this

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study, the final 10 case studies were selected purposively to ensure a diverse sample pool to review the possible influence of intersectionality on Stage 6 of the LID model, namely "integration/synthesis", i.e. supporting the research question of "what informs student leadership identity formation?"

The participants all self-identified as student leaders and, at the time of the interviews, were all still actively involved in various leadership activities in the student community. As explicated in this chapter, all participants met the selection criteria, having been recognised for their exceptional leadership contributions on campus. Furthermore, the participants reflected the diversity of the student leadership community in terms of race, religion, language, ethnicity, sexual orientation, different study fields and student life involvement.

Although this *reflects* the diversity of the student leader population, the researcher would like to acknowledge that the participants should not be regarded as *representing* their profile groups. Each participant's life story and their recollection of South Africa's history as well as the main contributing factors to their identity and leadership identity were subjective in relation to their own lived experiences. This is typical of life stories and narrative inquiry which was incorporated into the data analysis. This is also highlighted in Chapter 6 in the discussion of the individual case studies.

To protect the identity of the participants, pseudonyms were allocated to all participants (Phase 1, 2 and 3), and their specific leadership involvement and scholarships received are not linked to them directly.

4.7.1 Participant selection and criteria

A purposive sampling approach was used to ensure a diverse sample population (gender, language, race, sexual orientation, religion). As the researcher works within the student leadership environment at Stellenbosch University and engages extensively with positional student leaders, she was able to draw up a short list of potential participants meeting the selection criteria. In addition, the researcher approached two practitioners working in the Student Affairs leadership space at the university (on both the Stellenbosch and Tygerberg/Faculty of Medicine and Health

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Sciences campuses) to provide recommendations for student leader participants based on the criteria mentioned below.

4.7.1.1 Selection criteria (Phase 1 and Phase 2)

The following criteria were applied in Phase 1 and Phase 2:

- The student leader must be holding or have held a positional leadership role within the student community (e.g. Cluster Convenor, Academic Affairs Council, Faculty Student Council, Residence Committee Member, Primaria/Primarius, Student Representative Council, Tygerberg Student Representative Council);
- The student leader must have had received a "Rector's Award for Excellence in Leadership" for their contribution to the student community or based on their involvement on campus, and must have made a significant or meaningful contribution to the student community as a positional leader;
- The student leader should have been enrolled as a student at Stellenbosch University for at least three years, i.e. final-year or postgraduate student;
- The student leader must, at the time of the interviews (or focus group participation), still be actively involved within the student community (e.g. Student Court, Student Parliament, mentor, monitor, facilitator of leadership development programmes, Faculty Mentor-Tutor/MenTut).

It is important to note that "historical trauma" could not be included as criterion for participation, as the researcher would not have been able to verify if the participant has been affected by historical trauma prior to the selection. The researcher also decided against limiting the research pool to black student leaders from low socio-economic backgrounds, as this would presuppose that only black students are potentially affected by historical trauma. The researcher believed that focusing on a diverse pool of students instead lent itself to rich data for a first study done in South African higher education on student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa. All participants in all phases had to sign a consent form (see Appendix C for the Phase 1 consent form).

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4.7.1.2 Selection process: Phase 1

The following provides a breakdown of the selection process for Phase 1:

1) A consolidated list of 28 potential participants was compiled (a combination of the researcher's short list and the short list of two Student Affairs practitioners);
2) Thirteen students were approached by the researcher;
3) Two students declined participation due to their academic programme;
4) One student never responded to the invitation or follow-up e-mail invitation;
5) Finally, 10 of the 13 senior students who were approached confirmed participation in Phase 1.

4.7.1.3 Selection process: Phase 2

The same selection criteria applied to the Phase 2 participants. The following offers a breakdown of the selection process:

1) The researcher consulted the original consolidated list (minus the participants in Phase 1);
2) Seven students were approached to participate in the focus group;
3) One student declined. This was the same students who declined in Phase 1 due to his academic programme;
4) One student accepted and the researcher scheduled an online briefing with him. He signed the consent form, but never responded to five follow-up e-mails;
5) A final group of five of the seven senior students who were approached consented to participate.

4.7.1.4 Selection process: Phase 3

Based on the researcher's role in Student Affairs, she had access to Student Affairs practitioners at various higher education institutions in South Africa. The following process was followed:

1) The researcher reached out to five Student Affairs practitioners – at each of the University of Cape Town, Stellenbosch University, North-West University, the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Pretoria, and a researcher with extensive background in student affairs research in South Africa;
2) The researcher declined participation in the focus group, as he viewed himself as a researcher in the field and not necessarily a student affairs practitioner,

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but he offered to engage in a one-on-one conversation with the researcher after Phase 3 of the data collection process;

3) All five Student Affairs practitioners who were approached accepted the invitation to participate.

Figure 4.4 provides an overview of the participant profile (Phase 1, 2 and 3):

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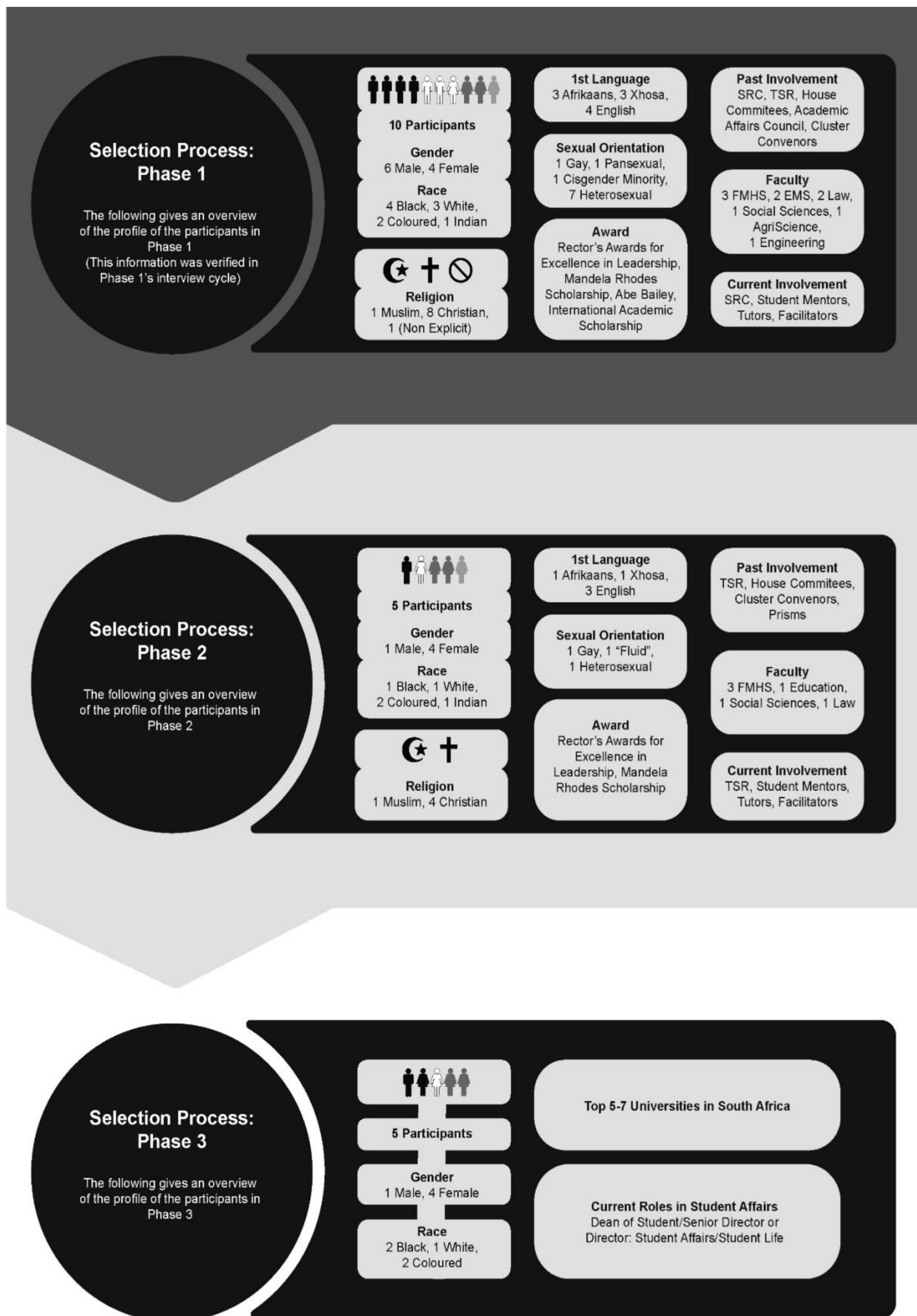

Figure 4.4: Participant profile (Phase 1, 2 and 3)

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4.7.2 Selection of site

As stated in the research proposal for this study, the initial site was going to be an office on the main Stellenbosch campus or at the Tygerberg campus (Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences), and not the researcher's office. The latter office is positioned centrally on the main campus and the student leaders are familiar with other Student Affairs colleagues. This was also to ensure that the interview could take place in a safe environment where participants will not be interrupted or will not be recognised as participants in this study.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all face-to-face research was put on hold, and ethical clearance were only granted by Stellenbosch University in late September 2020. At this stage, the researcher had to resort to online interviews via Microsoft Teams. The fact that the interviews were now online and not face to face brought an additional challenge to the study, as the researcher could not observe body language or other non-verbal clues. In order to establish rapport with the participants, it was important that the researcher's camera was switched on throughout the duration of each of the 40 (90 mins+) interviews. Participants were encouraged to have their cameras switched on, but some participants preferred to have theirs switched off. Some argued that it was to save data, but it could also have been that the participant felt more at ease to engage in conversation without video.

It was interesting to note that only two, and at most three, of the participants opted to switch off their cameras. In these cases, the researcher left her camera switched on. While one could argue that online interviews are not as ideal as face-to-face interviews, the fact is that this form of engagement had become normal at the time of the interviews (October to December 2020) as a result of Covid-19, as most classes on campus were offered online only. It certainly aided the process of conducting the interviews online because the students were familiar with the Microsoft Teams platform.

The site selection for the focus group (Phase 2) was a secluded venue off campus. It was scheduled for a Saturday, which would have been easier for the participants in the light of their academic schedule. Unfortunately, due to one of the participants testing positive for Covid-19, the session had to be conducted online via Microsoft

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Teams. A follow-up face-to-face session to conclude Phase 2 with the same participants was also scheduled at the same venue on another Saturday. Due to South Africa moving into its third wave of Covid-19 in June/July 2021 (as a result of which all face-to-face engagements with students were cancelled), this follow-up session again had to be rescheduled and conducted online via Microsoft Teams.

The focus group session in Phase 3, with the Student Affairs practitioners, was scheduled online via Microsoft Teams from the beginning, as the participants were scattered all over the country. The researcher was also not comfortable about travelling during the third wave and putting the participants in a position to feel obliged to attend a face-to-face focus group conversation.

As with face-to-face interviews, it was important that the interview site selected by the participant was free from interference. This "rule of engagement/agreement" was honoured by all the participants, except for one session when one of the participants (in Phase 1) was late for his interview, did not reschedule in time, and was certainly distracted, as he was not in an environment in which he could give his undivided attention. Requested to consider rescheduling the interview, the participant indicated that he was not available after this final interview. When reviewing the field notes for that particular session, the researcher felt that this particular interview was not ideal, as she could sense the participant did not reflect deeply on what was required for that session.

4.7.3 Pseudonyms

There are different opinions on the selection of pseudonyms for qualitative research. According to Wiles (2013:51), "[p]seudonyms are generally chosen by the researcher, but are sometimes given by a transcriber or suggested by participants. The use of pseudonyms is not without its problems in relation to successful anonymisation". The researcher's decision to select the pseudonyms herself was based on the following:

1) The fact that the sample (for both Phase 1 and Phase 2) consisted of student leaders who are quite prominent within the student leadership environment;
2) Allowing participants to choose their own pseudonyms would pose a greater risk, as there could be the possibility that they would choose nicknames/names of their friends, or names which would easily disclose their identity;

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3) Using a simple label such as “SRC member”, “HK/House Committee member” would be oversimplifying the participant’s identity, as all participants held various leadership positions and would not ascribe to only one single label;
4) Using a simple label such as “Participant 1, Participant 2” would also detract from the personal nature of this study, in which participants often disclosed very personal and detailed aspects of their life.

For the abovementioned reasons, the researcher decided to choose an appropriate pseudonym (e.g. with reference to Indian, Portuguese, Xhosa, Zulu or Afrikaans names) as a “label” with a profile description of their self-disclosed intersectionality, but without explicitly mentioning their specific leadership roles (see Appendix A: Researcher’s fieldnotes). To further ensure anonymity as a collective, the researcher instead mentioned “the participants have held/are holding positional leadership such as … and have either received Rector’s Awards for Excellence in Leadership, or prestigious scholarships such as Mandela Rhodes or Abe Bailey” (see Figure 4.4).

4.8 Triangulation

Creswell (2009:191) argues that, if themes are established by converging several sources of data or perspectives from participants, the process can be claimed to be adding to the validity of the study. Daniel (2019:121) refers to Cope (2014) in positing that “[t]riangulation relates to the convergence of data obtained using two or more data sources and a mechanism to substantiate findings by using one method and corroborated the outcome with another, and also gain a comprehensive overview of the phenomenon”.

It was considered to add a focus group of student leaders from 1976 (the year of the Soweto Uprising in South Africa and often referred to in South African student leadership history) as part of the triangulation process to compare pre/post-apartheid student leader cohorts. However, after careful consideration, the researcher decided that this could potentially have distracted from the selected cohort’s data. After consultation with her supervisor, the researcher decided against it. The original research plan for triangulation was adhered to:

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- **Phase 1:** Multiple one-on-one in-depth semi-structured interviews with a selected group of student leaders;
- **Phase 2:** Focus group with student leaders to test the key themes emerging during the interviews (the participants in the focus group also met the criteria stipulated for Phase 1 participant selection);
- **Phase 3:** Focus group with senior Student Affairs practitioners (from five universities in SA).

Figure 4.5. indicates the triangulation process which was applied in this study.

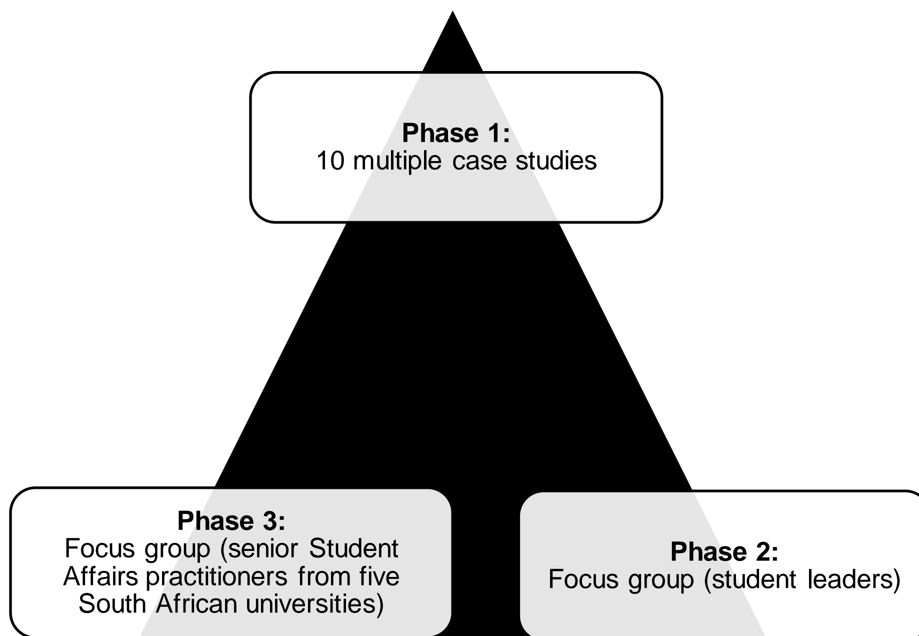

Figure 4.5: Triangulation process during the three-phase data collection process

4.9 Data collection

The following section elaborates on the data collection process from prior to Phase 1 to after Phase 3.

4.9.1 Data collection: Phase 1

4.9.1.1 The briefing meeting

Although there are many qualitative approaches, the researcher believes the nature of the study required an in-depth one-on-one semi-structured formal interview approach. The initial e-mail invitation included the consent form and was then followed up with an online briefing meeting with each participant. This recorded online briefing

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meeting was scheduled with each participant prior to the interview cycle to explain the details of the study, discuss the consent form and confirm that multiple interviews were required during the interview cycle. Creswell (2009:89) stresses the importance of respecting the participants and research sites and refers to Sarantakos's (2005) elements that should be considered in the consent form to be discussed with the participants prior to the formal data collection stage (see Appendix D for the approved letter of consent). The approved consent form includes all elements referred to by Brinkmann and Kvale (2015:93), Sarantakos (2005) and Seidman (2006: 61), e.g. identification of the principle investigator and supervisor, how the participant was selected, purpose of the research, risks and benefits for the participant, guarantee of confidentiality, provision of contact details if questions arise, and assurance that the participant could withdraw at any given time during the data collection phase.

During the briefing meeting, the participants were also informed that, prior to sessions 1, 2 and 4, they would be required to reflect on specific themes. This would require more time than just the interview time. Ultimately, a firm commitment was required from each participant to participate in the study. All ten participants agreed and committed to the process. The researcher believed that the online briefing meeting not only allowed the participants to raise any questions or potential concerns, but also allowed the participant to get to know the researcher in a more "informal" way. It is important to note that all ten participants knew the researcher (due to her position in Student Affairs) and had either engaged with her in specific leadership programmes or had participated in programmes in which the researcher had been involved.

During the initial briefing meeting, cameras were switched on and it could be observed that the participants felt more at ease with a flexible approach to the interview schedule, e.g. that the interviews could be scheduled after hours or over weekends at a time that best suited their schedule. They were also more at ease when the researcher mentioned that no prior knowledge of a specific topic was needed, but that the study would focus more on their experiences as student leader in post-apartheid South Africa. One participant asked if a glossary of definitions would be shared with them prior to the interviews (to which the answer was "no, because I would first like to hear your interpretation of some of the concepts"). This indicated to the researcher that the participant wanted to do his "homework" on the themes to be discussed. In

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this case, it was important for the researcher to stress that she would be more Interested in his authentic sharing of experiences or understanding of specific concepts. The participant appeared to be more at ease after this explanation.

Each briefing meeting was followed up by a summary of what was discussed, confirmation of interview dates, and information about the required timelines. A suggestion on how to reflect – the Gibbs reflective model (Gibbs, 1988) – was included as a guideline for reflection. Participants were encouraged to reflect on their own style and to type if they preferred to do so. The Gibbs reflective model served merely as a guideline – a method the researcher put in place to ensure that the participants did not simply describe what happened but moved towards a deeper reflection on being a leader – towards analysing, understanding and applying the knowledge gained to inform the manner in which the specific entry on their timeline affected their identity or leadership identity development.

4.9.1.2 The interview rhythm

For the focus of the study, the aim was to create an interview rhythm that would assist the participant to also understand the flow of the interview cycle and to allow them to feel more in control of the process of sharing personal details of their life. Seidman (2006:17) explains the "three-interview series" as a model of in-depth phenomenological interviewing where the researcher conducts a range of interviews with each participant; interview 1 focused on life history, interview 2 focused on the details of the experience, and interview 3 on reflection on the meaning. He further says that this process "becomes meaningful and understandable when placed in the context of their lives and the lives around them". The researcher followed a similar interview structure, with the exception of adding a fourth interview to the series, followed by a consolidation and reflective interview with the participants in Phase 1 nine/ten months later.

The interview cycle (Phase 1) consisted of the following process:

* **Interview 1:** Life history (identity timeline)
* **Interview 2:** Exploration (leadership identity timeline)
* **Interview 3:** Exploration
* **Interview 4:** Reflection and meaning (South African historical events timeline)
* **Final:** Follow-up consolidation and reflection interview after Phase 3.

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Follow-up interview: A fifth interview, scheduled 9/10 months after Phase 1, focused on prioritisation of the consolidated key themes generated in Phase 1 and Phase 2.

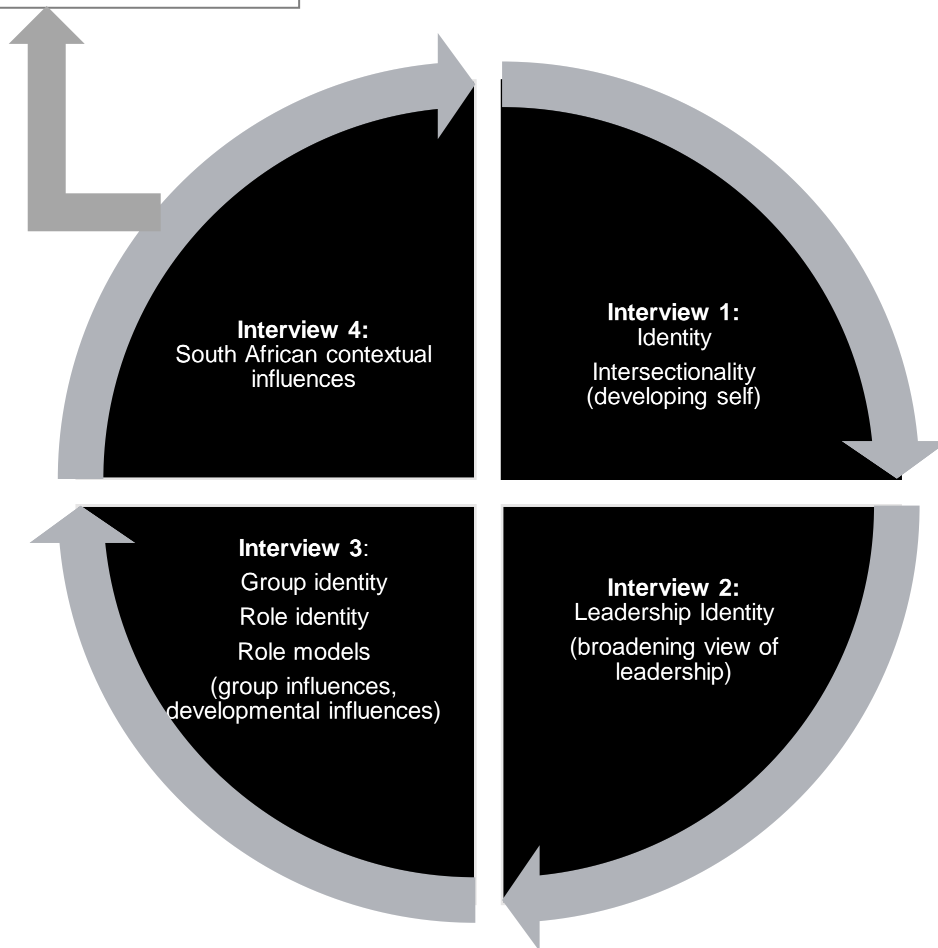

Figure 4.6: Cycle of interviews conducted from October 2020 to December 2020. (Phase 1 of the data collection process)

4.9.1.3 The length of the interviews

Seidman (2006:20) argues that, although there is not necessarily a required time for an interview, it is important to take into consideration that, if the purpose of the interview is for the participant to deconstruct their experience, anything less than 90 minutes might be too short. He furthermore alludes to the importance of ensuring the participant has a stake in a set amount of time. During the briefing meeting with each participant, the researcher and participant agreed to set aside two hours per interview at a time that would not interfere with their academic programme. The researcher also

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wanted to ensure that they would not be cut short or that the participant would not feel rushed during a rich conversation. On one occasion (interview 4), the interview was more than two hours long and both the researcher and participant agreed to rather schedule a follow-up interview to ensure that both were refreshed and that the topics would not be rushed.

4.9.1.4 Spacing of the interviews

Due to the fact that each interview would be building on the previous interview, it was important that the rhythm was maintained. The interviews were scheduled one week apart, unless their academic schedule did not allow for a weekly routine (this only happened with one participant, with two of the interviews being two weeks apart, but the rest remained within the one-week time frame). Eight of the ten participants chose to have their interview cycle completed prior to their final exams in November 2020, while two participants chose to complete their final exams first and have their interview cycle scheduled in December 2020.

4.9.1.5 Structure of the interviews

The interview structure consisted of a combination of different types of questions: introductory questions, contrasting questions, describing questions, probing questions, cross-control, follow-up questions, specifying questions, normalising, direct and indirect questions (Bernard, 2000; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015:160 Gilbert, 1993; Gilham, 2000; Taylor & Bogdan, 1984, 1998). Rubin and Rubin (2012:137) simplify the interview structures by narrowing them down to main questions, follow-up questions and probes. When creating the interview protocol, the researcher was mindful of Rubin and Rubin's (2012:141) reference to the tree-and-branch model (with reference to questions eliciting depth), and the river-and-channel model (with reference to exploring the breadth of a particular response). The tree-and-branch model was utilised when the research question was broken up into various parts (or sub-themes), and each of these sub-themes was further broken into smaller sections with question types ranging from main, follow-up and probing questions.

For example, some of the main topics identified as branches were identity, leadership identity, group identity, role identity, role models. For the tree-and-branch model to work, in other words to inspire the participant to do deep dives into the topic, Rubin and Rubin (2012:142) advise that the researcher ensure that main questions are

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logically related and phrased in a manner that would make sense to the interviewees. When a participant requested clarity on a question during the interview, it served as an indication to the researcher that the question was either not clear enough or was not phrased in a manner that the interviewee could understand. On a positive note, it also demonstrated that the participant wanted to make sure that they understood the question correctly (which in two cases became a pattern, which demonstrated the thoroughness with which the participants wanted to deal with the question). In these cases, the participants also started to demonstrate an ability for deep reflection, as their engagement throughout the interview cycle indicated (see Appendix B: Interview Protocol, Phase 1).

4.9.1.6 Researcher's fieldnotes

The researcher made some fieldnotes during the interviews but was also mindful that the interview should not be experienced by the participant as rigid, or that the researcher was only focused on taking notes rather than listening attentively to their answers (see Appendix A). For this reason, the researcher made a concerted effort to study the interview flow prior to the interview so that the participant would experience it as a conversation. It also was important for the researcher to refer the participant to some of their comments in previous interviews so that they would be able to see the connection or progression of their thoughts through the interview cycle. While the interview was conducted online and recorded, the researcher did not share the list of questions on her screen. This was important to add to the comfort of the participant to share freely, without feeling that they had to pre-empt what was to be covered next.

The researcher's fieldnotes also provided an opportunity for her to reflect on her own observations and experiences during a specific interview, e.g. when she felt the participant was being evasive. It also provided insights into her positionality when, for example, she mentioned her slight irritation and disappointment at a student who shared some aspects of her intersectionality (race, gender). Based on the researcher's prior engagement with the particular participant, she did not reflect as deeply as the researcher had anticipated (see discussion in Chapter 6).

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4.9.1.7 Timelines and 'black book moments'

As mentioned during the briefing meeting, participants were requested to complete a timeline of the main factors or life events contributing firstly to their identity development and secondly to their leadership identity formation. They then had to provide key historical South African events contributing to their leadership identity formation. Some researchers would request additional information from the participant that can aid their understanding of the participant's life, such as a resumé or a short biography, which will also give the researcher insight prior to the interview of what the participant is comfortable to share. For this study, the researcher selected "timelines" as an additional data point to analyse. The timeline was sent to the researcher at least one day prior to the interview. This gave the researcher additional insights into how to incorporate specific emerging themes into each participant's leadership identity development, as the researcher could refer to prior "timeline entries" to highlight new or recurring themes.

Reflexivity became an important method to collect many layers of data and added to the richness of descriptions (or additional information to the transcripts). The researcher provided each participant with a black Moleskine notebook prior to the interview cycle. During the briefing meeting she explained that the purpose of the "black book moments" would be for the participant to make notes during or after each interview to capture their thoughts, "aha moments", when they felt unease, or general themes/topics they wanted to reflect on. The "black book moments" also became a "point of reference" for both researcher and participant, as the researcher would often invite the participant to have a "black book moment" when they mentioned an interesting experience (with reference to the river-and-channel model).

This was done when the researcher could not focus on exploring that particular comment by the participant, but wanted the participant to reflect, for example, on the relevance of and potential link to the contributing factors affecting their identity or leadership identity development. The researcher collected the black books after the fourth interview and, if she could not collect them, the participants sent a copy or typed their "black book moments". The "black book moments" were included in the data analysis. The researcher stored back-up copies of each recording and transcribed each of the 40 interviews of 90 to 120 minutes herself. Brinkmann and Kvale

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(2015:174) argue that "computer-assisted interviews" have their advantages, and Microsoft Teams has a caption functionality that allows for the auto/self-transcribing of recordings. However, the researcher found this format of little value, as it could not accurately transcribe the local vernacular, i.e. typical South African expressions, or Xhosa and Afrikaans words.

In other words, although the automated text was available, the researcher still transcribed the text by verifying content by listening to the recordings. Although this process was incredibly time-consuming and took months to complete, she believed that spending additional time listening to the recordings and transcribing the interviews would allow her more time to familiarise herself with the content, pick up on silences and where participants requested her to rephrase questions. It also allowed her to cross-check her field notes and to observe where she was perhaps getting tired or did not phrase certain questions as sharply as desired.

4.9.2 Data collection: Phase 2 (student leaders) and Phase 3 (student affairs practitioners)

Silverman (2011:207) refers to Wilkinson's (2011:168) description of focus group methodology when used in social science as "deceptively simple" and a way of collecting qualitative data involving the following aspects:

1) "Recruitment of a small group of people (6-8)". This should usually be people sharing a particular characteristic or common interest;
2) "Encouraging an informal group discussion(s) focused around a particular topic";
3) "Usually based on the use of a schedule of questions". In some cases it can be followed by rankings in order of preference or importance;
4) "Focus groups are sometimes referred to as group interviews". In this case the role of the researcher is not to merely ask a set of questions, but to rather facilitate a group discussion and employ skills to engage all participants in the group;
5) "Focus groups may be reconvened at a later date or a series of focus groups may be held";
6) "The discussion is recorded, the data transcribed, and then analysed using conventional techniques for qualitative data".

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The researcher followed the same approach to the focus group in Phase 3 as mentioned in relation to Phase 2. In this case, due to time constraints and the participants' busy schedules, the focus group was divided into two groups because all the participants could not attend the same session. The researcher does not believe this had any effect on the participants' contributions; in fact, the smaller groups allowed for more participation by each participant. Figure 4.7 highlights the focus group dimensions (Wilkinson, 2011:168).

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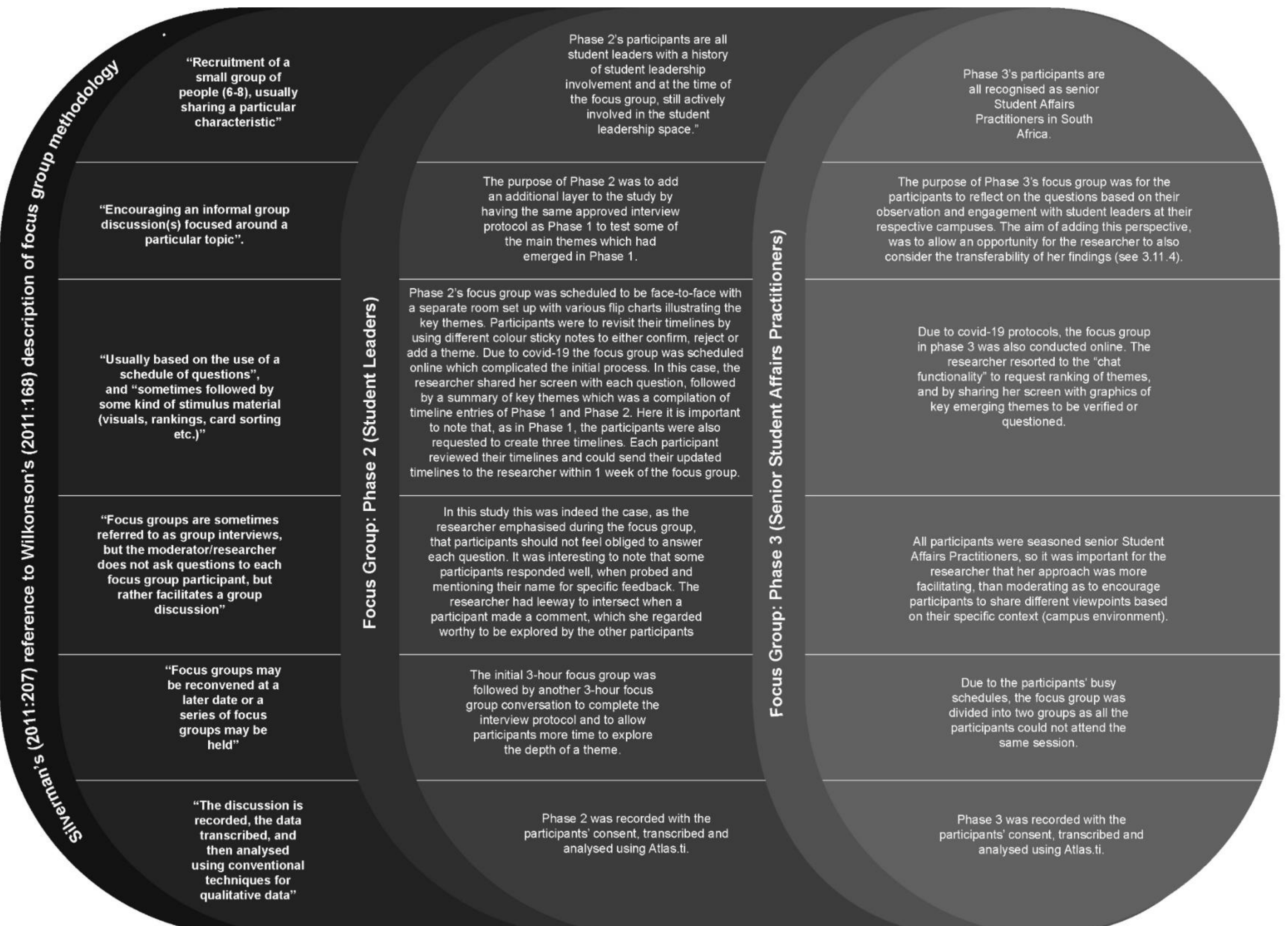

Figure 4.7: Summary of focus groups 2 and 3, with reference to Wilkinson's (2011:168) focus group methodology.

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4.10 Data Analysis

The following data analysis stages were employed in this study:

4.10.1 Coding process

Henning *et al*. (2004:101) emphasise the importance in qualitative research of showing the design logic. In the case where grounded theory is being explored, that the analysis is extended to more sophisticated levels of abstraction and to a conceptualised understanding of the data that led to the substantive theory.

A combination of the systematic deductive method, guided by Komives *et al*.'s (2006) LID model stages, and an inductive method was followed – from the raw data to the final patterns of meaning, i.e. the qualitative coding and categorising method referred to by Merriam (1998):

- **Step 1:** collection of raw, thick data *(in this case from in-depth one-on-one interviews, followed by the transcription of the interviews;*
- **Step 2:** divided into small units of meaning – this was done according to what a unit of meaning signifies to the researcher *(in this case depending on the researcher's observation notes);*
- **Step 3:** grouping of categories containing related codes (*the researcher explored online software, e.g. Dedoose and Nvivo, but finally utilised Atlas.ti for the coding process).*

Although the researcher explored online software to assist with the coding process, cognisance was taken of the responsibility to be mindful of the various types of coding, such as open, axial and selective coding (Neuman, 2006:461), as the complexity of the research topic required throughout analysis. To summarise Henning *et al*.'s (2004:138) stages for constructivist analysis:

- **Stage 1:** orientation to the data (sets of data were read and text segmented for open coding) – this was used for verification in Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the data collection phase;
- **Stage 2:** working the data (coding and categorisation was done by working iteratively and comparing through selected coding);
- **Stage 3:** final composition of the analysed data text (through the researcher's understanding of the phenomena).

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4.10.1.1 Coding stages: Open, axial and selective coding

Stage 1–- open coding: Open coding was applied predominantly in Step 1 of the data analysis phase. Neuman (2006:461) describes open coding as "a first coding of qualitative data in which the researcher examines the data to condense them into preliminary analytic categories or codes". During this phase, for example, the researcher reviewed all the participants' timeline reflections submitted prior to interview 1 (identity), interview 2 (leadership identity) and interview 4 (South African historical events) and categorised all timelines according to main themes. The researcher then reviewed all the transcripts pertaining to the discussion of these themes to confirm or highlight contradictions. Finally, the main themes were listed, regardless of the number of participants highlighting a specific theme. It is important to note that, because the series of interviews was well structured according to specific themes, the researcher used the interview structure to populate transcript content first, and only after this categorisation did open coding take place.

Stage 2 - axial coding: Axial coding is described by Neuman (2006:462) as "a second stage of coding of qualitative data in which a researcher organises the codes, links them, and discovers key analytical categories". During this step of the data analysis, the researcher requested the assistance of a second coder to review timeline reflection samples to verify the codes produced by the researcher. The second coder fully agreed with the researcher's codes and no new codes were generated by the second coder. Figure 4.8 indicates how the researcher proceeded from open coding to axial coding.

Figure 4.8: From open coding to axial coding

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Stage 3 – selective coding: the final stage entailed **selective coding**. Selective coding refers to "a last stage in coding qualitative data in which the researcher examines previous codes to identify and select data that will support the conceptual coding categories that were developed" (Neuman, 2006:464). The following provides an example of the selective coding applied by the researcher using the participants' timeline reflections: Student movements were clustered as a selective code, and student movements were linked with student activism in the axial coding phase. Figure 4.9 indicates how the researcher proceeded from axial coding to selective coding.

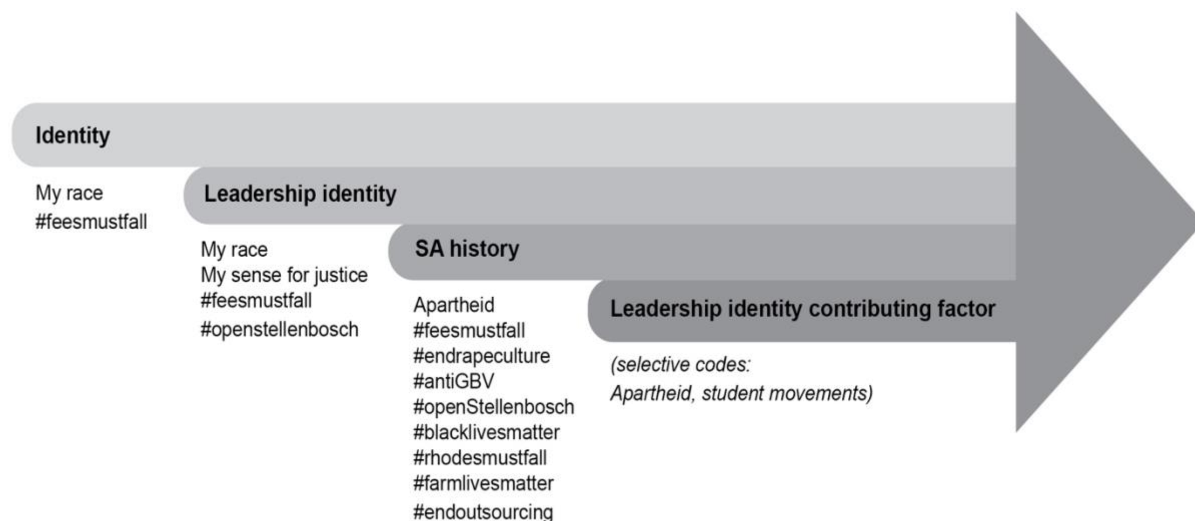

Figure 4.9: From axial coding to selective coding

"Induction, deduction and abduction are forms of logical reasoning that are used in every type of research (qualitative and quantitative)" (Flick, 2014:123). As mentioned, the researcher was cognisant of the need not to limit the data analysis with a deductive approach, i.e. not merely *testing the theory* posited by the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model, as it was anticipated that some codes would require an inductive approach to determine factors contributing to student leadership identity formation, and that this study could potentially *build on the theory*. Vogt, Vogt, Gardner and Haeffele (2014:368) say most social research could entail both deductive and inductive data analysis approaches.

They further point out that following a merely deductive approach when exploring a study of people could become irrelevant, something the researcher anticipated with this South African sample. The researcher had to take the South African context into

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account, which differs from that of the United States of America context, where the Komives *et al*. (2005) LID model originated. The researcher could also not limit the data analysis to an inductive approach, as she had already designed the interview protocol with some elements of the Komives *et al*. (2005) LID model. She therefore acknowledged preconceived ideas about the potential data prior to collecting it.

Although the researcher started with the data analysis during the data collection phase, she would like to point out that this was done on a thematic analysis basis only, as it did not entail theoretical sampling at this stage, and not as grounded theory. According to Ezzy (2002:87), thematic analysis is often mistaken for grounded theory, but the latter utilises theoretical sampling where the emerging analysis guides the collection of further data – which was not the case in this study. Although the Komives *et al*. (2005) LID model is considered a grounded theory, the researcher would like to emphasise that this study is not considered a grounded theory. Figure 4.10 illustrates the data analysis approach followed:

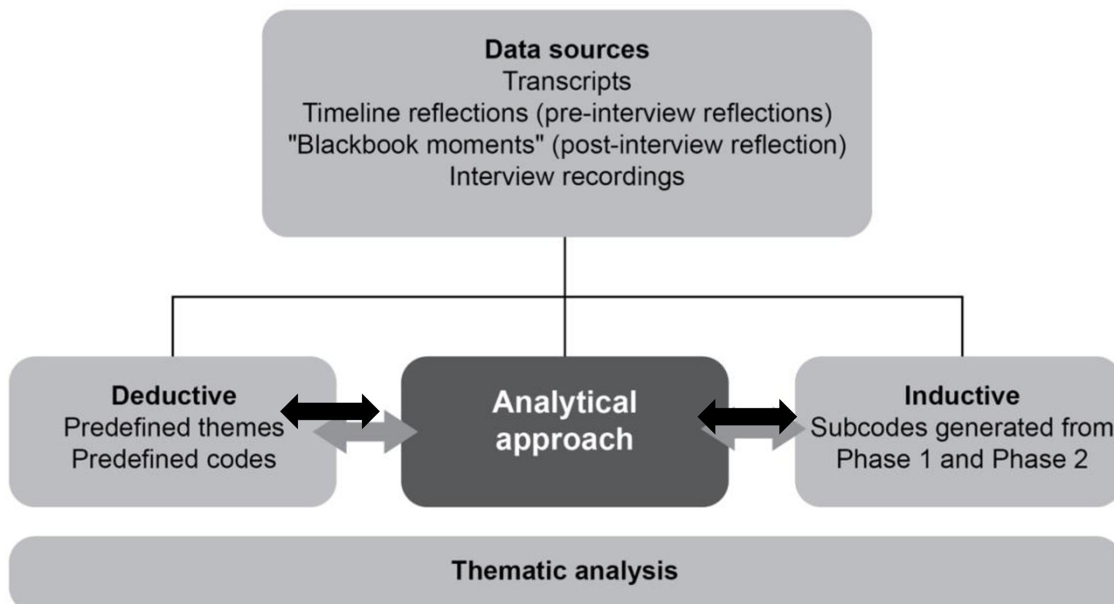

Figure 4.10: Combined analytical approach

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The researcher utilised Atlas.ti software (a CAQDAS programme) to categorise the data (Friese, 2012), also because of the quotation structure. I.e. that data segments could remain independent, be coded, and linked to other quotations (Silver & Lewins, 2014:62). In this study, many quotations were double or triple coded based on their relevance to multiple codes. All data sources, as indicated above (excluding the recordings), were imported to create a "project". Each participant's data was added as a single document (interview transcripts, timeline reflections and "blackbook moments"). Atlas.ti was not utilised for data analysis, but to create data categorisation according to the codes and subcodes determined by the researcher. The data was then exported to separate Excel sheets according to each theme, code and subcode. This also assisted with the frequency count per theme, code and subcode (see Table 4.1), which explains the structure of the themes, codes and subcodes).

Pseudonyms served as "labels" and not as profile description, e.g. 'Fundiswa" was the "label", instead of "Xhosa-speaking, heterosexual Christian female". Focus groups were added as separate documents.

Figure 4.11 indicates an example of a typical network view in Atlas.ti.

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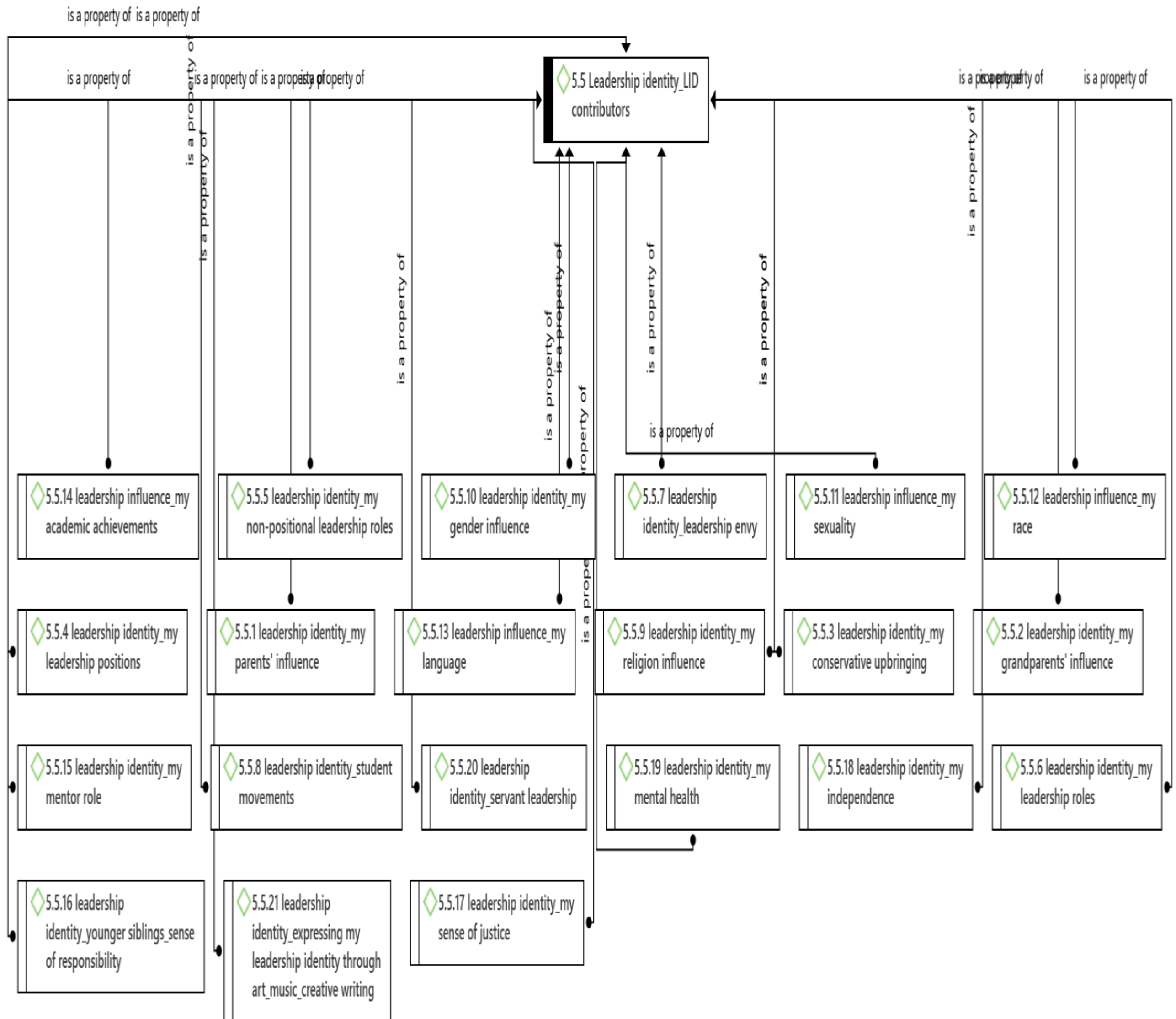

Figure 4.11: Atlas.ti code display in a network view
(Leadership identity theme; leadership identity as code with its subcodes).

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4.10.2 Key themes, codes and subcodes

Bernard and Ryan (2010:55) point out that there are various interpretations of themes in terms of "categories", "codes", "labels, "incidents", "segments', "thematic units", "data bits", "chunks" and "units". The researcher would like to point out that her reference is consistent, as follows:

- **Theme:** A category of the data/interview that was predetermined as a potential contributor to answer the main research question;
- **Code:** A sub-section of the theme that was predetermined as a potential contributor to answer the main research question;
- **Subcode:** Generated during Step 1 and Step 2 of the data collection process, which indicates a sub-section of a specific code as a potential contributor to answer the main research question as it pertains to the individual participant/case study.

Based on the literature review, and as indicated in Figure 4.12, the researcher predetermined 14 key themes to be explored over the four interviews (Phase 1 of the interview cycle) and structured the themes according to 82 predefined codes as follows:

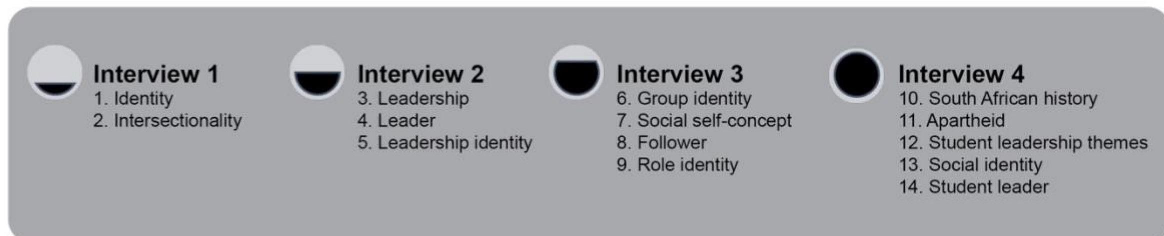

Figure 4.12: Interview themes

The following predetermined codes were generated from the above key themes, followed by the emerging subcodes. This illustrates the broad predefined key themes as departure point and the progression from open coding to axial coding phase. The results, presented in graphs, were limited to their relevance to the main research questions. It is important to note that not all codes were analysed on the subcode level.

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The researcher therefore decided to present the following in graphs and tables to indicate either progression, frequency, comparison or links:

1) **Frequency:**
    a. Overview of quotation frequency per predefined key themes
    b. Overview of each key theme and code (quotation frequency)
    c. Frequency count of intersectionality acknowledgement
    d. Leadership identity contributors – total frequency count per contributor/subcode
    e. South African historical context influence on leadership identity – total frequency per contributor/subcode
2) **Progression:**
    a. Identity contributors – to indicate progression from Phase 1 to Phase 4
    b. Leadership identity contributors – to indicate progression from Phase 1 to Phase 4
3) **Comparisons:**
    a. Student leadership themes (post-apartheid) versus student leadership themes (apartheid)
2) **Links:**
    a. Role identity association versus group identity association

The researcher would like to confirm that, as this study focused on the contributing factors of a *selected group* of student leaders' identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa, frequency count is considered less significant than its significance for the individual case studies. For this purpose, the contributing factors and their relationship with the individual's leadership identity formation are presented by case study (see Appendix A).

Figure 4.13 displays a broad overview of themes, codes and subcodes.

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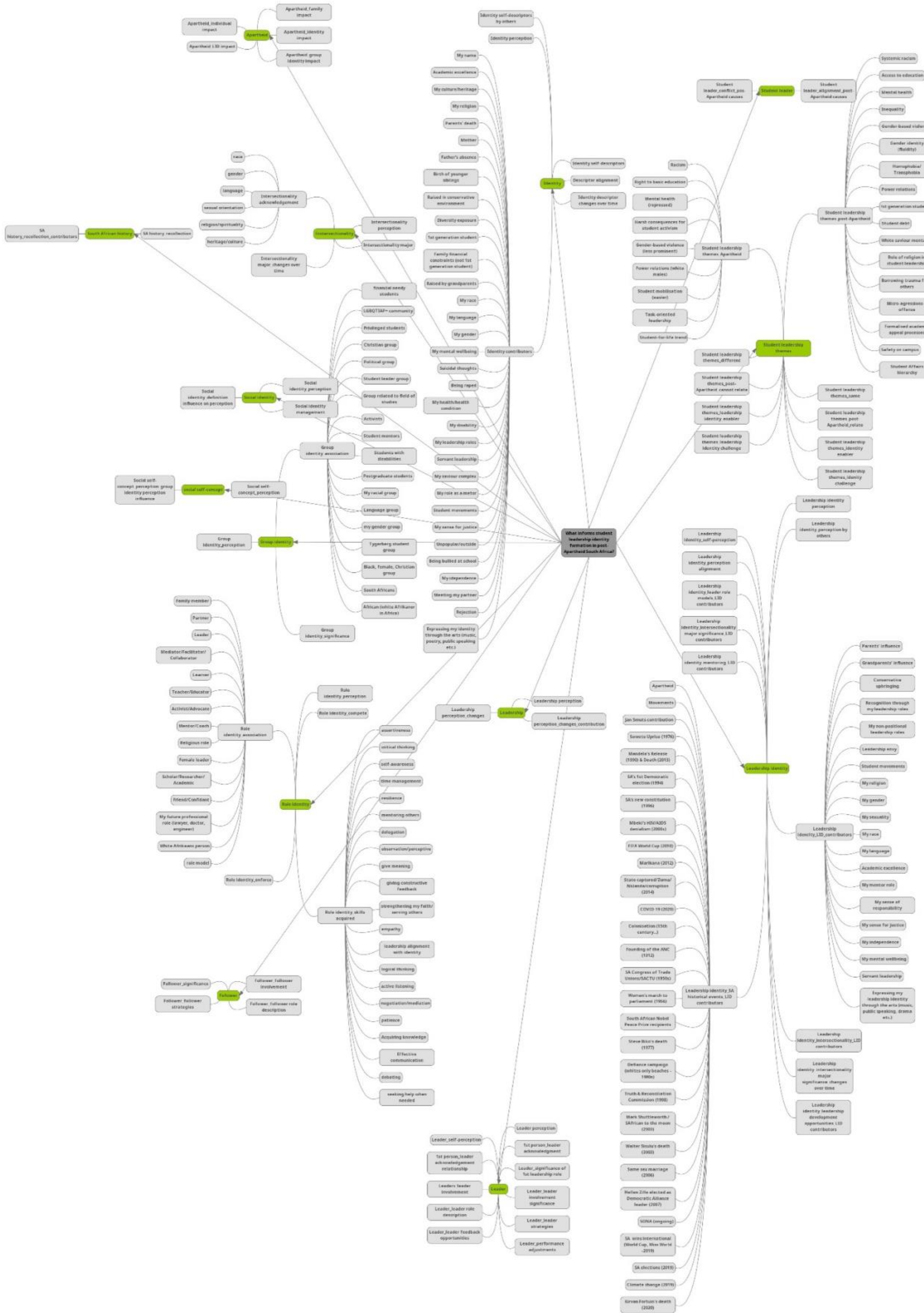

Figure 4.13: Broad overview of themes, codes and subcodes

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Table 4.1 illustrates the coding development process during Stage 1, 2 and 3. The code describes the purpose of the question linked to the code. Where no specific subcodes were generated, the researcher applied selective coding to maintain the broader code linked to the relevant main theme. For example, “identity self-descriptors” (1.1) and “identity descriptors by others” (1.2) produced a variety of descriptors linked to the individual participant, but the researcher chose not to generate specific subcodes for this code based on their relevance to answering the main research question, “*What informs student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa?”*

Table 4.1: List of themes, codes and subcodes

Main theme (14)	**Code**	**Code description**	**Subcode**
1. Identity	1.1 Identity self-descriptors	How does the participant describe themselves?	
	1.2 Identity descriptors by others	How are they described by others?	
	1.3 Descriptor alignment	Do they think there is alignment with how others describe them versus how they describe themselves?	
	1.4 Descriptor changes over time	Has the manner in which they describe themselves changed over time?	
	1.5 Identity perception	What is their perception of “identity”?	
	1.6 Identity contributors	What do they consider the major contributing factors to their identity formation?	1) My name 2) Academic excellence 3) My culture/family heritage 4) My religion/faith/spirituality 5) My father’s/mother’s death 6) My mother 7) Father’s absence 8) Parents’ divorce 9) Siblings 10) Patriarchal family 11) Conservative environment

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			12) Diversity exposure from early childhood 13) 1st-generation student 14) Financial constraints (not 1st-generation student) 15) My grandparents 16) My race 17) My language 18) My gender 19) My mental wellbeing 20) Suicidal thoughts 21) Being raped 22) My health/medical condition 23) My sexuality 24) My disability 25) My chosen career field 26) My leadership roles 27) Servant leadership 28) My role as a mentor/ mentor influence 29) Student movements 30) My sense of justice/ injustice 31) Unpopular/outsider 32) Being bullied at school 33) My independence 34) My partner 35) Rejection 36) Arts (expressing my identity through the arts) 37) Sport 38) Toxic friends 39 Fatherhood 40) Being my own hero 41) Death in family
	2.1 Intersectionality perception	What is their perception of "intersectionality"?	

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2. Intersec-tionality	2.2 Intersectionality acknowledgement	Do they acknowledge the various aspects of their intersectionality?	1) race 2) gender 3) sexual orientation 4) religion/faith 5) language 6) heritage/culture (Afrikaner, Xhosa, Zulu, Portuguese, Indian) 7) disability (ableism)
	2.3 Intersectionality_major	What do they consider the major aspect of their intersectionality?	
	2.4 Intersectionality _major_changes over time	Has the major aspect of their intersectionality changed over time?	
3. Leadership	3.1 Leadership perception	What is their perception of “leadership”?	
	3.2 Leadership perception changes	Has their perception of leadership changed over time?	
	3.3 Leadership perception changes_contributors	What led to their leadership perception changes?	
4. Leader	4.1 Leader perception	What is their perception of a “leader”?	
	4.2 Leader self-perception	Do they consider themselves as a leader?	
	4.3 1st person_leader acknowledgement	Who is the 1st person they considered to be a leader?	
	4.4 1st person_leader acknowledgment traits	What about this person made you regard him as a leader?	
	4.5 1st person_leader acknowledgement relationship	What is the relationship between you and this person?	
	4.6 Leader_significance of 1st leadership role	What is the significance of the 1st leadership role you have fulfilled?	
	4.7 Leader_leader involvement	Where are you mostly active as a leader?	
	4.8 Leader_leader involvement significance	What is the significance of the cause/your involvement as a leader?	
	4.9 Leader_leader role description	Describe the role you have fulfilled as a leader.	

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	4.10 Leader_leader strategies	What are the strategies you have put in place to achieve desirable outcomes?	
	4.11 Leader_feedback opportunities	Have you created opportunities for feedback as a leader?	
	4.12 Leader_performance adjustments	In what way have you adjusted your leadership performance based on the feedback received?	
	4.13 Leader_rolemodel	Who do they consider to be a leader role model?	
	4.14 Leader_rolemodel_trait adoption	Have they adopted any of the traits of this role model?	
	4.15 Leader_mentoring peer	Have they mentored a peer?	
	4.16 Leader_mentoring follower	Have they mentored a follower?	
	4.17 Leader mentoring significance	What was the significance of this mentoring role in relation to their leadership identity?	
5. Leadership identity	5.1 Leadership identity perception	What is their perception of “leadership identity”?	
	5.2 Leadership identity_self-perception	How do they describe their leadership identity?	
	5.3 Leadership identity_perception by others	How would others describe their leadership identity?	
	5.4 Leadership identity_perception alignment	Do they think there is alignment with how others describe their leadership identity versus how they described themselves?	
	5.5 Leadership identity_LID contributors	What are the main contributing factors to their leadership identity formation?	1) Parents' influence 2) Grandparents' influence 3) My conservative upbringing 4) My non-positional leadership roles 5) Leadership roles 6) Leadership envy 7) Student movements 8) My religion 9) My gender 10) My sexuality 11) My race 12) My language

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			13) Academic excellence 14) My mentor role 15) Siblings (responsibility) 16) My sense of justice 17) My independence 18) My mental health 19) Servant leadership 20) Arts (expressing my leadership identity through the arts.) 21) Leadership programmes 22) Fatherhood
	5.6 Leadership identity_leader role models_LID contributors	Who are their main role models who contributed to their leadership identity formation?	
	5.7 Leadership identity_intersectionality_LID contributors	Does their intersectionality contribute to their leadership identity formation?	
	5.8. Leadership identity_intersectionality major(significance)_LID contributors	Is there an aspect of their intersectionality that played a significant part in their leadership identity formation?	
	5.9 Leadership identity_intersectionality major (significance)_LID contributors_changes over time	Have there been any changes over time in the aspect of their intersectionality that plays a significant part in their leadership identity formation?	
	5.10 Leadership identity_mentoring_LID contribution	Did mentoring contribute to their leadership identity development?	
	5.11 Leadership identity_leadership development opportunities_LID contribution	Are there specific leadership development programmes that have contributed to your leadership identity development?	
	5.12 Leadership identity_SAhistorical events_LID contribution	What are the major South African historical events	1) Apartheid 2) Student movements 3) 1919 – Jan Smuts' contribution; 1914 – First World War; 1939 – Second

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		contributing to your leadership identity development, and in what way?	World War/Jan Smuts's contribution 4) 1976 – Soweto Uprising 5) 1990/2013 – Mandela's release & Mandela's death 6) 1994 – SA 1st democratic elections 7) 1996 – New SA Constitution 8) 2000s – Mbeki's HIV/AIDS denialism; 1999 – Thabo Mbeki elected as SA president 9) 2010 – FIFA World Cup 10) 2012 – Marikana 11) 2014 – State capture/Zuma/Nkandla/ corruption 12) 2020 – Covid-19 13) Colonialism (1652 – forefathers arrived in SA; 1806 – Britain's control over Cape Colony; 1834 – Abolition of slavery in SA; 1899 – SA war/Anglo Boer War; 1910/1912 – Union of SA) 14) 1912 – Founding of the ANC 15) 1950s – SA Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) 16) 1955 – Asia/Africa Conference (2016 Asia/Africa Youth Conference) 17) 1956 – Women's march to the Union Buildings 18) 1961– Albert Luthuli receives Nobel Peace Prize; 1984 – Archbishop

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			Desmond Tutu receives Nobel Peace Prize; 1993- – FW de Klerk & Nelson Mandela receive Nobel Peace Prize 19) 1977 – Steve Biko's death, Helen Zille exposes Steve Biko's death 20) 1980s – Defiance campaign (whites only beaches) 21) 1998 – TRC 22) 2002 – Mark Shuttleworth 23) 2003 – Walter Sisulu died 24) 2006 – Same-sex marriage allowed in SA 25) 2007 – Helen Zille elected as the DA leader 26) 2008 – ongoing xenophobia attacks 27) 2015 – ongoing SONA 28) 2019 – SA Rugby World Cup win/Miss Universe won by Miss SA 29) 2019 – SA elections 30) 2019 – Climate change protests 31) 2020 – Kirvan Fortuin's murder
	5.13 Leadership identity_intergenerational conversation impact	Have intergenerational conversations contributed to your leadership identity?	
	5.14 Leadership identity_major shift	Has there been a shift in your understanding of leadership identity?	
	5.15 Leadership identity_LID_perception changes during interview cycle	Has your perception of leadership identity changed during the interview cycle?	

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	5.16 Leadership identity_final reflections_LID contributing factors	Do you have a final reflection to share on your understanding of the major contributing factors to your leadership identity formation?	
6. Group identity	6.1 Group identity perception	What is their perception of "group identification"?	
	6.2 Group identity_association	With which groups do they identify in the student community?	1) Financial needy students 2) LGBQTIAP+ community 3) Privileged students 4) Christian group 5) Political group 6) Student leaders 7) Group related to my field of studies 8) Activists 9) Student mentors 10) Students with disabilities 11) Postgraduate students 12) My racial group 13) Language 14) Gender 15) Tygerberg student community 16) Black female Christian group 17) South Africans 18) African (specifically a white Afrikaner in Africa)
	6.3 Group identity_significance	What is the significance of group identification to them?	
7. Social self-concept	7.1 Social self-concept perception	What is their understanding of "social self-concept"?	
	7.2 Social self-concept_perception_group identity perception influence	Has their understanding of group identification influenced their understanding of "social self-concept"?	
8. Follower	8.1 Follower_follower involvement	What has been their involvement as a follower?	

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	8.2 Follower_significance	What has been the significance of their follower role?	
	8.3 Follower_follower role description	What do they believe their role as a follower was/is?	
	8.4 Follower_follower strategies	What are the strategies they have put in place as a follower?	
9. Role identity	9.1 Role identity perception	What is their perception of “role identity”?	
	9.2 Role identity_association	Which roles do they identify with?	1) Family member (son, daughter, brother, sister, carrying my family name, father) 2) Partner (boyfriend, girlfriend, fiancé) 3) Leader (female leader, Muslim leader, church leader, forward-thinking leader in a conservative Afrikaans community, founding member, head mentor, SRC) 4)Mediator/Facilitator/ Collaborator 5) Learner 6) Teacher/Educator 7) Activist /Advocate 8) Mentor/Coaching/Coach 9) Religion (Christian, Muslim) 10) Female leader (not sure if it should be “role as a female”) 11) Scholar/Researcher/ Academic 12) Friend/Confidant 13) My professional role (e.g. med student/doctor, engineer, law student/ lawyer)

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			14) White Afrikaans-speaking person 15) Role model
	9.3. Role identity compete	Are any of these roles competing with each other?	
	9.4 Role identity_enforced	Are any of these roles reinforcing each other?	
	9.5 Role identity_skills acquired	Which skills have they acquired over time to manage role integration?	1) Assertiveness 2) Critical thinking 3) Self-awareness & intuition 4) Time management 5) Resilience 6) Mentoring others 7) Delegation 8) Observant/perceptive 9) Meaning making 10) Giving constructive feedback 11) Strengthening my faith/ serving others 12) Empathy 13) Leadership identity integration 14) Logical thinking/ analysing/rationalising 15) Active listening 16) Negotiation & mediation 17) Patience 18) Expanding knowledge/ reading/research 19) Effective communication 20) Debating 21) Seeking help when needed/consult
10. South African history	10.1 Sahistory_recollection	Describe your recollection of South Africa?	
	10.2 Sahistory_recollection_contributors	What has influenced your recollection of South Africa?	

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11. Apartheid	11.1 Apartheid_family impact	In what way, if any, has apartheid affected your family?	
	11.2 Apartheid_individual impact	In what way, if any, has apartheid affected you personally?	
	11.3 Apartheid_identity impact	In what way, if any, has apartheid affected your identity?	
	11.4 Apartheid_LID impact	In what way, if any, has apartheid affected your leadership identity?	
	11.5 Apartheid_group identification	In what way, if any, has apartheid affected your group identification?	
12. Student leadership themes	12.1 Student leadership themes_post-apartheid	What are the current major student leadership themes?	1) Systemic racism 2) Access to education 3) Mental health 4) Inequality 5) Gender-based violence 6) Gender identity 7) Homophobia/transphobia 8) Power dynamics 9) 1st-generation students/ empowerment 10) Student debt 11) “White saviour mentality” 12) The role of religion in student leadership 13) Borrowing trauma from others 14) Micro-aggressions 15) Formalised academic appeal processes 16) Tribalism and leadership 17) Safety 18) Student affairs hierarchy
	12.2 Student leadership themes_Apartheid	What do you think were the main student leadership	1) Overt racism 2) Basic rights (Education) 3) Mental health 4) Harsh consequences for student activism

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		themes during apartheid?	5) Gender-based violence 6) Sexuality 7) Power relations (white males) 8) Student mobilisation 9) Task-oriented leadership 10) Student leaders for life
	12.3 Student leadership themes_post-Apartheid_Apartheid_same	Were there any similar themes during apartheid and post-apartheid?	
	12.4 Student leadership themes_post-Apartheid_Apartheid_differen t	What are the main differences in themes during apartheid versus post-apartheid?	
	12.5 Student leadership themes_post-Apartheid_relate	Are there any of the current student leadership themes you can relate to?	
	12.6 Student leadership themes_do not relate	Are there any of the current student leadership themes you cannot relate to?	
	12.7 Student leadership themes_identity enabler	Is there anything about your identity that enables you to address specific student leadership themes?	
	12.8 Student leadership themes_identity_challenges	Is there anything about your identity challenging you to address specific student leadership themes?	
	12.9 Student leadership themes_leadership identity enabler	Is there anything about your leadership identity that enables you to address specific student leadership themes?	
	12.10 Student leadership themes_leadership identity challenges	Is there anything about your leadership identity challenging you to address specific student leadership identity themes?	
13. Social identity	13.1 Social identity perception	What is their understanding of social identity?	
	13.2 Social identity_definition influence on perception	Has the definition shared influenced their understanding of social identity?	
	13.3 Social identity management	How do they manage social identities in a multicultural context while being cognisant of their identity?	

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14. Student leader	14.1 Student leader_alignment_post-Apartheid student causes	Was there any time as a student that you felt truly aligned with the student cause at hand?
	14.2 Student leader_conflict_post-Apartheid causes	Was there any time as a student leader you felt conflicted with the student cause at hand?

4.11 Research factors: Strategies to demonstrate rigour

It is important to mention that the researcher had to take various research factors into account during this qualitative study. As Morse (2015:1212) points out, "although the criteria to demonstrate rigour in qualitative research have remained the same over time …, the strategies for attaining each have changed over time". Morse (2015) refers to Guba and Lincoln's (1989) strategies, such as *credibility* (also referred to as internal validity), *transferability* (with reference to external validity or generalisability), *dependability* (reliability) and *conformability* (objectivity), followed by *reflexivity,* which has been often applied by researchers.

Although in essence the same as Guba and Lincoln's (1989) strategies, the researcher would like to highlight Daniel's (2019) TACT (trustworthiness, auditability, credibility and transferability) model, which was utilised as a guideline to take specific research factors into account for this study.

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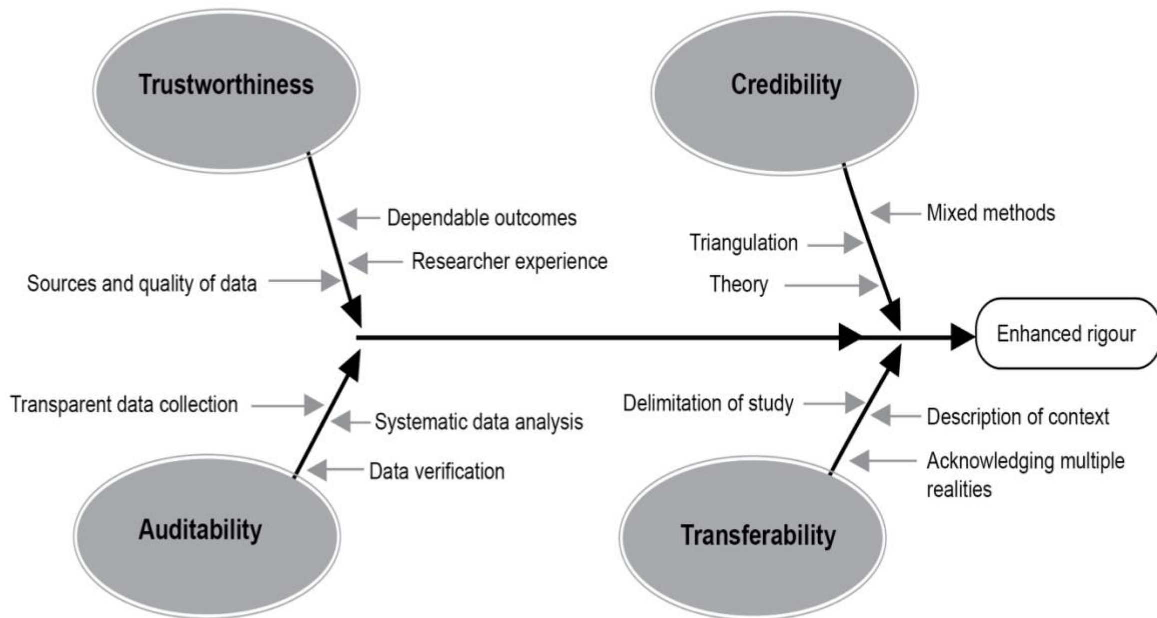

Figure 4.14: TACT model for assessing qualitative research outcomes (Daniel, 2019:119)

Within the four dimensions illustrated in Figure 4.14, the researcher specifically applied the following dimensions (and research factors).

4.11.1 Trustworthiness and reflexivity

Patnaik (2013:104) argues that, within the constructivist framework, it is even more pertinent to establish the trustworthiness of the research, as qualitative research is often under scrutiny for its so-called lack of methodological rigour and generalisability. It is through the employment of reflexivity (one of the factors within the trustworthiness dimension illustrated in Figure 4.14) that the researcher could establish trustworthiness by applying the criteria of the credibility dimension (accuracy of the description of the phenomenon under study and with reference to the triangulation process), the transferability dimension (external validity), dependability (data demonstrates the phenomenon it is expected to demonstrate) and confirmability (that the previous three conditions have been addressed). The researcher is of the opinion that the process of triangulation (within the credibility dimension, as illustrated above) further enabled the establishment of the trustworthiness of the research. She furthermore applied reflexivity within the trustworthiness domain (see the researcher experience in Figure 4.14).

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Patnaik (2013:100) refers to reflexivity as "the constant awareness, assessment, and reassessment by the researcher of the researcher's own contribution/influence/ shaping of inter-subjective research and the consequent research findings". It is, however, Patnaik's (2013:99) reference to Salzman (2002) regarding the meta-cognitive nature of reflexivity, namely that - "it is by means of reflexiveness–- the turning-back of the individual upon himself – that the whole social process is thus brought into the experiences of the individuals involved in It", which the researcher was reminded of throughout this study. Reflexiveness is the essential condition within the social process for the development of the mind" – that reflexivity is referenced as part of the process of formation of self and not in the context of researcher-researched dynamics. Olson (2011:17) refers to Chiseri-Strater (1996:130) that it is important to note that reflexivity is not the same as reflection, i.e. "reflection does not require 'an other', whereas reflexivity demands both 'an other' and some self-conscious awareness of the process of self-scrutiny".

In relation to Patnaik (2013), it is the latter meta-cognitive emphasis that is relevant for this study, which focuses on leader identity formation. The researcher was constantly aware of her own potential bias toward the factors contributing towards the leader identity formation process. She acknowledged that she approached this study from an emic (insider) perspective because the objective was as to learn as much as possible about the participants' experiences and directly from the person who had the experience – the most appropriate perspective for a case like this (Olson, 2011:15). Creswell (2009:192) argues that it is important to clarify the bias researchers bring to a study, and that reflexivity should contain comments about how the researcher's interpretations of the findings could potentially have been shaped by their background, e.g. race, gender, culture, history and socio-economic origin. In this case, the researcher's experience as a previous student leader of colour from a middle-class Afrikaans-speaking countryside background, who was awarded for her leadership contribution at a previously predominantly white institution in the early 1990s, when minority students (specifically students of colour) were alienated by other students of colour for participating in student politics at former white institutions.

Furthermore, given the fact that the researcher currently works in the student leadership space and regularly sits on review panels for student leadership awards,

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international exchange programmes and Rector's awards recognitions, her situatedness could potentially have skewed the objectivity of the research. Another factor to take into account was the opportunities provided to the researcher by the in-depth interviews to relive her own experiences as a student leader (both positive and negative). This has to be taken into consideration, as she would constantly have had to reflect on which role she was playing in the data collection phase. In other words, as a PhD student, a former student leader or a current senior staff member heading a Leadership Institute?

Daniel (2019:120) refers to Meyrick (2006) in this regard, saying "the researcher needs to acknowledge personal biases and to accept that the outcomes of any qualitative research are subject to multiple realities". In this case, the researcher understood that she had to ensure the trustworthiness of the data analysis by explicitly stating her assumptions about the phenomenon being studied and stating the experiences she brought to guide her understanding of the data through the tools of reflexivity (Meyrick, 2006). In this regard it is also necessary to consider section 4.12 – the researcher's reflection on her positionality in relation to this study.

Patnaik (2013:101) further distinguishes between *introspective reflexivity* (with reference to how one's own experiential location might have influenced the research topic, choice of methodology and themes), *methodological reflexivity* (while acknowledging the relationality, it is necessary to strive to ensure that standardised protocols are followed), and *epistemological reflexivity* (assuming personal engagement with the subject does not serve to explain research knowledge). The researcher would like to acknowledge commitment to introspective reflexivity and counteracted this by updating her fieldnotes as mandatory protocol for the data collection process.

4.11.2 Auditability

Daniel (2019:120) describes to external auditability, as "a process in which the researcher's findings are subjected to verification, and internal auditability. Halpern (1983) points out that "the researcher's ability to address methodological issues including stating clarity in the research question and how questions are aligned with particular research design, analysis of data and conclusions drawn". In this study, the

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alignment of the questions in the interview protocol with the literature and the key themes to address the main research question(s) demonstrates the internal auditability of the research process (see Appendix C for the interview protocol).

Through the detailed description in this chapter of who was involved in the study, how data was collected, where and when data was collected and how analysis was done, the researcher aims to demonstrate the thoroughness of her recordkeeping throughout the process – from as early as the recording of the briefing meetings prior to data collection in Phase 1. Furthermore, the researcher demonstrates in this chapter how the process was documented and described during each phase of the triangulation process.

4.11.3 Credibility

Thomas and Magilvy (2011:152) refer to credibility as "the element that allows others to recognise the experiences contained within the study through the interpretation of participants' experiences". They say that credibility can be achieved through the researcher's methodical analysis of the transcripts and comparing them with other participants' responses. In this study, the researcher initially utilised a simple Excel spreadsheet to extract themes, which she utilised further when migrating the data to the qualitative software programme, Atlas.ti.

Another method the researcher applied to ensure credibility in this study was to approach a colleague during Phase 1 of the study to confirm key themes extracted from a sample interview. This process of selecting a section of the data for a "second coder" to analyse is often applied with semi-structured interviews and it is rarely required that the entire dataset should be double coded to confirm reliability (Morse, 2015:1218). This process is also referred to as inter-rater reliability.

According to Daniel (2019), Hammarberg, Kirkman and De Lacey (2016) and Thomas and Magilvy (2011), credibility can also be achieved by reflexivity (see Section 4.11.1) and triangulation (see Section 4.8). In this study the researcher added an additional follow-up interview (nine months later with the participants in Phase 1; see Figure 5). As Daniel (2019:121) explains, "similar to auditability, credibility is achieved through a

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careful description of the data analysis and verification of sources of data obtained with participants from whom data was collected".

In this case, the aim of the final follow-up interview nine months later was for the researcher a) to create a final opportunity to discuss the consolidated key themes obtained in Phase 1, Phase 2 and confirmed in Phase 3, and b) for the participants to rank key themes in terms of importance and relevance to their own experience, i.e. the process of "member checking" (Loh, 2013; Morse, 2015; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). This was of particular importance for the current study, as there were a few themes that surfaced with only one or two participants. It therefore was important to establish if these themes were "outliers" or could be considered "transferable" to other settings.

4.11.4 Transferability

Transferability in qualitative research refers to the suggestion that findings from one study can be applied to other settings or groups of people (Daniel, 2019:121) or, as Thomas and Magilvy (2011:153) reference Lincoln and Guba (1985), "how one determines the extent to which the findings of a particular inquiry have applicability in other contexts or with other subjects/participants". Perhaps important to note, as Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014:786) point out, is the initial interchangeable use of the term "generalisability" and "transferability" during the period 1993 to 2011. The difference between reliability in quantitative research and transferability in qualitative research does not advocate generalisability, but is rather "used to provide evidence to the reader to assess the integrity of research outcomes (Cope, 2014).

In this study, the researcher was aware in particular of the scrutiny under which various aspects of the study would come, e.g.:

1) The fact that purposive sampling was applied. I.e. whether the researcher demonstrate transferability because the recruitment and selection of the sample was based on their expert knowledge or that they were knowledgeable of the phenomenon under study (Forero, Nahidi, De Costa, Fitzgerald, Gibson & Aboagye-Sarfo, 2018). In this case, the selection criteria (based on their proven involvement in leadership over a period of years) already is an indication that a very specific sample was considered. Furthermore, due to the selection

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criteria, a rather small selection pool was considered, which further indicates the level of experience of the participants;

2) The fact that the researcher deliberately took the demographics of the South African student leader population into account. Hence whether the researcher can demonstrate transferability in that there would be congruency in the findings of the participants' intersectionality in relation to the broader student leadership population. In this case, Phase 3 of the study was significant when the Student Affairs practitioners were included in the triangulation process to confirm or question the findings as they relate to their observation and engagement with student leaders on their respective campuses. In this case (Chapter 5), the researcher resorted to thick descriptions of the participants' understanding of their worldviews, not only to achieve transferability, but to "help bridge the gap between practitioners and researchers" (Ospina, Esteve & Lee, 2018). Another aspect of the participants' intersectionality that the researcher had to take into account was that she had to recognise that multiple realities exist. I.e. not all participants sharing the same intersectionality had the same experiences. Or, that a particular intersection of their identity played a more significant role in their leadership identity, e.g. gender or, specifically, leading as a female leader;
3) The fact that the researcher's background and familiarity with the context and, to some extent with many of the participants, could reflect her potential bias to come to specific conclusions as they relate, for example, to her own intersectionality. Hence, are the findings a true reflection of the participants' intent? In this case, the researcher utilised the final follow-up interview to confirm her conclusions as they relate to the particular participant's interview cycle;
4) The fact that it could be argued that a sample of 10 participants might be too small to draw a specific conclusion. Here the researcher observed that there does not seem to be a "magic number" for the ideal number of participants in qualitative research, but that the focus should rather be on the quality and depth of the data from the multiple case studies. In this case the researcher considered "saturation" as a research factor to confirm the rigour of her study. Saunders, Sim, Kingstone, Baker, Waterfield, Bartlam, Burroughs and Jinks (2018:1894) refer to saturation as "a criterion for discontinuing data collection

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and /or analysis". The final research factor to be highlighted for this study is the researcher's determining factors for saturation (viz. sample, sample size, data analysis or data collection).

Saunders *et al.* (2018:1897) differentiate between four models of saturation, which differ in terms of the extent to which inductive or deductive logic was adopted:

- *theoretical saturation* (related to grounded theory and the development of theory, where the principal focus is on the sampling stage);
- *inductive thematic saturation* (focusing on the data analysis stage and the emergence of new code or themes)*;*
- *a priori thematic saturation* (focusing on the sampling stage but as it relates to the degree to which identified codes or themes are exemplified in the data); and
- *data saturation* (focusing on the data collection phase as it relates to the degree to which new data repeat what was expressed in the previous data).

As this study aimed to build on the theory of Komives' (2005) LID model, the researcher anticipated that an inductive thematic saturation approach would be followed during the data analysis phase. I.e. the continued emergence of new codes or themes or the extent to which new theoretical insights are gained from the data via the process (Saunders *et al.*, 2018:1898). This indeed was the case (see Chapter 5). The researcher is aware, however, of the challenge of identifying this "fixed point". As Saunders *et al.* (2018:1901) point out, conceptual depth may be a more appropriate term – at least from a grounded theory perspective – whereby "the researcher considers whether sufficient depth of understanding has been achieved in relation to emergent theoretical categories".

In short: determining the saturation was certainly not done in the sampling phase of this study, but rather in the process of data collection and its endeavour to build on current leader identity formation theory. Phase 2 and Phase 3 indicated to the

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researcher that saturation point had been reached for the study, as many of the themes (that emerged in Phase 1) were confirmed.

4.12 Researcher positionality

With the personal reflection below, the researcher aims to provide an authentic representation of her background and her positionality in relation to this study.

My personal reflection aims to give an authentic view of my life story and the potential impact it might have had on the topic of this research and my positionality in relation to this study. I couldn't possibly expect my participants to put themselves in a vulnerable position to share an honest reflection of the contributing factors to their identity and leadership identity formation if I wasn't prepared to do the same.

I was born in the late 1970s as the only child of middle-class parents and grew up in an Afrikaans-speaking coloured community in a small countryside village in the Overberg (Western Cape, South Africa). A dam (symbolic of crossing the Rubicon) divided the white and coloured community, and the black community was situated on the outskirts of the village about 4 km away.

My mother, one of ten children, was committed to education and to break the cycle of poverty. Despite the limitations of poverty and being raised in a small village, she recalls how her father, a bricklayer, placed a great emphasis on education and introducing the world to them through books. This led to all ten children receiving high school education and eight of the ten with higher education qualifications – this despite her father's untimely death and her mother being widowed in her thirties, with limited income as a domestic worker for a white family.

My mother knew that her mother was from mixed descent (my mother's grandfather is white), yet due to apartheid's Immorality Act had no relationship with the grandfather's side of the family. A black step-grandfather later took on the grandfather role, but the coloured family never had a relationship with his black family. As a first-generation student, my mother obtained a Master's degree at a late stage in her life and spent 47 years of her life as an educator, later principal and community leader, serving on various trusts and committees.

As a female leader of colour, she faced many challenges in a conservative community where she advocated for black children to be enrolled at the local coloured school and for the inclusion of isiXhosa as an instructional language – this was met with resistance by the coloured community at the time, but she continued to build bridges between the black, coloured and white community.
This race hierarchy became evident to me as a child. My mother experienced overt racism on many levels throughout her life. Her family lived in the "white area" in the village but, due to the Group Areas Act, had to relocate to the new "coloured area" of the village where the government built low-income houses – a traumatic experience for her family. My mother and her siblings were later

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compensated for the forced removal – an initiative she spearheaded on behalf of all the coloured people who were forcefully removed. Her father served in the Second World War and, as she recalls, had a bicycle and an army coat to show for that period. South African people of colour who served in the war didn't receive the same post-war compensation as their white countrymen who received new houses. So, the "bikes & boots versus houses" was a recurring theme and started long before the Group Areas Act. My mother instilled a sense of justice, resilience and independence in me as a woman that would become major contributing factors to my identity and my leadership identity.

My father, who has little recollection of his mother (she died when he was six), and his four brothers (ages 2, 4, 8 and 10 at the time of their mother's death), were raised by his father and single half-deaf uncle on the October farm. Coloured people as slaves received surnames either from their "Masters" or the month they arrived in South Africa. The "October" surname therefore carries an identity of its own.

My grandfather, who inherited the farm from his father, never remarried. My father (now in his 80s) and his siblings had limited access to education, and although they faced financial difficulties, were still considered to be privileged coloured people during the apartheid years. There were not many coloured farm owners in South Africa during this time. The October farm (now a Rooibos tea producer) remained October property, despite a trend occurring later years when coloured people sold their properties to white people.

The Moravian mission station (a coloured church community) with strong German influences had a great influence in their upbringing. My father was the local barman in the white section of the bar at the local hotel (at the time white people and people of colour were served in separate sections of the bar). This meant that he was well-known by everyone in the village. He is light of complexion and sometimes mistaken for white – something that offered "some perks", as my parents would often joke that, thanks to my father, they received "permission" to live in a house next to the hotel after they got married, at a time when it was prohibited for people of colour.

They worked hard and later became the first coloured people to build their house in the coloured community on the side closest to the dam. My father's faith, humility, and his belief in the good of all people left a lasting impression on me and would later become a constant reminder to stay humble as a leader while relentlessly working to achieving my goals.

The reflection of my positionality started with my parents, as their life story (and their parents' life story) became enmeshed in my life story and their experiences became my recollection of South African history – and how the elements of that history became contributing factors to my leadership identity formation and my sense of Self.

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I identify as an Afrikaans-speaking coloured, cisgender female, heterosexual, able-bodied, Gen-X Christian. In Afrikaans I identify as "bruin" (brown) and prefer this term instead of "kleurling", which is considered by people of colour to be a derogatory term. Although being raised by strict parents who held me accountable for my actions and encouraged independence, I was fortunate to have had a carefree childhood with fond memories of being loved and feeling safe and protected – something I perhaps took for granted at the time, as I would later learn it was not the default experience for all coloured kids in South Africa, or my friends with other racial profiles for that matter.

I later realised that many of my childhood experiences would later become drivers for my identity and leadership identity formation, e.g. I remember participating in a school fun run and arriving last at the finish line (the last learner in the entire school). I made a promise to myself that I will never allow that feeling to overwhelm me again, which later translated into my resilience and taking up solo long-distance walking as a hobby – the Santiago de Camino being the ultimate physical challenge I had to overcome with a screwed-up spine and knee.

My first exposure to diversity came when I started with music and ballet classes in primary school. At the age of six, this would introduce me to the "white world", walking to "the other side" of the village for piano lessons at a white retired teacher's house. As a six-year-old I had to make sense of this "stepping into the world of the other" because my inquisitive nature questioned why the houses and streets looked better on that side. As I grew older, I realised I am my biggest competitor and critic. This, in a sense, removed me slightly from my coloured peers, as I was occupied with extramural activities which they had not the privilege to be exposed to.

This became even more so when I started with national music exams and often needed to practise for hours after school while my peers were playing in the dirt streets. I became a loner – someone who found great solitude in doing things on her own and ventured into escapism through discovering my love for exploring foreign cultures (solo traveling would later become one of my life passions, having explored more than 40 countries by the time I turned 40).

When former white schools (also referred to as former Model C schools) opened to all races in 1990, my mother immediately explored a few options and I eventually left the carefree village life for a competitive Afrikaans school in Cape Town – a school known for learners of famous white writers, artists, politicians, surgeons. I will never forget my mother's words when they said goodbye in January 1992: "today you have arrived as Heidi October, not the daughter of a famous parent. Now you need to carve out your own path and you don't need to step back for anyone – do that with integrity". My observation of how my mother viewed herself as equal to white people, despite her apartheid experiences, influenced my self-confidence in relation to other races. Little did I know at the time how much this would enable me in my leadership and career in general.

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In my teenage years I was diagnosed with scoliosis. The severity of my scoliosis would lead to several major surgeries in my life. At some stage my mother had to take leave to home school me and I was still determined to stay in the top 20 of my grade in that year. Classes were divided based on academic performance and I was adamant about remaining at the top class (the extra pressure of being one of only two coloured learners in the entire school to reach the top 20 in their grade that year). Here I had first-hand experience of classism, racism and intellectual snobbery.

"Resilience" stemming from health challenges became another factor contributing to my identity and leadership identity. Despite the sense of security I had as a child, my parents challenged me to become self-reliant, resourceful, standing my ground and speaking my mind. As an introvert it would sometimes lead to internal conflict, i.e. I had to figure out how an introvert could become an assertive leader. I experienced overt racism in high school from a teacher, and subtle racism within the social context, being excluded from social gatherings by my white peers.

Another example was being denied an opportunity to be an exchange student to Germany in my Grade 10 year – the school argued as a "countryside kid your community would not be ideal for a German exchange student", which my mom challenged. I eventually ended up going on the exchange programme. This would later lead to the irony of how that denial of access led to me obtaining an Honours degree in German, fully sponsored by the Deutsche Akademische Austausch Dienst (DAAD).

Although exposed to other races as a child, I became aware of being part of a minority group in high school and yet I didn't feel like I belonged to that minority group either and it didn't bother me at all. I would notice how some peers from the minority group started to assimilate into the dominant culture, which then afforded them access to the exclusive social gatherings of their white peers. I later wondered why I was nominated as a class leader after only being in the school for a few months. Apparently it was due to my aloof demeanour and that I was not attached to specific groups, therefore the perfect character for a class representative. The switching of schools, to another former model C school closer to home, led me to expressing my identity and leadership identity through public speaking. As an introvert, I realised that, when I speak about issues that matter to me and that affect others, I could capture a diverse audience. I realised I had something to say … that matters.

"Knowledge empowers/Kennis is Mag" was the creed of the coloured primary school I attended. I would often reflect on this and the limited prospects my coloured peers had, while I always knew I was going to Stellenbosch University. My interest in psychology, philosophy and social anthropology fed my need to learn about other cultures and question my own in relation to other's. I've truly grown into my own skin at university, where both space and time allowed for identity exploration. I started exploring many interests through residence and campus life and soon noticed the segregation in residences and on campus, for example in "The Neelsie" (the student centre), where a clear demarcation of groups based on race could be observed.

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There also was an absence of students of colour in the leadership space. And, just like at high school, I didn't join the "coloured groups" just for the sake of my race. I simply followed my interests, and my friendships continue to grow across racial, sexual, gender, political, spiritual and international groups (which also sparked my M-thesis topic on the social exclusion of sub-cultures). Due to my involvement in campus and public speaking competitions, I got noticed as a candidate for the annual "stereotype reduction seminar" (a few students were selected every year to discuss strategies to break down stereotypes on campus). I thought this was ironic, as I was also labelled a "coconut" (coloured person with white behaviour) in some coloured circles, i.e., not quite "blending in", but also "too difficult to rope in" by some of the white groups for their own agendas (e.g. conservative white people approached me as an "Afrikaans coloured female leader" to rope into the establishment of a private Afrikaans university – which I declined).

Although I held leadership positions throughout my life, I doubted my leadership capabilities as an introvert, but my campaigns and speeches at caucuses came naturally, as I would address issues I felt passionate about. I could resonate with those students who are making a difference without being typical "rah-rah" leaders. At the time I was elected to the Student Representative Council (SRC) in the 1990s, I was one of a handful of students of colour in the history of Stellenbosch University to serve as a student leader (Studenteraad, 2004). *It afforded me opportunities to address social inclusion matters on campus while being cognisant of my own identity.*

I transitioned from student leader to staff member. My awareness of the complexity of addressing diversity within a historically white Afrikaans university (HWAU) soon became evident when I moved from serving as a student leader on task teams to being staff member. Being promoted to a senior position in Alumni Relations in my 20s also challenged my ability to facilitate and participate in conversations with a range of liberal and very conservative alumni on identity issues, such as the "language debate", "the meaning of traditions" and "diversity at a transforming university". I could draw meaning from my life story to engage in conversations, often with older-generation alumni who had limited first-hand engagement with women of colour who shared their passion for the Afrikaans language and the need for inclusivity in a language that divided races.

It was also during this phase of my career that I was reminded of that part of my identity (integrity) and the associated price one has to pay for speaking one's truth. Later, working as a self-employed consultant in the higher education environment, I could merge my meaning-making from the alumni to student leadership space. It is in the latter space where I am in a position to have observed the changes in demographic profile, the opportunities it brought for HWIs to rebrand their identity, and for both students and staff to work collectively to craft that identity. It is, however, in this process of broader identity formation that I could observe how each stakeholder brought with them their worldviews, shaped by the factors contributing to their identity and leadership identity formation.

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So, as an Afrikaans-speaking, heterosexual, able-bodied, Gen-X, Christian cisgender female of colour, with a surname carrying its own identity, I had to acknowledge my positionality (the power and privilege, as well as my disposition) as a Student Affairs practitioner engaging in leadership development programmes within a diverse, highly contested Gen-Z post-apartheid student leader context. As facilitator, my positionality and my lived experience matter, as they influence my interpretation of South Africa's history and my role perception in relation to how I can contribute to accountability and reconciliation in South Africa in a space where future national leaders and global citizens are cultivated.

I strongly believe that the authentic unpacking of my positionality was not only important in relation to this study, but also for the changing role of Student Affairs practitioners in post-apartheid South Africa – an aspect which this study alludes to in its recommendations.

Factors contributing to my leadership identity

Contributors to leadership identity

My mother's leadership
My gender (leading as a woman)
My language (leading as an Afrikaans-speaking leader)
My race (leading as a person of colour)
Independence
Authenticity
Resilience
Speaking my truth
Leadership roles from primary school
My sense of justice
Diversity exposure
Apartheid (democracy, human rights, social justice)
Schools opened to all races
Group Areas Act

Identity	Leadership identity	South African historical events
My mother My father Resilience (scoliosis) Independence My gender Being Afrikaans-speaking My race Security The price for speaking my truth Diversity exposure Public speaking	My mother's leadership My gender My language My race Independence Authenticity Resilience Speaking my truth Leadership roles from primary school (Head girl, prefect, SRC, HC, Rector's Awards) My sense of justice Diversity exposure	Apartheid: - Democracy - Human rights - Social justice Group Areas Act Schools opened to all races

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4.12 Ethical considerations

For this study, the researcher had to follow three separate ethics clearance/permission processes.

The formal ethics clearance process of the University of Pretoria was followed**.** Since this study was conducted at Stellenbosch University, using a Stellenbosch University student sample and Stellenbosch University data, ethics clearance had to be obtained from the ethics clearance committee at the University of Pretoria as well as Stellenbosch University's *"Subcommittee A for the faculties of Arts and Social Sciences, Education, Law, Theology, Economic and Management Sciences and Military Sciences"*. The research proposal approved by the University of Pretoria, submitted on 30 October 2019, as well as the contact details of the supervisor at the University of Pretoria, accompanied the online application for ethics clearance at Stellenbosch University.

Additional to the ethics clearance application process at Stellenbosch University, the researcher also had to apply to the Institutional Permission Committee, which is a separate committee that evaluates all research in which students or staff are involved. For this application, the researcher had to submit the data collection tools (questionnaires, interview schedules), full research proposal, informed consent forms and proof of ethics clearance. This review follows a two-step process. A primary reviewer conducts an initial review of all submitted documentation. The reviewer may request additional information from the researcher. In this case, the researcher was not granted permission to conduct face-to-face interviews due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The researcher received permission in September 2021 to commence with the data collection phase, but limited to online interviews only.

No further changes to the ethics clearance application and specifically the interview protocol were requested from either of the three committees (see Appendices D, E and F).

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4.13 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher gave a detailed overview of the research question, theoretical framework, the research paradigm that framed the research, followed by an extensive account of the research method and its various phases through triangulation. The various research factors that were considered to demonstrate rigour were also highlighted, as well as the ethical considerations. Samples of the letter of consent and approved interview protocol were shared, followed by a detailed reflection on the researcher's positionality, and the potential impact thereof on the interpretation of the data. Figure 4.15 summarises this chapter and the research process followed in this study:

Figure 4.15: Summary of the research process

Research paradigm – Ontological and epistemological position: a constructionist ontology was followed whereby the social phenomena studied could be understood by their actions and the meaning the observer attaches to them (Bell *et al.*, 2019:26). As a reminder, the researcher entered this study with a philosophical worldview from a social constructionist approach to leadership, whereby the researcher assumed participants would "develop subjective, varied and multiple meaning of their experiences and which will lead the researcher to look for complexity of views rather than narrowing meaning into a few categories of ideas" (Creswell, 2009:8). Based on this study's focus on the post-apartheid South African context, it was important to explore how Identity construction coincides with leadership identity and the construction of leadership. With reference to Carroll and Levy (2010:212) and their recommendations for more research in the social construction of leadership field, the researcher discussed how this study would contribute, and can now confirm that the findings illustrate the following: That

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- observations of participants' leadership perception have shifted from the traditional conceptual continuums, with reference to the agency pendulum (Fairhurst, 2007:78) and from nouns (static) to verbs (becoming) (Carroll & Levy, 2010:213; Weick, 1995);
- observations of participants' identity perception have shifted to a personalised development journey, i.e. a constructionist approach (Velsor & Drath, 2003) and not merely from a functionalist approach (Lord & Hall, 2005);
- the utilisation of narratives in this study, through the method of "storying social construction", contributed to narrowing a narrative constructionist inquiry in relation to leadership; and
- by the inclusion of identity as part of the leadership space in the research design, the study mediated participants' view of themselves not only as subjects of leadership identity construction, but as actors exercising choice in how that construction finds expression in the way they practise leadership.

Research paradigm – the theoretical perspective: The theoretical perspective that was followed in this study was an interpretivist approach, "the systemic analysis of a socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds" (Henning *et al*., 2004:20; Neuman, 1991:88). This was done because the study was concerned with how the *student leader* (unit of observation) interacts with and draws meaning from that interaction and allow that interaction to affect their perception of the *factors contributing to their leadership identity formation* (unit of analysis). In this study, the interpretative approach through a constructionist lens allowed for a broader social and cultural focus than merely from an individual and psychological perspective (Fairhurst, 2009:1608). Social construction allowed for the acknowledgement of the relational meaning-making by the unit of observation (Hosking, 2008), and the constitution and reconstitution of realities and identities (Cunliffe, 2009).

Theoretical frameworks: As mentioned, theoretical frameworks from two main disciplines underpinned this study:

- the social psychology discipline (Identity Theory); and

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- the leadership discipline – the SIT of leadership (Brown, 2000; Hogg, 2001a) and the LID model (Komives *et al*., 2005).

A few factors influenced the researcher's decision to utilise these frameworks: firstly the post-apartheid context in which the study was conducted and, secondly, the fact that the student leader/unit of observation would have to navigate multiple social identities in a multicultural context while being cognisant of their own identity(ies). While the identity framework provided a point of departure point for this study, the SIT of leadership was utilised as theoretical framework as it highlights group processes and group membership-based social influence (Hogg *et al*., 2012:292). The latter was useful to explore how student leaders managed social identities within a multicultural context while being cognisant of their own social identities (and limitations and privileges thereof). The researcher therefore found it appropriate to draw from these two disciplines to underpin the exploration of identity (within the identity theory framework) and leadership identity (within the SIT of leadership and LID model). Although the Identity and Social Identity Theory of Leadership were included in the literature review and served as broader reference framework in a supporting manner, the researcher drew mainly from the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model.

Research process: The research design falls within the qualitative research methodology. For the data collection phase, the research method used by the study was multiple individual case studies and a series of in-depth semi-structured interviews. In addition, the researcher employed a three-phase triangulation process with a focus group method for Phase 1 and Phase 2. For the data analysis phase, the researcher utilised the CAQDAS programme, Atlas.ti, to categorise the data according to the 14 predefined themes and 82 predefined codes and subcodes emerging from the axial and selective coding phases.

Chapter 5 will provide the findings based on the data collected during phase 1, phase 2 and phase 3.

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Chapter 5: Findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the predefined key themes covered in the data collection phase, the codes and subcodes generated from three sources (in-depth interviews and two focus groups) through the data analysis phase, and the presentation of the data as it relates to each of the themes. The methodological approach in presenting the data aims to answer the research question, namely *what informs student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa*? To answer this question, the researcher opted to pre-determine key main themes, but followed an open coding approach, further analysed through the alignments of quotations with main themes.

To give context to the extent of the data collected:

- 80 hours (Phase 1: 40 two-hour interviews) over a two-month period, 14 hours (Phase 2 and 3 focus groups) and 10 hours (Phase 4: 10 one-hour follow-up interviews) = +/- 104 hours of data collection
- 14 predefined key main themes, 82 codes and 183 subcodes
- 2 104 quotations (this includes interviews and focus group transcripts, timeline reflections and "black book moments")
- 1 400 + transcription pages

Figure 5.1 indicates the layout of Chapter 5.

Figure 5.1: Layout of Chapter 5

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5.2 Data presentation of the predefined themes

The following section presents the findings based on the data for each of the 14 key themes. The Student Affairs practitioners' reflections (Phase 3) were added as a separate "contribution", but the participants (Phase 2) were added to the main data, as they were also contributing to the data through their timeline reflections and focus group participation. The quotation content was analysed, and the frequency of key subcodes was extrapolated.

It is important to note that the researcher started by acknowledging each subcode, but many subcodes generated had only one "frequency count". The researcher did not interpret this subcode as significant in relation to the broader sample, but decided to include it as a subcode as it was significant to the individual participant. Another observation was that patterns of interaction were observed in the participants' interview process, but some of these patterns were relevant only to the individual and not necessarily to the broader sample. This is discussed in Chapter 6. The relevance of pattern identification and interrelation with other codes as they pertain to the individual is also discussed in Chapter 6. Figure 5.2 indicates the quotation frequency count per theme.

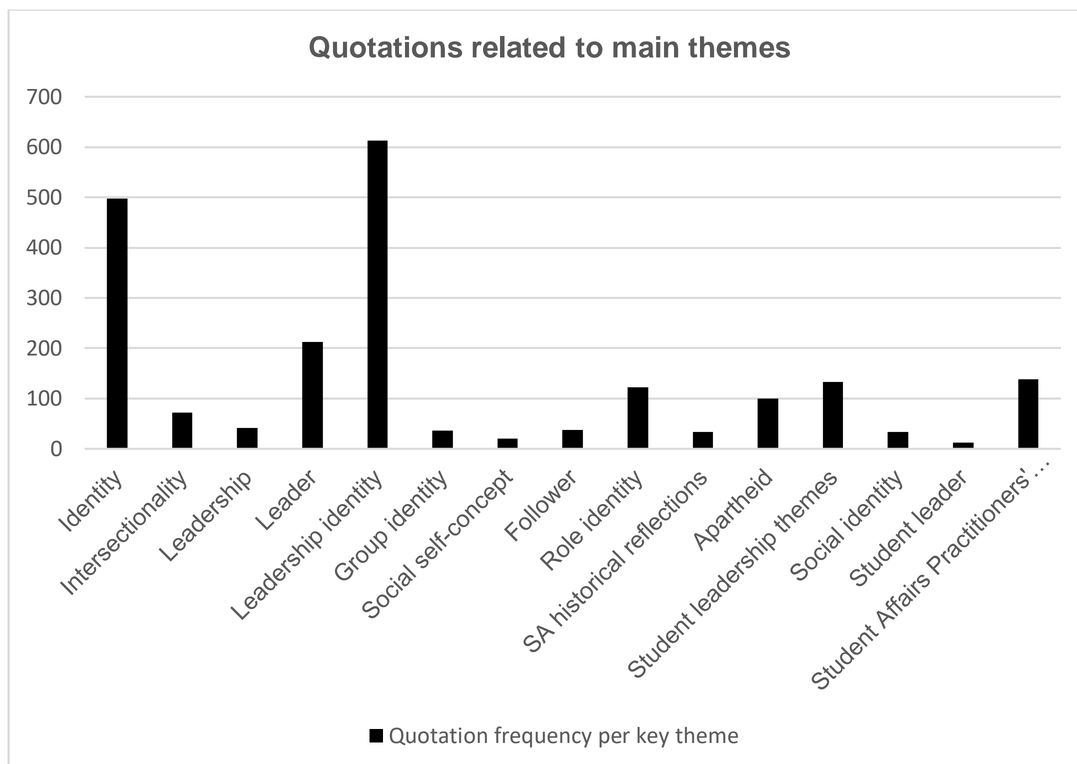

Figure 5.2: Quotation frequency per key theme

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5.2.1 Theme 1: Identity

"Identity" was the first predefined theme. Figure 5.3 indicates the quotation frequency count (the number of quotations captured per code). This theme consisted of six predefined codes, with "identity contributors" as the dominant code, with 384 quotations and 41 subcodes. For the purpose of this chapter, the researcher focuses only on the code for this theme, namely, "identity contributors". Figure 5.3 illustrates the code distribution in relation to the key theme.

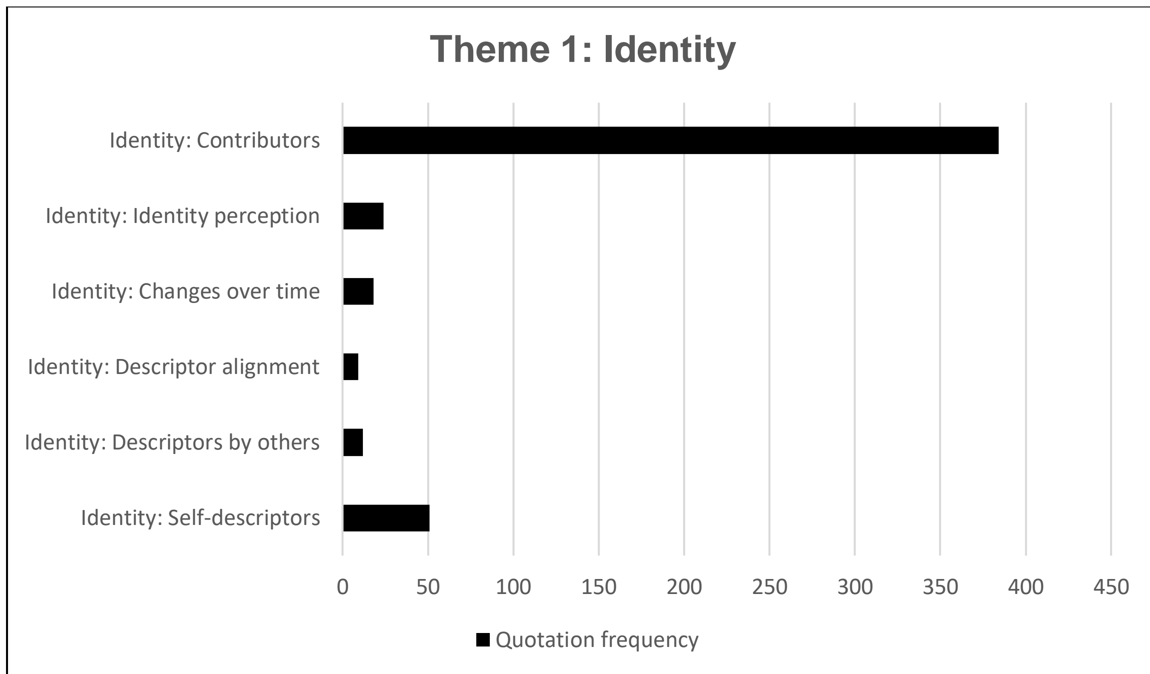

Figure 5.3: Theme 1 (Identity) – quotation frequency count per code

The "Identity: self-descriptors", "Identity: descriptors by others", "Identity: descriptor alignment" and "Identity: changes over time" presented a distribution of potential subcodes, but the researcher chose to limit the data categorisation to the code level and not to a subcode level, as the significance would be related to the individual, as indicated in their summary description of their profile (see Appendix A). The general notes regarding these codes are as follows:

- **Identity: self-descriptors** allowed the participant to describe themselves as viewed by themselves;
- **Identity: descriptors by others** allowed the participant to describe themselves as viewed by others (friends, family, fellow student leaders);

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- **Identity: descriptor alignment** required the confirmation (alignment) or rejection (misalignment) of themselves as viewed by others, followed by a reason for this alignment or misalignment;
- **Identity: changes over time** required the participant to reflect on how their self-descriptors changed over the years and what (life events) contributed to that change;
- **Identity: perception** confirmed the participant's understanding of identity as a construct, as it laid the foundation for the study. This would later be reconfirmed in theme 2 (Intersectionality).

The main code, "Identity: Contributors", presented 41 subcodes. Table 5.1 illustrates the subcodes as recorded in phase 1, phase 2 and phase 3.

Table 5.1. Identity contributors: Subcode trends from phase 1 to phase 4.

(A) Phase 1 (participant-specific subcodes)	**(B) Phase 2 (subcodes not present in Phase 1)**	**(C) Phase 4 (subcodes increase in frequency from Phase 1 to Phase 4)**	**(D) Unchanged subcodes**
Fatherhood Rape Being my own hero Sport My name Being bullied Toxic friends Disability Father's absence (not due to death) Financial constraints (not first-generation student) Suicidal thoughts Mentor role	Parents' divorce Patriarchal family(3) structure (1)	My name (from 1 to 10) Mother (from 2 to 10) Academic excellence (from 4 to 8) Siblings: sense of responsibility (from 3 to 6) Diversity exposure (from 4 to 9) Financial constraints: not first-generation student (from 1 to 7) Grandparents' influence (2 to 6) My language (3 to 7) Suicidal thoughts (1 to 4) Career field (3 to 8)	Parents' divorce Rape Disability First-generation student Sport Fatherhood Being my own hero Death of a family member

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		Leadership roles (2 to 8) Servant leadership (3 to 8) Mentor role (1 to 9) Student movements (2 to 8) Sense of justice (2 to 10) Outsider (2 to 7) Bullied (1 to 6) Independence (3 to 9) Partner (2 to 6) Rejection (2 to 7) Arts/expressing my identity through the arts (2 to 9)	

In Phase 4, the participants of Phase 1 were required to eliminate subcodes (recorded in phase 1 and phase 2) not relevant to their identity formation. The following key trends were observed from the identity contributor data, captured across the various stages:

- Participant-specific themes were captured In phase 1 which either featured on the participant identity timeline and or was confirmed in interview 1 – see Table 5.1. (A)
- Two new sub-codes were captured in phase 2 – see Table 5.1. (B)
- A trend was observed in phase 4 with participant-specific sub-codes increasing with the greatest shift in the following sub-codes; “my name”, “mother”, “diversity exposure”, “career field”, “leadership roles”, “mentor roles”, “student movements” and “expressing my identity through the arts” – see Table 5.1.(C). This could be ascribed to participants having had more time to reflect as almost 1 year passed between phase 1 and phase 4.
- Participant-specific sub-codes which remained unchanged – see Table 5.1 (D).

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- The main contributors to participants' identity formation will be discussed in section 6.4.

Figure 5.4 shows the progression of these subcodes from Phase 1 to Phase 4.

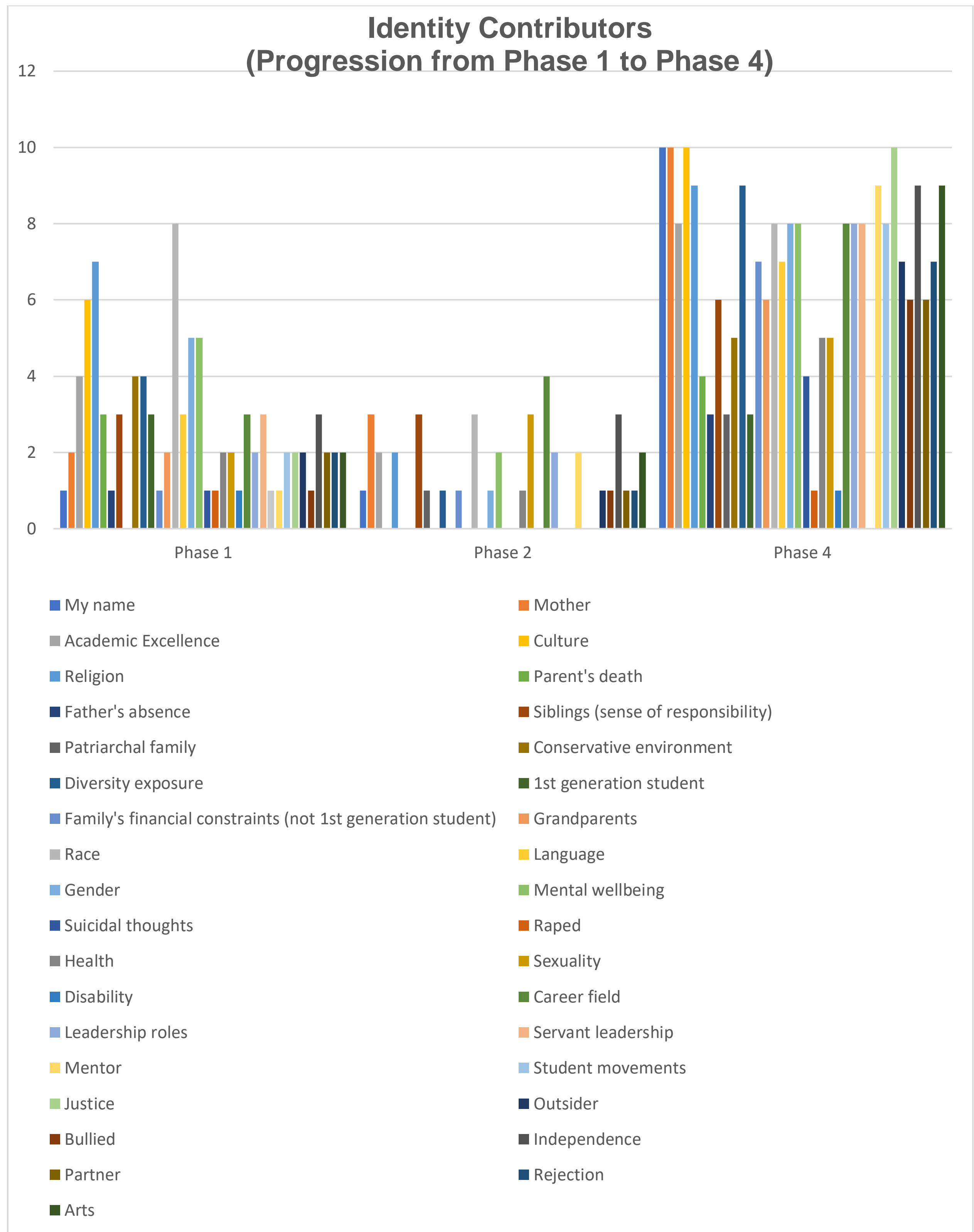

Figure 5.4: Identity contributors – progression from Phase 1 to Phase 4

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5.2.2 Theme 2: Intersectionality

The second theme focused on the participant's understanding of intersectionality and its relation to their identity. Four codes were identified, and 72 quotations were captured. Figure 5.5 shows the quotation frequency as captured per code. The researcher only identified subcodes (seven) for "intersectionality acknowledgement" and limited the data analysis to the code level for the other three codes, as the findings are shared in Figure 5.6 per individual.

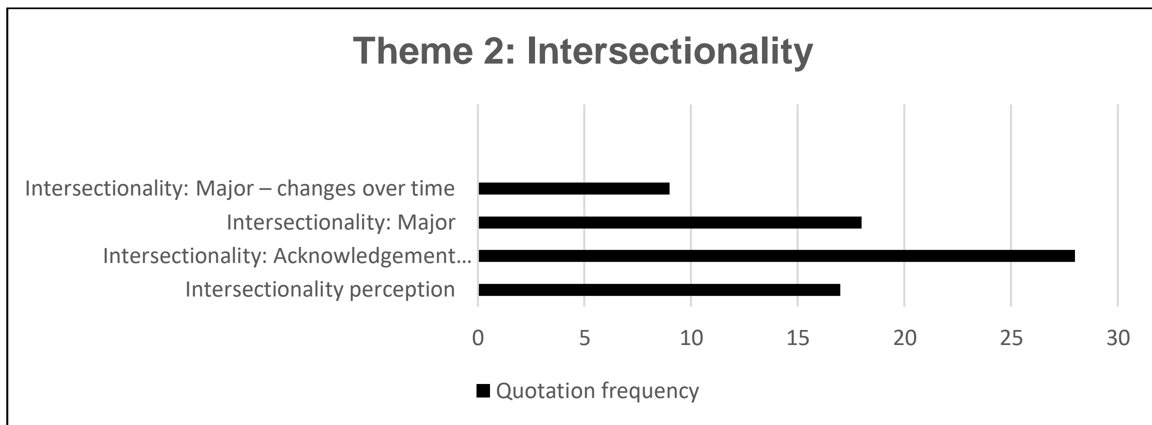

Figure 5.5: Theme 2 (Intersectionality) – quotation frequency count per code

The following key notes are provided regarding the codes:

- **Intersectionality perception** first confirmed the participant's understanding of the concept of intersectionality;
- **Intersectionality: Major** indicated the dominant part of their intersectionality in Phase 1;
- **Intersectionality: Major – changes over time** required the participant to confirm if the dominant part of their intersectionality changed over time.

Figure 5.6 indicates the intersectionality acknowledgment by each participant (Phase 1).

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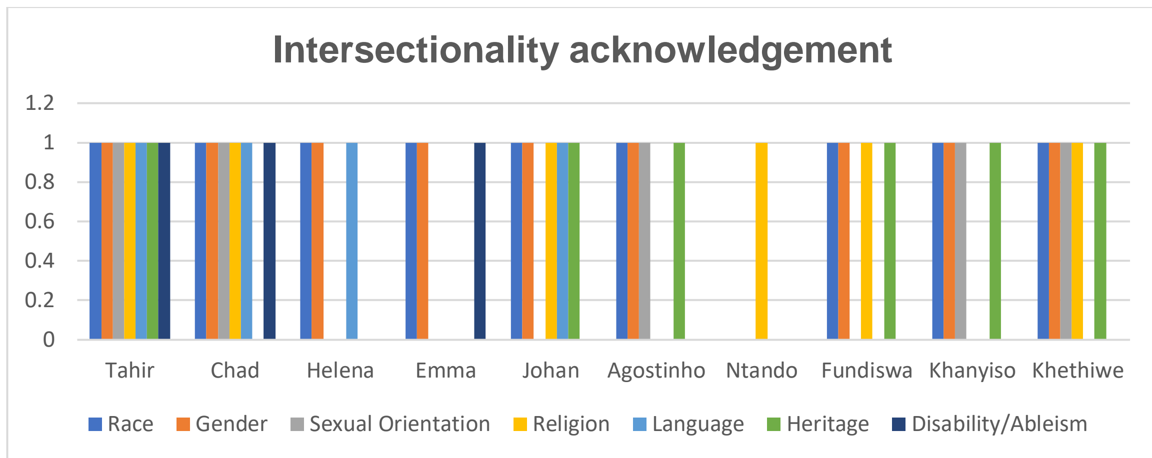

Figure 5.6: Intersectionality acknowledgment by Phase 1 participants

Seven subcodes were identified for the intersectionality acknowledgement code. The following notes are provided regarding this subcode:

- Race and gender presented the highest frequency count (9/10);
- Religion and heritage presented the second highest frequency count (8/10);
- Language presented the second least frequency count (4/10);
- Ableism presented the least frequency count (3/10);
- Ntando was the only participant who explicitly acknowledges religion as part of his intersectionality.

5.2.3 Theme 3: Leadership

The third theme, "Leadership", had three predetermined codes and 42 quotations were captured. Figure 5.7 displays the quotation frequency count per code.

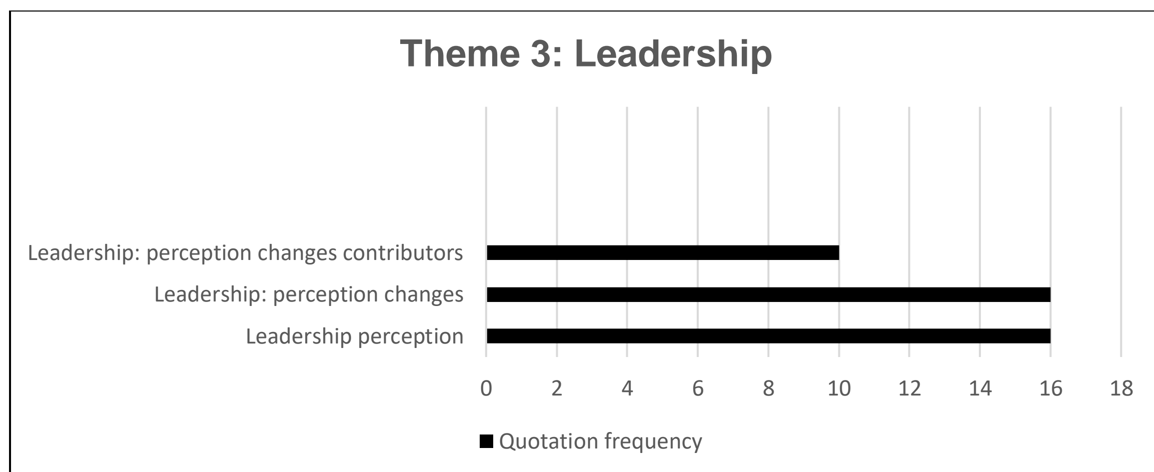

Figure 5.7: Theme 3 (Leadership) – quotation frequency per code

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The following notes are provided regarding the codes:

- **Leadership perception** confirmed the participant's understanding of the concept of leadership;
- **Leadership: perception changes** required the participant to reflect on whether their perception of leadership had changed over the years;
- **Leadership: perception changes contributors** required the participant to reflect on what/who contributed to that change.

5.2.4 Theme 4: Leader

The fourth theme, "Leader", had 17 predetermined codes and 213 quotations were captured. Figure 5.8 displays the quotation frequency captured per code. The researcher limited the data analysis to the code level and no subcodes were generated, as the findings are discussed in Chapter 6 pertaining to the individual.

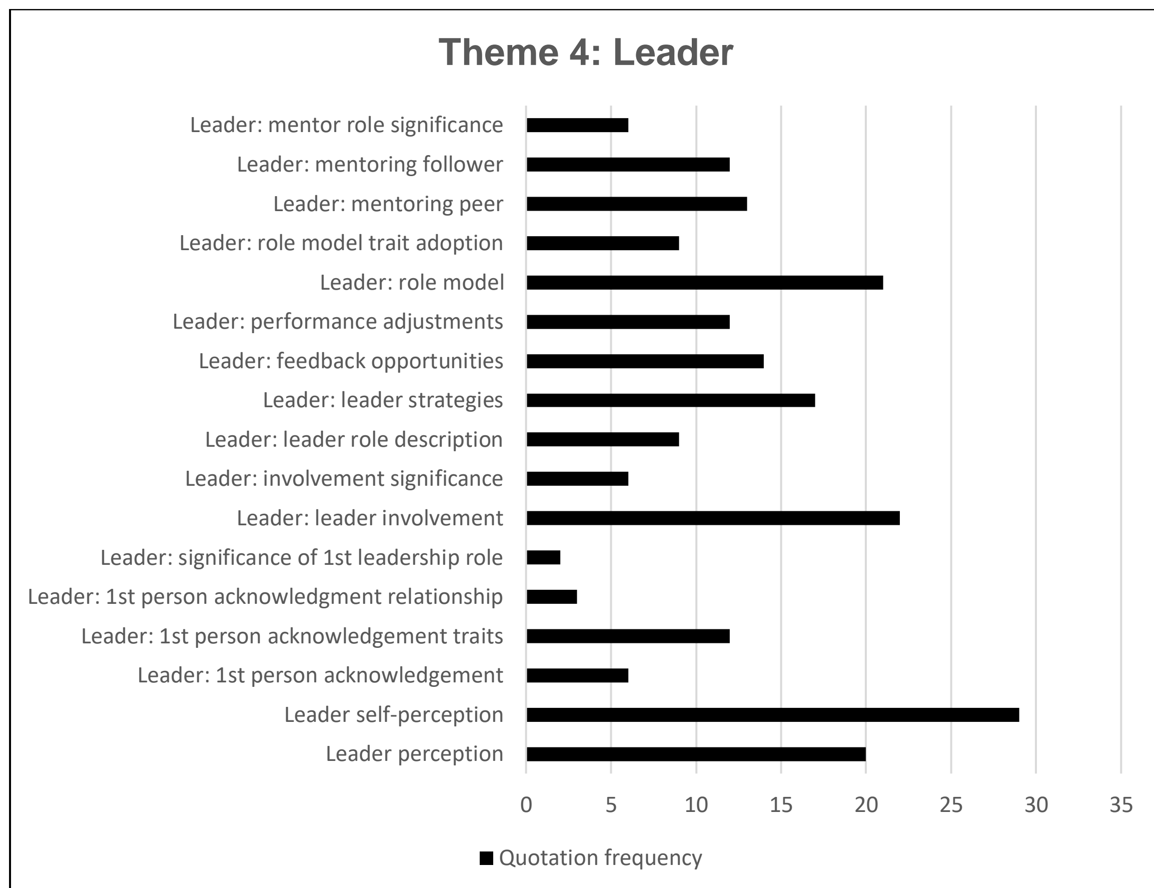

Figure 5.8: Theme 4 (Leader) – quotation frequency count per code

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The following notes are provided regarding this theme and codes:

- **Leader perception** confirmed the participant's understanding of the concept of a leader;
- **Leader self-perception** confirmed the participant's acknowledgement of themselves as a leader;
- **Leader: first person acknowledgement** allowed the participant to reflect on when and who the first person was whom they acknowledged as a leader, and why;
- **Leader: first person acknowledgement traits** confirmed whether the participant identified specific traits in this person (which were later reconfirmed as "trait adoption");
- **Leader: first person acknowledgment relationship** determined the nature of the relationship with the person;
- **Leader: significance of first leadership role** captured the responses regarding the significance (or not) of this first leadership role;
- **Leader: leader involvement** captured responses related to their chosen leadership involvement and the variety of the leadership spectrum;
- **Leader: involvement significance** identified where/why they had chosen to become involved as a leader (and a potential link to their intersectionality);
- **Leader: leader role description** entailed a general description of the leadership role they fulfilled;
- **Leader: leader strategies** captured the strategies they acknowledged having utilised to reach their goals;
- **Leader: feedback opportunities** indicated the awareness they had to actively seek feedback opportunities to reconfirm their leadership;
- **Leader: performance adjustments** confirmed the adjustments regarding their leadership after feedback. This would later be reconfirmed with **role identity: skills acquired;**
- **Leader: role model** determined the leader role model and reason for their chosen role model

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- **Leader: role model trait adoption** confirmed their awareness of the trait adoption (or rejection) of their leader role model;
- **Leader: mentoring peer** provided insights into whether they had extended their leadership into involvement in peer mentoring;
- **Leader: mentoring follower** provided insights into whether they had extended their leadership into involvement in follower mentoring;
- **Leader: mentor role significance** captured responses to determine whether mentoring played any significant factor in their leadership identity.

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5.2.5 Theme 5: Leadership identity

The fifth theme, "Leadership identity", provided the highest quotation frequency count in this study (613) and 16 codes. Figure 5.9 displays the quotation frequency per code. The researcher identified two codes to be sub-coded based on their relevance to the research questions, namely "leadership identity: LID contributors" and "leadership identity: South Africa historical events_LID contributors". These subcodes provided 224 and 174 quotation frequencies respectively.

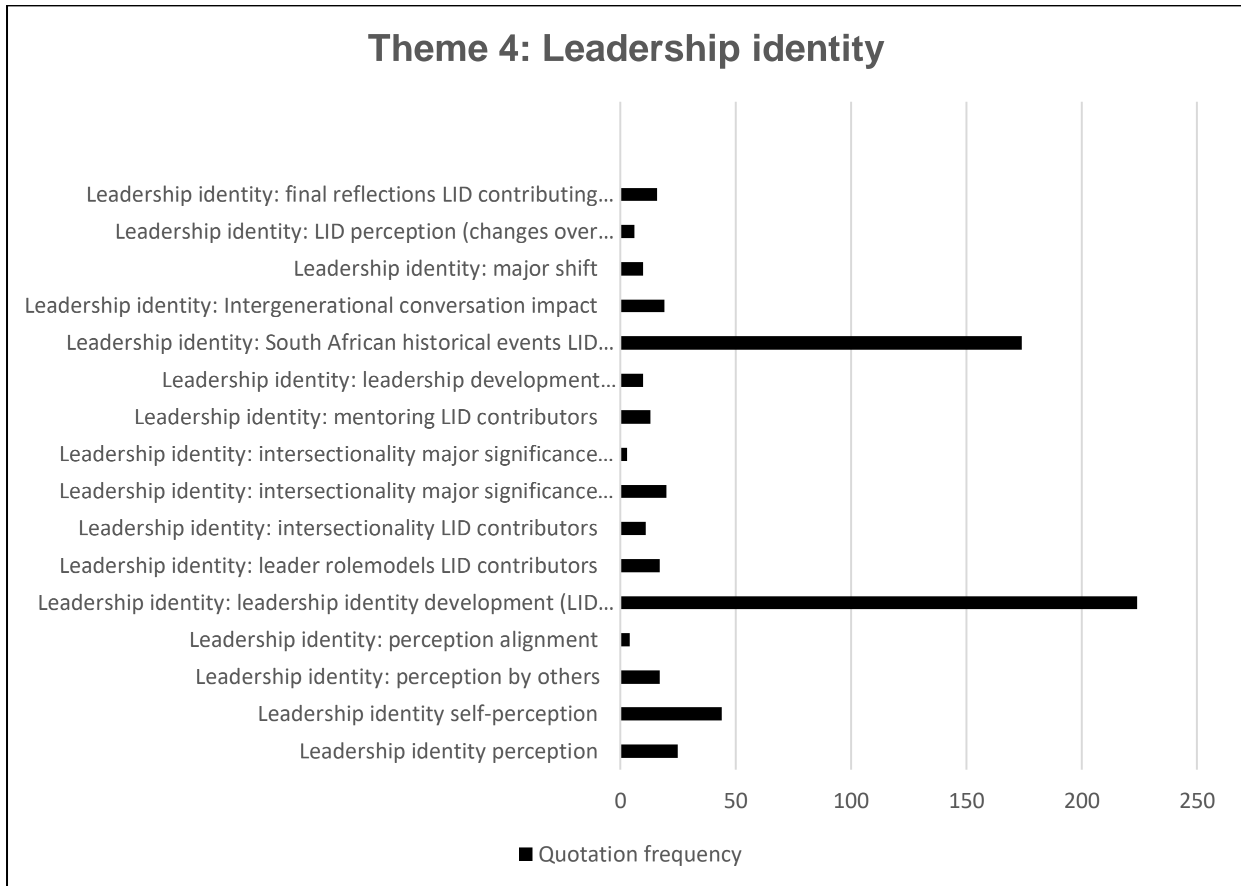

Figure 5.9: Theme 5 (Leadership identity) – quotation frequency count per code

The following notes are provided regarding the codes:

- **Leadership identity perception** captured the participants' understanding of leadership identity as a concept;
- **Leadership identity self-perception** provided insight into their understanding of their own leadership identity;
- **Leadership identity: perception by others** provided insight into their awareness of how their leadership identity was being perceived by others;

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- **Leadership identity: perception alignment** created an opportunity for the participants to evaluate congruency in their self-perception regarding their leadership identity versus how they believe they are perceived by others;
- **Leadership identity: leader role models LID contributors** clustered their responses to a specific role model (and would later compare their response to their response regarding "first person leader acknowledgment";
- **Leadership identity: intersectionality LID contributors** provided additional data to compare with their intersectionality responses and captured the aspects of their intersectionality that they believed contributed to their leadership identity;
- **Leadership identity: intersectionality major significance LID contributors** confirmed a relationship with the dominant part of their intersectionality and its relevance for their leadership identity;
- **Leadership identity: intersectionality major significance LID contributors (changes over time)** confirmed whether changes occurred over time in their perception of the dominant part of their intersectionality with their leadership identity. In addition, it provided insight to compare their responses to the intersectionality theme;
- **Leadership identity: mentoring LID contributors** confirmed the influence of their mentor role on their leadership identity. In addition, it provided an opportunity to confirm congruency in their responses here versus their responses in the "leader mentor role significance";
- **Leadership identity: leadership development opportunities LID contributors** provided insight into whether the participant actively sought opportunities/programmes to develop their leadership identity;
- **Leadership identity: intergenerational conversation impact** captured responses to their acknowledgement of the impact of intergenerational conversations on the leadership identity. The responses provided insight to further categorise a link between those

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who never had intergenerational conversations, e.g. about apartheid, and their responses to the apartheid theme;

- **Leadership identity: major shift** provided an opportunity for reflection to capture their response in terms of their self-awareness of a specific time that they could pinpoint as a major shift in their leadership identity;
- **Leadership identity: LID perception (changes over interview cycle)** captured potential changes in their understanding of the concept of leadership identity throughout the interview series;
- **Leadership identity: final reflections LID contributing factors** – this data contains a combination of post-interview reflections and responses in the final interview. Individual responses are discussed in Chapter 6.

Figure 5.10 illustrates the code, “Leadership identity: LID contributors”, and shows the progression of subcodes from Phase 1 to Phase 4.

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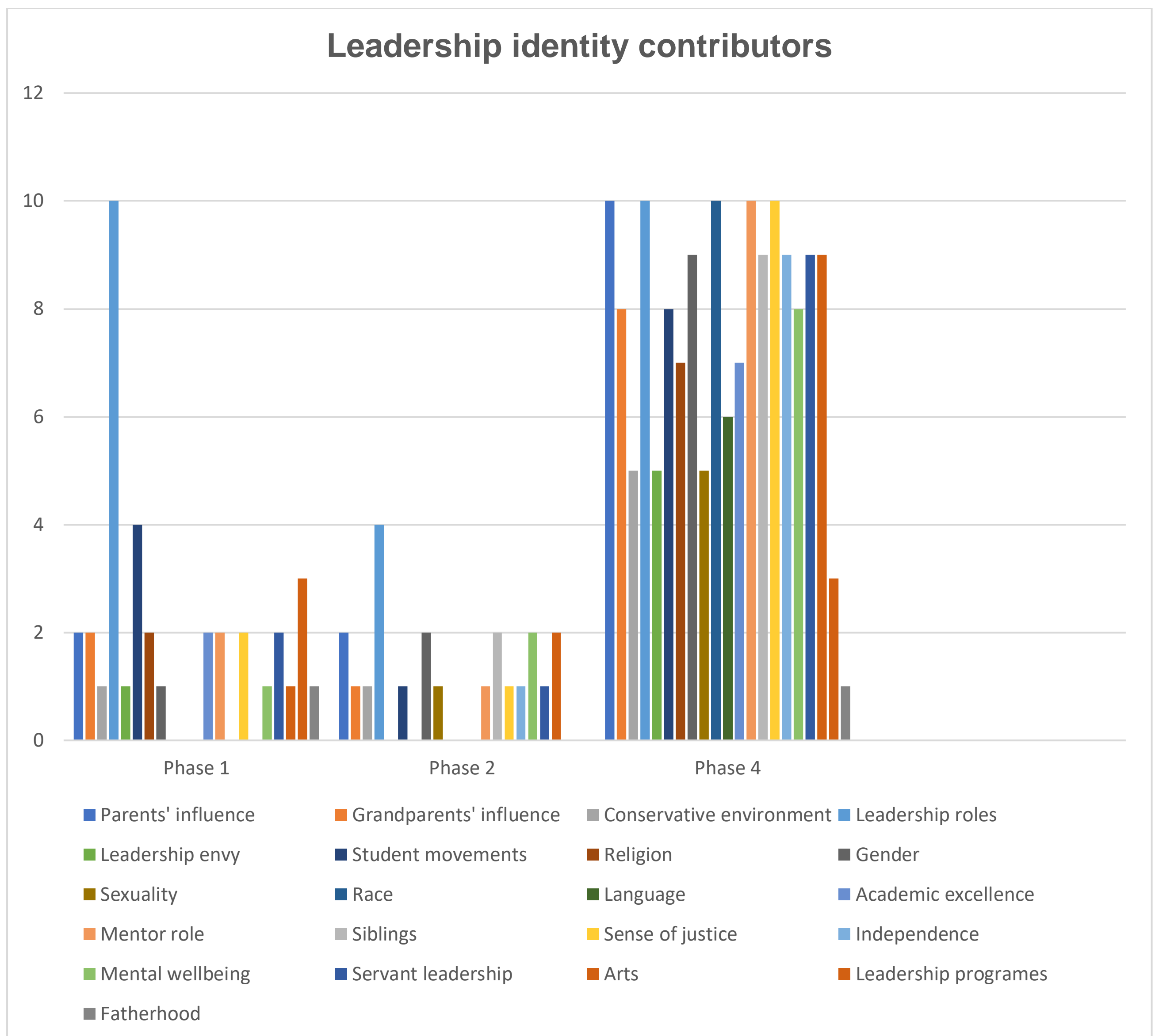

Figure 5.10: Leadership identity contributors – progression from Phase 1 to Phase 4

Figure 5.10 indicates the following regarding the subcode progression:

- Some subcodes only had one frequency count in Phase 1:
  - Conservative environment
  - Leadership envy
  - Gender
  - Mental wellbeing
  - Arts (expressing my leadership identity through the arts)
  - Fatherhood

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- Some subcodes were added as intersectionality and the following patterns emerged through Phase 1 to 4:
    - Religion (2 to 7/10)
    - Gender (1 to 9/10)
    - Sexuality (0 to 5/10) – added only in Phase 2
    - Race (0 to 10/10)
    - Language (0 to 6/10)
- The following subcodes were added in Phase 2:
    - Sexuality
    - Siblings (sense of responsibility as part of their leadership identity)
    - Independence
- The following subcodes showed no change in frequency:
    - Leadership roles
    - Fatherhood

Figure 5.11 shows the frequency count among Phase 1 participants (in Phase 4, after eliminating what was not relevant to their leadership identity):

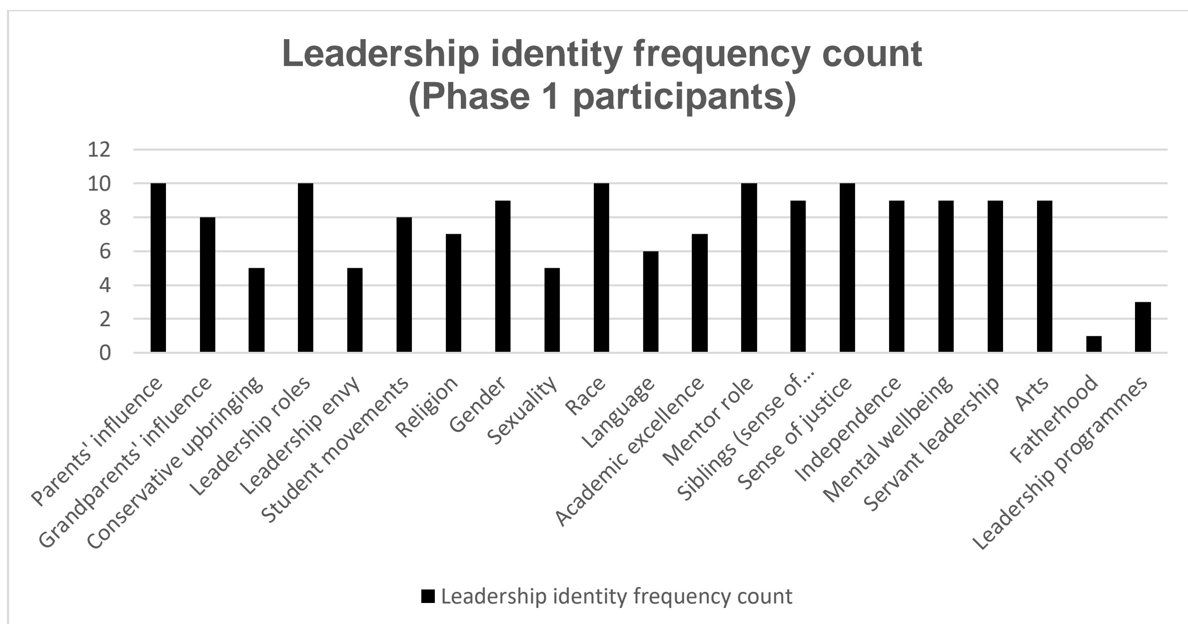

Figure 5.11: Leadership identity frequency count (Phase 1 participants)

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- The general observation is that all participants said that most of the subcodes were relevant to their leadership identity formation, with fatherhood being the outlier, followed by leadership programmes.

Figure 5.12 indicates the South African historical events that the participants believed contributed to their leadership identity formation. This is a combination of subcodes generated in Phase 1 and Phase 2 (from the participants' timeline reflections), with the total reflecting all participants' responses.

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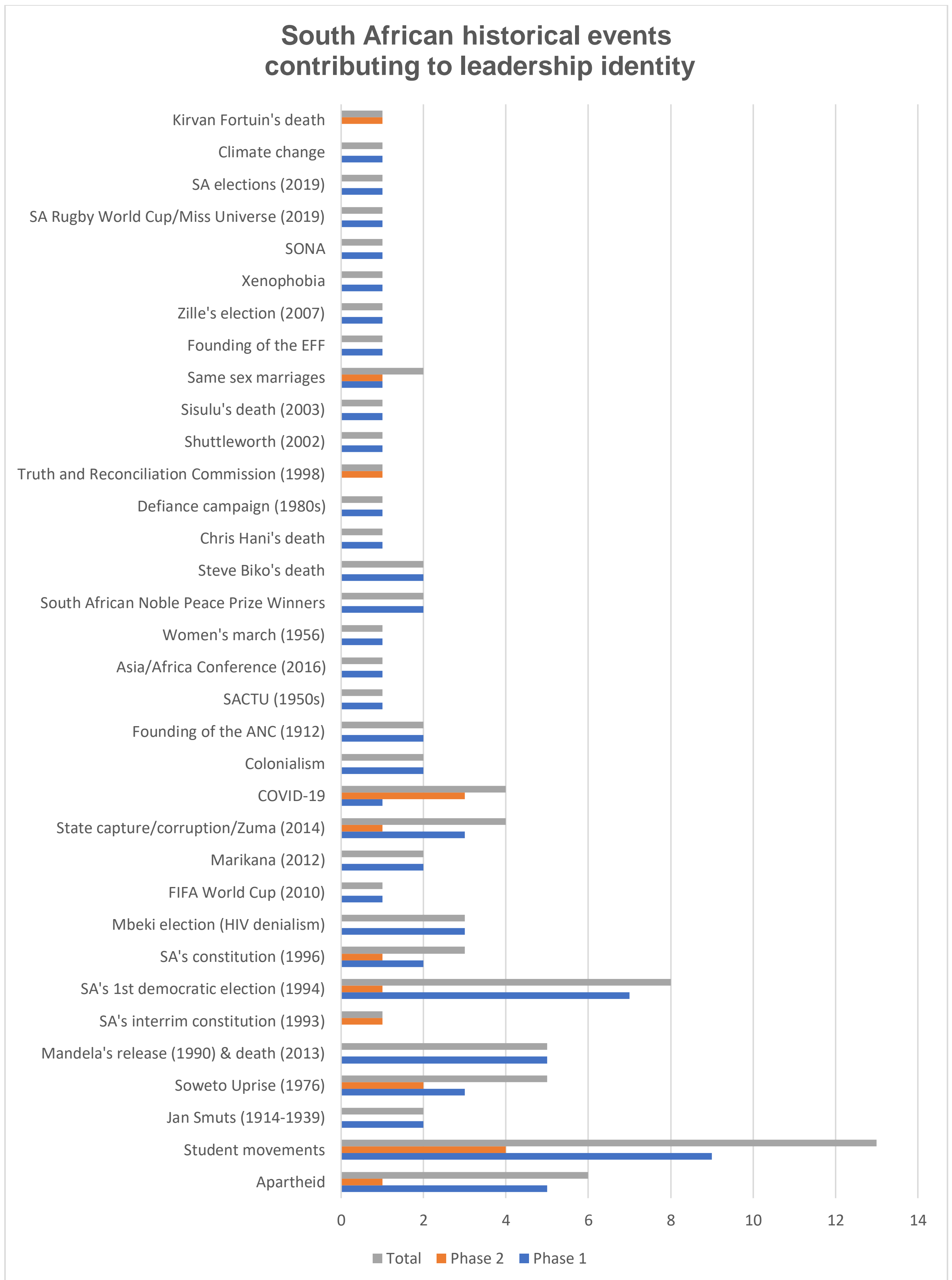

Figure 5.12: South African historical events (LID contributors)

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The following notes regarding this code as illustrated in Figure 5.12:

- Many subcodes only had one frequency count:
    - South Africa's interim constitution (1994)
    - FIFA World Cup (2010)
    - South African Congress of Trade Unions/SACTU (1950s)
    - Asia/Africa Youth Conference (2016)
    - Women's march to parliament (1956)
    - Chris Hani's death (1993)
    - Defiance campaign/whites-only beaches (1980s)
    - Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1998)
    - Mark Shuttleworth's trip to space/first South African and African to travel to the Space Station (2002)
    - Walter Sisulu's death (2003)
    - Founding of the EFF (1990)
    - Helen Zille's election as the Democratic Alliance party leader/ first woman opposition party leader (2007)
    - Xenophobia (2008 ongoing)
    - SONA (ongoing)
    - SA wins Rugby World Cup/Miss SA wins Miss Universe (2019)
    - South Africa national elections (2019)
    - Climate change (2019)
    - Kirvan Fortuin's murder (2020)
- New subcodes were generated in Phase 2:
    - South Africa's interim constitution (1994)
    - Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1998)
    - Kirvan Fortuin's murder (2020)
- The main subcodes are as follows:
    - Student movements (13/15)
    - South Africa's first democratic election (8/15)
    - Apartheid (6/15)
- Specific subcodes were clustered together, e.g.
    - Colonialism:

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  - 15th century colonialism
  - 1652 forefathers arrived in South Africa
  - 1806 Britain's control over the Cape Colony
  - 1834 Abolition of slavery in South Africa
  - 1899 South African war/Anglo Boer war
  - 1910/1912 Union of South Africa
- Student movements
  - #FeesMustFall
  - #BlackLivesMatter
  - #RhodesMustFall
  - #OpenStellenbosch
  - #EndOutsourcing
  - #antiGBV
  - #EndRapeCulture
  - #FarmLiveMatter
- Mandela's release and Mandela's death
- Jan Smuts's contribution:
  - 1914 First World War
  - 1939 Second World War
  - 1919 Jan Smuts
- Thabo Mbeki's election:
  - Mbeki's HIV/AIDS denialism
  - Mbeki's contribution to the white paper for people with disabilities
- Zuma's election
  - State capture
  - Nkandla
  - Corruption
- South Africans winning Nobel Peace Prize:
  - Albert Luthuli (1961)
  - Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1984)
  - FW de Klerk (1993)
  - Nelson Mandela (1993)

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- Steve Biko:
  - Steve Biko's death
  - Helen Zille exposes Steve Biko's death
- Two Phase 2 participants (Zoe and Bridget) indicated that, although they could acknowledge South Africa's history, it made no specific contribution to their leadership identity formation. They provided no timeline reflections pertaining to the South African historical context.

5.2.6 Theme 6: Group identity

"Group identity", as illustrated in Figure 5.13, was the sixth theme and consisted of three codes and 36 quotation frequencies. The researcher limited the data analysis to the code level and only created subcodes for "group identity association".

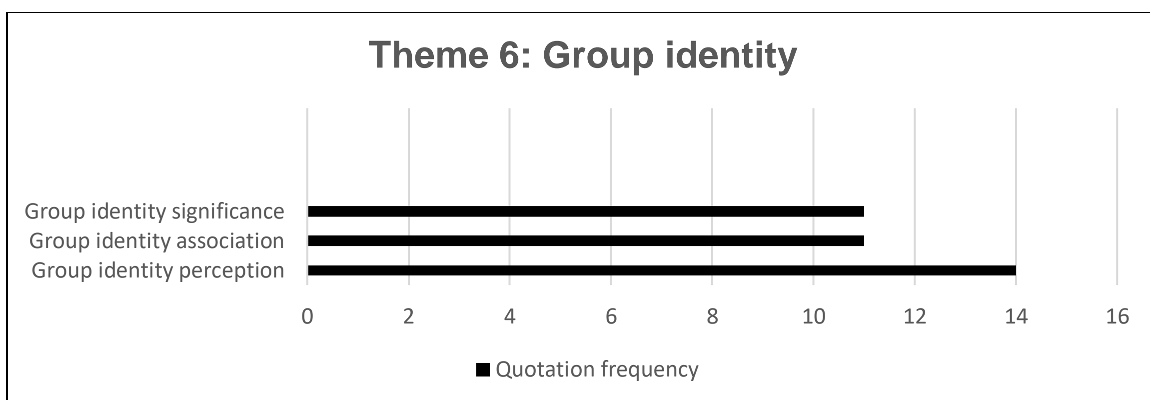

Figure 5.13: Theme 6 (Group identity) – quotation frequency count per code

The following notes are provided regarding the group identity code displayed in Figure 5.13:

- **Group identity perception** captured the participants' understanding of group identity;
- **Group identity significance** indicated the participants' view of the significance of group identity to them on a personal level;
- **Group identity association**, as illustrated in Figure 5.14, was captured as follows:
  - The majority of the participants associated with the student leader group;

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- The participant who identified as an activist did not identify with the student leader group;
- Intersectionality groups (race, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation) were not identified by default.

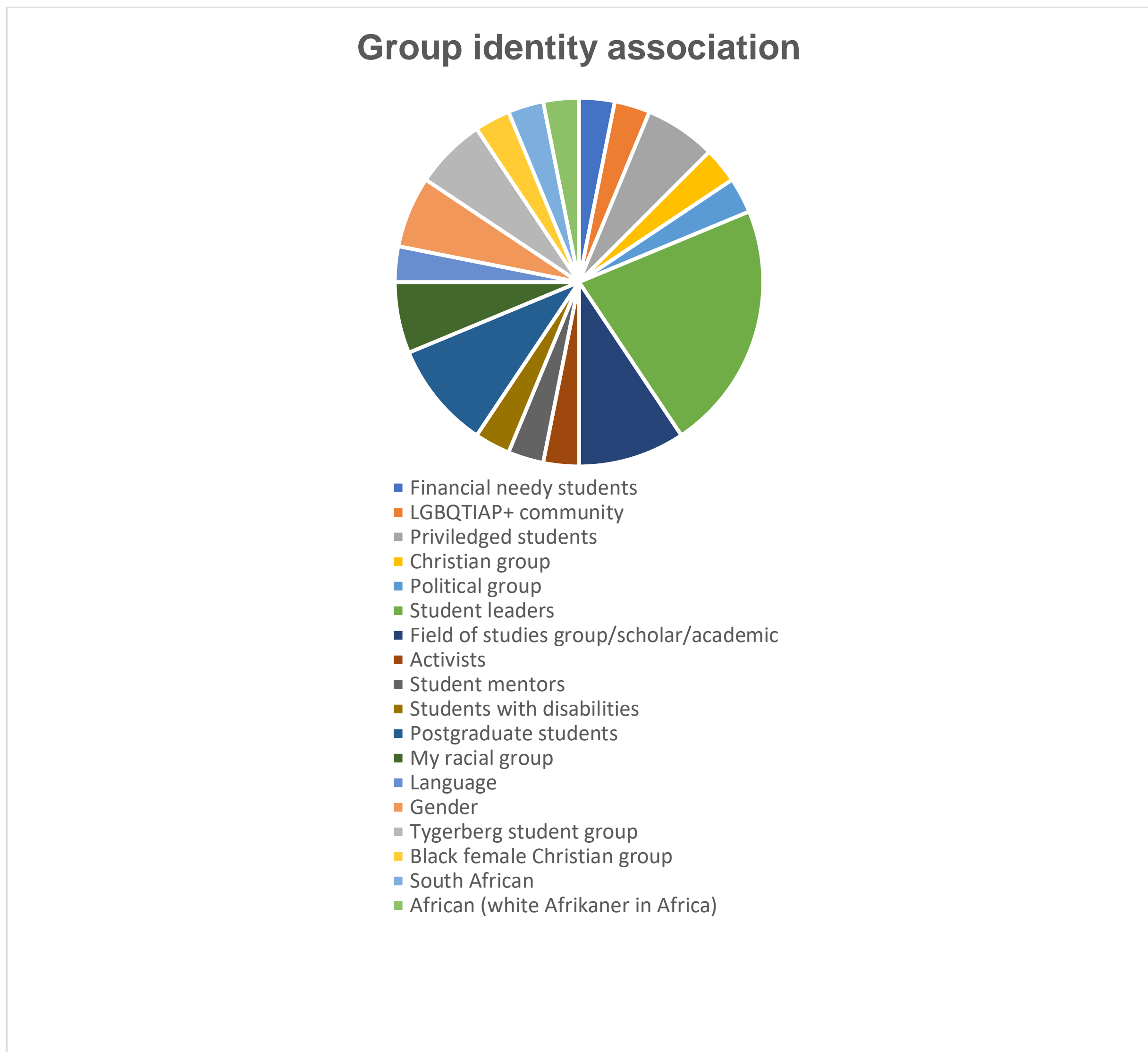

Figure 5.14: Group identity association

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5.2.7 Theme 7: Social self-concept

The seventh theme focused on social self-concept. Figure 5.15 displays two codes, "social self-concept perception" and "social self-concept perception: group identity perception", and the quotation frequency count per code. Twenty quotation frequencies were captured, but no subcodes were generated.

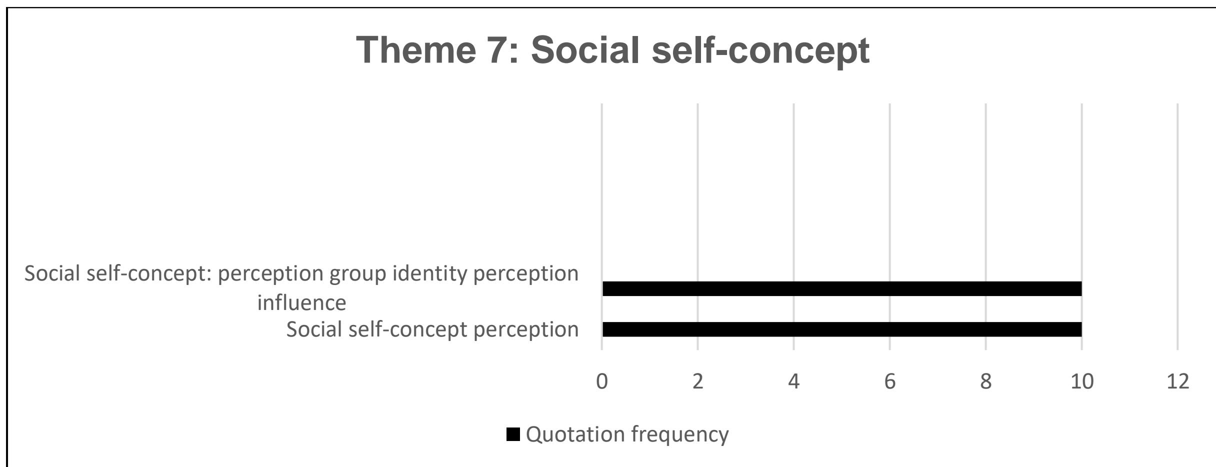

Figure 5.15: Theme 7 (Social self-concept) – quotation frequency per code

The following notes are provided regarding the social identity theme:

- **Social self-concept perception** captured the participants' understanding of social self-concept;
- **Social self-concept: perception group identity perception influence** confirmed that their understanding of social self-concept was influenced by their understanding of group identity – this would later be reconfirmed in the role identity theme.

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5.2.8 Theme 8: Follower

As displayed in Figure 5.16, in theme 8, "follower", consisted of four codes and 38 quotation frequencies were captured. No subcodes were generated for any of the codes.

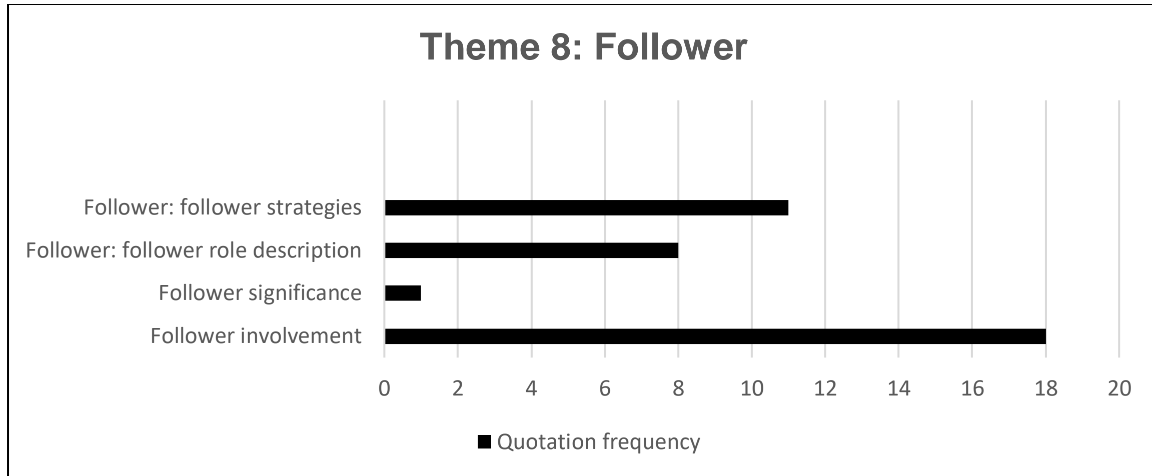

Figure 5.16: Theme 8 (Follower) – quotation frequency count per code

The following notes are offered regarding this theme:

- **Follower involvement** determined where the participants were involved as a follower and not as leader;
- **Follower significance** determined the significance for each of the participants relating to the specific follower role;
- **Follower: follower role description** served to confirm the specific role they played as a follower in relation to the organisation/cause;
- **Follower: follower strategies** captured the participants' responses to the strategies they implemented as a follower to support the organisation's/ cause's goals. These data were later compared to their leader strategies.

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5.2.9 Theme 9: Role identity

Figure 5.17 displays the ninth theme, role identity, and the quotation frequency per code. This theme consisted of five codes and 122 quotation frequencies. Subcodes were generated for two of the codes, namely "role identity association" and "role identity: skills acquired".

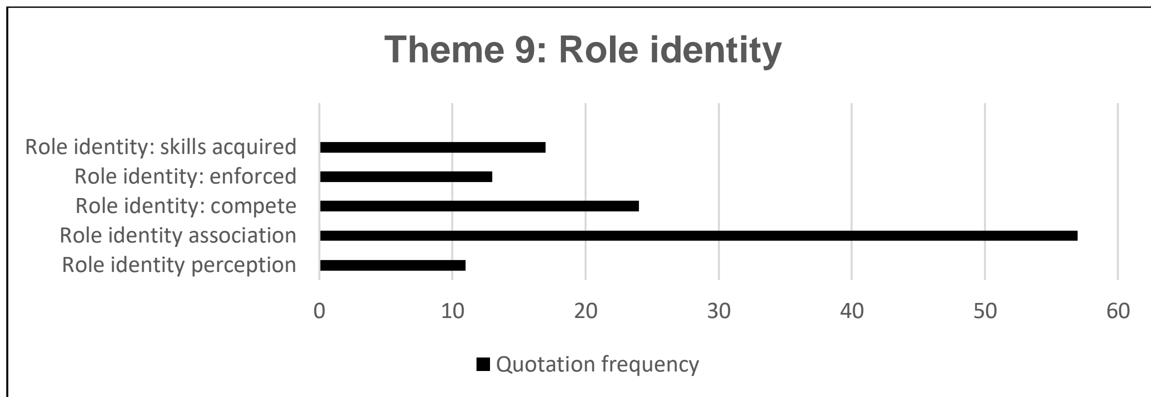

Figure 5.17: Theme 9 (Role identity) – quotation frequency per code

The following notes are provided regarding the role identity theme:

- **Role identity perception** captured the participants' understanding of the concept of role identity;
- **Role identity: compete** determined the roles that participants believed were competing. This differed on an individual level;
- **Role identity: enforced** determined the roles that participants believed were reinforcing each other. The responses differed on an individual level.

Figure 5.18 shows the **role identity association**, in relation to which the following observations were made:

- "Family member" and "leader" indicated the highest frequency count, followed by "friend/confidant";
- Some subcodes only indicated a single frequency:
    - Mediator/facilitator/collaborator
    - Learner
    - Teacher/educator
    - Role model
    - South African

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- The following role clusters were created:
  - Family member (son, brother, sister, daughter, father);
  - Leader (female leader, Christian/Muslim leader, black/person of colour leader).
- "White Afrikaans-speaking person" consisted of:
  - White forward-thinking leader in an Afrikaans community;
  - White Afrikaans-speaking person in Africa – in this subcode the emphasis was on language, and the Afrikaans language in particular.

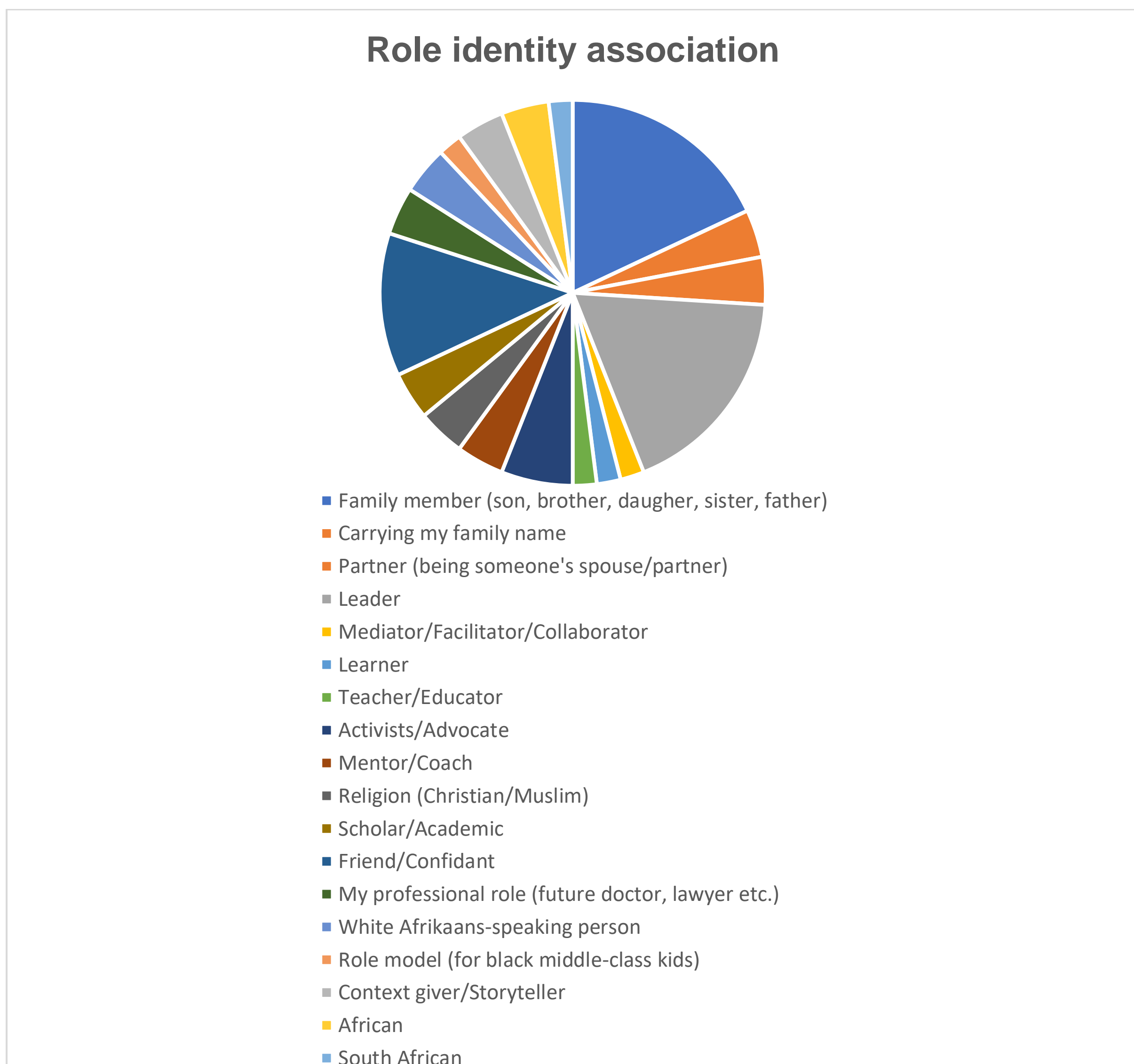

Figure 5.18: Role identity association

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- **Role identity: skills acquired** generated subcodes indicating the skills participants acquired to manage role identity integration. Figure 5.19 indicates the skills mentioned by the participants. Frequency count is not indicated, but rather the occurrence of the specific skill as mentioned by the participants.

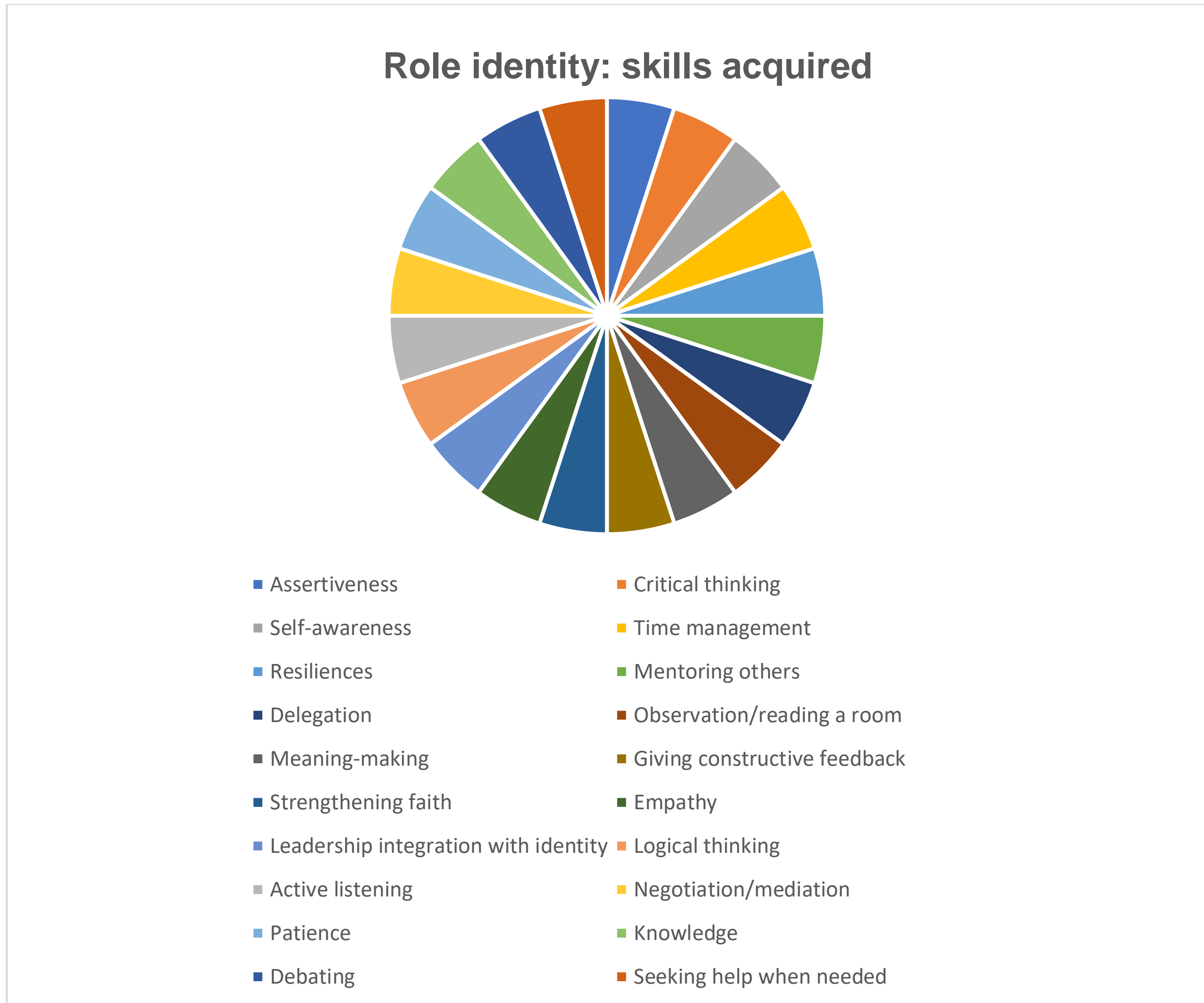

Figure 5.19: Role identity: Skills acquired

- Specific skills were clustered as follows:
  - Self-awareness included “intuition”;
  - Observation included “reading the room”;
  - Meaning-making included “storytelling” and “sharing context”;
  - Empathy included “empathic disposition”;
  - Leadership integration with identity referred to “leadership became part of my personality”;

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- Logical thinking included "analysing" and "rationalising potential conflict";
- Expanding knowledge included "reading", "doing research on a topic";
- Debating included "being able to express my point of view" and "challenge viewpoints".

5.2.10 Theme 10: South African historical reflections

The tenth theme focused on South African historical reflections and the participants' recollection of history. Two codes were identified and 34 quotation frequencies were captured. Figure 5.20 indicates the quotation frequency count per code.

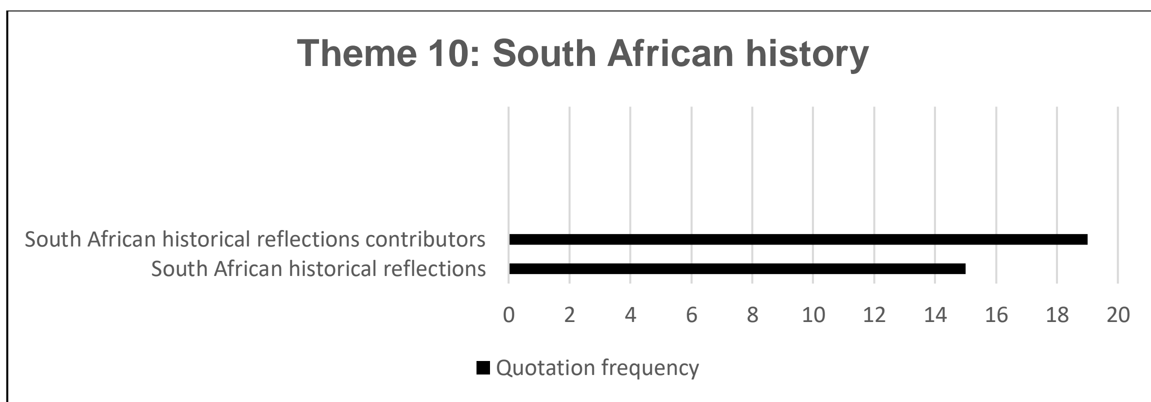

Figure 5.20: Theme 10 (South African history) – quotation frequency per code

The following notes are provided regarding this theme:

- **South African historical reflections** captured the participants' recollections of South Africa's history;
- **South African historical reflection contributors** focused on determining who/what contributed to their recollection of South Africa's history. This would later be compared to the significance of intergenerational conversations for their leadership identity formation.

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5.2.11 Theme 11: Apartheid

The eleventh theme focused on “apartheid” as a specific element of South African history. Figure 5.21 indicates the quotation frequency per code. Five codes were identified and 100 quotation frequencies were captured. No subcodes were generated for this theme. The findings of this theme, per participant, are discussed in Chapter 6, also in relation to the South African historical events contributing to student leadership identity formation.

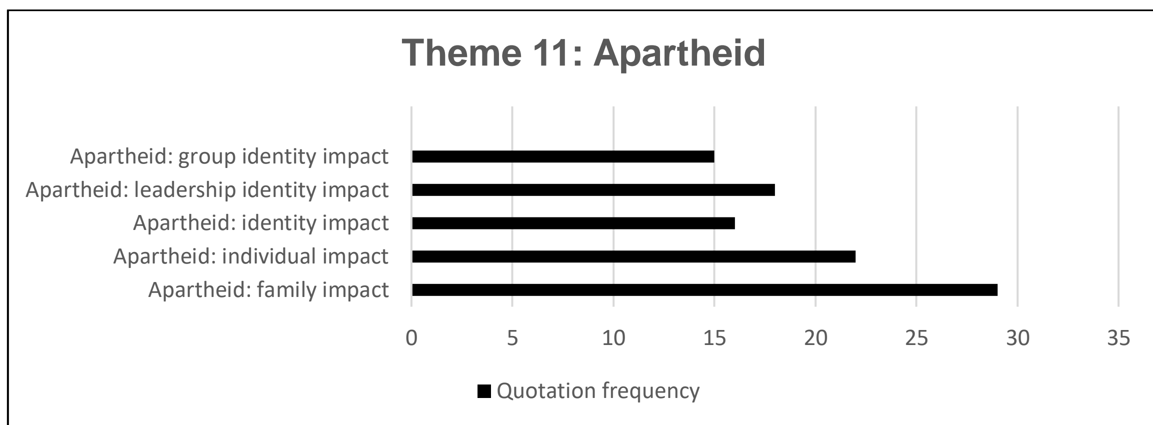

Figure 5.21: Theme 11 (Apartheid) – quotation frequency count per code

The following notes are provided regarding this theme:

- **Apartheid: family impact** – this code captured the participants’ understanding of the effect of apartheid on their family, e.g. death of family members, economic status, lost education opportunities, forced removals, dismantling of families due to mixed relations;
- **Apartheid: individual impact** – this code captured responses related to the participants’ acknowledgement of the direct impact of apartheid on themselves, e.g. economic status, limited opportunities for white males and “born-frees” in general due to affirmative action;
- **Apartheid: identity impact** – this code captured responses directly linked to the participants’ identity formation, e.g. “realising the limitations of my profile and the privilege linked to my profile”;
- **Apartheid: leadership identity impact** – this code captured responses relating to their understanding of the impact of apartheid on their leadership identity, ranging from little to no impact to

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understanding the responsibility of leaving a better legacy for the next generation;

- **Apartheid: group identity impact** – this code captured confirmation of their group identity association (as per the group identity theme) and indicated positive and negative group identification based on the impact of apartheid.

5.2.12 Theme 12: Student leadership themes

The twelfth theme focused on student leadership during the post-apartheid period compared to apartheid. A total of 133 quotation frequencies were captured. Figure 5.22 indicates the quotation frequency per code. Ten codes were identified and subcodes were generated for two codes, namely “student leadership themes: Post-apartheid” and “student leadership themes: apartheid”.

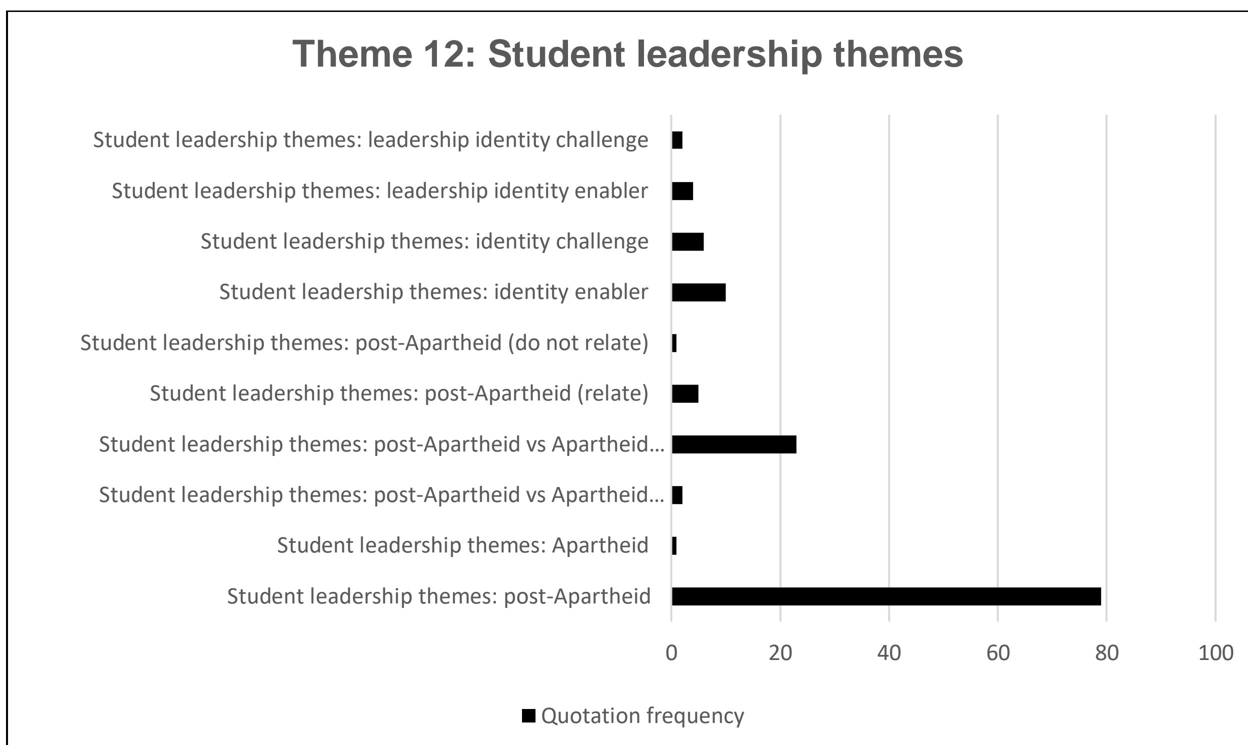

Figure 5.22: Theme 12 (Student leadership themes) – quotation frequency per code

Table 5.2 displays the student leadership themes: post-apartheid compared to apartheid, and the student leadership themes which participants considered to be either the same or different.

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Table 5.2: Student leadership themes: apartheid versus post-apartheid.

Student leadership themes (post-apartheid)	Student leadership themes (apartheid)	Student leadership themes (same)	Student leadership themes (different)
1) Systemic racism	1) Overt racism	**Racism**	**The fight against racism was the main cause**
2) Access to education	2) Basic rights (Education)		
		Affordable higher education	**More causes, e.g. fluidity of gender, sexuality transphobia etc., reflecting the diversity of the student community**
3) Mental wellbeing	3) Mental wellbeing (repressed)		
4) Inequality			
	4) Harsh consequences for student activism	**Inequality**	
5) Gender-based violence			
6) Gender identity fluidity (e.g. pronouns)	5) Gender-based violence (less prominent)	**Power dynamics (but more than race, e.g. gender, status, etc.)**	**To mobilise students for a single common cause is more challenging now than pre-1994**
7) Homophobia/transphobia (sexual orientation fluidity)	6) Sexuality (more repressed)		
8) Power dynamics	7) Power relations (white males)	**Power of student movements**	
9) First-generation students/ empowerment of first-generation students	8) Student mobilisation		
		Police managing crowds during student protests	
	9) Task-oriented leadership		
10) Student debt			
	10) Student leaders for life		
11) White saviour mentality			
12) The role of religion in student leadership			
13) Borrowing trauma from others			
14) Micro-aggressions			
15) Formalised academic appeal processes			
16) Tribalism and leadership			
17) Safety			
18) Student Affairs hierarchy			

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Additional notes regarding this theme:

- **Student leadership themes: post-apartheid (relate)** indicated the participants' relatability to the specific student leadership themes mentioned;
- **Student leadership themes: post-apartheid (do not relate)** indicated the student leadership themes to which the participants could not relate;
- **Student leadership themes: identity enabler** captured responses acknowledging how their identity enabled them as student leaders to address specific themes. These responses were cross-checked with the identity perception responses;
- **Student leadership themes: identity challenge** captured the participants' awareness of the limitations of their identity to address specific student leadership themes;
- **Student leadership themes: leadership identity enabler** captured responses acknowledging how their leadership identity enabled them as student leaders to address specific themes. These responses were cross-checked with their leadership identity perception responses;
- **Student leadership themes: leadership identity challenge** captured participants' awareness of the limitations of their leadership identity to address specific student leadership themes.

5.2.13 Theme 13: Social identity

The thirteenth theme focused on "social identity". Figure 5.23 indicates the quotation frequency captured per code. Three codes were identified, with 33 quotation frequencies captured. No subcodes were generated.

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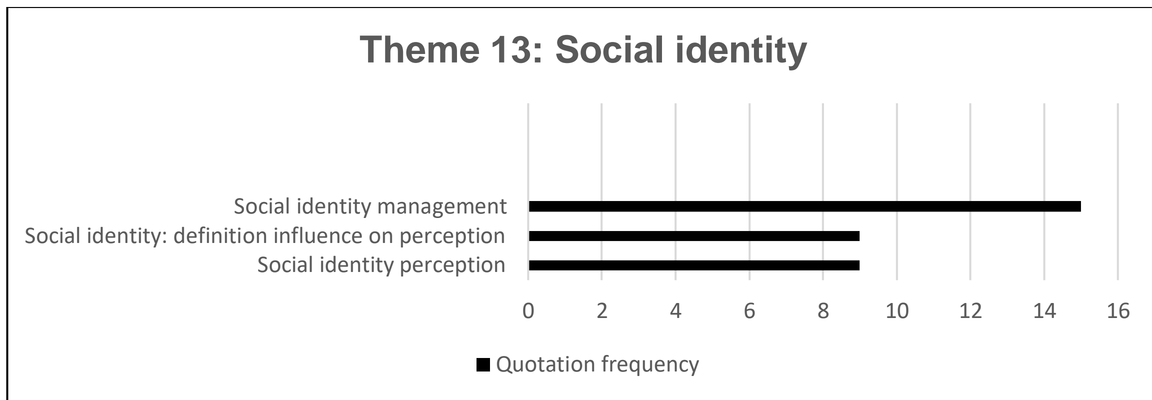

Figure 5.23: Theme 13 (Social identity) – quotation frequency per code

The following notes are provided regarding this theme:

- **Social identity perception** captured the participants' responses regarding their understanding of social identity;
- **Social identity: definition influence on perception** confirmed whether the definition of social identity shared with them influenced their understanding of social identity;
- **Social identity management** captured the participants' responses on how they managed their social identities in a multicultural context while being cognisant of their own identity.

5.2.14 Theme 14: Student leader

The final theme, "student leader", consisted of two codes and 12 quotation frequency counts. Figure 5.24 indicates the quotation frequency per code. No subcodes were generated.

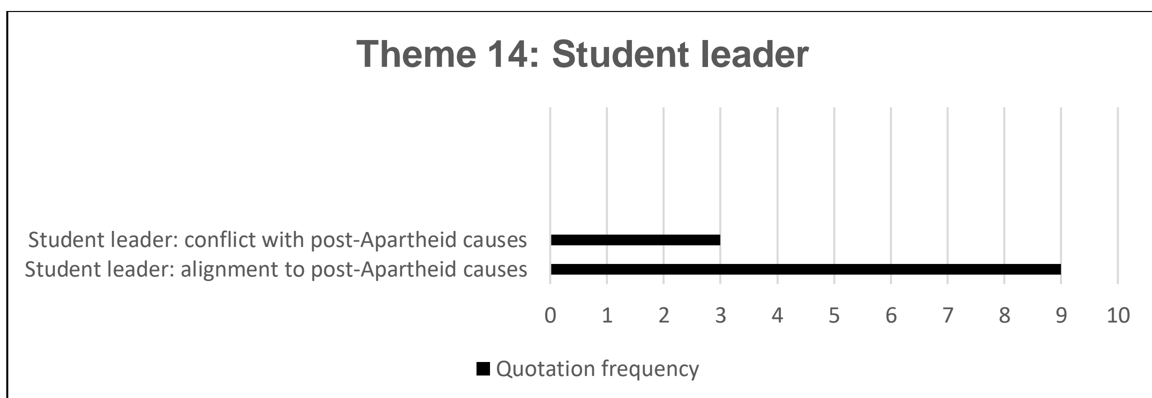

Figure 5.24: Theme 14 (Student leader) – quotation frequency per code

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The following notes regarding this theme:

- **Student leader: alignment to post-apartheid causes** captured participants' responses confirming their alignment as a student leader with the post-apartheid causes mentioned;
- **Student leader: conflict with post-apartheid causes** captured participants' responses confirming their conflict as a student leader in addressing specific post-apartheid causes mentioned.

5.3 Summary

This chapter has presented the key themes, codes and subcodes that emerged from the data collected. The researcher confirmed that the data collected provided case-specific responses that were included in the data analysis, as she considered these to be significant for the specific participant's identity and leadership identity formation. The researcher confirms that the data collected in Phase 3 were not added to the data analysis and served as verification for the data collected in Phase 1 and Phase 2. However, the Student Affairs practitioners' insights will be included in the discussion in Chapter 6 as part of the confirmation of key themes, codes and subcodes. Data trends were observed where participant-specific subcodes captured in phase 1, or phase 2 were either included in the elimination process followed in phase 4, or remained the same (i.e. remained participant-specific).

The researcher would like to emphasise that subcodes which were participant-specific and remained participant specific, were not considered as relevant to the broader sample. It was however, included as it indicated to be a significant contributor to the relevant participant in either their identity and leadership identity. In these cases participant-specific subcodes were also relevant to their lived experiences.

The following chapter discusses the research findings pertaining to each of the 14 themes, codes and subcodes and specifically how they relate to each case study.

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Chapter 6: Interpretation and Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The short participant profile sketches as part of the researcher's fieldnotes (see Appendix A), including their family history as shared over the span of the interview series, aim to give context to what they believed contributed to their identity and leadership identity. The influence of these contributing factors will be discussed in the thematic analysis.

This chapter reconfirms the research question and related sub-questions and illustrates how the research question was answered in this study. The findings of the 14 predefined key themes are discussed, as well as new themes that emerged from the study's triangulation process. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key findings per theme, indicating how they are aligned with the study's 12 main findings, and finally how the study's findings are aligned with the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model stages.

Figure 6.1 illustrates the chapter layout.

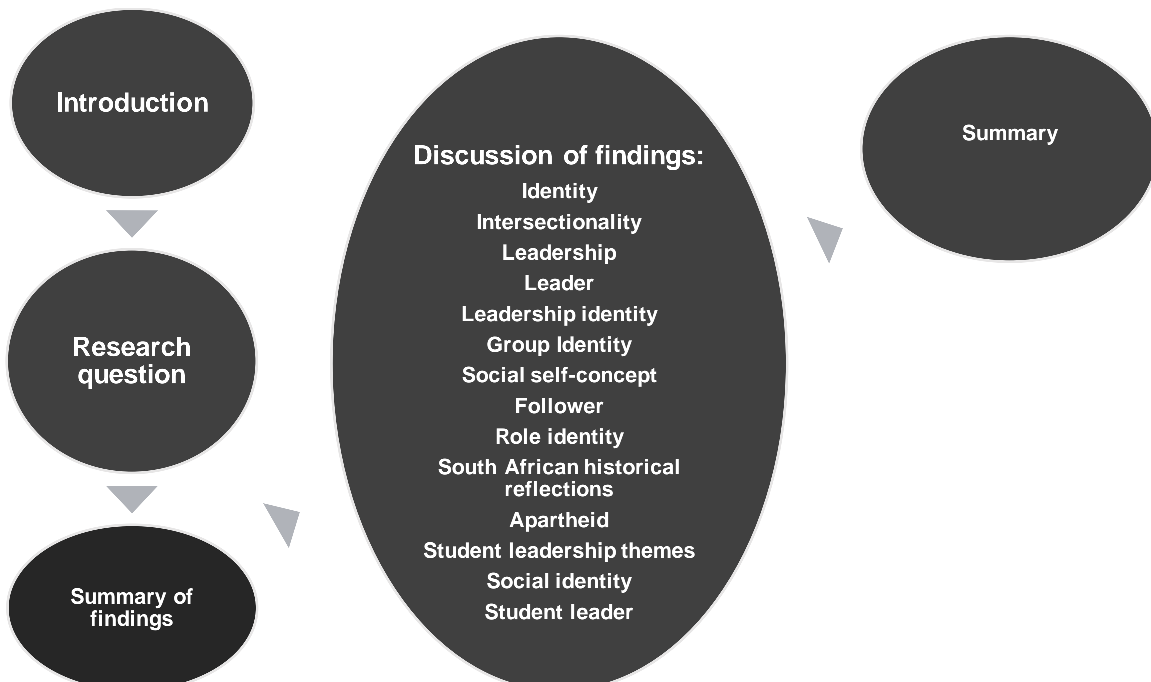

Figure 6.1: Layout of Chapter 6

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6.2 Research question

This study's main research question was:

What contributes to student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa?

Two sub-questions related to the main research question were posed, namely:

- In relation to evaluating a phenomenon (leadership identity):
  - *What is the participants' perception of the main factors contributing to their leadership identity formation (with reference to identity, intersectionality, group identity, role identity and social identity)?*
- Explaining the causes and consequences of a phenomenon (relationship between South Africa's historical context and leadership identity):
  - *What are the key themes in the South African history and the intergenerational elements (e.g. the effect of apartheid on their family) affecting the leadership identity of the selected group of student leaders?*

In this study, 14 predefined themes, each with an objective and outcome, were explored in relation to answering the above questions. The summary of the findings is illustrated in Figure 6.2.

6.3 Summary of findings

The findings from this study's research question, *"What informs student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa?",* are summarised in Figure 6.2:

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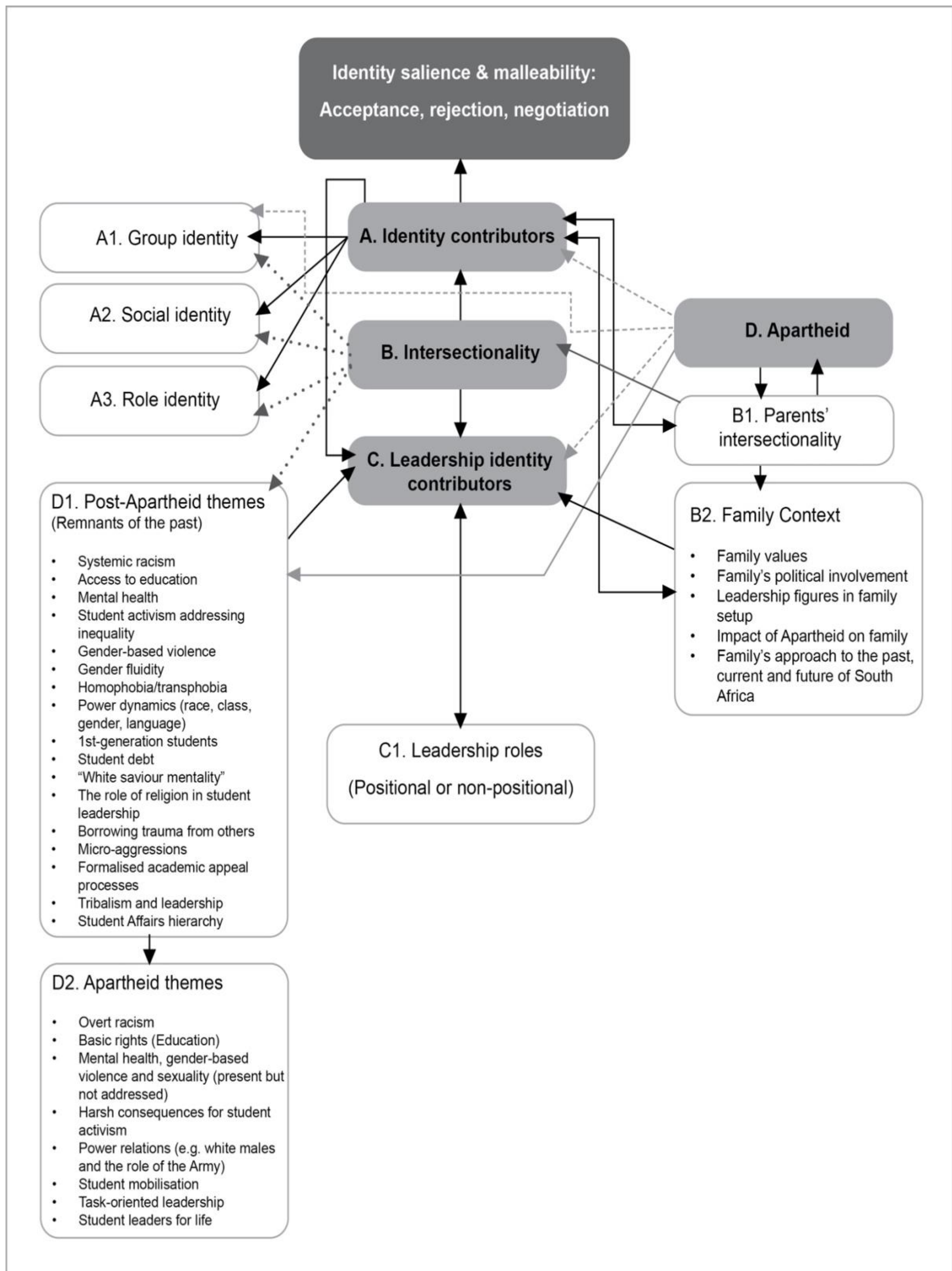

Figure 6.2: What informs student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa?

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This study's findings provide insights for answering the research question and, with reference to Figure 6.2, the following key findings were made as factors contributing to post-apartheid student leadership identity formation. The findings of each theme are discussed in section 6.4.

- **Finding 1–- Identity contributors (A):** Identity contributors were mainly influenced by the participants' acknowledgement of their intersectionality.
- **Finding 2–- Intersectionality (B):** The participants' understanding of their intersectionality (B) in relation to their power and privilege was directly linked to their parents' intersectionality (B1), predominantly race, followed by religion, and finally race and language (particularly white Afrikaans participants), AND in relation to apartheid (D) (Collins, 1990).
- **Finding 3 – Family context (B2):** The participants' family context (B2) showed a strong relationship with the participants' perception of identity contributors (A) in relation to apartheid (D). This included the family's value system, political involvement, the presence of strong political leadership roles within the family context, the effect of apartheid on family and related intergenerational conversations, their current approach to the sense-making of apartheid and, finally, their approach to their contribution in post-apartheid South Africa with reference to social justice and social cohesion.
- **Finding 4 – Family context (B2):** The same pattern could be observed as in finding 3, but in relation to participants' perception of leadership identity contributors (C) in relation to apartheid (D).
- **Finding 5 – Family context (B2):** There was convincing evidence that participants whose families had limited intergenerational conversations about the effects of apartheid (D) in the family context (B2), or whose family members had limited political involvement, indicated that apartheid or South Africa's history in general made only a limited contribution to their identity (A).
- **Finding 6- Apartheid (D) and Leadership identity (C):** The same patterns as in finding 5 could be observed in the relevant participants' perception of apartheid in relation to their leadership identity (C).
- **Finding 7 – Leadership identity (C) and leadership roles (C1) :** Leadership roles (C1) as a sign of affirmation and recognition of leadership capabilities by the institution and peers, as well as leadership role rejection (not being elected),

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and the value they attached to these roles, were strong contributors to the participants' leadership identity (C).

- **Finding 8 – Leadership identity (C) and leadership roles (C1):** As leadership roles (C1) contributed to participants' leadership identity (C), their leadership identity self-perception found expression in their leadership style while fulfilling their leader or follower roles. Finding 7 and 8 therefore make a mutual contribution to the participants leadership identity.
- **Finding 9 – Apartheid (D) and post-apartheid student leadership themes (D1) and apartheid student leadership themes (D2):** The participants' understanding of the key post-apartheid student leadership themes (D1) vis-à-vis apartheid themes (D2) provided insight into their reflection on how their identity (A) and leadership identity (C) could either enable or challenge their post-apartheid leader role. This awareness also situated their positionality in terms of power and privilege, which stems from the acknowledgment of their intersectionality (B).
- **Finding 10 – Identity (A) and leadership identity (C) contributors:** There was a strong relationship between identity contributors (A) and leadership identity contributors (C).
- **Finding 11 – Intersectionality (B), group identity (A1), social identity (A2) and role identity (A3):** There was a strong relationship between intersectionality (B) and group identity (A1), social identity (A2) and role identity (A3).
- **Finding 12:** Identity salience and malleability were informed by intersectionality (B) in relation to the group (A1), social (A2) and role identity (A3), and the multicultural context they found themselves in permeated their leadership identity (C) (Trepte & Loy, 2017).

These key findings will now be discussed per theme.

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6.4 Discussion of findings

The themes that arose are discussed by firstly reminding the reader of their objective and outcome, and key findings related to the codes explored within each theme. A summary concludes the discussion of each theme, bringing it into alignment with the 12 key findings made in relation to the broader study and research question.

As point of departure, the researcher would like to refer to the approach followed with the themes in relation to specific definitions – see Chapter 1 (interpretation of terms) and Appendix B (Interview Protocol). The summarised profiles of all the participants and the segments of their verbatim narratives as part of the researcher's fieldnotes are a useful point of reference. Some segments of the verbatim narratives of the participants of phase 2 and phase 3 are also included in the researcher's fieldnotes – see Appendix A.

6.4.1 Theme 1: Identity

Table 6.1 indicates the theme's objective, outcome and key findings:

Table 6.1: Theme 1 – Identity

Theme 1: Identity	
Objective	**Key findings**
To confirm the main contributors to the student leader's identity.	**1.** Identity perception was perceived within the social categories related to intersectionality (Hogg, 2001a). **2.** Intersectionality, family context, values, student movements, apartheid and leadership roles are the main contributors to identity. **3.** The social context permeated identity salience and malleability.
Outcome	
Identity perception, identity self-perception and key contributors confirmed. Alignment with leadership identity contributors cross-checked (see theme 5).	

Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Identity perception: Participants' perception of identity indicated an understanding of the interconnectedness within social categories of gender and race (Hogg, 2001a), the relational influence of identity perception and the intra- and interpersonal processes mediated by the self-concept (Markus & Wurf, 1987). Based on the themes extracted (identity markers, complexity based on intersectionality, values, relations based on

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societal influences, combination of traits), the participants showed a clear understanding of what identity entails in relation to the self. The participants' acknowledgement of the interaction with society contributing to their understanding of self and confirmed that they viewed themselves as an "entity created out of the interpretation of the interaction between society and the individual by the mind" (Cinoğlu & Ankan, 2012:1116). This finding was confirmed by the focus group (Phase 2).

Both Phase 1 and Phase 2 also referred to the complexity of identity, e.g. the fluidity of sexuality and gender and how race as part of their identity is "paradoxical" and can either be celebrated or can create barriers (Dawid – phase 2). These barriers and celebratory parts are considered in relation to others and their identities. The construction of identity based on experiences can often be undertaken in relation to points of struggle and internal conflict, where one's disposition is socially constructed apart from one's qualities and personality possessed. An example shared by students of colour was that they felt their identity was socially constructed based on the way they look and speak, with a disregard for the other aspects of their identity e.g. intellectual capacity (Zoe – phase 2).

Participants in Phase 3 confirmed this interpretation of identity on their campuses, where some aspects of students' intersectionality had become more dominant than others with reference to the use of pronouns to demonstrate the fluidity of gender. On another campus, race remained the dominant aspect of intersectionality, followed by the rural/environment or family/generational aspect. It was observed that, at politically driven universities, the political affiliation as part of identity would be a stronger contributor to student leaders' identity than perhaps at another university that is not as politically driven, such as Stellenbosch University.

One can argue that this could be why "political identity" did not feature strongly in this sample, or rather, within this research setting. This aspect was also confirmed by a senior Student Affairs practitioner also affiliated with a HWEU and a politically driven student leadership context. The findings of identity perception in relation to others as influenced by the environment support Leary and Tangney (2012) and Middleton *et al.* (2019), who argue that identity can be viewed as part of the self, but also with a definite

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split, with one informing the other by engaging within the social context. Also, as pointed out by Oyserman *et al.* (2012:74), by “aspects of the “me” forming self-concepts and identities being part of the self-concepts”. It furthermore hints at meaning-making, i.e. the self-awareness associated with the meaning-making and classification process of understanding the construction of identity outside the self (Stets & Burke, 2000:224), and finally how the collection of that meaning-making is then attributed to the self as part of identity (Cinoğlu & Ankan, 2012; Rosenberg, 1979; Stets & Burke, 2003).

In this study, apart from intersectionality, there are values - authenticity, integrity, independence, religious values (serving others), a sense of justice, which includes equality and accountability) - that are a dominant aspect of identity perception and identity contributors. This draws on Stets and Carter’s (2011) proposition that identity is extended to include moral identity (Blasi, 1980, 1984, 1993) experienced as the “real me”, the authentic self, guided by deeply rooted principles that differ from individual to individual. In this study religion played a significant role in 70% of the participants’ sense of self (Tahir, Fundiswa, Johan, Helena, Ntando, Chad and Khethiwe). This finding, namely, the strong relation between religion and identity, i.e., developing a spiritual identity, can be viewed as part of these participants’ identity growth as a way of finding meaningfulness and developing an inner life to make sense of their outer life (Kreiner & Sheep, 2009). See also the discussion on leadership identity self-perception and alignment in section 6.4.5.

Identity contributors: Figure 5.10 (Chapter 5) summarises the main factors contributing to identity. Based on the sample (Phase 1 and Phase 2), the following key themes emerged: *Values* (which stem from either religious beliefs or family values); *Family set-up* (based on the absence or presence of strong figures who are idolised); which also includes *Parents* (single mother figure, father figure, or both) and *Grandparents* (influence in formative years); *Role within the family structure* (taking on responsibilities of an older sibling, e.g. role model for younger siblings); *Divorce* (dismantling of traditional family structure); and *Patriarchy within family structure* (informing e.g. feminism or strengthening the gender aspect of identity).

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Other themes were *Intersectionality* (race, religion, class (financial status), ableism, sexual orientation, gender, language, ethnicity, culture, first-generation student); *Environment* (conservative and exposure to diversity from an early age); *Academic excellence:* The intellectual ability as part of the identity that informed career choices and the professional role (doctor, engineer, psychologist, lawyer) associated with the identity; *Leadership roles:* The affirmation associated with leadership roles that makes leadership or leader part of identity; *Student movements:* Confrontation with the power and privilege of the identity in relation to others and the student cause at hand, e.g. #FeesMustFall (socio-economic status) or #antiGBV (gender-based violence); and *Medical condition/Health and wellbeing (not disability)*: This reference includes the mental wellbeing aspect of identity formation, in this case rejection, bullying, rape, suicidal thoughts, depression and anxiety.

These themes demonstrate the interconnectedness of identities as displayed in Figure 2.6 (Chapter 2). In this case, identity is informed by intersectionality and environment (which inform both group, social and role identity), values (moral identity), leadership roles (leader identity) and family (role identity). Based on the narratives of this sample, student movements, for example, confronted the individual with the power and privilege associated with their intersectionality, which could lead either to identity acceptance or identity rejection; in other words, acceptance of rejection of the part of the identity perception that is ascribed to them (and not identity self-perception), the part they perceive to be true (Baumeister, 1998; Forgas & Williams, 2002). In these cases, the participants chose how they wanted to structure their self-concept around specific domains of their intersectionality, e.g. race, ethnicity, gender and age (Oyserman *et al*., 2012).

Identity negotiation, rejection and acceptance: The following examples highlights identity negotiation, rejection and acceptance:

- *Identity negotiation.* Two observations were made: *1) Religion and conservative environment*: Fundiswa, who acknowledged how liberal narratives were fed to her in her first year as student, which would have been easy for her to have adopted as part of her identity markers (being black and female), but that she started exploring more conservative views that she considered to hold greater merit. Her religious beliefs and conservative culture also challenged her to

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negotiate her identity, as she realised that these "red pill moments" (changing perspective after being introduced to unsettling new perspectives) were what broadened her perspectives. One example she shared "not to borrow trauma from others", which she perceived as forming part of the identity that some of the "born-frees" in post-apartheid South Africa had adopted. 2) *Race and language:* Khethiwe's conflict with her racial and language identity led her to use the so-called language of the oppressor (Afrikaans) to her advantage to engage with conservative Afrikaans-speaking students. This identity negotiation was also challenging, as her identity was perceived to be compromised by other Zulu-speaking students, who considered her a "coconut" (people of colour adopting white traits);

- *Identity rejection*: Four observations were made regarding identity rejection: 1) *Race and religion:* Helena's self-awareness of her white Afrikaans identity (perceived as the superior race during apartheid) and her religious beliefs (acknowledging that all human beings are the same), together with being raised in a conservative environment, led her to realise that inequality based on race conflicted with her religious beliefs. Her identity rejection manifested as adopting a new identity (later also role identity) as a "forward-thinking Afrikaans person in a conservative community". 2) *Religion and patriarchy:* Raaida, a Phase 2 participant (MBCHB, mixed descent, gay, English-speaking Muslim female) indicated how growing up in a religious patriarchal family steered her into feminism and jumpstarted her argumentative and assertive nature. In this case, the rejection of the patriarchal aspect of her religion as part of her identity meant that she could freely express other aspects of her identity (sexual orientation). 3) *Race:* Olwethu's negative experiences as a black female in a predominantly white school led to her to "fight with her blackness", where she felt bombarded by the narrative of blackness being secondary to whiteness. This resulted in her developing hatred of herself and her culture. Another example is Khethiwe's aspiration to whiteness, as it was perceived to be better than a black life, e.g. "one day I want to be white". 4) *Intersectionality:* Although Khanyiso acknowledged his intersectionality as part of his identity, he shared his frustration at being "labelled" a "black leader", "black queer man", "first black queer leader", as it disregarded all other aspects of his identity.

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- *Identity acceptance:* An observation was made regarding taking accountability for a contested identity: *Race and responsibility:* Johan and Agostinho understood the power and privilege associated with their racial and gender profiles, accepted this but utilised it to drive changes in countering stereotypes associated with it.

To summarise: Firstly, although moral identity (as implied by religion) played a significant role in the majority of the participants, one should bear in mind that multiple identities are at play, in other words the individual's self-perception can be that of a moral being (personal identity), a student (role identity), and member of a residence (social identity), and that the meanings associated with the other identities may infiltrate the role and social identities (Stets & Carter, 2011). These meanings can either enforce or compete with each other. This is discussed in relation to theme 9 (role identity) and theme 13 (social identity) respectively.

Secondly, that identity acceptance, rejection and negotiation are informed by intersectionality and how it is perceived within the context, i.e. social context permeated identity salience and malleability. This is further informed by the integration of group identity from a minority and dominant positional perspective (Barrett, 1998), which is discussed in theme 6 (group identity). With these participants the shift in self-concept came into play when participants viewed their identity from the individual (me) and collectivist (us) points of view (Oyserman *et al*., 2012), and from the future self or possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986) when identity acceptance commenced, as they were negotiating how their "contested identity" could contribute to change negative narratives about them. Ashforth & Schinoff (2016) point out that the construction of identity would involve the development of a sense of self over time but also the construction of possible self (the desired self) and avoidance of becoming (the undesired self). In this study, the salient possible self, evident in, for example, Helena, Johan and Dawid sharing the same contested racial and language profile, allows for the facilitating of positive self-adjustments as they represent the goal of changing negative past narratives and role modelling to others, while engaging with role models for feedback.

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Thirdly, as observed by the focus group (Phase 3), some students would link their identity with the institutional identity of the university and the institutional values associated with it. The contestation around their identity came into play when no alignment with and representation of their identity was visible and experienced at their institutions, e.g. "*symbols, names of buildings, institutional culture*", which is especially apparent at HWAU. This indicates the need for these institutions to reposition themselves as African universities, with their students expressing the need to identify with the Africanisation of the institutional identity (Nkosazana – senior Student Affairs practitioner at a HWAU). The contestation of identity formation and the rebranding of the institutional identity come to the fore in the post-apartheid higher education context, as students and institutions are confronting the complexities of the power and privilege associated with identity – be it individual or institutional.

Another observation in relation to institutional influence on identity by the focus group (Phase 3) is that the environmental influences of residence life, now as substitute for the family home/family values, also play a role in how identity is constructed in relation to the residence context (Ria – senior Student Affairs practitioner at a HWAU). The strong residence culture has the potential to negate identity construction prior to entering the residence environment and social context, which also influences group identity (e.g. Agostinho, who rejected the white male group identity based on its misalignment with his values). This theme led to: **Finding 1:** Identity contributors were influenced mainly by the participants' acknowledgement of their intersectionality; and **Finding 12:** Identity salience and malleability are informed by intersectionality in relation to the group, social and role identity, and finally their leadership identity, permeated by the multicultural context they find themselves in.

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6.4.2 Theme 2: Intersectionality

Table 6.2 indicates this theme's objective, outcome and key findings.

Table 6.2: Theme 2–- Intersectionality

Theme 2: Intersectionality	
Objective	**Key findings**
To confirm participants' acknowledgement of their intersectionality (and intersectionality dominance).	**1.** Intersectionality perception is based on identity markers, and the associated power and privilege related to these markers. In addition, it is also based on the South African context (and intersectionality inherited from parents). **2.** Intersectionality majors were race, followed by religion. **3.** Intersectionality remains a major contributor to participants' identity. **4.** Identity salience and malleability (based on intersectionality) were permeated by social context.
Outcome	
Intersectionality perception and intersectionality dominance confirmed. Alignment cross-checked as factor contributing to their leadership identity (see theme 5).	

Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Intersectionality perception and acknowledgement major: The participants' general understanding of intersectionality confirmed their identity markers, e.g. race, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, ethnicity, ableism, and the privilege and power that come with certain identity markers. In their acknowledgement of their intersectionality (shown per participant in Chapter 5, Figure 5.11) – some more so than others – another finding was also made that some participants' understanding of intersectionality supported the view of Warner and Shields (2013:804), according to whom intersectionality applies to all identities and no single intersectional position experiences only privilege or only oppression.

This was found more with the white participants, who felt they were reminded daily of their positionality of power and privilege, while other participants would allude to Crenshaw's (1991) approach to intersectionality based on the intersection of marginalised identity aspects such as gender and race. Some participants indicated a stronger acknowledgement of certain identity markers than others, with race being the highest, followed by religion in terms of major intersectionality.

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It was also found that participants became more aware of the effect of their intersectionality on their identity and leadership identity as the interview cycle progressed, and they would reference more aspects of their intersectionality than only the initial ones. Although class as an identity marker did not feature with these participants, it was added by the Student Affairs practitioners, who pointed out that students on their campuses were more aware of their class/socio-economic status and that it influenced their disposition as student leaders at the HWUs.

To summarise: These participants showed intersectionality to be a major factor contributing to their identity. This was confirmed by participants in both Phase 2 and Phase 3. However, there also resistance to the use of this terminology in identity conversations. Khanyiso at first was reluctant to answer questions around intersectionality based on his negative experiences of being "boxed in", whereas Dawid (Phase 2) referred to the "liberal capture of marketing identity", which, in a sense, stigmatised certain groups of people (in his case as a white Afrikaans-speaking gay male). There was an acknowledgement of the relevance of the concept of intersectionality within post-apartheid student leadership when used as "a tool to robustly engage where we converge and where identity and experiences diverge" (Dawid).

This finding was supported by the Student Affairs practitioners, who provided two examples of how intersectionality underlined differences and not commonality at their campuses: firstly, socio-economic status based on race and access to education versus first-generation students consisting of students from all races, and secondly, how the Israel-Palestine issue was handled at a HWEU by the Progressive Youth Alliance (PYA), Muslim Students Association and the Jewish Student Association, where the students' intersectionality came into play with their stance on the issue, despite their being members of the umbrella society, PYA. In the PYA case, the racial aspect of intersectionality demonstrated the divide when Muslim students supported Palestine, but were not perceived as demonstrating the same support for the black students' struggle.

This supports Molefi's (2017:44) view that intersectionality in South Africa (based on its history and apartheid policies, e.g. the Group Areas Act and Immorality Act) is still

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predominantly focused on race and does not necessarily combat labelling. The power and privilege theme arose consistently throughout this study (see leadership identity, group identity, social identity and role identity themes) and was central to participants' student leader engagement (Suransky & Van der Merwe, 2016). This supports Collins's (1990) position that historically contingent modes (like South Africa with its apartheid history) evidently refer to the social context, where the experiences of minorities would be different depending on their identities in relation to that historical contingency mode. The recurring finding on white participants (now minorities within the broader South African post-apartheid student leadership space) was that they have to renegotiate multiple identities based on their identity salience in relation to the social context. This confirms the finding by Holvino's (2010) and Parent *et al.*'s (2013) that the "interlocking roots of inequality" affect unique experiences for that individual.

In this study, and particularly in the themes of identity, intersectionality, leadership identity, group identity, social identity and role identity, the finding was that these "interlocking roots of inequality" are now reversed for white student leaders, as their voice bears less social capital on the national student leadership platform and in student activism. Although the findings still support initial intersectionality narratives around race, gender and disability (Bowleg, 2012; Corlett & Marvin, 2014; Crenshaw, 1991), the intersections of the white post-apartheid student leader indicate the grounds for further research. This theme led to **Finding 2:** The participants' understanding of their intersectionality in relation to their power and privilege is directly linked to their parents' intersectionality, predominantly race, followed by religion, and finally race and language (particularly white Afrikaans participants), AND in relation to apartheid.

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6.4.3 Theme 3: Leadership

Table 6.3 indicates the objective, outcome and key findings of the leadership theme:

Table 6.3 Theme 3–- Leadership

Theme 2: Leadership	
Objective To confirm participants' understanding of leadership, and changes in leadership perception. **Outcome** Aligned with Komives *et al.*'s (2005) LID model – key shift in leadership perception confirmed.	**Key findings** **1.** Leadership and leader perception were viewed as interconnected. **2.** Leadership was initially perceived as symbolic of authority and linked to title influence and symbols – supports traditional leadership perceptions (Copeland, 1942; Katz & Khan, 1966; Knickerbocker,1948; Stogdill, 1950). **3.** Leadership perception changed due to leadership involvement, knowledge gained, and worldviews challenged – supports Komives *et al.*'s (2005) LID model. 4. Leadership perception influenced leader role acceptance and leadership identity perception.

Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Leadership perception and leadership perception changes over time: The perception of "leadership" forms an important part of the leadership identity formation process. Based on the Komives *et al.*'s (2005) LID model (see Figure 2.7 in Chapter 2), the awareness or recognition that leadership is "happening around you" forms part of Stage 1 of the model. In this study, awareness of leadership and leader identify were happening at the same time, as "leader" was associated with "leadership" and, for these participants, occurred either at home or at school for the first recollection of these concepts. Participants confirmed that their initial understanding of leadership was linked to authority figures (e.g. politicians, parents, teachers, school prefects) or the symbolism of leadership, i.e. "title", "the blazer", "abiding by the rules", "being respected", "giving orders", "telling others what to do", "getting others to do things", "managing others", "what sets you apart from others", "recognition" and "hierarchical".

These perceptions, however, changed over time, with participants developing a stronger focus on the self as medium through which leadership (the process) is facilitated. This happens through aspects such as "self-awareness", "self-discovery",

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"self-mastery", "leading yourself before leading others", "serving others", "understanding that vulnerability leads to connection with those who you lead", "others need to consent to our leadership". There was also the realisation that no formal position is required for the leadership to manifest, or as the participants put it, "no position is needed for leadership", "you don't have to be the main person in charge or the person who orders people around but can also be the person who is assisting whose on the ground level", "anyone who can influence positive change, in themselves, the environment".

This change in leadership perception by the participants supports the view of leadership posited by DeRue and Ashford (2010) and Uhl-Bien *et al.*'s (2007) as the outcome of mutual influence between leaders and followers, which eventually becomes diffused within a group and the broader social system. The contributors to participants' change in leadership perception were based primarily on those times when they were becoming more involved in the process of leadership, taking on more non-positional leadership roles, through experiential learning and volunteering, and on participating in critical discourses and leadership programmes that challenged their world views and affected their traditional viewpoints of leadership. The combination of gaining more knowledge and experience also supports the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model in that student leaders' leadership perception changed as they progressed from phase 1 to 6 of the model and eventually realised that leadership "happens without the title". The participants' changed perceptions also support the definition by Komives *et al.* (1998:21) that "leadership is a relational process of people together attempting to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good".

To summarise: The leadership theme confirmed the participants' initial support of the traditional views of leadership based on influence (Copeland, 1942; Katz & Khan, 1966) directed towards achieving a goal (Stogdill, 1950), and the hierarchy of an individual and a group (Knickerbocker,1948). The reference to these traditional views of leadership, is also an indication of how traditional views of leadership are still perpetuated in public institutions such as schools and that these traditional perceptions still influence worldviews from an early stage. However, the focus was on the leader as mediator of the leadership process and not on the process itself. There was a tendency to describe leadership based on idolised traits (what they possess) of

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authority figures driving change (how they do that) and the power and symbols of power associated with it, such as “the blazer”, which is equated with authority and respect, i.e. a way of differentiating themselves/leaders from other members of society (what leadership means).

Participants indicated that “what sets them apart” and the recognition associated with it was initially favoured by them prior to gaining more knowledge and experience. It was only through stepping into leadership positions and gaining more knowledge through leadership courses that they developed a different perspective on leadership. This new perspective moved towards the relational aspect (Burns, 1978) and social change aspect of leadership, which can arise without the formal positions associated with the process (Komives *et al*., 2009).

The general finding of the participants’ leadership perception also indicates the hierarchical structure of leadership as mirrored within the student leadership environment and as something to aspire to. The process of leadership was not highlighted by any of the participants, and the terms ‘leadership’ and ‘leader’ merged in their descriptions. This theme highlighted the strong influence of positional leadership perception as contributor to leadership identity and let to **Finding 7:** Leadership roles (a sign of affirmation and recognition of leadership capabilities by the institution and peers), as well as leadership role rejection (not being elected) and the value they attached to these roles, which is indicated to be a strong contributor to participants’ leadership identity. It is also aligned with **Finding 8:** As leadership roles contributed to participants’ leadership identity, their leadership identity self-perception found expression in their leadership style while fulfilling their leadership roles. Findings 7 and 8 therefore indicate a joint contribution to the participants’ leadership identity.

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6.4.4 Theme 4: Leader

Table 6.4 indicates the objective, outcome and key findings of the leader theme.

Table 6.4: Theme 4-- Leader

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Theme 2: Leader</th></tr>
<tr><td>Objective
To confirm participants' leader perception, leader self-perception, leader involvement, role model trait adoption/rejection and mentor involvement.</td><td rowspan="2">Key findings
1. Leader was perceived on the basis of a combination of traits and characteristics – supporting Bass (1990), and the idea that leadership is granted by followers – supporting DeRue and Ashford (2010).
2. Leader perception and leader self-perception were often described as similar, i.e. participants verbalised perception of leader traits, which they would also apply to leader self-perception.
3. Leader self-perception was denied and stemmed from negative experiences of leader perception or leader role rejection.
4. First person leader acknowledged was often authority figures such as parents, school principals, political figures.
5. 'Leader first person trait adoption' correlated with role model trait adoption. In most cases these were the same figures. In most cases, both contributed to leadership identity self-perception. Traits were rejected based on the negative perception of those traits within current student leader context.
6. The significance of participants' first leadership role was a sign of affirmation of their leader capabilities. The rejection of leadership roles had the opposite effect and led to self-doubt in their leader capabilities, and their avoidance of positional leadership roles.
7. Leader involvement was based on participants' strengths, interests, field of studies, mentoring, volunteering, formal structures and activism around transformation and social justice. There was a pattern observed with leader involvement and participants' leadership identity aligned with these leader roles.
8. The significance of participants' leader involvement related to role modelling and being part of institutional change in addressing social justice matters.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Outcome
Aligned with Komives et al.'s (2005) LID model – key shift in leader perception and leader involvement confirmed.</td></tr>
</table>

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	9. Leader strategies employed were based on sustainability, policy implementations and allyship with staff and peers. **10.** All participants proactively sought feedback from staff and peers and adjusted their leadership style based on feedback received. The adjustments made gradually formed part of their leadership identity.

Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Leader perception: The participants' perception of a leader was mostly linked to traits (e.g. responsibility, ability to motivate others, decision-making skills, critical thinking skills, empathic listening skills) which an individual must possess to be recognised as a leader. This finding supports Bass's (1990) concept of a leader based on competencies and characteristics. This was followed by the idea that, for an individual to lead, they must be granted permission to lead and have followers to lead (Johan). This supports DeRue and Ashford's (2010) view that leadership must be granted by followers and claimed by the leader.

Leader self-perception: A strong relation could be identified between a participant's perception of a leader, and their leader self-perception. The traits mentioned were often also traits mentioned when describing their leader self-perception, i.e. "decision-making", described as leader perception, was also mentioned in relation to leader self-perception (Johan). Apart from Emma and Ntando, this indicates that participants all viewed themselves as leaders. Emma's reluctance to view herself as a leader stemmed from the negative perceptions she associated with leaders (as being authoritarian and telling other what to do), thus something she does not want to ascribe to. Ntando's reluctance stemmed from being rejected for leadership roles, which made him question whether he was indeed a leader based on what he perceived as the requirements to be considered a leader. It was only when driving change through non-positional roles at school and university that he could craft his own leadership style based on his religious views (i.e. servant leadership) and change his perception of what a leader is.

Leader first person acknowledgement and traits: The participants' recollection of who they first regarded as leaders can be categorised into four main categories: *Parents* (strong mother and/or father figures), *Grandparents* (grandparents with whom

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participants had a strong relationship in their formative years), *Public figures* (politicians, e.g. president of the country or prominent female politician figures whom they idolised or a family member who is a well-respected politician and idolised within the family context), and *Leader at school or church* (a prefect at school in Grade 1 and a female church leader).

Traits: The traits that made them consider the above figures as leaders varied in many ways:

- Tahir's father serving the community;
- Emma's grandmother demonstrated compassion. In Emma's case this also made her aware of people with disabilities;
- Johan's grandfather who was a minister and who he regarded as someone whose counsel was sought after by family and the broader community;
- Khethiwe's church leader whom she viewed as someone knowledgeable in a specific area;
- Khanyiso' grandmother in the church community who was respected by others;
- Ntando's uncle as a politician who was respected as public figure and within family context;
- Agostinho's grandmother as the matriarch of the family who was very influential within family context;
- Helena's female politician whom she believed is someone who stands for what they believe in despite criticism;
- Chad's parents, mother in family context, father as politician – people demonstrating authority.

In all cases there was a strong relation in the trait adoption that formed part of participants' leadership identity.

Leader_significance of first leadership role: A number of key aspects were highlighted, such as the affirmation of their leadership capabilities, which was an indication that others trusted them to lead. Another factor was the responsibility assigned to them showing that they could take responsibility to decide and act on behalf of others. Their authority and differentiation from the rest, i.e. that it sets them apart from others. Another aspect was the value their family attached to leadership,

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i.e. that people whom they respect valued and encouraged leadership. The significance of the leadership role was also linked to the fact that they were in a position to do advocacy work, i.e. creating awareness for a cause as well as the role-modelling idea, i.e. the ability to influence others and that others look up to them.

Leader involvement: Participants' leader involvement was based on either strengths or interests, for example:

- mentoring (Tahir, Agostinho, Fundiswa);
- the academic leadership space (Tahir, Johan, Agostinho, Khethiwe);
- residence space (Ntando, Fundiswa, Khethiwe);
- volunteering work related to their field of study (Tahir);
- transformation and advocacy work (Chad, Emma);
- formal structures (Khanyiso);
- citizenship beyond student leadership (Helena, Agostinho) and
- social media and social spaces (Fundiswa).

Leader role description and significance of leader involvement: Role description and significance collate where participants referred primarily to the significance of being part of creating change, role modelling, mentoring and guiding others to be part of change. For some participants, the relationship with the career field and their leadership position merged, e.g. future doctor in a position to advocate for equality on local, national and international level (Tahir), or future lawyer advocating for justice through transformation work (Chad).

For others, being involved in leadership beyond the student leadership environment offered an opportunity to activate their citizenship ideals and to inspire other youth leaders to become involved in local government structures and, in that way, be a part of change in the broader societal context (Helena, Agostinho). Furthermore, the significance of leader involvement also brought opportunities to use their chosen platforms on campus or social media to change stereotypes through meaningful engagements with topical issues that challenge their peers to reflect on their opinions and biases (Fundiswa).

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Leader strategies: Key strategies highlighted revolved around sustainability of organisations in which they were leading as well as making practical changes in structures and systems that would support sustainability after their departure as leader from that group/society/organisation. These ranged from contributing to policy changes (transformation, mental health) to implementing policies, transference of institutional knowledge and the documentation of these initiatives for future reference. Leader strategies further indicated an awareness of the needs of the changing demography of the student body and, vice versa, the mutual impact of the changing student body on institutional culture. There was also an awareness of the importance of networking and relationship-building within the institution to secure allyship with staff members to support causes. Furthermore, they realised the need to identify internal collaborators (peers) to join efforts to offer effective projects instead of duplicating non-effective projects. In general, participants demonstrated a greater awareness of the collaborative nature of leadership as a method to support sustainability and to consult with peers and staff to expand their knowledge on subject matter or institutional matters.

Feedback and adjustments: All participants actively sought feedback from peers or staff members about their leadership capabilities. Although admitting that it was initially difficult to accept the feedback from peers and staff, they could eventually be more open to feedback as they matured in their leadership. Adjustments made on the basis of feedback received, varied and included:

- including peers in decision-making even though it might delay implementation;
- realising that efficiency also includes acknowledging own mental health challenges and that of team members/leaders (Agostinho);
- finding common ground to work collaboratively (Tahir);
- owning up to mistakes made (Chad);
- becoming more aware of blind spots due to identity (Helena);
- improving on knowledge related to specific environments/contextual influence so as not to apply generic implementation plans in academic environments (Johan);
- adopting a life-long learning approach (Emma and Ntando);

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- finding a healthy balance between fostering relationships/boundary setting and accepting accountability for poor performance (Ntando, Khethiwe);
- managing expectation, finding a balance between micro-managing due to high standards and effective delegating to allow others to grow (Fundiswa);
- becoming less defensive (Khanyiso).

Feedback forms a significant part of a student leader's leadership learning (Sessa, 2017:119. Not all learning comes from leadership roles or challenging experiences, but also from situations that might push student leaders out of their comfort zones, by being challenged by peers, role models and mentors/mentees, and by adopting the process of feedback just as they embrace recognition. Through feedback they are introduced to other perspectives and values that allow for opening themselves to multiple perspectives. The ability to evaluate one's leadership identity based on feedback received also speaks to the maturity level of student leaders as they progress to different stages of the LID model (Komives *et al.*, 2005). Both Fundiswa and Agostinho's, for example, both admitted to initially being micro-managers, pace-setters and perfectionists, and having difficulty delegating. This could also be perceived as a leader in the survival stage of self-leadership (Dharani, April & Harvey, 2021:12). However, as they gained more experience, it changed to valuing feedback, taking on mentor roles and changing their leadership style from authoritative to a facilitative approach (Agostinho).

Leader role model trait adoption (this theme corresponds with "leadership identity_ role model LID contributors): Apart from Khethiwe, who added her mother as a role model (and not as the first person she regarded as a leader), all participants confirmed their role models to be the same people they first considered to be leaders (i.e., first person recognised as a leader). Another finding was that, in all cases, participants *adopted* certain traits from their role models as part of their leadership identity, or *rejected* some of the traits, as they perceived them to be less favourable (e.g. Tahir, Agostinho and Helena). This supports Sessa's (2017:126) view that role models can serve two purposes – modelling what traits to adopt and what not to emulate. Below is an account of the role model traits they adopted as part of their leadership identity, and the role model traits they rejected.

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Mentoring role and the significance of mentoring: Apart from Khanyiso, who is not involved in mentoring either peers or followers and operates more in an advisory capacity when needed, all other participants were actively involved in mentoring on campus, in residences and beyond campus in local government. Participants viewed mentoring as an important part of leadership not only for knowledge transfer, but also to allow themselves to learn from peers as equals. The significance of the mentoring role is also regarded as an indication of the trust others have in their leadership capabilities, or that they possess qualities others admire in them, accompanied by being recognised as someone who is changing the environment. For some participants, mentoring also opened their eyes to the "dark side" of mentoring when leaders' intentions are not pure and they employ peers to drive their personal agendas instead of being truly invested in the peer's leadership trajectory or the benefit of the broader student community (Chad). Participants also mentioned the fulfilment of seeing mentees becoming leaders and, in that way, feeling part of the succession of the leadership pipeline on campus and witnessing the influence of their mentoring in empowering others. These findings confirm the value of Komives *et al*. (2005) LID model, indicating the integration of the mentor/role model role as part of leadership identity.

To summarise: This theme was important for the exploration of the participants' leadership identity awareness, as their acknowledgement their leader role plays a significant part in their leadership identity formation. As they progressed from stages 1 to 6 of the LID model (Komives *et al*., 2005) on the "development influences" level, participants became aware of the following:

- *Stage 1:* During this stage, they acknowledged the first person they recognised as a leader, and why (traits possessed);
- *Stage 2:* They started receiving recognition/affirmation from others that they demonstrate leader potential, i.e. others begin to see them as a leader (significance of first leadership role). Role models have been identified;
- *Stage 3:* As they progressed by taking on more leadership responsibilities, they also start modelling the traits observed in role models (role model trait adoption);

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- *Stage 4:* Their engagement with peers starts to change, as they are now placing a stronger value on learning from and with peers (mentoring peers and followers);
- *Stage 5:* Through ongoing engagement with peers AND staff (with different world views) they expand their leadership knowledge and change their perspectives of leadership. Feedback is incorporated and they make leadership identity adjustments (including changing views of self), which are interdependent as opposed to dependent, as in Stage 1 and 2;
- *Stage 6:* The realisation that life-long learning should become the default approach to leadership, as regular unlearning and learning need to happen to be flexible in an uncertain context.

The key findings made in this theme are aligned with **Finding 7:** Leadership roles (a sign of affirmation and recognition of leadership capabilities by the institution and peers), as well as leadership role rejection (not being elected), and the value they attach to these roles, which is indicated to be a strong contributor to the participants' leadership identity. The findings are also aligned with **Finding 8:** As leadership roles contributed to participants' leadership identity, their self-perception of this identity found expression in their leadership style while fulfilling their leadership roles. **Finding 7 and 8** therefore make a joint contribution to the participant's leadership identity.

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6.4.5 Theme 5: Leadership identity

Table 6.5 shows the objectives, outcome and key findings of the leadership identity theme:

Table 6.5: Theme 5 – Leadership identity

Theme 5: Leadership identity	
Objective	**Key findings**
To confirm participants' perception of leadership identity, leadership identity self-perception, role model and mentoring contribution to leadership identity and key contributors to their leadership identity. **Outcome** Key contributing factors to leadership identity confirmed. Cross-checked with identity contributors (theme 1) and intersectionality major (theme 2) confirmed. The effect of South African history on their leadership identity confirmed (theme 10 and theme 11).	**1.** Leadership identity was perceived to be an extension of identity, a combination of leadership traits and styles and linked to leadership roles. **2.** Leadership identity perception and leadership identity self-perception were often described as similar, e.g. participants who regarded leadership identity as an extension of identity showed a similar understanding of their leadership identity self-perception. **3.** Leadership identity contributors were similar to identity contributors e.g. intersectionality, family values, student movements, apartheid and leadership roles, with the exception of personal, individual-specific contributors. **4.** Most participants confirmed role model trait adoption as part of their leadership identity. This observation is similar to first person leader trait adoption in relation to leadership identity. **5.** Intersectionality indicated to be a major contributing factor to leadership identity – specifically race and religion, followed by gender. Identity salience and malleability were observed, permeated by social context. **6.** Mentoring, although rewarding and challenging, was perceived to be contributor to participants' leadership identity. **7.** Leadership programmes (80% indicated examples of the FVZS Institute's leadership short courses) as contributing factor to their leadership knowledge. **8.** Most participants (including phase 2) indicated specific South African historical events affecting their leadership identity: student movements, apartheid, the 1994 democratic elections and the death of Nelson Mandela. A few participants (2/15) indicated that South African history had no significant effect on their leadership identity. **9.** Intergenerational conversations about apartheid were observed to have had a significant influence on participants'

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	leadership identity, and to a lesser extent on participants who come from families favouring silence. **10.** Leadership identity was developed mainly by intersectionality, family context, values, apartheid and leadership roles.

Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Leadership identity perception: Although some participants acknowledged that they were not familiar with this term, they reflected on their understanding of the term and their interpretation indicated a broad understanding of life experiences that contributed to their leadership identity, that leadership identity is an extension of their identity and cannot be separated from identity, and is also related to the values/morals/ethics that guide their leadership. Leadership traits or leadership brand (the unique way in which you lead) were also mentioned. While most participants also referred to leadership styles/the way in which you lead, some participants believed leadership identity was more than leadership styles. Intersectionality was also referenced, as aspects of one's identity also translate into one's leadership identity.

Leadership identity self-perception and alignment: The same finding made on leader perception and leader self-perception is that the participants referred to themselves in the way they perceived leadership identity. All participants described the leadership traits they possessed or leadership style they applied when leading. The participants referring to leadership identity as being an extension of identity also referred to how aspects of their identity (intersectionality) influenced their leadership identity, or how the environment influenced their leadership style and where or the causes in relation to which they practised their leadership (e.g. activism around issues of equality and justice). Those participants with a strong religious inclination as part of their identity also referred to "servant leadership" as an extension of their identity. Most participants indicated alignment with their leadership identity self-perception and how they would be viewed by others. The researcher would like to point out that the strong influence of religion as contributing factor to their leadership identity occurred across racial profiles (Johan, Fundiswa, Chad, Helena, Ntando, Khethiwe, Tahir). Adams et al. (2012) and Adams (2014), using the South African context, point out the importance of culture and context play in individuals' self-definition. In these studies (Adams et el.,

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2012; Adams, 2014) a strong focus was placed on the influence of individualistic vs collective cultures on self-definition and was aligned with race, culture and ethnic identity. It is Adams's (2014:53) hypothesis 3, "religious identity is *more salient in adolescents from more religiously diverse and less affluent contexts",* that the findings of this study confirmed. Adams (2014: 66) attributed this finding to the individual's religious identity as promoting "a sense of belonging as well as promoting a personal, individuated conception of identity that distinguishes the individual from the group". In this study, it was clear that for these participants the religious aspect of their intersectionality contributed not only to their identity formation, but also to their leadership identity formation and served to cultivate both a sense of purpose on a personal identity level, as well as a "sense of belonging" on a group membership level. To a further extent participants also utlised their awareness of their religious identity as questioning the negative perception of their religion in terms of justifying white supremacy (Helena, Johan and Dawid) and patriarchy (Fundiswa, Khethiwe and Raaida).

Leadership identity contributors: Figure 5.10 (Chapter 5) shows what participants considered to be their top leadership identity contributors. The following are the top six leadership identity contributors: 1) *Family figures (parents, grandparents):* A pattern was observed that participants who listed specific figures on their identity timeline also listed them on their leadership identity timeline. 2) *Intersectionality:* This refers to aspects such as leading as a Muslim male, a black Christian female, as a female person of colour with a disability, a queer leader, a white Afrikaans male leader, a forward-thinking leader in a conservative Afrikaans community, leading as a servant leader (religion influence), academic leader (with reference to their intellectual capabilities as part of their identity, but now extended to being part of the leadership identity). 3) *Values:* This refers to the morals and principles that participants acknowledged as contributing to their leadership identity, e.g. "strong sense of justice", "equality", "accountability", "compassion", "reconciliation", "resilience", "independence", "humility". 4) *Leadership positions/roles:* Participants included various leadership roles they had held that informed their leadership identity, but where their leadership identity also informed the way they led in those roles. The leadership roles also include mentorship as part of their leadership identity. 5) *Activism:* Student movements were listed by the participants as affecting how their

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leadership identity finds expression by addressing human rights, justice and equality, democracy, anti-GBV, corruption. 6) *Personal/health related:* Despite academic resilience, leadership positions, scholarships and awards received, participants also acknowledged there were personal experiences that affected their mental health, e.g. medical conditions (not considered a disability), bullying at school, feeling like an outsider, rape, suicidal thoughts, which informed their leadership identity in that they became more empathic towards students experiencing mental health challenges or advocated for mental health awareness.

Role models and leadership identity contributors: Most participants showed consistency in the role models mentioned in terms of the first person they acknowledged as a leader (see “leader” theme). Helena and Agostinho added their mother as role models who had influenced their leadership identity, while Khanyiso was the only participant who mentioned that he had not adopted leadership identity traits from a specific role model, but from a range of peers with whom he worked in a leadership environment. This was the only one exception in the sample, as he also mentioned his mother as a role model, along with specific traits (independence, prioritisation skills) he had adopted from her that informed his leadership identity. See also discussion on the influence of role models on role identity and the experimentation with possible selves (see Section 6.4.9).

Intersectionality and leadership identity contributors: Intersectionality was a major theme that contributed to the participants’ leadership identity formation. Participants viewed their identity and aspects of their identity (intersectionality) as an integral part of how they lead, but also as part of their leadership identity. Identity salience was highlighted, with some participants also indicating that specific aspects of their identity become more relevant, depending on the space where they lead. For example, Fundiswa (being a black female in a white-dominated environment is more significant than being an isiXhosa speaker), or Emma (being a leader with a disability in a predominant able-bodied student environment is more significant than being a female leader), while Agostinho realised being a white male can be utilised to his advantage when he has to drive issues on behalf of minorities, and Ntando showing up as a servant leader in a transformation space is more significant than his blackness.

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Mentoring and leadership identity contributors: Mentoring as part of their leadership identity was considered mutually beneficial for various reasons: *rewarding*, as they could witness the growth in others, which also supported their servant leadership approach; *challenging*, because they were now able to demonstrate patience while allowing others to lead and establish networks for themselves. They could also utilise their reputation as a leader to help others instead of intimidating others. Mentorship also allowed for life-long learning, as participants realised leadership is a process and that one does not reach the end of the learning path when one exits formal leadership structures (usually at the end of their SRC term). They realised they had institutional knowledge to impart to others when they were no longer in official positional leadership roles. In this way they could expand the leadership pipeline at the university and invite aspiring leaders into the leadership environment to lead authentically. Through sharing their own failures and challenges, they could make themselves more relatable to others and further secure their leadership identity in terms of demonstrating the values that form part of their leadership identity (e.g. sense of justice and accountability for Chad, as he would hold mentees accountable to identify the objectives of their leadership path before they challenge institutional matters).

Leadership programmes and leadership identity contributors: Participants reflected on leadership programmes that contributed to their leadership identity and understanding of leadership in general. Eight of the ten participants mentioned the short courses offered at the Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert Institute for Student Leadership Development (based at Stellenbosch University's Centre for Student Leadership, Experiential Education and Citizenship). Through these courses, which are recognised in their academic transcripts as forming part of the co-curriculum, they were challenged to review their preconceived ideas of leadership and the contextual influences that affect their understanding of leadership, student leadership and their own leadership. Other courses were explored via massive open online courses (MOOCs) and youth programmes related to political parties. In general, participants also mentioned the importance of doing research to be informed leaders on topics with which they were not familiar. This was also highlighted as part of the strategies they employed to deal with student leadership causes (see "student leadership themes").

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South African historical events and leadership identity contributors: Figure 5.12 (Chapter 5) illustrates the key historical events contributing to the participants' leadership identity. Although many events were listed, most were significant to only a few participants. The following key events stood out as having the most significance to the bigger sample (Phase 1 and Phase 2):

- *Student movements (2015):* 90% of Phase 1 participants indicated student movements as a significant factor contributing to their leadership identity. Some of the participants were already students during the #FeesMustFall movement, while most of the participants only experienced it through its recurrence when they entered university. Their involvement in other movements, e.g. #BlackLivesMatter, #RhodesMustFall, #OpenStellenbosch, #EndOutsourcing, #antiGBV, #EndRapeCulture, #FarmLivesMatter, influenced their leadership identity, as it challenged them to view their positionality relating to these causes;
- *South Africa's first democratic election (1994):* None of the participants in this sample were eligible to vote in 1994 (South Africa's first democratic elections), but the significance of what democracy entailed for their families and them on an individual level affected their leadership identity (70% of Phase 1), as it reminded them of their responsibility as youth citizens to participate on a national level to contribute to positive change;
- *Apartheid:* apartheid featured as a major contributing factor to the leadership identity of 50% of the participants (Phase 1). This major aspect in South Africa's history reminded them of their role as social change agents as post-apartheid student leaders. The researcher would like to refer to the discussion of the "apartheid" theme, in which 80% of the participants indicated apartheid having a direct influence on their leadership identity, and 20% to a lesser extent;
- *Mandela's release and death:* 50% of participants (Phase 1) indicated Mandela's release as a major contributing factor to their leadership identity – for some it symbolised hope for a better future, while his death symbolised the death of hope.

Intergenerational conversations and leadership identity contributors: Participants reflected on the intergenerational conversations they had with parents and grandparents and the significance of this in relation to their leadership identity. This

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theme corresponds with the observation made by participants who had limited conversations with parents and grandparents about South Africa's history and their perceptions of whether apartheid contributed to their leadership identity (Khanyiso and Khethiwe – Phase 1) or South African historical events affected their leadership identity (Zoe and Bridget – Phase 2).

The majority of these participants indicated that intergenerational conversation did indeed contribute to their leadership identity and how to *navigate post-apartheid leadership*, specifically in the following ways: *awareness of the responsibility* participants are assuming to change the apartheid narrative of oppression, either as children of the victims or perpetrators of apartheid, by seeking redemption for their forefathers; also as a reminder of the humanity of others and serving all people with respect by reminding them not "to borrow trauma from others" (Fundiswa), and by understanding when to act in the struggle and in general, by activating their activism to seek social justice.

To summarise: The findings on the factors contributing to the participants' leadership identity show consistent trends in their identity contributors – particularly in relation to intersectionality. This supports the elucidation provided by Duran and Jones (2019), Jones (2016) and Jones and McEwen (2000) of the intersectional understanding required for student leadership in a diverse student community. Strong race-based narratives aligned with participants' intersectionality remain a strong element in both the identity and leadership identity themes. This was extended to other key factors contributing to leadership identity, such as student activism (addressing equality, injustice, systemic racism) and apartheid (inequality, injustice, overt racism). These findings support the literature on the strong race-based narratives within post-apartheid South African higher education institutions, infiltrating not only the institutional identities, but the student leaders and their multiple identities at HWUs (Brunsma *et al.,* 2013; Bryson, 2014; Metcalfe, 2022; Wale, 2019; Wawrzynksi *et al.*, 2012).

The participants indicated the complexities associated with HWUs as vehicles for social transformation, where student leaders find themselves in the midst of facilitating conversations on the effect of these efforts at redress, while constantly being reminded

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of their positionality, not only as an individuals, but also as a leaders (Booysen, 2006; Daniels & Damons, 2011; Gobodo-Madikizela, 2020; Maurice, 1993; Milazi, 2001). This study has confirmed that the daily confrontation with their identity positionality impacted on their leadership identity, either by having adopted specific values, e.g. a sense of justice and activism, or a leadership style e.g. relational issues. Finally, the effect of intergenerational conversations on the participants' leadership identity was shown to be a significant contributor – and confirmed by the Phase 2 participants.

The key findings made in relation to this theme are aligned with the broader findings. **Finding 3:** The participant's family context was strongly related to the participant's perception of identity contributors in relation to apartheid. This context included value systems, family's political involvement, strong political leadership roles within family context, effect of apartheid on family and related intergenerational conversations and, finally, the family's current approach to the sense-making of apartheid and their approach to their contribution in post-apartheid South Africa with reference to social justice and social cohesion. **Finding 4:** The same pattern could be observed as in finding 3, but in relation to the participant's perception of leadership identity contributors in relation to apartheid. **Finding 5:** There was a strong indication that participants whose families had limited intergenerational conversations about the effects of apartheid within family context, or where the family members had limited political involvement, indicated that apartheid or South Africa's history in general had made a limited contribution to their identity. **Finding 6:** The same as in finding 5 could be observed in relation to the relevant participant's perception of the effect of apartheid on their leadership identity.

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6.4.6 Theme 6: Group identity

Table 6.6 indicates the objective, outcome and key findings in relation to the group identity theme.

Table 6.6: Theme 6 – Group identity

Theme 6: Group identity	
Objective	**Key findings**
To confirm participants' perception of and significance attached to group identity.	**1.** Group identity was perceived as being by default (based on intersectionality) and common interests, e.g. based on social cultural categories. This supports Abrams and Hogg (1990), Tajfel (1978) and Turner and Giles (1981). **2.** Group identity association was based on intersectionality, field of studies, political affiliation, leadership and mentoring, and leadership and citizenship. **3.** Group identity association rejection was linked to the negative experiences associated with the group (e.g. avoidance of white Afrikaans male group). **4.** Group identity significance was based mostly on the personal value and emotional significance attached to that group. **5.** Identity salience and malleability, permeated by social context, had a direct effect on group association and group avoidance.
Outcome	
Identity and group identity congruency confirmed. Impact on leadership identity confirmed.	

Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Group identity perception varied from having a shared sense of community, sense of belonging, advocating for a specific cause, shared identity, membership by virtue (demographic profile) versus formative (contested identities) and common interests. It was associated with comfort, adopting the group identity or assimilation with the dominant traits of the associated group, community, social clusters, and values and beliefs as common goals. Participants' general understanding of group identity supported the interpretation of group identity as "the extent to which they define themselves in terms of various social cultural categories" (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Tajfel, 1978; Turner & Giles, 1981).

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Group identity association: (See Figure 5.14 in Chapter 5). Participants' group association was based on the following: *intersectionality association* (acceptance or avoidance), *field of studies* (scholars/researchers/association with professional career groups and can include intersectionality, e.g. "black lawyers' group"), *political affiliation and activism* (e.g. DASO, ANCYL), *leadership and mentoring* (groups related to leadership and *citizenship* (participant's group association with South Africans and Africans).

Group identity significance: It was evident that the significance for participants was strongly associated with how they related to their associated groups and the contestation that comes with that group association. This included the significance of self-awareness of the intentionality of group association and the effect the collective group has within the broader society, e.g. the accountability of the individual to preserve their integrity if the group association is not aligned with personal values, or if the group no longer provides the "safety/community" to do so. There seems to be a relation between group identity and social identity significance and Tajfel's (1982) view of the value of and emotional significance attached to membership of social identity. In this case, the same observation was made as in participants' decision to exit groups, i.e. rejection of group identity when the emotional significance hampered the enactment of their student leader role.

Participants felt that this added to "character building", as the individual must demonstrate integrity when favouring minority views within that group, or character strength when having to break away from the associated group if their identity is no longer aligned and dealing with the consequences of that "group exit". Another finding was participants' reflection on how their identity was strengthened when they were exposed to a broader perspective (when their group identity conflicted with other group identities). Emotional significance was further highlighted with an example of being part of the student leaders' group, which brought the added benefit of sharing an understanding of the pressure of leadership without judgment. The comfort aspect of group association was further highlighted based on intersectionality similarities (race, gender, sexual orientation, class), whether being part of the oppressor or the oppressed group and the collective power the group has to disrupt the status quo, e.g. #FeesMustFall and #antiGBV protests.

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Alternative views (Johan and Helena) were shared relating intersectionality alignment, for example, while acknowledging the significance of intersectionality in relation to identity formation, they did not indicate the need to actively seek group association based on similarity. With both participants it was due to the negative connotation of group identity and the discomfort of not experiencing the "sense of belonging", despite the default group association (being white and Afrikaans). Group avoidance was also mentioned by Agostinho in that he does not associate with white males on the Stellenbosch campus (as perceived by him as being more conservative than the white males on the Tygerberg campus).

To summarise: Group significance was observed in developing self-awareness, character building, influencing identity formation, identity development in relation to the group, exposure to broader perspectives, individual empowerment and collective power, sense of belonging, comfort based on similarity, and awareness of individuality despite group association by virtue of intersectionality. Group avoidance occurred when participants did not want to be associated with the stereotypes of a group they belonged to as a result of their intersectionality. Participants' conflict with their perceived "contested identity" alludes to the influence of the complexities of identity constructs, as the integration of individual identity and group identity now reminded participants of their group identity (and later role identity – see theme 9) as social change agents, and the additional layer added to their already "contested identity". In these cases, group identity provided a contextual framework to explore their contested identity within a diverse society (Barrett, 1998). Participants' group identity association or avoidance (rejection) also alludes to self-regulation and self-verification, as they gradually started to negotiate new group identities (Helena, Johan, Agostinho).

This negotiation was preceded by the stereotype threat they experienced (also confirmed by Dawid in Phase 2, as a white Afrikaans male) when viewed negatively by their peers based on their negative group stereotype (Steele, 2010; Steele *et al*., 2002; Walton *et al*., 2012). This finding was not limited to white participants only, as Khethiwe and Fundiswa (black females) and Zoe (coloured female – Phase 2) confirmed stereotype threat negating their other positive identity traits, resulting in them focusing more on integration across groups rather than being linked to a racial

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group (Steele & Aronson, 1995). In this case, stereotype threat further indicated how participants either contributed to their own commodification of identity over time or as required by changing context over time. The integration of multiple identities within group context also refers to self-determination theory (SDT), namely the relative assimilation of goals, values and identity (Ryan & Deci, 2012). Based on SDT, all three ways of how identities can vary, was indicated in this study. Firstly, participants assimilated by contingencies of social context which can be perceived as oppressive and destructive e.g. Khethiwe feeling more threatened in the presence of a group of Zulu students than a group of Afrikaans students. Secondly, assimilation occurred partially as introjects explicitly and implicitly motivated, e.g., Zoe as a female leader of colour applying assimilation as a form of mediator non-group alignment to race. Thirdly, assimilation occurred by identities being well integrated into the self, serving as meaningful to their lives, e.g., Helena, Johan and Dawid. These participants (apart from Tahir, Chad, Fundiswa utilising their spiritual identity) all demonstrated identity growth through searching for optimal balance based on the need for inclusion and distinctiveness, the experimentation with possible selves motivated by the need for change and frustration with current identity, and finally, leveraging (in)congruence motivated by the need to adapt to the environment (Kreiner & Sheep, 2009).

The final finding regarding the participants' reluctance to be associated with their intersectionality group identity and the negotiation of new group identities is in relation to an SIT of leadership perspective. In this regard, the SIT of leadership as one of the theoretical frameworks, and as Hogg *et al.* (2005:1002) state, "provides a new perspective that treats leadership as a group process pivoting on psychological group membership – people in psychologically salient groups categorise and depersonalise themselves and others in terms of the relevant group prototype". This explains why participants who showed group avoidance (Khethiwe in the case of Zulu students, and Helena in the case of conservative Afrikaans students) could depersonalise themselves from the group prototype.

Relevant to the group identity findings, is the elucidation by Steffens *et al.* (2014) of the four dimensions of leadership as part of the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI):

- identity prototypicality (being one of us) - participants realising what the cost would be to assimilate;

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- identity advancement (doing it for us) – participants realising that they are representing certain identity markers as a leader (gay leader, black leader, Afrikaans leader);
- identity entrepreneurship (crafting a sense of us) – participants realising that finding commonality is more important than isolating a group identity facing a stereotype threat;
- identity impresarioship (making us matter) – participants realising how they, as social change agents, could contribute to broader group identity in terms of citizenship. In this study, all four dimensions were observed and confirmed by the Phase 2 participants.

The findings in relation to this theme are aligned with **Finding 11:** There is a strong relation between intersectionality and group identity, social identity and role identity, and **Finding 12:** Identity salience and malleability are informed by intersectionality in relation to the group, social and role identity, and finally leadership identity, permeated by the multicultural context in which they find themselves.

6.4.7 Theme 7: Social self-concept

Table 6.7 indicates the objective, outcome and key findings of the social self-concept theme:

Table 6.7: Theme 7 – Social self-concept

Theme 7: Social self-concept	
Objective To confirm participants' understanding of social self-concept in relation to group identity.	**Key findings** **1.** The social self-concept statement shared with participants had no effect on the participants' understanding of their group identity. **2.** Most participants indicated a stronger preference for the relational construct than the collective construct. **3.** The favouring of the relational construct of self-concept is based on the participants need to display their authentic self-concept on a one-on-one basis, other than experiencing a self-concept constructed by a group or social category (and often linked to a negative perception in relation to their intersectionality).
Outcome Social self-concept and impact on group identity significance confirmed.	

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Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Social self-concept: Participants agreed with the statement and confirmed it did not change their perception of their group identity:

> Social self-concept refers to the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their relationships. Social self-concept could also be described with two distinct constructs: relational self (emanating from relationships with significant others) and collective self (based on identity with a group or social category) (Uhl-Bien, 2006:657, with reference to Hogg, 2001).

One participant (Agostinho) mentioned it had expanded his view of group identity, as he has always viewed it in the collective context and not in the relational context. Most of the participants (6/10) indicated a stronger affiliation with the relational construct due to the closer connection formed with the significant other and the ability to forge stronger affiliations based on a more authentic display of their identity with others. At the same time, a significant finding was made by two white participants (Helena and Johan), namely that they had negative experiences of the collective construct of social identity. They felt that their profile in relation to the collective construct and group association puts them in a stereotypical disposition within the broader student group context. This also confirmed the group association challenges indicated in terms of both race and language, and also gender in Johan's case.

To summarise: This theme confirmed that a self-concept had been negotiated from which the participants could construct working self-concepts (Mead, 1934). It was furthermore based on the fulfilment of goals within a broader social construct (Markus & Wurf, 1987:301), and where that social environment contributed to the stability and malleability of their self-concept (Markus & Kunda, 1986:858). The findings related to this theme are aligned with **Finding 11:** There is a strong relationship between intersectionality and group identity, social identity and role identity, and **Finding 12:** Identity salience and malleability are informed by intersectionality in relation to the group, social and role identity, and finally their leadership identity, permeated by the multicultural context in which they find themselves.

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6.4.8 Theme 8: Follower

Table 6.8 indicate the objective, outcome and key findings of the follower theme:

Table 6.3: Theme 8 – Follower

Theme 8: Follower	
Objective	**Key findings**
To confirm participants' follower involvement and significance of their follower role.	**1.** Follower involvement was mostly based on field of studies, institutional transformation, residence environment, political affiliations and local government beyond the university environment.
Outcome	**2.** In all follower contexts, participants were aware of identity politics.
Influence of follower role on leadership identity confirmed.	**3. O**n the national student political platform, participants were aware of their limited leverage as student leaders based on their association with SU as a HWAU, and perceived as being too removed from national student politics.
	4. The follower role indicated participants' evolution through the Komives *et al*. (2005) LID model stages, as they now re-entered non-positional roles to activate broader societal change.
	5. Follower strategies employed were differentiated from leader strategies in the sense that participants indicated having a stronger awareness of the collaborative nature of leadership and allyship. These strategies showed a strong relation with their leadership identity self-perception in relation to their intersectionality.

For this study, and with reference to the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model, the follower role is significant to the student leadership identity formation process in the following ways:

- specifically from stage 2 (exploration/engagement), where self-perception is still strongly dependent on others;
- to stage 3 (leader identified), where the student leader as follower is now starting to influence others to work towards a common goal;
- to stage 4 (leader differentiate), where the attainment of a goal is based on the collective effort;

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- to stage 5 (generativity), where specific strategies are being implemented to ensure the sustainability of the group/cause after their departure as a follower;
- to stage 6 (integration and synthesis), where the student leader, as follower, has broader insight into the complexities of the institution and stakeholders.

Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Involvement and follower role: Participants indicated follower involvement based on *field of studies* (faculty involvement as a researcher, in programme renewal, where the participant's non-positional leadership influence was seen as part of their follower role, or the former leader influence was now seen as an advantage to their follower role); *institutional transformation follower involvement* (in these cases, their follower-role perception was to expand knowledge while being aware of identity politics, i.e. the influence of a follower role supersedes the influence of taking on a leader role); *residence follower involvement* (here the follower role was to first gain influence, respect and the understanding of the community before the intentional effort to move from a follower to leader role. In other words, the follower involvement was to gain access to those sharing a living environment who had opposing views. The living context created a "communal point of departure"); *political and student political involvement* (contributing as an active citizen to change on a bigger scale, beyond campus activities).

Follower-role in student politics has also been explored on a national level, where the role entailed taking collective accountability for student issues on a national level and holding the leader accountable. In this case, the leader association at a HWI had limited relatability with student leaders on a national level, and the follower role implied more leverage. Other follower involvements included *activism follower involvement:* the role of an ally, e.g. in the LGBQTIAP+ community or anti-GBV causes); *intersectional follower involvement* (Christianity, women's empowerment, combining intersectionality, e.g. black Christian women or the deliberate decision to take on a follower role not associated with intersectionality, e.g. Emma's need to demonstrate that she is more than just the association with her activism revolving around her disability); and finally, *family followe*r role (understanding that being part of a family

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requires followership of traditions, culture and beliefs. The follower role in this case can also be perceived as challenging customs from a modern perspective).

Significance of follower role: Themes identified included the acknowledgement of their non-positional approach to leadership as affecting the follower role (Tahir), an opportunity to listen to peers (Chad), crossing the leader barrier with the student community as the follower role makes them equal with their peers (Emma), mobilising support (Helena), participating in policy, e.g. mental health or Student Affairs leadership structures (Johan, Chad), or mobilising those who do not feel ready to get involved in activism (Agostinho). The significance of taking on a follower role with a "learner for life" approach creates the self-awareness required to navigate complexed student environments (Ntando), or utilising a familiar empowered space to consciously learn and improve a specific skill, e.g. public speaking (Khethiwe).

Follower strategies: Participants mentioned specific strategies they had employed as a follower that differ from their leader strategies: *promoting the organisation* (effective collaboration and utilising networks and resources), *peer engagement* (gaining a deeper-level of understanding of contradictory viewpoints), *utilising social contexts to address microaggressions* (social engagements were used to address stereotypes in family and friend context), s*treamlining systems* (by applying institutional knowledge gained as a follower), *capturing institutional knowledge from a student perspective* (as a method to ensure sustainability within the organisation/society), and finally, *sustainability* (understanding that change in itself is part of sustainability and, as a follower, resistance, disruption and compliance are all necessary for sustainability, as they all feed into one another).

To summarise: The key findings in relation to the follower theme demonstrate the participants' leadership identity growth as they move from stage 1 to stage 6 of the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model, expand their follower role and broaden their understanding of how they could contribute to institutional changes without positional leadership. It furthermore illustrates that participants realised the differentiation in role identity, where their follower role would now require them to grant leadership to someone else (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). The ability to demonstrate what was required

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from them in a follower role would also add to their leadership identity, as the focus would now shift to the sustainability of a project without them being the leader.

The findings are aligned with the general **Finding 7:** Leadership roles (a sign of affirmation and recognition of leadership capabilities by the institution and peers), as well as leadership role rejection (not being elected), and the value they attach to these roles, which was indicated to be a strong contributor to participants' leadership identity. They are also aligned with **Finding 8:** As leadership roles contributed to participants' leadership identity, their leadership identity self-perception found expression in their leadership style while fulfilling their leader or follower roles. Findings 7 and 8 therefore make a joint contribution to the participant's leadership identity.

6.4.9 Theme 9: Role identity

Table 6.9 indicates the objective, outcome and key findings of the role identity theme:

Table 6.9: Theme 9 – Role identity

Theme 9: Role identity	
Objective	**Key findings**
To confirm participants' role identity perception, role identity association, role identity competition/enforcement and skills developed.	**1.** Participants' role identity perception was based on their understanding of the multiple roles they occupy within various contexts and in relation to different people. **2.** A range of roles was identified, with multiple roles within the *family context*, *leader* and *friendship* context indicating the highest frequency. **3.** Participants indicated their intersectionality as role identities that were assigned to them by default. **4.** Role identity acceptance, rejection and negotiation occurred when fulfilling multiple roles within one context. **5.** Role identity competition and enforcement occurred and varied from participant to participant. **6.** Participants indicated specific skills they acquired to deal with contexts in which they experienced role competition.
Outcome	
Role identity acceptance, rejection, negotiation confirmed. Cross-check for identity, group identity and role identity acceptance/rejection patterns. Impact on leadership identity confirmed.	

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	7. Identity salience and malleability, permeated by social context, had a direct influence on role identity acceptance, rejection and negotiation. **8.** Role identity competition and enforcement examples supported the view that role identities are self-conceptions applied because of the structural roles occupied as a member of a social category (Burke, 1980; Thoits, 1991). **9.** The importance of including self-concept in the discussion of role identity formation and the acknowledgement of history (contextual influences) in role identity acceptance, rejection or negotiation, were confirmed.

Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Role identity perception and role identity association: (See Figure 5.24 in Chapter 5 for the participants' role identity association.) Through a process of self-reflection and self-awareness, the student leaders' role identity association was followed by their acknowledgement of their multiple role identities and how these multiple identities either compete or re-enforce each other. Their lifeworld (Patzer, Voegtlin & Scherer, 2018) and life stories (Pless, 2007) also gave insight into role acceptance and role rejection in a post-apartheid South Africa student context. Acknowledging role identity association would imply that the student leader would either accept or reject naturally assigned role identities. As Callero (1985:205) states , "role identities by definition imply action". According to Stryker and Burke (2000:290), "competing multiple identities could hamper reciprocal relationships between identity salience, identity standards and self-relevant perceptions". Stryker and Burke (2000:290) further argue that "identity-salience is positively affected by the degree of commitment to its respective role and the degree to which its respective role is positively evaluated with one's performance". As Figure 5.18 (Chapter 5) indicates, a range of roles were identified, with multiple roles within *family context*, *leader* and *friendship* context having the highest frequency. These also were the dominant roles, referred to as "identity centrality", indicating the importance of a particular role identity (Settles, 2004).

Participants interpreted their intersectionality as labels associated with roles that were assigned to them by default, which led to a key observation in terms of *role*

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acceptance, e.g., Emma being an activist for students with disabilities and an educator – educating people within those leadership structures on the different disabilities or on accessibility. *Role rejection* was observed, e.g., Helena experienced role rejection due to the limitations of what her role "as a white Afrikaans-speaking leader" can be in post-apartheid South Africa. In these cases, intersectionality (whether viewed positively or negatively) would indicate role identity salience as participants attached subjective importance to their multiple role identities (Capitano *et al.,* 2017). Two examples can be highlighted of participants adopting role identities through the process of observing identified role models, e.g., Helena (adopting a leader role identity strongly influenced by a white female politician), Ntando (adopting a leader role identity strongly influenced by his uncle who was an influential politician), Chad (adopting a leader role identity linked to social justice issues, strongly influenced by his father as politician and family as freedom fighters). The adopting of leader role identities influenced by identified role models allowed these participants to experiment from an early age with provisional selves as they could develop their own set of internal leader standards compared with external feedback received (Yeager & Callahan, 2016).

There also was *role negotiation* when new roles were negotiated, e.g. Ntando, who utilised his race and the preconceived ideas about his race to facilitate change in contexts not familiar with his racial and economic status (private high school, university residence space) by combining it with his "friend" role. The motivation for role negotiation stemmed from sense-making in reconciling intercultural and interpersonal dilemmas to acknowledge the conservative environment as a factor contributing to their role rejection as a white Afrikaner leader, but acknowledging their religion to negotiate a new role as a citizens. In these cases, participants acknowledged that they were venturing into social contexts in which they were educators or had to take on the role of coach and role model, as their actions as a student leaders would have a ripple effect on the broader community. In Helena's case there seemed to be alignment with accountability, equality and human rights (values mentioned in her comments about her identity and leadership identity contributors), i.e. a strong role identity alignment with personal values. In her case, role identity alignment with personal values was utilised to deal with intercultural dilemmas.

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The role negotiation observed in this study supports Purkey's (1998) observation of the complexities of the self-concept influenced by the social environment (Markus & Kunda,1986:858). All participants indicated a fluidity of self-concept negotiated within the multiple role identities they accepted, and in relation to the social context in which the action of that role identity was demonstrated. The study supports the findings of Markus and Kunda (1986:858), which support the view of Mead (1934) that

> there is no fixed self-concept, only the current self-concept that is negotiated from an available set of self-conceptions, i.e., that perhaps self-concept should rather be seen as a productive space, or a system of self-conceptions from which the individual constructs e.g., a working self-concept.

The study further supports Markus and Wurf's (1987:301) distinctions in describing the ways that the self-concept is being explained, as "varied, from the self-concept in relation to networks, spaces, hierarchies".

Role identity competition and role identity enforcement: Participants felt that certain role identities reinforced or were competing with their power and influence in dealing with moral complexities by shaping the structure of social influence. Role identity competition and reinforcement varied from participant to participant, for example:

- *Role identity competition, e.g.* Khanyiso's role competition related to his role as a leader, i.e. when leader charisma, as influence, and the roleplaying as required by the situation have a negative effect on identity and self-concept. Maak and Pless (2006a, 2006b) refer to how the idea of the leader as a visionary is often linked to a charismatic leader, but that it is problematic around questions of ethics. It was evident that Khanyiso's role contestation stems from his acknowledgement of having multiple identities. In other words, different self-concepts employed, depending on the social context he finds himself in. His strategy to deal with power and influence as a student leader was to resort to the charismatic leadership style to navigate moral dilemmas (such as gender fluidity, homophobia and issues of inequality), also utilising his social capital. His acknowledgement of the contestation of this approach with his role as a leader also led to an acknowledgement that he does not want to take on the role identity of being a "queer leader speaking on behalf of the lesbian, gay,

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bisexual, queer, transgender, intersexual, asexual, pansexual/LGBQTIAP+ community", as this was not perceived by him as his dominant role. Identity centrality in this case became a challenge, as he also rejected intersectionality, or as he refers to it as "being boxed in". This finding alludes to the inherent tension between role expectation and leader role identity. In this case Khanyiso would have benefited from a process of leader role crafting whereby he could find ways to navigate his intersectionality and self-in-role in an authentic manner through utilising his social capital to manage his leader role expectations (Gjerde & Ladegard, 2019);

Role identity contestation also occurred in the differentiation participants made between "leaders" and "activists". This stems from the 2015 student movement, #FeesMustFall, in which student activism was viewed as being contradictory to traditional student leadership (i.e. task-driven compliance role). Chad's role identity competition often lay in his role as an activist and the potential impact on his professional law career. Being the son of a prominent politician and coming from a coloured family with strong political ties during the apartheid years, he had to confront his internal conflict driven by his sense of justice and the way he acted in the role as activist (and being incarcerated) and risking his future legal career;

- *Role identity reinforcement*: Emma's disability had a major impact on her leader role identity and as activist for people with disabilities. As a change agent (also on a national level), she understood that her power lies in her advocacy work and the role enforcement of her intersectionality (female leader, PoC leader, leader with disability) as an enabler to shape the structure of social influence. Through role integration she utilised her intersectionality to navigate various social contexts in aid of the transformative student experience. Another layer of Emma's example is the alignment of her personal values (equity, inclusivity and justice) with her role identity as a student leader and monitor of inclusive welcoming practices at the university.

Agostinho, on the other hand, used the relational aspects of his multiple roles to enable role identity reinforcement by utilising his power and influence in the

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relational context (advocate, friend, future doctor) to deal with role modelling healthy male traits (i.e. using his experience of toxic masculinity to his advantage to influence male cousins positively or as a heterosexual male taking on the role as ally of the LGBQTIAP+ community). He did this to deal with moral complexities such as homophobia, gender discrimination and gender-based violence. Agostinho's confirmation of the relational aspect of role negotiation, speaks to Uhl-Bien's (2006:657) description of social self-concept, specifically "relational self, which emanates from relationships with significant others as a distinct construct of self-concept". Agostinho indicated a stronger affinity for relational self to execute power in role negotiation instead of the collective self (which is based on identity with a group or social category).

Johan's role negotiation stemmed from his deep understanding of the power and privilege of being a white Afrikaner male and the acknowledgement of the limitations of what his "identity can and cannot do today". Johan's example, with reference to Stryker and Burke (2000), indicated contrasting approaches to "self-identity", namely, on the one hand, self-identity focusing on the linkages of social structures with identities and on the other hand, self-identity focusing on the internal process of self-verification. In Johan's case, although he experienced role contestation, he did not reject his role as a white Afrikaner male, but dealt with power and influence by merging his citizen role with the intersectionality of his identity and linking this new role identity to the social structures.

Role identity skills required: Participants indicated key skills they had to acquire to negotiate their roles, i.e. how student leaders negotiate their roles as "facilitators" in a multicultural context while being cognisant of the factors contributing to their role identity as responsible leaders (see Figure 5.19 in Chapter 5). It is evident that the student leader in post-apartheid South Africa cannot facilitate in a multicultural context without being cognisant of the factors contributing to their role identity. This was demonstrated by the participants' acknowledgement of the transient nature of self-concept and role identity, as it varies based on social context. Khethiwe pointed out how she had to come to terms that the Zulu student community might not relate to her because of the way she speaks English and being very fluent in Afrikaans, but that

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she could use it to her advantage in the Afrikaans student community when she had to deal with difficult conversations in her residence on racism and equity. The alienation she would feel within the Zulu student community did not deter her from perceiving her role as a meaning-maker and context giver – skills to facilitate situations in a multicultural context. Her role became larger than her individual role as a leader. Other skills highlighted included knowledge gaining, meaning-making, self-awareness and mediating.

Another skill observed was the awareness of the merging of their citizen role with their intersectionality by becoming builders. This refers to changing the narrative of the legacy of the oppressor profile associated with them (Johan and Helena). In these cases, the participants merged their role of leader and citizen which enables their leadership a mechanism for societal discourse e..g, Helena's interest in local and national politics. Their role of citizen leader can be regarded as a skill acquired to mediate between lifeworld and economic system (Patzer *et al.,* 2018). This also speaks to the radical role identity shift into becoming a leader in behaviour and identity (Maurer & London, 2018). Fundiswa, through her "red pill moments", had to work through her experiences of racism, but had to confront her own understanding of the complexities of conservative and liberal views and herself as a critical mediator in this context, be it within her family or in the student community. Skills such as critical thinking, knowledge acquisition, negotiating and not borrowing trauma were key skills for facilitation in a multicultural context. This required a level of maturity as a leader, as these participants now became stewards, or custodians of social, moral and environmental values and resources (Maak & Pless, 2006a:108). First-generation student participants further emphasised their mentor and role models (Tahir, Agostinho and Ntando) as being advocates who addressed injustices, but also worked for reconciliation, with the religion as the dominant role identity (Tahir, Ntando).

It is evident that self-awareness seemed to be the underlying theme, as the post-apartheid student leader realised the interconnectedness with their identity, self-concept and role identity, and when/in which social context to act on their roles as leader or follower. Self-awareness was enhanced through direct interaction within the social context, as Agostinho learned about himself from others, both through social comparisons and direct interaction. This supports Markus and Wurf's (1987:305) view

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that "self-concept and identity seem to be interlocked depending on the intra- and interpersonal processes mediated by the self-concept", and that the social environment remains one of the most powerful determinants of self-conceptions (McGuire, 1984; McGuire & McGuire. 1982). Participants who have adopted a leader role identity and integrated that role in their self-view also showed stronger integration with role-based behaviour and regulation of that that behaviour around that role, e.g. Tahir integrating his role as a Muslim man with his leader role (Farmer & Van Dyne, 2010; Farmer *et al.,* 2003; Leavitt *et al.,* 2012; Mathias & Williams, 2017).

To summarise: Based on the examples shared and their relationship with the self-concept literature, this study concurs with the view of the self as not being an "autonomous psychological entity but "a multifaceted social construct that emerges from people's roles in society", and that the variation in self-concepts is due to different roles (Hogg *et al.*, 1995:256). It has also demonstrated the view that role identities are self-conceptions applied as a consequence of structural roles occupied as member of a social category (Burke, 1980; Thoits, 1991). This study can confirm Maak and Pless's (2006a: 104) argument that "responsible leaders should demonstrate the ability to integrate people with different cultural backgrounds, to understand issues from different perspectives, to solve conflicts of interests and to reconcile intercultural and interpersonal dilemmas". Maak's (2007) argument that responsible leadership and social capital are an emerging vista, as leaders are relying on social structures to allow for the facilitation of responsible action, is also borne out here.

The study further highlights the importance of including self-concept in the discussion of role identity formation and the acknowledgement of history (contextual influences) in role identity acceptance, rejection or negotiation. This dimension requires from the post-apartheid student leader to confront the complexities of their identity in the role identity-association process. In this study, role negotiation and self-awareness seem to be key skills for a facilitator in a multicultural context – which gives additional weight to Brown's (2000): 754) contention that the gap in the social identity theory (of leadership) is the absence of a stronger focus on the facilitator role in managing social identities in a multicultural setting.

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The key findings made in this theme are aligned with **Finding 11:** There is a strong relationship between intersectionality and group identity, social identity and role identity, and **Finding 12:** Identity salience and malleability are informed by intersectionality in relation to the group, social and role identity, and finally their leadership identity, permeated by the multicultural context in which they find themselves.

6.4.10 Theme 10: South African historical reflections

Table 6.10 shows the objective, outcome and key findings of the theme of South African historical reflection.

Table 6.10: Theme 10 – South African historical reflection

Objective	Key findings
To explore what participants highlight in their recollection of South Africa's history and what/who influenced that recollection.	**1.** Main themes identified in participants' historical reflections are within the family context: family migration/relocation, family's political affiliation, family's silence and the contestation of navigating family and school. **2.** The second set of themes related to the broader South African political context, e.g. the old versus new South Africa, death of an iconic leader, South African identity, student activism and police brutality. **3.** Intergenerational conversations, the history curriculum and the media were identified as the three key contributors to participants' historical reflections.
Outcome	
Main themes confirmed. Cross-checked with themes 5 and 11 for alignment with factors contributing to leadership identity.	

Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Themes captured in this theme were also consistent with the themes captured in the "apartheid" theme. I.e. the recollection of South Africa's history was also affected by how the participants' family was affected by apartheid, and the narratives that were shared with them (or not). Furthermore, there was consistency among participants whose family shared few recollections of the past and how it affected them, and their acknowledgement whether the past had any influence on their identity and leadership identity. This was specifically the case with Khanyiso and Khethiwe (and Zoe and Bridget in Phase 2).

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South African historical reflections: A few key findings were made regarding themes: *Family (migration and relocation):* Some participants recalled family members referring to their migration or relocation in South Africa, which significantly affected family life. In Tahir's case, his family had immigrated from India, but some family members relocated back to India because of apartheid. Their family life was split and those who stayed behind faced hardships. In Emma's case, the family was split on the basis of their racial classification (see discussion of apartheid regarding family impact). Agostinho's family, being of Portuguese descent, immigrated from Madeira. Although he realised that his family was better off than other immigrants during apartheid due to being classified as white, he questioned the role of the Portuguese in colonialism in South Africa.

The second theme was *family members' political affiliations*: Four participants have/had family members with strong political ties over a few generations. Chad's family had an involvement in politics that spanned more than three generations. Coloured people's involvement in politics is a theme to which Chad was introduced at a very young age. He recalls stories shared of how the family adopted codes to hide political activists fleeing the police in their homes. Johan's family contestation due to political differences between conservative and liberal Christians, and his father's involvement as a white male in the current ruling party, also influenced his stance on his role in post-apartheid South Africa. Ntando's political awareness stemmed from his uncle's involvement as a prominent politician in the current ruling party. Although his uncle was well respected, he recalls how his father discouraged him from getting involved in politics because his family perceived it as choosing a difficult life.

A third theme was *family members' silence:* The recollection of South Africa's past was limited for two participants. The first is Khanyiso who believed he lived a very sheltered life as the past was hardly ever discussed in the family context. Khethiwe, on the other hand, acknowledged that she was quite ignorant before entering university because her mother and grandmother never spoke about the past. It was only at a later stage, when she started engaging more with white peers in a social context that she noticed her mother's discomfort e.g. with her sleepovers at the homes of white peers.

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The fourth theme was *navigation of family and school – contestations:* Family life and life at school became two worlds to navigate. While gaining more knowledge, the realisation of a one-sided perspective offered in schools (History) did not match the perspectives shared by family members (e.g. Ntando would challenge the curriculum based on the views shared by his uncle, and Chad would do the same based on the views shared by his father – both family members with strong political affiliations). Growing up in an environment where you are part of the majority race and the white people adopt some black traits created safety and ignorance about racism for Fundiswa. She recalls growing up in the Eastern Cape before being confronted with "the other" who did not resemble the traits with which she was familiar. Fundiswa reflected on this as being useful to her because it assisted her in breaking down stereotypes.

The fifth theme, *The New versus The Old South Africa:* The recollection of the past made Helena think about the confusion she experienced as a child on what this "New South Africa" entailed. In her environment it looked the same, as she could still observe the inequality based on race in her conservative environment, with farm workers calling her father *"grootbaas"* (big boss) and her brother *"kleinbaas"* (little boss). This inequality was also shared by Emma, who attended private mixed-race schools but could see the difference in historically black and coloured schools. For these participants, there was nothing "new" to the "New South Africa".

The sixth theme, *death of an iconic leader (Nelson Mandela):* The death of Mandela (which also featured strongly in the participants' timeline of South African historical events affecting their leadership identity) could also be interpreted as the death of hope or the death of reconciliation. This was indeed the case for Chad, who reflected on how this would change the course of the born-frees in post-apartheid South Africa. The seventh theme, *South African identity:* Three participants (Ntando, Khethiwe and Fundiswa) mentioned how they never really thought of South Africa and their citizenship other than during international events, e.g. South Africa hosting the FIFA World Cup, and national events, e.g. #FeesMustFall. They recall feeling disconnected from the country.

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The final theme observed was *student activism:* The first-hand experience of and participation in student activism with #FeesMustFall in post-apartheid South Africa also created a stronger connection to youth leaders of the past. This would be the first time that any of the participants had some level of engagement, some more than others, with the collective fight against inequality. Another layer to this theme was *police and student activism:* This aspect further pointed to how the police were managing student activism during the #FeesMustFall protests, which seemed similar to the situation during the 1976 Soweto Uprising (see Table 5.2 in Chapter 5, on similarities in apartheid and post-apartheid student themes). Participants mentioning police brutality also spoke of their observations of this method of engagement with student activists, which could be regarded as just another remnant of the apartheid era, as noted by Davids and Waghid (2016), De Vos (2015), Gillespie (2017), Mathebula and Calitz (2018) and Mpofu-Walsh (2021).

Contributors to South African historical reflections: Three main contributors to their recollection of South Africa's history were highlighted by the participants:

- *Parents/family:* family remained the primary source of knowledge transference for most of the participants;
- *Media:* although media was another source of knowledge, participants realised as they grew older, to challenge what they were fed by the media and to cross-reference information shared with other sources such as family members or their own research);
- *School/History curriculum:* history as a school subject continued to be a source of information. For some participants this also highlighted the limited understanding they had of what "decolonising the curriculum" meant. As their awareness grew of Western-based views of leadership with little African perspective, they realised how, even the history curriculum neglect to include more African perspectives.

To summarise: This theme highlighted the effect of silence and ignorance about apartheid on the participants' historical reflections. A late awareness of the significance of apartheid was observed in relation to their identity and leadership identity in cases where there was no or little intergenerational conversation (Khanyiso

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and Khethiwe). This was also confirmed in Phase 2 (Zoe and Bridget indicating that South Africa's history had little to no influence on their identity and leadership identity). This issue showed a similar trend to the apartheid theme, and supports the view of the family as primary site for the transmission of psychological legacies and experiences of trauma (Frankish & Bradbury, 2012; Hoffman, 2004; Jansen, 2009; Naidu & Adonis, 2007; Weingarten, 2004).

The "what if" and "generational wealth" themes brought to the fore aspects of nostalgia and longing for a past that does not exist and from which these participants felt they could gain advantage. It highlighted the friendship-beyond-race theme referred to by Lima (2007), which is idealised in post-apartheid South Africa but becomes threatened by racist incidents in which participants fall back on family-context narratives by default (e.g. Chad's example of the farms previously owned by his family and now in the possession of white people in an affluent agricultural area). His "what if" reminiscence, and Tahir's reminiscences of the lost opportunities of family members wanting to become doctors, became reminders of their role as change agents as a form of redemption for the losses of their forefathers. The family as primary site of transmission – also for reconciliation, equity and justice as value systems – was a significant contributing factor to the participants' leadership identity.

The key findings in this theme are aligned with **Finding 3:** The participants' family context showed a strong relationship with the participants' perceptions of contributors to their identity with reference to apartheid. These contributors include value systems, family's political involvement, strong political leadership roles within family context, impact of apartheid on family and related intergenerational conversations, and the family's current approach to sense-making of apartheid and their approach to their contribution in post-apartheid South Africa with reference to social justice and social cohesion). They are also aligned with the following findings: **Finding 4:** The same pattern could be observed as in finding 3, but in relation to the participant's perception of contribution to their leadership identity with reference to apartheid; **Finding 5:** There was a strong indication that participants whose families had limited intergenerational conversations about the effects of apartheid, or where the family members had limited political involvement, said that apartheid or South Africa's history in general had made only a limited contribution to their identity; and **Finding 6:** The same as in finding 5

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could be observed in relation to the relevant participants' perception of apartheid in relation to their leadership identity.

6.4.11 Theme 11: Apartheid

Table 6.11 indicates the objective, outcome and key findings of the apartheid theme.

Table 6.11: Theme 11–- Apartheid

Objective	Key findings
To explore the effect of apartheid on the participants' family, self, identity, leadership identity and group identity. **Outcome** Apartheid as contributing factor to leadership identity confirmed.	**1**. Key themes within the family context were: the effect of the Group Areas Act, Immorality Act and the dismantling of families. A second subset within the family context was family and politics, and the white/coloured people and apartheid struggle narrative. The third subset within the family context was silence and ignorance. **2.** Key themes regarding apartheid's effect on the individual include: generational wealth, belonging, race narrative (whiteness and blackness), and education. **3.** Apartheid's impact on the participants' identity includes: claiming a controversial identity, intersectionality, claiming individuality, and values informed by apartheid. **4.** Apartheid's effect on participants' leadership identity includes: their leadership style, values, intersectionality (as driver to become social change agents, the repositioning of a controversial identity, using language as a mediation tool and religion). **5.** Apartheid's effect on participants' group identity was based on the black leader/white leader narrative and the observation that stereotypes breed group identity. **6.** In cases where silence about apartheid was favoured within the family context, the participants admitted that the past did not really have any effect on their leadership identity, or only at a later stage.

The apartheid theme was explored on five levels in relation to how it potentially could have affected the participants: effect on the participants' family, themselves, their identity, their leadership identity and, finally, on their group identity.

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Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Apartheid's impact on the family: Apart from participants' mentioning lost opportunities where family members had limited education levels or could not continue their studies, apartheid affected the participants' families in the following ways:

- *Group Areas Act:* Tahir's family moved to an Indian community, while some family members moved back to India. Agostinho's family, being immigrants from Portugal, were also moved to an area in Cape Town allocated to Portuguese people, yet they were still afforded the same privileges as other white South Africans. Another example is the involvement of Chad's family in protests against "whites only" areas. e.g. beaches. In Ntando's case, his family was living in the deep rural Eastern Cape and not affected by the Group Areas Act. They reached a level of affluence within their rural construct. In fact, he mentioned his grandmother came across her "dompas" (an apartheid document to control the movement of people of colour limited to specific areas or granted for work purposes) and did not even know what it was because she never had to use it;
- The *Immorality Act*, *dismantling of families* and *race classification:* Three participants, each from a different race – white (Johan), coloured (Emma) and black - (Khanyiso) - had mixed-race members in their family. Emma's grandfather was white but was disowned by his white family. Her family members from this mixed-race marriage who chose to be classified as white had to distance themselves from the rest of the (coloured) family, while Johan's (white) family also distanced themselves from family members who had relationships with people of colour.

The dismantling of the family structure had a big impact on Emma's mother, who never reconciled with her "self-identified white" siblings. Khanyiso's grandmother (black and coloured parents) had no ties with the coloured family, which also highlights the black/coloured racism narrative of the past. Although Agostinho's family was classified as white (and Portuguese were classified as 'white' in South Africa), he shared the following perceptions while acknowledging his understanding of the complexity of his race:

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> There was a little bit of overlap because my grandfather was born in Madeira. They're all very dark people because of where they sit on the equator. If you go to Portugal, everyone would be classified as coloured technically under South African demographics, so it was a bit different for them because they would look at him and say, OK, it is a coloured man. But then with the pencil test (an apartheid test done to determine whether the individual can be classified as white based on the texture of their hair), he had straight hair, so he passed.

This theme also highlighted how the dismantling of families due to the Immorality Act led to mistrust among people of colour. Khanyiso's grandmother, being mixed race, had no ties with her coloured family. This could have affected his aunt's perception and experience of Muslim and coloured people considering themselves superior to black people. She recalled being treated poorly by Muslim and coloured people, which gave rise to resentment towards coloured people, who had better access to resources, jobs and houses than black people did. The dismantling of this family structure and unresolved resentment towards coloured people would then become a "silent theme" in this family.

The second theme was of *Family and politics.* Two distinct findings were made in this category, that of white and coloured people and the struggle (the less dominant narrative of the apartheid struggle). *White people and the apartheid struggle:* Johan remembered the division in his family between the Christian liberals and conservatives. Helena's grandfather and great-grandfather were involved in politics from the Jan Smuts era and during the apartheid era, which meant that her family had a political awareness spanning generations, along with their contribution to apartheid. Agostinho's family on both sides were against apartheid and got into trouble with the police because they employed people of colour in their family businesses. *Coloured people and the apartheid struggle:* As coloured people, the involvement of Chad's family in politics opposing apartheid highlights the complexity of the apartheid struggle, which stems from diversity within the coloured race.

The narrative of the past is often recounted in terms of the binary of the white and black race, while there is a significant group of coloured people who were part of the apartheid struggle and who were only acknowledged later, in post-apartheid South

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Africa, for their contributions. In terms of this racial binary, some coloured people would refer to themselves as black, and others who "passed" as white, would self-identify as white. Being part of a family with generational involvement in politics also brought awareness of the complexity within the coloured community in terms of politics during the apartheid and post-apartheid eras. The third finding related to how families dealt with apartheid experiences. *Silence and ignorance* refer to the impact of apartheid on family life and how it has been dealt with by either using silence or pleading ignorance. *Silence (Trust/Discomfort/Pain/Anger):* Participants shared a few examples of the silence within their family and their interpretation of that as being too painful, unresolved anger, discomfort and mistrust.

This translated into examples such as Khethiwe's mother not liking her sleepovers at white friends' homes, as she could not understand what the purpose would be for white people to invite a black child to spend the night at their home, while her grandmother was afraid to go to an old-age home in fear of having to work for white people again as she had in the past. Khanyiso's grandmother hardly ever spoke about the past but will never vote for white people because she does not trust them. The recollection of past experiences was simply too painful, and they chose not to share this with the grandchildren. This led to Khethiwe and Khanyiso's fragmented recollection of South Africa's history. Silence was also regarded as a pacifier, a method to keep the peace in families where there were opposing views about apartheid (in Johan's case), or Emma's father who chose not to talk about the past but Emma observing his anger when he felt mistreated in a specific environment.

Ignorance: Ignorance could also be interpreted as a method of indignation, e.g. Helena considered her mother to be liberal as she broke ties with the Dutch Reformed Church, which she considered as being too conservative. Yet her mother's acknowledgement of her ignorance had a lasting impression on Helena, who idolised her mother as a liberal female figure. Growing up, both Helena's and Johan's mothers acknowledged their ignorance of apartheid and race, which activated their (Johan's and Helena's) sense of responsibility to own up and be accountable within the current context. In Johan's case, although his mother came from a liberal family (where they would sneak out farm workers to go to "whites only" beaches"), at the time she (Johan's mother) could not understand why they did that because it was never spoken about.

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In both examples shared by the parents, these participants realised that their parents had to make peace with their ignorance as a form of condoning the past. Ignorance was also observed by Ntando, who considered his family to have lived sheltered in a rural Eastern Cape area, somewhat disconnected from and ignorant of the broader impact of apartheid. His sense-making of their ignorance was to demonstrate that the apartheid system was effective in showing people how to develop separately so that their marginalization reached a level where they did not even know they were being oppressed.

Apartheid's impact on the individual: Apartheid affected participants on an individual level – some more than others. The following key themes emerged: *Generational wealth:* Participants reflected on how their lives could have been different should their parents have had access to better education systems. This was apparent in the reflections of the participants who were also first-generation students who felt they could resonate with the struggles of their family and the first-generation students around them (Tahir). The same applies for Fundiswa, who dreamed about going to study at Harvard but knew her parents would not be able to afford it and she did not want to put them in a position to feel guilty that they could not afford to give her the opportunity. This resulted in many "what if" conversations, e.g. Chad reflecting on the properties his family had owned in the same area as a wealthy white peer of his.

Both Johan and Helena admitted their privilege in relation to generational wealth and access, and its direct effect on them as individuals. A second theme was *belonging:* this was highlighted in a stronger sense by participants who had a deeper understanding of what their family experienced. Tahir's belonging related to his family's approach to reconciliation and hope as intentional themes for their generation, while Chad argued that resonating with one's family and their past experiences contributed to his identity.

A third theme was race narratives. *Whiteness*: Khethiwe acknowledged the fact that she grew up in an Afrikaans environment where she perceived whiteness as being more desirable than blackness. Helena acknowledged her experiences of white guilt, i.e. apartheid led to her being put in a certain stereotypical box. Johan underlined the

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emotional and responsibility-oriented legacy that comes from apartheid. Agostinho noticed that he was treated differently by his coloured and black friends' parents and grandparents, i.e. whiteness was still perceived more and better in relation to other races. While the legal and financial segregation is gone, the social segregation remains. *Blackness:* Ntando viewed his legacy as less of a weight and more like a privilege. While he acknowledged the narrative amongst the "born-frees" of inheriting a legacy of past oppressions, he chose to change the narrative into an aspirational one contributing to black excellence. For that reason, it was not sufficient for him to be recruited as a black student for rugby. Instead, he chose a professional career (Engineering) in which he could excel as a black scholar. In contrast to Khethiwe's aspiration to whiteness (perceiving it as being a better life) and seeing the way her mother avoided white people (observing how her mother became "small" in the presence of whiteness), Ntando's approach came from what he observed from his parents as never showing an inferiority complex towards white people – something he unwittingly adopted.

The fourth theme was identified on the perception that *Education = better future:* This narrative was strongly present, as the participants' families all encouraged them to access avenues that had been denied to them and, in this way, to break the cycle of poverty. Khanyiso reflected on how entering SU, although only 30 km from his township, felt like stepping into another world, as he had never seen so many white people in one place. The constant reminder to succeed with his studies as the main priority for why he entered university was more important than engaging in student politics. However, this changed for him, as education also implied that he was now able to address the changes needed in the university. The *"black man taking up space"* became a recurring theme in his reflections, despite not wanting the label that came with it. Despite access to education, he could also see how the apartheid cycle of "lesser than" continued with family members back in the township limiting themselves. This frustrated him, as he realised that it would take a fundamental mind shift from his cousins to see the opportunities available to them, but that they needed to believe that nothing was holding them back – except for holding on to past narratives of being oppressed. This illustrated to him how apartheid was still affecting his family and him on a personal level.

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The final theme related to *dealing with the aftermath of apartheid:* Participants reflected on central themes such as continued racism, inequality and mistrust, whether in day-to-day social engagement, the class context or in the student activism space. Emma, as a female of colour with a disability, felt the impact of apartheid on her on an individual level, as she is regularly confronted with inequality and difficult access issues for disabled people of colour. These inequalities still exist based on their intersectionality, whether they want to acknowledge it or not (as in Khanyiso's case).

Apartheid's impact on identity: The general observation was that participants did not give much thought to apartheid but, as they grew older, they realised that they could not escape from their or the country's history. The following findings were made:

- *Claiming a controversial identity:* This theme was especially apparent among the white Afrikaans participants, who understood the complexity of the racial and language aspects of their identity. Both Helena and Johan reached the conclusion that claiming a controversial identity does not mean accepting the conservative aspects of the group identity that come with it;
- *Intersectionality:* Participants also claimed that apartheid affected the intersectionality aspect of their identity, as the associated privilege with their intersectionality that was inferred from apartheid. Khethiwe, however, claimed that apartheid did not necessarily have any impact on her identity, as her identity was mostly informed by her religion;
- *Individuality:* There was also a need among the participants wanting to claim their individuality and not being "boxed in" and being limited to their racial identity, which was derived from apartheid;
- *Values:* The final observation, apart from intersectionality, was that values were identified as aspects of their identity informed by apartheid. For example, Emma's valuing of equality stemmed from the family dismantling of her family and Agostinho's work ethic stemmed from experiencing the effect of his family's bankruptcy, despite their hard work as immigrants.

Apartheid's impact on leadership identity: This theme highlighted a strong relationship between participants from families who were involved in or were detained during the struggle against apartheid. In these families, conversations were about the

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past were part of normal family life (Chad, Johan, Ntando, Helena, Fundiswa), part of a reconciliation conversation (Tahir), based on the current visibility of the effect on a divided family structure (Emma), or the realisation that immigrants who were considered white also contributed to colonialism (Agostinho). In cases where silence was favoured, the participants admitted that the past did not really have any effect on their leadership identity (Khanyiso) or did so only at a later stage (Khethiwe).

Three findings were made. The first finding was in relation to their leadership style:

- *Leadership style:* Participants indicated apartheid's impact on their leadership style, e.g. *Justice* in Chad's case refers to his strong sense of justice, which was informed by his family's apartheid experience, which also informed his career path in the legal field, in which he can focus on serving justice;
- *Listening to others' stories:* An example is Johan's engagement with a diverse student community supported his mediator role – which he considered to be a crucial element to navigate apartheid-related issues;
- *Judgement:* Khanyiso did not believe apartheid had a direct effect on his leadership identity formation, but indirectly in how he used his judgement to explore different opinions without believing what he is fed via family, media or his studies);
- *Facilitative approach:* Agostinho's leadership style stemmed from inclusivity and what he observed as a child in the authoritative leadership style of his grandparent towards his workers).

The second finding was made concerning *Values* as an aspect of their leadership identity affected by Apartheid. The following can be highlighted:

- *Accountability:* Apartheid has not only affected Emma's values as part of her identity, but also as part of her leadership identity. The congruency in her values as they transferred from identity to leadership identity form part of how she performed as a post-apartheid student leader;
- *Empathy* (The sharing of stories also affected how Emma, for example, could now connect with students who did not share a similar socio-economic background to hers).

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The third observation was on *Intersectionality* and their leadership identity as influenced by apartheid. The following themes were present:

- *Agents of change:* Tahir's parents' message of hope and reconciliation as themes when reflecting on the effect of apartheid inspired him to reflect on his role as a Muslim male of Indian descent). He now considered his moral responsibility to contribute to change as recompense for the lost opportunities of his ancestors, just as Helena's acknowledgement of how old wounds informed her leadership identity as she realised that she had to learn from those wounds and how that could inform how she could contribute to South Africa as a white Afrikaans female leader;
- *Repositioning of a controversial identity:* Johan realised the legacy he inherited but found himself moving away from the discomfort he initially focused on towards finding a way he could change that legacy into a driver for change, AND as a proudly white Afrikaans African and South African. His claiming of citizenship and global citizenship forms part of that repositioning process of his leadership identity);
- *Language as a tool of mediation:* Khethiwe's reflection on apartheid made her realise (perhaps not at the time when she initially started to use it) how the use of the language aspect of her intersectionality also informed her leadership identity. At the same time, this aspect of her leadership identity put a distance between her and Zulu students who shared the same demographic profile);
- *Religion*: Although religion featured as a major LID contributor for Chad, Tahir, Fundiswa, Johan, Helena and Khethiwe, it was Ntando who specifically mentioned how apartheid influenced him via his religious beliefs and that his servant leadership approach stemmed from his religion.

Apartheid's impact on group identity: Participants confirmed how apartheid might have affected their group identity association, in relation to which the following findings were made.

- First finding: *Stereotypes feed group identity.* Khethiwe and language can serve as an example of how she utilised language as a tool to negotiate group identity within the Afrikaans-speaking student community, but at the same time how that led to her alienation within the Zulu student community;

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- Second finding: *Black leader, white leader narratives: Black leader example can be demonstrated by* Khanyiso in that he needed to accept his “black leader” group identity and the responsibilities that came with that. The *white leader example can be demonstrated by* Helena, who admitted the struggle with her group identity based on the effect apartheid had on her group identity;
- Third finding: *Change agents:* Tahir linked his group identity with his values and his family’s approach to deal with the remnants of apartheid by choosing to hope and reconcile, which made him realise that his contribution is to serve all people and not only as a future doctor, but also from his religious perspective; Chad’s strong sense of justice based on his family’s experiences drove his group identity, as he could identify with the most marginalised groups; the dismantling of Emma’s family during apartheid led to a need for stability that she observed in her mother’s side of the family, and now her need for belonging within group context. This she found within the disability group, despite the disagreements and separation within this group based on class and income; Agostinho, who chose to identify with marginalised groups as he could utilise his privilege in an allyship role; Ntando’s group identification, which stemmed from apartheid, was based on wanting to be associated with black excellence.

To summarise: This theme highlighted the relation between participants who reflected deeply within the family context about apartheid, either due to their family’s past or current political involvement or due to having a natural interest in South African history. The family context and intergenerational conversations served as a major contributor to participants’ understanding of the South African historical context. Similar to the historical context (theme 10), this theme’s findings support the observations by Hoffman (2004), Jansen (2009), Naidu and Adonis (2007) and Weingarten (2004) that family context is the primary site where the transmission of psychological legacies and experiences of trauma takes place.

The finding of the effect of the silence and ignorance of family members on the participants’ understanding (regardless of their race) of the influence of apartheid on their identity and leadership identity supports Frankish and Bradbury’s (2012:305) reference to the “active silence and nostalgic articulation” hinged on political traumas.

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This highlights the complexities faced by post-apartheid youth in navigating their own lives in the present and future on the remnants of the past.

The race-based narratives, also in relation to identity salience and malleability, and to the *guilt, silence, shame* and *ignorance* narratives, support the elucidation by Adonis (2016), Schramm (2011), Schwan (1998) and Steyn (2012) that, although they provide the preconditions for not knowing injustice and therefore becoming appropriate containers for ignorance, the impact would now be visible in the children of the so-called perpetrators, resulting in identity loss and indirectly loss of citizenship. The findings on this theme in relation to silence and ignorance observed by white participants within their family context also allude to how the conspiracy of silence (Aarts, 1998) or "the unstated taboo" (Denham, 2008:398) or "leave it alone and move on" (Oelofsen, 2020:197) approach would now become central to their sense-making of their role as white post-apartheid student leaders.

In the absence of in-depth conversations by post-apartheid student leaders of any race with their parents, fragmented narratives would continue to "perpetuate a narrative void surrounding the subject experience" (Abrams, 1999) and, as a result, become the default narrative in new conflicts (as has been observed with student movements). This further alludes to the explanation by Cross *et al.* (2019) of the importance of applying narratives as a tool to transfer the lived experiences of minorities and an intentional shift away from institutional paradigms, The vulnerability of the post-apartheid youths, due to their hopefulness for better prospects (Swartz *et al*., 2012), was evident in this study, as participants felt positioned in a crossfire between institutional transformation efforts, a family context that never healed from apartheid and a national student leader context disempowered to solve the systemic problems beyond their capacity. This finding confirms the point made by Suransky and Van der Merwe (2016) and Khampepe (2022) that student leaders indeed do not feel sufficiently empowered and informed to facilitate the challenging conversations where the narratives of minorities are shared. White student leaders, in particular, are often associated with what Yenjela (2021) refers to as the "white saviour complex" theme, central in transformation discourse when addressing systemic racism. Whiteness narratives (of white student leaders finding themselves as minorities) also draw on the "white victim" and "out of my comfort zone" (Wale, 2019) tropes. In this study, the white

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student leader participants demonstrated a high level of awareness of these themes and their stance on their positionality in relation to these "whiteness themes".

In their reflection on student activism as leadership identity contributor, the participants alluded to skills and competencies they believed they needed to hone to deal with the structural violence affecting their mental health and the deep-rooted challenge to position themselves as "born-free" citizens with limited prospects as graduates. The illusion of "the car that was sold but never seen" (referring to the promises made by the ruling ANC party of a better future) narrative (Khethiwe) threatened the establishment of a social identity, in which a sense of belonging was much desired as part of their legacy (Fundiswa). Themes 10 and 11 showed consistencies in terms of the impact of the historical context and apartheid on leadership identity. With reference to the Komives *et al*. (2005) LID model, the following observations were made:

- **Stage 1: Awareness.** In addition to their awareness of their identity and intersectionality, they were also aware of how their perception of their identity has been shaped by their parents' experiences of apartheid;
- **Stage 2: Exploration/Engagement.** The participants' awareness of adults and peers as role models was evident (and their role models' activism in addressing the social injustices of the past);
- **Stage 3: Leader Identified.** The participants' leader and follower differentiation was consciously noted as it relates to their understanding of when to lead and when to follow based on their demographic profile (and the heritage of power and privilege associated with it);
- **Stage 4: Leadership Differentiated.** The participants' understood how their perception of their identity influenced their leader role as facilitator in a multicultural context was found, while also being cognisant of their group, social and role identity;
- **Stage 5: Generativity.** It was clear that the participants' understood of what influenced their commitment to a specific cause. Given the historical South African context, their perception of the influence of apartheid on their family, their own identity, their leadership identity and group identity drove their commitment to addressing social justice, human rights, democracy. Student

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activism was informed by their leadership identity, and leadership was informed by student activism and the historical context of apartheid;

- **Stage 6: Integration/Synthesis.** Finally, the participants' integration and congruency of their identity and their leadership identity became evident, with them viewing themselves as change agents, regardless of a formal leadership position.

The findings, as it relates to the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model, confirmed Collins' (2010) recommendation that more research is required on the influence of race on leadership identity. This study's findings, however, unlike Collins' (2010) findings, not only indicate that race had a greater impact on how participants are received as student leaders of colour (in this case all races), but that it indeed also indicated a significant influence on their leadership identity development based on their positionality in post-apartheid South Africa (and based on the positionality of their parents in apartheid South Africa). Although this study did not set out to investigate the influence of race on student leadership identity formation, and through a critical race theory lens, this study's apartheid and intersectionality theme findings, point to Beatty's (2014) findings that race had an influence on leadership identity development. This was particularly the case in relation to Beatty's (2014) findings related to the theme investigated in that study related to 1) individual social experiences, 2) resisting and responding to racism and microaggressions.

The key findings of this theme are aligned with **Finding 3:** The participants' family context showed a strong relationship with the participant's perception of identity contributors in relation to apartheid. The contributors included their value system, political involvement, strong political leadership roles within family context, impact of apartheid on family, related intergenerational conversations, the family's current approach to the sense-making of apartheid and their approach to their contribution in post-apartheid South Africa with reference to social justice and social cohesion. They are also aligned with **Finding 4:** The same pattern could be observed as in **Finding** 3, but in relation to the participant's perception of leadership identity contributors in relation to apartheid.

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In terms of **Finding 5,** there was a strong indication that participants whose families had limited intergenerational conversations about the effects of apartheid in the family context, or in which family members had limited political involvement, indicated that apartheid or South Africa's history in general made a limited contribution to their identity. In relation to **Finding 6,** the same came to the fore as in **Finding** 5, i.e. in relation to the relevant participants' perceptions of the impact of apartheid in relation to their leadership identity.

6.4.12 Theme 12: Student leadership themes

Table 6.12 shows the objective, outcomes and key findings of the student leadership themes:

Table 6.12: Theme 12 – Student leadership themes

Theme 12: Student Leadership Themes	
Objective	**Key findings**
To confirm participants' understanding of the main student leader themes and how their identity and leadership identity either enable or challenge them in addressing these themes.	**1.** Main post-apartheid student leadership themes identified by all participants were based on student activism themes: systemic racism, inequality, inclusivity, access to higher education, first-generation student support, decolonising the curriculum and gender-based violence. Other themes included mental health issues, gender neutrality, homophobia and transphobia. **2.** Similarities in post-apartheid and apartheid student themes included racism, police brutality and education. **3.** Participants confirmed relatability to all themes, some more than others (mental health), and some to a lesser extent (e.g., pronouns and decolonising the curriculum). **4.** Intersectionality was observed as being both an enabling and challenging factor in addressing themes. In cases where identity markers were perceived as challenging, allyship instead of leadership was favoured. **5.** Leadership identity enablers included: specific leadership traits (active listening, social agency, having a relational and facilitative approach, and having a strong sense of justice).
Outcome	
Participants' understanding of their identity and leadership identity as enabler or disabler in addressing post-apartheid student leadership themes. Cross-checked leadership identity self-perception.	

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	6. Intersectionality was observed as both an enabling and challenging leadership identity factor in addressing some of the themes (e.g. white leader as an ally of #FeesMustFall instead of white leader leading).

Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Determining the participants' understanding of the key post-apartheid and apartheid themes, similarities and differences was important for this study, as it indicated their awareness of the broader national context in which they represent the student agenda. (see Table 5.2 (Chapter 5) for the list of main student themes, similarities and differences).

Relatability of student themes: Although most participants could relate to all the student themes, the following were highlighted by some participants as either more enabling or more challenging and therefore worth highlighting: *Academic access and success* (Khethiwe felt that, as a black female, she had utilised the available resources and therefore found it more challenging to relate to those black students who had difficulty in succeeding after gaining access); *Decolonising the curriculum (*Khanyiso admitted that the concept was at first difficult for him to grasp, but after engaging with more students and within the academic space (in History classes), he realised how Westernised the Higher Education curriculum is, while Ntando, on the other hand, realised he first had to understand his personal relationship to the theme); *Mental health and health care* (Khethiwe, who acknowledged her privilege in having access to privatised health care, understood the challenges other students experience in relying on free campus counsellors. Khanyiso, Agostinho, Johan and Fundiswa could relate strongly to the mental health themes because of their personal experiences), and *Pronouns* (Fundiswa and Ntando, although understanding the importance of this to others, admitted not prioritising it in relation to other student leadership themes).

Identity as enabler or challenge: Some participants found aspects of their identity more enabling or challenging when addressing some of the main post-apartheid student leadership themes. There was a strong relationship between the following intersectionality-related participant findings and the findings made within the student leader theme:

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- Tahir considered his identity as enabling him to participate in conversations due to being mindful and appreciative of the progress the country has made and what has been achieved in terms of education. Although the progress the country has made since 1994 is debatable, he (as a first-generation student) resonated with the struggles that are experienced by others;
- Helena's identity was contested, but her firm conviction that she needed to contribute to change enabled her to address student leadership themes.
- Johan regarded his identity as an enabler as it gave him access to education. Yet he found it also challenging to address sexuality, gender and race issues. The enabling effect of his identity came into play when he realised that he could be an integral part of solving the problems from a power and privilege perspective.
- Being a white male leader enabled Agostinho in advocacy work, especially when it came to systemic issues. His reflection on his identity (as a grandson of immigrants) enabled him to relate to students experiencing xenophobia, as he sometimes had to confirm that he was indeed South African. Xenophobia in South Africa is rooted in apartheid and the deficits of the post-apartheid state (Adam & Moodley, 2015). This arose from habits formed during the apartheid era, when "surplus" people were moved around and "endorsed out" (an apartheid practice of ordering black people to leave urban areas). Agostinho therefore could have empathy with minority groups from this perspective. On another level, which could be both enabling and challenging, it arose from being a cisgender male, where he could not speak from an experiential perspective on issues of gender-based violence or homophobia issues.
- Khanyiso's identity as a black gay man specifically in relation to gender-based violence was challenging to him in addressing it from an experiential perspective, but he could relate to observing how women are objectified in a male space.
- On the other hand, Fundiswa believed her culture and race enabled her to navigate and relate to perpetuated trauma, racism and cultural differences. Culture, gender, faith and race could also be in contestation for her, as she admitted having difficulty adapting to "modern interventions or a modern way of thinking". Student themes she found difficult to grasp as a student leader

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included white male students feeling ostracised, black students despising Christianity because they believe it drove apartheid, and those who are straight or cisgender despising Christianity because they believe it is homophobic or transphobic.

Leadership identity as enabler or challenge: Participants' leadership identity was considered both enabling and challenging in addressing the post-apartheid student leadership themes. The following key findings were made:

- *Leadership traits and Leadership styles: Sense of justice versus student activism* – Chad considered his leadership identity in terms of his beliefs and experiences as an activist gave him insight into context from a legal perspective, be he also admitted to the challenging aspect of the law, which cannot negate his experiences as a student activist. This contestation, however, makes him relatable to fellow student activists. The fact that he could apply his logical thinking skills to critically assess his viewpoint enabled him to consider opposing perspectives;
- *Social agency* – Khanyiso referred to using social context to drive change. Placing a strong emphasis on engaging with students within a social context about leadership issues, he could advance himself to gain knowledge and different perspectives to utilise in academia and writing thought pieces. This was informed by being involved in grassroots-level engagement;
- *Active listening, decisiveness* – Johan's leadership identity entailed intentionality in including others by active listening, which enabled him to make informed decisions as a leader because he realised the student leadership space was an emotionally charged environment in which students were easily triggered. This further enabled him to relate to students, as he observed a need among them to feel heard. In these cases, decisiveness as part of his leadership identity helped him in assisting with issues that he might not have had first-hand experience of. The challenge for him was the realisation that it sometimes was not his place to solve an issue, but that supporting could be enough. Finding the balance remained a challenge;
- *Facilitative approach* – the enabling factor in Agostinho's leadership identity was his facilitative leadership approach of influencing others to work

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collaboratively towards a shared vision. Finding the balance for him was to know when to apply his initial authoritative style, depending on the urgency of the matter in cases where the leader was not adept. This was challenging for his results-driven nature, as he admitted becoming overbearing to others. He had to realise when to step back and let others lead, even though it might delay a positive outcome;

- *Relational approach* – Ntando's relational approach worked in his favour when engaging in one-on-one conversations to address contested topics such as decolonisation.

The second finding was around *Intersectionality.* Intersectionality as part of participants' leadership identity was both enabling and challenging in the way in which they were allowed to address student leadership themes. The following findings were made:

- *Ableism* – Emma considered her disability as the only aspect of her identity that was recognised in spaces where she wanted to contribute to other issues, such as gender-based violence or transformation or mental health issues. Although "leading as a person with a disability" formed part of her leadership identity, it hampered her contribution on other levels. On the other hand, the fact that she was a versatile leader and involved in different areas of leadership on campus also enabled her to create more awareness of students with disabilities outside the community. In this way she could extend her reach on campus, and on a national level;
- *Race, gender and culture* – Fundiswa considered her faith, culture, race and gender as both enabling and challenging at the same time. Religion was highlighted as a strong theme influencing student leadership. In Fundiswa's case, she acknowledged the conflict she experienced when elected to a leadership position with expectations from the church community on how she would lead, while she knew that she had an obligation as a student leader to serve all students, regardless of their religious beliefs or sexual orientation and preferred gender pronouns – topics that were contested in her church environment. The same holds for leading as a black, isiXhosa leader where she would challenge the conservative aspects of her cultural traditions.

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To summarise: The findings made in relation to this theme also correspond with the participants' reflections on how their identity enabled/challenged them in navigating social identities within a multicultural context (see theme 13, social identities), with intersectionality being a significant factor at play in both identity and leadership identity. These findings are aligned with **Finding 9:** The participants' understanding of the key post-apartheid student leadership themes versus apartheid themes provided insight into the participants' reflection on how their identity and leadership identity could either enable or challenge their post-apartheid leader role. This awareness also situated their positionality in terms of power and privilege, which stems from the acknowledgment of their intersectionality. The observations also are aligned with **Finding 12:** Identity salience and malleability are informed by intersectionality in relation to the group, social and role identity, and finally their leadership identity, permeated by the multicultural context they find themselves in.

6.4.13 Theme 13: Social identity

Table 6.13 indicates the objective, outcome and key findings of the social identity theme:

Table 6.13: Theme 13 – Social identity

Theme 13: Social Identity	
Objective	**Key findings**
To confirm participants' perception of social identity and how they navigate social identities in a multicultural student community.	**1.** Social identity perception was based on identity markers within the social context, with two further findings: 1) social identity was perceived as a subset of group identity and 2) social identity was perceived as social engineering. **2.** Intersectionality was observed to be a key contributor to navigating social identities in a multicultural context. Five findings were made in this regard: religion and culture support a humanitarian approach, language can be utilised as mediation tool, finding common ground aids social identity, honesty about intersectionality conflict assists in addressing political correctness, and the resolution of internal conflict assists in reviewing the underlying symbolism associated with racism.
Outcome	
Cross-checked identity and leadership identity self-perception.	

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	3. Knowledge gaining, and research were observed to be additional methods to navigate social identities within a multicultural context on topics participants were not familiar with. This formed part of their leadership identity. **4.** Values and specific leadership traits (relational and facilitative approaches) as part of participants' leadership identity assisted them in navigating social identities in a multicultural context. 5. Identity salience and malleability were permeated by social context – and in relation to social identity association, avoidance or negotiation.

Several key findings were made regarding this theme.

Social identity perception: Participants' perception of social identity led to the following findings: *Relation to identity markers* – Participants highlighted their involuntary identity markers (race, gender) in terms of what they shared with others in a social context and voluntary identity markers (political, religion, interests). This theme also led to the observation of social identity rejection when the involuntary identity markers did not contribute to a positive social affiliation (e.g. Helena and Johan's rejection of a social identity associated with conservative Afrikaans students). Or social identity adoption, where the social identity gave rise to emotional significance through the projection of that identity by others, e.g. Chad's political affiliation, which brought camaraderie and respect as a fellow "comrade" fighting for social justice. This supports Tajfel's (1982) observation that social identity is "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group, together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership".

Two additional findings were made regarding social identity perception: 1) *Social identity as subset of group identity:* Some participants viewed social identity as a subset of group identity, but with stronger emphasis on the social context lending itself to involuntary social identities, where the emotional significance was stronger if experienced positively, or where blackness was celebrated and not seen as a token or associated with affirmative action, for example. In the latter case, participants would reject that social identity, e.g. Ntando who would rather adopt the social identity of black excellence. 2) *Social engineering:* Some participants referred to social

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engineering as a component of social identity in which the individual and the social context influence the social identity of the individual. With reference to social identity as interpreted by Tajfel (1982), participants did not give thought to the value and emotional significance they attached to social identity.

Navigating social identities in a multicultural context: Participants shared their experiences of how they were navigating social identities in a multicultural student community while being cognisant of their own social identity. *Intersectionality was observed as a key factor:* Participants again drew from their intersectionality and their positionality in relation to the social context. Five sub-themes were identified that relate to intersectionality:

- *Religion and culture:* While acknowledging the many elements at play within a social context, in Tahir's case a strong focus was observed on religion (Muslim), gender (male), culture (Indian) and being part of a previously marginalised group. His compassion and serving nature (which stemmed from his values and religious beliefs), as well as his strong sense of self and the awareness of the impact of exclusion on his family enabled him to interact with and serve fellow students and colleagues. Johan, on the other hand, acknowledged that growing up in another country would have been easier for him as a white male, but that he would not want to be in another country. His strong religious convictions (influenced by his grandfather as a minister) allowed him to apply human principles as a guideline to navigate the complexities of a multicultural student community. He further regarded this process as part of redemption, in that he did not deny the "merits and demerits" of his identity but had made peace with his current position after gaining a clear understanding of what his role ought to be in the new South Africa while being proud of his identity. In both cases, the underlying factor was that participants had a sound understanding and acceptance of their identity;
- *Language and culture:* Helena's reflection on the university's language policy and the conflicting emotions of understanding inclusion from the perspective of multilingualism, and her love for her language (Afrikaans), indicated the contestation of a controversial identity (something she would often allude to). Being brought up in an Afrikaans household and Afrikaner culture, it was only at university that multilingualism started to make more sense to her. She had

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to reflect on the attachment she had to her language and her role as social agent in post-apartheid South Africa. Her passion to drive change beyond her involvement as a student leader on campus led her to believe that she could connect better with people in a language they understood;

- *Finding common ground:* While intersectionality can create "labels", with an unintentional focus on what differentiates individuals, Agostinho's approach was to learn to find common ground. While being cognisant of the privileges he had as a white male voice, this approach assisted him to take on allyship as part of his social identity in spaces where he did not share the intersectionality of the students of the cause at hand, e.g. women and gender-based violence or as a heterosexual male and ally for the LGBQTIAP+ community. His reference to the narrative in the student living space, with its "us" (residence) and "them" (private students organisation (PSO)) narrative, made him realise that he could build a bridge with the "us" component. In this regard, he could speak on behalf of queer men of colour in a white male residence or in a mixed residence (male/female), where he could demonstrate support for the female students because his white male identity gave him power with the dominant culture;
- *Honesty about intersectionality conflict:* Khethiwe's use of the Afrikaans language has been discussed in relation to other themes. She navigated social identities by not compromising her integrity when she chose her affiliation, e.g. while supporting gender-based violence, she would not keep quiet when she observed homophobia within the social context where anti-GBV was addressed. Her understanding of her social identity made her create platforms for people to constantly explore themselves with whatever uncomfortable realisations they have. She did this through modelling and sharing her understanding and perceptions (e.g. confessing that she still trusts whiteness more than black people). In other words, Khethiwe's honesty about her conflict with her intersectionality, which others might have perceived as controversial, enabled her to resonate with people also dealing with conflicting/controversial issues that were not politically correct and that could not be acknowledged out of fear of cancel culture;

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- *The resolution of internal conflict:* As in the case of Khethiwe, Ntando also referred to the resolution of internal conflict as a method to navigate social identities. He believed the resolution of this internal conflict could be carried out unintentionally in a healthy or an unhealthy way, depending on the environment. For example, entering university and for the first time being more aware of his blackness. Before this, as a Christian, it never bothered him to see pictures of a "white Jesus", but suddenly the physical appearance bothered him. In this case, it was only after moving into a space where his social identity was confronted with the major aspect of his intersectionality (his religion) that he started to question the physical appearance, realising it was relevant because if you're going to equate a deity with a particular race, that has consequent effects". While he realised it would not change his perception of white people or of Jesus, it does have an underlying message that only became uncomfortable to him when race became central to social context and his social identity (for example, if he is praying in his mother tongue, which isiXhosa, can God understand him?). The shift for Ntando came into play when he equated these subtle messages with propaganda. Through conversations with others, he realised that the resolution of internal conflict, or rather the acknowledgement of that internal conflict, had to be engaged with on a personal level, and in relation to others. This became one aspect of his role as a post-apartheid student leader of addressing these conflicts through reasoning.

In addition to intersectionality, two other findings were made of how participants navigate their social identities. *Knowledge acquisition:* In relation to this theme, knowledge acquisition was identified through either consulting official policies or intentional research:

- *The Constitution as guideline:* Another theme was utilising the Constitution as a lens for seeking social justice. This approach was favoured by Chad, as it was aligned with aspects of his identity and leadership identity (having a strong sense of justice). This approach informed his involvement with activism to address inequality, e.g. during the #FeesMustFall protests. He acknowledged that it was one of the most challenging phases of his student leader journey, as he had to deal with the conflict of inclusion (to include all students regardless

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of race), but at the same time had to remain true to the principle of the cause, which addresses positionality. He had to rely on his authenticity and honesty, which demonstrated his congruency with conservative students when he argued from both a black and a white perspective. This assisted him to create space for the minority group to share their experiences and opened the way for more authentic engagement between leaders. Although feeling more adept at navigating these contexts now, he still found it challenging in a group context and realised it was easier to connect on a one-on-one basis when it came to unpacking belief systems and identity.

- *Research:* Fundiswa, who identified her academic excellence as contributor to her identity, highlighted the significance of doing intentional research on topics that she was not entirely familiar with. This included research on her own identity (which could no longer be taken for granted in the post-apartheid context). She believed identity was mostly challenged in a multicultural student context based on the emotional link to social groups, e.g. understanding what it meant to be a self-identified "African, black, Xhosa, Christian woman with value attached to her name". She believed this enabled her to be more open to learning about other students' identities. It further enabled her as a leader to share her awareness that the issues at hand might affect everyone in a different way, and therefore it was important not to show a preference for a particular culture when leading in a multicultural context.

Finally, *Values* were indicated as another method to navigate social identities in a multicultural context. Emma's values, respect and equity, contributed strongly to her identity and leadership identity and enabled her to also apply that in relation to her social identity.

To summarise: The abovementioned themes illustrate the participants' acknowledgement of their intersectionality (or their discomfort/internal conflict) as a strong underlying factor enabling them to navigate social identities within a multicultural post-apartheid student context. The objective evaluation of their knowledge construct (or the lack thereof regarding specific issues or their identity) was highlighted as a method to allow them to question their own interpretation. An example would be their interpretation of policies based on constitutional guidelines and not their

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personal belief system, or interpretations based only on lived experiences, which also allowed for the demonstration of their integrity and impartiality in addressing issues that affected students differently, depending on their intersectionality.

The findings in this theme indicated to where this study is situated, namely the SIT of leadership. The observations of how participants navigate social identities within a multicultural setting through a deep awareness of their intersectionality, the internal conflict with intersectionality and the resolution of that internal conflict refer to how identity and identity formation from a group perspective are influenced by social contexts (Cinoğlu & Ankan, 2012). In this study the participants confirmed, through their reflection on leadership, leader and leadership identity their understanding of how organisational culture could shape the prototypes of a leader (Latta & Whitely, 2019).

As mentioned in Chapter 1 (rationale for SU as research setting), the strong focus on the "transformative student experience" was highlighted, with the emphasis on elements such as the SU graduate attribute of "engaged citizen". One could argue that the strong message of transformation at this HWAU filtered through to the student leadership environment, and these participants adopted the features of a post-apartheid leader prototype now favoured by the institution.

From a SIT of leadership perspective, Trepte and Loy's (2017) elucidation of the seven basic principles underlying SIT manifested in the following ways in this study:

1) *Categorisation:* participants determined the social groups to which they belonged;
2) *Salience:* participants determined which social identity was relevant for positive social group membership (e.g. "forward thinking Afrikaans leader", "servant leader" from a religious perspective);
3) *Social comparison:* participants determined how their in-group compared with other social out-groups (e.g. based on stereotype threat, Agostinho, Johan and Dawid avoided white Afrikaans male groups);
4) *Positive distinctiveness:* participants reviewed the results of the social comparison, i.e. Agostinho's allyship with the LGBQTIAP's community was perceived more positive than that with the out-group (white male community).

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5) *Social identity:* participants confirmed the combination of self-categorisation based on interests rather than limited to their intersectionality;
6) *Self-esteem*: participants reviewed the result of the self-categorisation (e.g. Chad as an activist and comrade and the sense of belonging associated with that, Khethiwe as her association with the Afrikaans student community instead of the Zulu student community). In both cases, their self-categorisation enabled them to cross over to social identities that were not imposed on them by default;
7) *Individual mobility, social creativity, social competition and stereotyping:* through social identity negotiation as strategy to re-interpret and change group membership, participants could claim power that would otherwise have been lost (e.g. Ntando and Fundiswa redefining black excellence and not feeding the black needy black student narrative).

These findings were aligned with broader findings: **Finding 3:** The participants' family context showed a strong relationship with the participant's perception of identity contributors in relation to apartheid. These contributors are value system, family's political involvement, strong political leadership roles within family context, impact of apartheid on family, related intergenerational conversations and, finally, the family's current approach to the sense-making of apartheid and their approach to their contribution in post-apartheid South Africa with reference to social justice and social cohesion. They were also aligned with **Finding 4:** The same pattern could be observed as in observation 3, but in relation to the participant's perception of leadership identity contributors in relation to apartheid, and **Finding 12:** Identity salience and malleability are informed by intersectionality in relation to the group, social and role identity, and finally their leadership identity, permeated by the multicultural context in which they find themselves (Trepte & Loy, 2017).

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6.4.14 Theme 14: Student leader

Table 6.14 shows the objective, outcome and key findings of the student leader theme.

Table 6.14: Theme 14 – Student leader

Theme 14: Student Leader	
Objective	**Key findings**
To confirm participants' understanding of their student leader role, alignment/ conflict with post-apartheid student leader causes. **Outcome** Cross-checked identity and leadership identity self-perception.	**1.** Participants' personal positive experiences based on their identity as enabler or their negative experiences, where their identity challenged their student leader role and relatability to the cause at hand, affected how they viewed their student leader role. **2.** Participants' understanding of the fluidity of leadership and the necessity for leaders to understand contextual uncertainty, and how their identity contributors affect their relatability to the cause they are confronting as post-apartheid student leaders, formed part of their leadership identity.

One key finding was made in relation to this theme.

Identity and values in conflict with student leader relatability to themes: This theme confirmed which post-apartheid student leadership themes or causes (see Table 5.3 in Chapter 5) the participants could or could not relate to (whether due to their identity or limited experiences). Based on the main post-apartheid student themes mentioned, participants felt that they were aligned with all themes (Chad, Helena, Johan, Fundiswa). Based on their identity profile, some participants highlighted specific themes with which they felt more aligned, e.g. Tahir and Emma could relate more to equity and racism due to their racial identity, Emma specifically regarding equity and its relationship with disability and gender issues, while Agostinho highlighted anti-GBV, LGBQTIAP+ issues and mental health and Ntando mentioned pronouns to a lesser extent. Conflict with these themes was highlighted by Chad in cases where his analytical skills (his legal background and approach to dealing with policies) conflicted with his Christian beliefs and personal experiences (as an activist and someone with a strong sense of justice).

Agostinho's observation during his negative #FeesMustFall experience made him conclude that "allyship is sometimes a better contribution than taking the lead".

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Emma's conflict as a leader came into play when finding herself in conversations in which disability was viewed as a privilege (extra writing time during exams), which required her to justify her positionality. Helena's conflict arose when she was confronted with the limitations of her racial profile as a white student leader in a national student leader context, where her racial profile was now in the minority. Ntando, although being able to relate to the student themes, and some more than others, highlighted "gender pronouns" as perhaps not having as high a priority as the rest. At the same time he realised that he had to acknowledge that as a student leader, because it influenced some students' identity recognition by the student community. As a student leader he had a responsibility to role model inclusivity, e.g. by acknowledging his pronouns at meetings to set the tone (regardless of whether or not he needed it for his own identity perception).

To summarise: The participants' personal positive experiences based on their identity as enabler or their negative experiences, where their identity challenged their student leader role and relatability to the cause at hand affected the way they viewed their student leader role. This finding relates with where the participants' values conflicted with the task at hand. This theme relates to "student leadership themes" and "social identity", as it indicated a strong relation with their responses to how they navigate social identities within a multicultural setting while being cognisant of their own identities. The findings on the student leader theme indicate that the participants' personal, relational and collective identities all playing an important role in the student leader identity and student leadership context. This finding contradicts Grabsch Moore and Dooley's (2021) findings on college student leaders, which indicated that the personal identities were most salient in the leadership context. One can ascribe this to the difference in context, where the South African culture-specific context favours a stronger collectivistic group approach than the individualistic nature of a Western culture such as the United States of America. This finding, in relation to the post-apartheid context, further implies that the in-group/out-group relationship is of greater significance for groups with a collectivistic culture than for individualistically-oriented groups where this is of lesser importance (Adams *et al.*, 2012).

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This theme also relates to the final stage of integration/synthesis in the Komives *et al*. (2005) LID model. It indicates the participants' understanding of the fluidity of leadership and the necessity for leaders to understand contextual uncertainty and how their identity contributors affect their relatability to the cause they are confronting as post-apartheid student leaders. The observations are aligned with **Finding 12:** Identity salience and malleability are informed by intersectionality in relation to the group, social and role identity, and finally their leadership identity, permeated by the multicultural context in which they find themselves (Trepte & Loy, 2017).

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6.5 Conclusion

Key findings were made and discussed per theme. Table 6.15 shows the findings per theme in alignment with the concluding findings related to the research question. Table 6.15 is cross-referenced with Figure 6.2 in terms of the key findings of this study.

Table 6.15: Summary of key findings in relation to the research question

Concluding findings	Theme findings supporting concluding findings
Finding 1–- Identity contributors (A): Identity contributors were mainly influenced by the participants' acknowledgement of their intersectionality.	**1.** Intersectionality is a major contributor to identity – *Theme 1* **2.** Identity perception was perceived within the social categories related to intersectionality (Hogg, 2001) – Theme 1 **3.** Major intersectionality factors were race, followed by religion – *Theme 2* **4.** Intersectionality remains a major contributor to the participants' identity – *Theme 2* **5.** Intersectionality was indicated to be a major contributing factor to leadership identity – specifically race and religion, followed by gender. Identity salience and malleability were observed, permeated by social context – *Theme 5* **6.** The favouring of the relational construct of self-concept is based on the opportunity participants felt they would have to share their authentic self-concept on a one-on-one basis, rather than experiencing a self-concept constructed by a group or social category (and often linked to the negative perception in relation to their intersectionality) – *Theme 7* **7.** In all follower contexts, participants were aware of identity politics – *Theme 8* **8.** Follower strategies employed were differentiated from leader strategies in the sense that participants indicated having a stronger awareness of the collaborative nature of leadership and allyship. These strategies showed a strong relation between their leadership identity self-perception and their intersectionality – *Theme 8*

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Finding 2–- Intersectionality (B): The participants' understanding of their intersectionality (B) in relation to their power and privilege was directly linked to their parents' intersectionality (B1), predominantly race, followed by religion, and finally race and language (particularly white Afrikaans participants), AND in relation to apartheid (D) (Collins, 1990).	**1.** Participants' power and privilege linked to their inherited intersectionality is a contributor to their identity and leadership identity – *Themes 1 and 2* **2.** Intersectionality perception is based on identity markers, and the associated power and privilege related to these markers. In addition, it is also based on the South African context (and inherited intersectionality from parents) – *Theme 2* **3.** Intersectionality was observed as both enabling and challenging leadership identity factors in addressing some of the post-apartheid themes (e.g. white leader as an ally for #FeesMustFall instead of white leader leading) – *Theme 12*
Finding 3 – Family context (B2): The participants' family context (B2) showed a strong relationship with the participants' perception of identity contributors (A) in relation to apartheid (D). This included the family's value system, political involvement, the presence of strong	**1.** Most participants (including Phase 2) indicated specific South African historical events affecting their leadership identity: student movements, apartheid, the 1994 democratic elections and the death of Nelson Mandela. A few participants (2/15) indicated that South African history had no significant effect on their leadership identity – *Theme 5* **2.** Intergenerational conversations about apartheid were observed to have had a significant effect on the participants' leadership identity, and to a lesser extent on participants who come from families favouring silence on the topic – *Theme 5* **3.** Leadership identity was contributed mainly by factors such as, intersectionality, family context, values, apartheid and leadership roles – *Theme 5*

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political leadership roles within the family context, the effect of apartheid on family and related intergenerational conversations, their current approach to the sense-making of apartheid and, finally, their approach to their contribution in post-apartheid South Africa with reference to social justice and social cohesion.	
Finding 4 – Family context (B2): The same pattern could be observed as in finding 3, but in relation to participants' perception of leadership identity contributors (C) in relation to apartheid (D).	**4.** Main themes identified in participants' historical reflections are within the family context: family immigration/relocation, family's political affiliation, family's silence and the contestation of navigating family and school – *Theme 10* **5.** The second set of themes concerned the broader South African political context, e.g. the old versus new South Africa, death of an iconic leader, South African identity, student activism and police brutality – *Theme 10* **6.** Intergenerational conversations, the history curriculum and the media, were identified as the three key contributors to the participants' historical reflections – *Theme 10* **7.** Key themes regarding apartheid's impact on the individual include generational wealth, belonging, race narrative (whiteness and blackness) and education – *Theme 11* **8.** Apartheid's effects on the participants' identity include claiming a controversial identity, intersectionality, claiming individuality and values informed by apartheid – *Theme 11*

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	9. Apartheid's impact on the participants' leadership identity includes their leadership style, values and intersectionality (as driver to become social change agents, the repositioning of a controversial identity, using language as a mediation tool and religion) – *Theme 11* **10.** Apartheid's impact on the participants' group identity was based on the black leader/white leader narrative and the observation by them that stereotypes breed group identity – *Theme 11* **11.** Key themes within the family context were the effect of the Group Areas Act, Immorality Act and the dismantling of families. A second subset within the family context was family and politics and white/coloured people and the apartheid struggle narrative. The third subset within the family context was silence and ignorance – *Theme 1a* **12.** Values and specific leadership traits (relational and facilitative approaches) as part of participants' leadership identity assisted them in navigating social identities in a multicultural context – *Theme 13*
Finding 5 – Family context (B2): There was a strong indication that participants whose families had limited intergenerational conversations about the effects of apartheid (D) in the family context (B2), or whose family members had limited political involvement, indicated that apartheid or South Africa's history in general made only a limited contribution to their identity (A).	**1**. Key themes within family context were the impact of the Group Areas Act, Immorality Act and the dismantling of families. A second subset within the family context was family and politics and the white/coloured people and apartheid struggle narrative. The third subset within the family context was silence and ignorance – *Theme 11*

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Finding 6- Apartheid (D) and Leadership identity (C): The same patterns as in finding 5 could be observed in the relevant participants' perception of apartheid in relation to their leadership identity (C).	**2.** In cases where silence about apartheid was favoured within the family context, the participants admitted that the past did not really have any effect on their leadership identity, or did so only at a later stage – *Theme 11*
Finding 7 – Leadership identity (C) and leadership roles (C1): Leadership roles (C1) as a sign of affirmation and recognition of leadership capabilities by the institution and peers, as well as leadership role rejection (not being elected), and the value they attached to these roles, were strong contributors to the participants' leadership identity (C).	**1.** Leadership and leader perception were viewed as interconnected – Theme 3 **2.** Leadership was initially perceived as symbolic of authority and linked to title influence and symbols – supports traditional leadership perceptions (Copeland, 1942; Katz & Khan, 1966; Knickerbocker 1948; Stogdill, 1950) – Theme 3 **3.** Leadership perception changed due to leadership involvement, knowledge gained, and worldviews challenged – supports Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model – *Theme 3* **4.** Leadership perception influenced leadership identity perception – *Theme 3* **5.** Leader first person trait adoption indicated a strong relation with role model trait adoption. In most cases they were the same figures. In most cases, both contributed to leadership identity self-perception. Traits were rejected based on the negative perception of those traits within current student leader context – *Theme 4* **6.** The significance of participants' first leadership role was a sign of affirmation of their leader capabilities. The rejection of leadership roles had the opposite effect and led to self-doubt in their leader capabilities, and their avoidance of positional leadership roles – *Theme 4* **7.** Leader involvement was based on participants' strengths, interests, field of studies, mentoring, volunteering, formal structures and activism around transformation and social justice. A pattern was observed between leader involvement and participant's leadership identity aligned with these leader roles – *Theme 4*

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Finding 8 – Leadership identity (C) and leadership roles (C1): As leadership roles (C1) contributed to participants' leadership identity (C), their leadership identity self-perception found expression in their leadership style while fulfilling their leader or follower roles. Finding 7 and 8 therefore make a mutual contribution to the participants leadership identity.	**8.** The significance of participants' leader involvement revolved around role modelling, and being part of institutional change in addressing social justice matters – *Theme 4* **9.** Leader strategies employed were based on sustainability, policy implementation and allyship with staff and peers – *Theme 4* **10.** All participants proactively sought feedback from staff and peers and adjusted their leadership style based on feedback received. The adjustments made gradually formed part of their leadership identity – *Theme 4* **11.** Follower strategies employed were differentiated from leader strategies in the sense that participants had a stronger awareness of the collaborative nature of leadership and allyship. These strategies showed a strong relation between their leadership identity self-perception and their intersectionality – *Theme 8*
Finding 9 – Apartheid (D) and post-apartheid student leadership themes (D1) and apartheid student leadership themes (D2): The participants' understanding of the key post-apartheid student	**1.** Main post-apartheid student leadership themes identified by all participants were based on student activism themes: systemic racism, inequality, inclusivity, access to higher education, first-generation student support, decolonising the curriculum and gender-based violence. Other themes included mental health issues, gender neutrality, homophobia and transphobia – *Theme 12* **2.** Similarities in post-apartheid and apartheid student themes include racism, police brutality and education – *Theme 12* **3.** Participants confirmed relatability of all themes, some more than others (mental health), and some to a lesser extent (pronouns and decolonising the curriculum) – *Theme 12*

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leadership themes (D1) versus apartheid themes (D2) provided insight into their reflection on how their identity (A) and leadership identity (C) could either enable or challenge their post-apartheid leader role. This awareness also situated their positionality in terms of power and privilege, which stems from the acknowledgment of their intersectionality (B).	**4.** Intersectionality was observed as being both an enabling and challenging factor in addressing themes. In cases where identity markers were perceived as challenging, allyship instead of leadership was favoured – *Theme 12* **5.** Leadership identity enablers included specific leadership traits (active listening, social agency, having a relational and facilitative approach, and having a strong sense of justice) – *Theme 12* **6.** Intersectionality was observed as both an enabling and challenging leadership identity factor in addressing some of the themes (e.g. white leader as an ally for #FeesMustFall instead of white leader leading) – *Theme 12* **7.** Participants' personal positive experiences based on their identity as enabler or their negative experiences in which their identity challenged their student leader role and relatability to the cause at hand affected how they viewed their student leader role – *Theme 14* **8.** Participants' understanding of the fluidity of leadership and the necessity for leaders to understand contextual uncertainty, and how their identity contributors affected their relatability to the cause they are confronting as post-apartheid student leaders, formed part of their leadership identity – *Theme 14*
Finding 10 – Identity (A) and leadership identity (C) contributors: There was a strong relationship between identity contributors (A) and leadership identity contributors (C).	**1.** Intersectionality, family context, values, student movements, apartheid and leadership roles were the main contributors to identity – *Theme 1* **2.** Leadership identity contributors were similar to identity contributors, e.g. intersectionality, family values, student movements, apartheid and leadership roles, with the exception of personal individual-specific contributors – *Theme 5*

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Finding 11 – Intersectionality (B), group identity (A1), social identity (A2) and role identity (A3): There was a strong relationship between intersectionality (B) and group identity (A1), social identity (A2) and role identity (A3).	**1.** Group identity was perceived as occurring by default (based on intersectionality) and common interests, i.e. based on social cultural categories – supports Abrams & Hogg (1990), Tajfel (1978) and Turner and Giles (1981) – *Theme 6* **2.** Group identity association was based on intersectionality, field of studies, political affiliation, leadership and mentoring, and leadership and citizenship – *Theme 6* **3.** Group identity association rejection was linked to the negative experiences associated with the group (e.g. avoidance of white Afrikaans male group) – *Theme 6* **4.** Participants indicated their intersectionality as role identities that were assigned to them by default – *Theme 9* **5.** Intersectionality was observed to be a key contributor in navigating social identities in a multicultural context. Five findings were made in this regard: religion and culture support a humanitarian approach, language can be utilised as mediation tool, finding common ground aids social identity, honesty about intersectionality conflict assists in addressing political correctness, and the resolution of internal conflict assists in reviewing the underlying symbolism associated with racism – *Theme 13*
Finding 12: Identity salience and malleability were informed by intersectionality (B) in relation to the group (A1), social (A2) and role identity (A3), and the multicultural context they found themselves in permeated their leadership identity (C) (Trepte & Loy, 2017)	**1.** Identity salience and malleability were permeated by social context – *Theme 1* **2.** Identity salience and malleability (based on intersectionality) were permeated by social context – *Theme 2* **3.** Group identity association rejection was linked to the negative experiences associated with the group (e.g. white Afrikaans male group avoidance) – *Theme 6* **4.** Group identity significance was based mostly on the personal value and emotional significance attached to that group – Theme 6 **5.** Identity salience and malleability, permeated by social context, had a direct effect on group association and group avoidance – Theme 6 **6.** Identity salience and malleability, permeated by social context, had a direct effect on role identity acceptance, rejection and negotiation – *Theme 9* **5.** Identity salience and malleability were permeated by social context – and in relation to social identity association, avoidance or negotiation – *Theme 13*

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6.6 Summary

Based on the thematic findings (Table 6.15), aligned with the general key findings (Figure 6.2), the research question, *What contributes to student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa?*, and the subsequent sub-questions have been answered in this study with the following:

The South African post-apartheid student leaders' leadership identity was informed by:

1) The student leader's intersectionality (primarily race) and the legacy of the associated power and privilege;
2) The country's historical context through:
    a. Intergenerational conversations within family context and the sharing of the direct experiences and impact of apartheid.
    b. The family's political involvement in the apartheid struggle.
    c. The family's values and approach to reconciliation and cohesion;
3) The student leader's leadership perception (and rejection) and associated leadership roles. The leadership role informed leadership identity, and vice versa;
4) The student leader's involvement in post-apartheid student activism to address the remnants of the apartheid era, e.g. inequality, systemic racism, human rights, democracy and social justice;
5) The student leader's identity salience and malleability, which are informed by their intersectionality in relation to the group, social and role identity, and finally their leadership identity, permeated by the multicultural context in which they find themselves.

The researcher would like to confirm that the purpose of this study was not to test the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model, but to utilise it is a theoretical framework. However, the findings of this study indicates that intersectionality played a significant role in the participants' leadership identity formation. Given South Africa's race-based history, this intersectionality, which stems from the parents' intersectionality, adds another layer of complexity to the participants' identity and leadership identity in relation to power and privilege. The post-apartheid student leaders' awareness of the power and limitations of their profiles, was evident throughout all six stages of the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model.

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To summarise: while the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model was one of the theoretical frameworks applied in this study (and should be viewed as such), the findings of this study as it relates to the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model (Figure 2.7) – now displayed in Figure 6.3 – confirmed Collins' (2010) recommendation that more research is required on the influence of race on leadership identity. This study's findings, however, unlike Collins' (2010) findings, not only indicate that race had a greater impact on the way that participants are received as student leaders of colour (in this case applying to all races), but that it indeed also indicated a significant influence on their leadership identity development based on their positionality in post-apartheid South Africa (and based on the positionality of their parents in apartheid South Africa). As mentioned in the apartheid theme discussion, this study did not set out to investigate race through a critical race theory lens, but the apartheid and Intersectionality theme findings do allude to Beatty's (2014) findings that race had an influence on leadership identity development, and particularly in relation to 1) individual social experiences and 2) resisting and responding to racism and microaggressions.

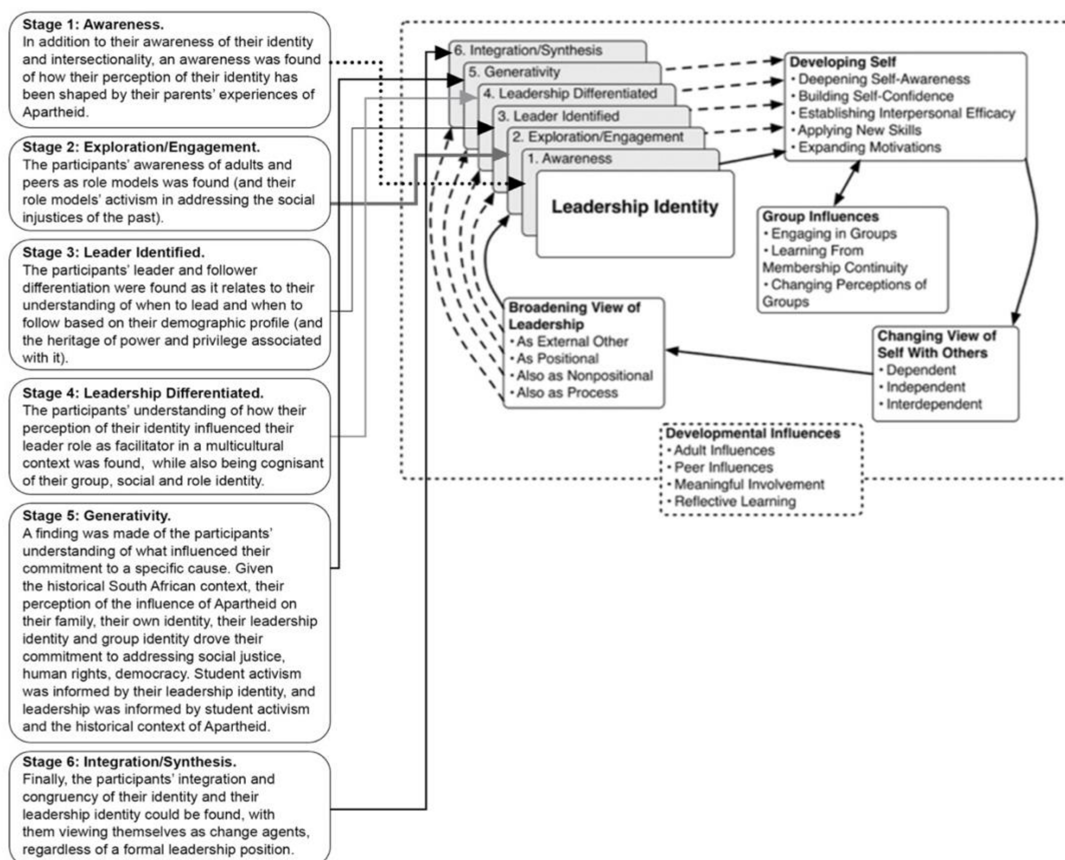

Figure 6.3 The study's findings in relation to the Komives et al.(2005) LID model

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Chapter 7: Critical Reflections

7.1 Introduction

In this final chapter the researcher shares an overview of the study which includes the problem statement, the research question, and the process and findings related to the research question. The researcher notes to the limitations of this study and furthermore explains how this study is contributes primarily to leadership theory and student leadership in post-apartheid South Africa and secondarily to social psychology. Recommendations are made for future research pertaining to the post-apartheid student leadership context in South Africa. The study concludes with a personal reflection on the insights gained through this study - for the South African Student Affairs professional, the post-apartheid student leader and for the researcher.

Figure 7.1 indicates the layout of Chapter 7.

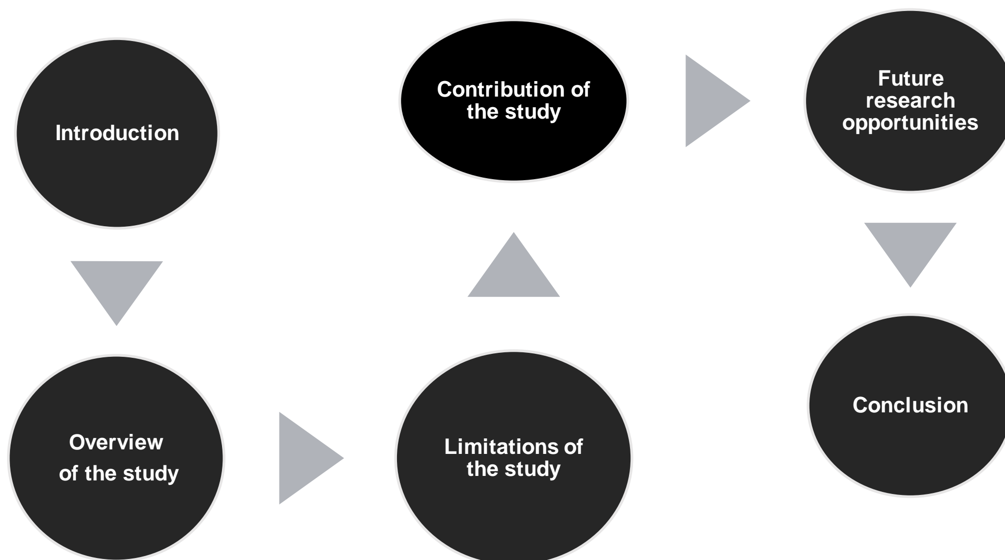

Figure 7.1 Layout of Chapter 7

7.2 Overview of the study

The rationale for this study, was based primarily on the researcher's interest in student leadership in South Africa, firstly as a former student leader in the early post-apartheid years, and currently as a Student Affairs practitioner. The researcher's background

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afforded her opportunities for regular engagement with student leaders and Student Affairs practitioners in South Africa and particularly within the research setting in which this study was conducted. This initial interest was the catalyst for the commencement of the formal research process, captured in the following brief overview.

Problem statement: The researcher's positionality allowed for key observations on the need for an understanding how post-apartheid student leaders make sense of their role as student leaders, whilst remaining aware of their positionality and its impact on the practice of their leadership. This personal engagement with student leaders, followed a thorough literature review with key observations made prior to commencing the study, namely: the

- changes in the approach to leadership from an attributional perspective to a constructivist and identity approach;
- merging of the disciplines of leadership studies and social psychology disciplines in exploring the social identity theory of leadership;
- distinction between leadership versus leader identity;
- lack of research on student leadership identity formation and intersectionality;
- *gap in the literature in terms of student leadership identity formation within a South African post-apartheid student leadership context*;
- gap in the literature, specifically a focus on the South African post-apartheid higher education context, in which post-apartheid student leaders practise their leadership. Linked to this is also the potential impact of South Africa's race-based history and accompanying potential effect of historical trauma on their student leadership identity formation.

Meeting of the problem statement and research question: The literature review and followed-up research done on the Komives *et al.* (2005) leadership identity formation theory, led to the identification of the gap in the practice of student leadership in post-apartheid South Africa. This gap is linked to the exploration of the complexity of identity and leadership identity formation of post-apartheid student leaders as it relates to the potential impact of apartheid on their leadership identity formation. The research question emerged from this clear gap in the literature:

What informs student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa?

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Research process: The research methodology, extensively discussed in Chapter 4, falls within the sphere of qualitative research methodology. The data were collected from multiple individual case studies and a series of in-depth semi-structured interviews, which constituted phase 1 of the study. A three-phase triangulation process was employed with a focus group method for phase 2 and phase 3. For the data analysis phase, the researcher utilised the CAQDAS programme, Atlas.ti, to categorise the data according to the 14 predefined themes and 82 predefined codes and subcodes emerging from the axial and selective coding phases.

Findings related to the research question: The study set out to demonstrate a potential link between two identified aspects of leadership identity formation, namely student leadership identity formation and the South African historical context. Within the scope of the study, three theoretical frameworks - namely, identity theory, the SIT of leadership and the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model - provided multiple lenses to investigate the potential link between South Africa's history and the leadership identity formation of the post-apartheid student leader. The key findings of the 14 pre-defined themes indicated a complex cross-sectional influence between identity, intersectionality, leadership identity and apartheid (captured in Table 6.15 and cross-referenced by Figure 6.2).

The South African post-apartheid student leader's leadership identity was informed by:

1) The student leader's intersectionality (primarily race) and the legacy of the associated power and privilege;
2) The country's historical context through:
    a. Intergenerational conversations within family context and the sharing of the direct experiences and impact of apartheid;
    b. The family's political involvement in the apartheid struggle;
    c. The family's values and approach to reconciliation and cohesion;
3) The student leader's leadership perception (and rejection) and associated leadership roles. The leadership role informed leadership identity, and vice versa;

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4) The student leaders' involvement in post-apartheid student activism to address the remnants of the apartheid era, e.g. inequality, systemic racism, human rights, democracy and social justice:
5) The student leaders' identity salience and malleability, which are informed by their intersectionality in relation to the group, social and role identity, and finally their leadership identity, permeated by the multicultural context they find themselves in.

With reference to other race-related studies linked to the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model, the researcher confirmed that this study builds on prior studies such as those of Collins (2010) and Beatty (2014) in the following ways:

- Collins (2010) – that this study confirmed the influence of race and awareness of positionality in relation to race, not only on how students are perceived as leaders (in this case, all races) but that it indeed influenced participants' leadership identity development throughout all six stages of the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model;
- Beatty (2014) – that this study confirmed that race had an influence on leadership identity development and particularly in relation to Beatty's (2014) findings related to the theme investigated in that study related to 1) individual social experiences, 2) resisting and responding to racism and microaggressions.

7.3 The limitations of this study

The researcher would like to highlight a few limitations experienced during the research process:

1) **Limited research – South African post-apartheid student leadership sample:** Due to the lack of prior research using the post-apartheid student leader as sample pool and universities as research settings, this study could only draw from the available leadership literature, which is situated mostly within a Western context and business organisations;
2) **Covid-19 pandemic**: Due to the pandemic commencing in 2020, the data-collection phase was put on hold by the ethics clearance committee. This had a major impact on the research timelines. The biggest impact was the

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limitations of having to conduct interviews online. The extensive interview process was planned to be conducted face to face, which would have allowed the researcher an opportunity to build rapport and create a relaxing atmosphere for the participants, and to interpret body language. The personal nature of the themes, and the deep reflection required prior to and during the interviews, would have benefited from face-to-face engagement. The researcher, however, does not believe that the data captured were of an inferior nature to what could have been derived from potential in-person interviews;

3) **The researcher's position**: The researcher acknowledges that her role at the university, engaging with student leaders and as member of selection panels for various scholarships and the prestigious Rector's Awards for Excellent Achievement, could have had an influence on the willingness of the participants to contribute to this study, or on the level of reflection in their narratives. None of the participants in Phase 1 and Phase 2 indicated that it had any influence on their contribution, and in fact it could have been advantageous to the study, as they trusted the researcher to respect their privacy. However, the researcher (being involved at the Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert (FVZS) Institute for student leadership development at Stellenbosch University) questioned the findings that the FVZS Institute's leadership offerings supported 80% of the participants' understanding of leadership, of themselves as leaders, their leadership identity and contextual influences affecting their leadership perception. This was, confirmed, as the participants could elaborate on the nature of the courses they completed and to what extent these courses contributed to their leadership. The researcher ensured clear boundaries between her professional role in Student Affairs and that of researcher, and had no communication with the participants about this study outside the parameters of the interview schedule;

4) **Participants with conservative views**: The researcher acknowledges that all the participants, regardless of their demographic profile (Phase 1 and Phase 2), demonstrated commitment towards change and work together to address the remaining legacies of apartheid. The study sample lacked participants who held conservative views. In other words, there were no participants (regardless of their race) who are still advocating for apartheid and the benefits of separate education, or the development of separate areas based on race. Although these views might still exist within the post-apartheid student leadership environment

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at this institution, they are not reflected in this study. The researcher therefore acknowledges that the sample is not a representation of *the entire* South African post-apartheid student leader profile, but merely a reflection of *some* of the demographic profiles.

7.4 The contribution of the study

The "limited research" limitation can also be perceived as the greatest strength and contribution of this study. The student leadership context in post-apartheid South Africa (which includes Student Affairs divisions/higher education institutions, Student Affairs Practitioners and student leaders) is in dire need of research related to identity and leadership identity to understand the complexities of the "born-free" student leaders. This stems from a need identified by Student Affairs practitioners to design relevant leadership offerings which are not only contextual in nature, but will also address positionality and the influence of that positionality on the student leaders' ability to lead collaboratively within a multi-cultural and diverse student community. As drivers of social change to foster a culture of social cohesion and a sense of belonging at campuses which are still largely race-based environments, student leaders often find themselves in contexts where they are ill prepared to facilitate the complexities of student leadership issues which stem from the apartheid past. The significance of this study at a crucial time for student leadership in South Africa, can be confirmed by the Khampepe report (Khamepe, 2022) which concluded that student leaders (referring to the research setting in which this study was conducted), and as future leaders in the broader societal context, are ill prepared for addressing the complexities of a diverse community still grappling with the consequences of an apartheid legacy.

As mentioned in Chapter 1 (on the significance of the study) and Chapter 2 (the literature review of the student leadership identity development model and intersectionality), since the Komives *et al.* (2005, 2006) LID model studies, more student leadership identity research has been conducted within a student college environment. This research includes a number of doctoral dissertations, e.g. Beatty (2014), Cohen-Derr (2018), Collins (2010), Cory (2011), Covarrubias (2017), Cullen (2022), Hays (2018), Pedersen (2022), Perkins (2020), Poole (2017) and Wagner (2011). Others have had a stronger intersectionality focus, e.g. Beatty (2014), Crandall (2017), McKenzie (2018), Moorosi (2014), Renn and Bilodeau (2005) and

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Schmiederer (2018) – the key focal points and findings have been summarised in Section 2.4.2. However, no study has been conducted in the South African context. Based on the review of the recommendations from these studies, the researcher identified a gap within student leadership identity research. This gap includes the following:

- **Students of colour at HWUs:** More studies are recommended to explore the effect of marginalisation on student leaders of colour at predominantly white universities (Collins, 2010: Pewewardy & Frey, 2002) compared to student leaders of colour at other types of institutions (Beatty, 2014);
- **Pre-college leader versus college student leader versus alumni student leader:** More studies are recommended to include the pre-college leader to compare the stages of the LID model (Wagner, 2011), or fraternity and sorority alumni student leaders (Cory, 2011).

This study addresses the gap in student leadership identity studies in the following ways:

- While the study drew from two established research disciplines, namely social psychology and leadership studies, and specifically the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model as theoretical framework within the leadership studies discipline, this study ventured into a new research area in its exploration of the country's historical context as potential contributor to student leadership identity. Including the South African post-apartheid student leader as research subject contributed to theory building, as it explored the intersection of both social psychology and leadership studies with the findings on the relationship of identity salience and malleability with leadership identity, group identity, role identity and social identity;
- The study also contributes to the SIT of leadership, as it addresses a gap identified by Hogg *et al*. (2012:294), namely that most research within the SIT of leadership still focused on how the individual can effectively lead individuals within a group, but not necessarily how to lead "across deep and hostile intergroup divisions". The researcher believes this study offers relevant insights, as it explored the navigation of group and social identities within a multicultural context through the experiences of the case studies;

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- As mentioned by Adonis (2016), more research is needed that focuses on the impact of historical trauma on post-apartheid youths. While it was not the main focus of this study, as mentioned in the delimitations of the study in Chapter 1, it began to explore how historical trauma caused by apartheid for the participants' family could potentially have influenced the way that the sample reflected on what might have influenced their leadership identity. The researcher is confident that the findings of the study suggest a strong link between student leadership identity and student leaders from families who were affected by apartheid. They grew up in households with parents, grandparents and other family members who were involved as activists or who are current politicians. This influenced their awareness of the significance of their role identity as post-apartheid student leader in addressing issues of justice, democracy and human rights.

To summarise: the contribution of this study, as set out in its aim in Chapter 1, is that it firstly provides insight into the factors contributing to the post-apartheid student leadership identity; secondly, it examines the effect of apartheid on student leadership identity; and thirdly, it builds on the leadership identity theory by expanding on the Komives *et al.* (2005) LID model in its exploration of identity salience and malleability. In relation to the latter, it explored the strong link between identity, leadership identity, group identity, role identity and social identity acceptance, rejection and negotiation AND the historical context of the country. It offered research recommendations for future research on the influence of historical trauma on student leadership identity – a research topic totally unexplored to date.

7.5 Recommendations for future research

Based on the research process and the findings of this study, the researcher would like to make a number of recommendations for future research in the student leadership field in post-apartheid South Africa.

1) **Student Affairs practitioners** enter the Student Affairs space with a range of educational backgrounds (specifically in the Arts and Social Sciences, Theology, Education, Law, and Economics and Management Sciences). This offers an opportunity for colleagues to bring transdisciplinary research into the Student Affairs field. Currently, research in Student Affairs is published mostly

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in journals focusing on Higher Education, Learning and Teaching, Education and Psychology. Based on the contents of journals in these fields, key themes investigated within Student Affairs in South Africa are:

a. Student persistence and success
b. Student access
c. First-generation students
d. The college experience
e. The college student identity
f. Adapting to student life
g. Social integration into student life
h. Experiential education and the development of graduate attributes
i. Mental wellbeing (counselling and psychology)
j. Wrap-around support
k. Learning and teaching (extended to the co-curriculum space)
l. Citizenship engagement
m. Global education – the student as a global citizen
n. Peer mentoring in support of:
    i. Student persistence (academic success)
    ii. Acclimatising to residence life and the broader student life
o. Student activism
p. Student leadership

As this study has indicated, limited research could be found on post-apartheid youth and the effect of historical trauma on their identity and leadership identity. Although this study's main focus was not to investigate the effect of historical trauma on students' leadership identity formation, it highlighted a potential link as a contributing factor.

- It is recommended that this under-researched field be considered by Student Affairs practitioners for further investigation on a campus-specific (HWAUs, HWEUs and historically disadvantaged universities (HDUs)) and national level.
- There is a need for intersectional studies within student leadership (Duran & Jones, 2019). Although the findings of this study still support initial intersectionality narratives around race, gender and

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disability (Bowleg, 2012; Corlett & Marvin, 2014; Crenshaw, 1991), the intersections of the white post-apartheid student leader (from a power and privilege positionality as perceived child of the oppressor) indicated grounds for further research.

2) **Student Affairs practitioners and their positionality:** In her reflection on her positionality (see Chapter 4), the researcher referred to the importance of the acknowledgement of positionality in a highly contested space where questions of identity affect student leaders' identity, leadership identity, group identity, social identity and role identity in relation to their leadership role perception. The researcher also acknowledges an element of bias in her advocating for the design of relevant leadership offerings to address the navigation of a complexed multicultural student leadership context. Student Affairs practitioners should therefore be mindful of their bias when facilitating conversations on topics affecting identity formation and leadership identity formation. Student Affairs practitioners in South Africa are under-served in terms of training and development opportunities, and should be empowered to navigate their personal lived experiences in a time and space where these could easily lead to a disconnect from a generation seeking a sense of belonging.

3) **Multicultural competence training:** The researcher would like to confirm that this study indicates the need for South African Student Affairs practitioners to undertake regular training in multicultural competence to navigate the diverse post-apartheid student community (Pope, Reynolds & Mueller, 2019).

4) **South African higher education institutions and the role they play in cultivating citizenship:** Identity exploration in relation to citizenship (beyond leadership identity) as part of a compulsory experiential education module should be considered for all students at higher education institutions. This would support graduate attributes and, in the case of Stellenbosch University, the graduate attributes of a *well-rounded individual* who is an *engaged citizen* with an *enquiring mind* and a *dynamic professional.* While this institution has embarked on an experiential learning pilot module as a Co-Curriculum offering, 'Shared Humanity', the merits for this as a compulsory module and as part of the curriculum for all students, is still under review. This has been met with mixed perspectives – those who caution against the institutionalisation of

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brainwashing students to comply, and those who argue, that based on South Africa's historical context, the post-apartheid generation and higher education institution have a citizen-leader duty towards a shared humanity. This study clearly indicates a need for more research on the curriculum of such a module.

5) **Collaboration among higher education institutions:** Both student and staff will benefit from cross-collaboration within the South African higher education context. This was confirmed by the participants in Phase 3 when they shared their observations based on engagement on their campuses. Phase 3 confirmed to the researcher that exposure to the different contexts of student leadership in post-apartheid South Africa is still limited for both staff and student leaders.
6) **Research on identity and role identity rejection:** This study supports Lanka, Topakas and Patterson's (2019) suggestion that future studies should engage with identity uncertainty and identity rejection to better understand how these factors affect student leader development and leadership outcomes, with a potential link to the role identity uncertainty of, and role identity rejection by, the post-apartheid student leader.
7) **The organisation as contributing factor in role identity shift:** This study supports Maurer and London's (2018) role identity shift framework in that it highlights the gap for potential studies using the post-apartheid student leader sample and context to investigate the organisation (university context, and the different university contexts) as contributor towards and enabler of the role identity shift for student leader development within innovative organisations.
8) **Relationship between leader role identity and friendship ties within group context:** This study supports Kwok, Hanig, Brown and Shen's (2018) focus on the relationship between understanding leader role identity, leader emergence and friendship ties within their groups, as the findings show that the participants indicated a strong emphasis on their role as friend/confidant. Hence there is scope for more research focusing on the relational aspect of self-concept, the post-apartheid student leader and their leader role identity.
9) **Self-concept and its relationship with role identity formation:** This study supports Lührmann and Eberl (2007) and their reference to Shamir (1991) in support of more studies to gain a deeper understanding of the self-concept of

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followers and the potential effect this might have on the post-apartheid student leader's influence in a multicultural context.

10) Finally, the researcher would like to point out that student leaders' involvement in student life should allow opportunities for them to understand the multiplicity of their roles as student leaders through experiential learning, reflexivity, self-awareness and identity work. The influence of one's level of self-awareness, including role contestation, certainly has an effect on role identity as a student leader, and even more so in post-apartheid South Africa. This study therefore supports the recommendations by Grabsch *et al.* (2021) that future research focus on identity in the leadership context to provide practitioners with suggestions for designing identity-based leadership development opportunities for college students.

7.6. Conclusion

Apart from my reflection on my positionality (see Section 4.12), I deliberately chose to write this dissertation in the third person as a self-preservation method to add more distance between myself and the study. I chose, however, to conclude with a personal reflection in the first person.

In the year 2022, the final year of this 3-year study, South Africa is celebrating its 28th year as a democratic state. This statement takes me back to June 2018 when I reflected on my engagement at the time with South African youth leaders and their experiences of this new democratic state. During that year I led a group of student leaders to Qunu, in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa, and birthplace of the late President Nelson Mandela (Madiba). It formed part of South Africa's Youth Month and the Madiba centenary year. These student leaders had such mixed perspectives of the past and their prospects in the new democratic South Africa. I remember challenging students who didn't want to participate in student leadership anymore – a white student who felt silenced, and a black student who believed his future would have been better without the disappointment he had experienced as a so called "born-free" South African. I observed that this was largely influenced by their positionality and their intergenerational conversations. It was student engagements like these, that served as one of the catalysts of my PhD journey.

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On a social engagement level during intergenerational conversations amongst South Africans, and personally within my own family context, this “celebration” has also been viewed from different perspectives influenced by the positionality one holds and whether that positionality was associated and still is associated with power and privilege. The notion of power and privilege changed in post-apartheid South Africa, as the “born-free” generation are now also confronted with their power and privilege regardless of their self-identified race.

On a personal level, as a person of colour and a member of the Gen-X age, we were the first post-apartheid generation to have gained access to previously exclusive white high schools and higher education institutions in the early stages of rebranding its identities. For post-apartheid generations the sense-making process relating to our power and privilege continues. As children of parents who had experienced official apartheid, the mere fact that we can self-identify e.g. in terms of race and gender, is now also considered to be a privilege. Yet, the slow dissipation of binary race-based and gender-based narratives also created complexities of its own – on a personal and professional level, and in particular in relation to identity salience and malleability. I can think of a few personal examples to share where the ongoing sense-making process of power and privilege has either been limiting or empowering; when a highly respected academic colleague and friend of mine declined to collaborate on a student leadership offering because he found critical race theory not “helpful” for relationship building; when friendships became vulnerable with frank conversations about our inheritance and current changed roles still linked to the intersectionality of our parents, or when role identity contestation is experienced, when the perception of tokenism overshadows one’s ability instead of the recognition of competence as qualifier for academic and professional successes.

Another example is when Student Affairs practitioners reflect on their roles at their institutions in cultivating citizen-leadership. The findings of this study are displayed in reflections when leadership identity comes to the fore when we find ourselves in a leadership role, advocating for accountability (as part of one’s leadership identity) when collective sense-making processes at our institutions fail to address accountability for e.g. poor performance because of a politicised view favouring apartheid rhetoric instead. On the other hand, the findings of this study displayed the

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direct link between identity, leadership identity and the South African historical context, when we disagree on the measures of that accountability (and who the vetters of that accountability measures should be) or when we argue that the continuing systemic influences of the legacy of apartheid is under-estimated. The findings of this study not only give insights into the complexity of the role identity of the student leader role (influenced by the factors contributing to leadership identity), but it also addresses the complexity of the Student Affairs practitioner role identity as facilitator of a welcoming and nurturing student leadership environment to cultivate and equip student leaders to critically assess and utilise their positionality as part of their leadership identity to drive social change.

Regardless of the diverse contributing factors to the participants' leadership identity, the student leaders all expressed a need to collaborate in meaningful sustainable change to improve relationships in post-apartheid South Africa, and to be valued as individuals who are more than the identity or identities assigned to them based on their association with the power and privilege of their inherited intersectionality. Perhaps the most relevant observation as a concluding remark lies in the comment by a participant; "it would be naïve to think that we will ever reach a stage where race will become irrelevant". This speaks to the need to acknowledge the potential impact of historical trauma on post-apartheid student leadership identity, regardless of race. It also speaks to the need to disagree on the merit of the potential impact of historical trauma on student leadership identity, regardless of race, and without the fear of *silencing*, *guilt* or *shame*.

For South Africa, its past, present and future, I wish to conclude this deeply reflective study, with the following observation from one of the most profound scholars on our condition:

> The finding of a shared humanity among victims, perpetrators and beneficiaries of privilege (and their children in post-apartheid South Africa) is needed for the sake of a transformed conception of society (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2020:146).

Our work has just begun.
And it starts with The Self.

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APPENDICES

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Appendix A – Researcher's Fieldnotes

Participant profiles (Phase 1)

Tahir

Muslim English-speaking heterosexual male of Indian descent, first-generation student

Tahir came across as someone who thinks carefully before answering questions and would often ask for clarification to ensure that he understood what was meant by the question. He described himself as, "passionate, enthusiastic, hardworking, humble and a goal-driven individual that is passionate about serving as an agent of change in society". He is a humble, caring, kind and introverted student who would often downplay his influence on campus and support to others, because "it goes without saying that being truthful, helpful, serving with transparency and with integrity, is what is being expected of me as a Muslim male". This interpretation of his role as a Muslim male, and a Muslim leader also indicated that his religious beliefs have played a tremendous influence on his identity and leadership identity. The death/murder of his father at a very young age (also a reflection of the violence in the country) served as a catalyst to change his somewhat average academic performance at the time, to realising he had to excel academically to be able to support his single mother and siblings. Due to hard work, diligence and being "the model child", he received various scholarships – first to attend a private school and later to study medicine. Even during the time of the interview, and almost being at the end of his degree, he still came across as somewhat in disbelief that he excelled against all odds and would now be graduating with a MBChB degree. He did not follow the typical positional leadership route on campus but served within the academic space as a leader mentoring and tutoring other students. He represented the faculty on an international level by serving on national and global medical students' committees. I appreciated the fact that he was truthful about the difficulty he had in completing his timeline reflections on the South African historical events, as his leadership development was more influenced by his political awareness due to the direct impact it had on his family (grandparents who were migrants from India during the apartheid years, him being a 1st generation student with financial difficulties, hardworking single mother with limited education, his father's murder due to the violent nature in our South African communities). He impressed me as a young student leader with a very clear analytical thought process

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regarding his sensemaking around his role as a 1st generation student, a "bornfree" South African and as a sibling who wanted to make life easier for his single mother. He realised, that although he did not have a carefree childhood, due to the death of his father, he did have a sheltered life and was only exposed to e.g., concepts like "intersectionality" and the LGBQTIAP+ community and gender neutrality at university. He had to reflect on how to serve the student community without prejudice and realised due to his character traits (being an introvert, and academically focused), he preferred non-positional leadership roles, mentoring students and leading in the academic space. Him becoming a medical doctor would not only be to fulfil a role in society, but also to honour his father's legacy and a trophy for his mother's sacrifices as well as the hardships his family was facing during apartheid. There was no anger and bitterness present in his engagement with me, merely a simple realisation of what he needed to do with the little he has to create a better life for himself and his family. Main broad themes identified in his timeline reflections are:

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Leadership identity contributors</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Parents' influence
Academic excellence
Leadership roles
Student movements
Religion
Mentor role
Sense of justice
Servant leadership
Apartheid
Democracy (equity)
Human rights (equity)
Reconciliation</td></tr>
<tr><th>Identity</th><th>Leadership Identity</th><th>SA History</th></tr>
<tr><td>Academic excellence/ Scholarships
Family values/Culture/Heritage
Religion (Muslim)
Father's death
Single mother
Volunteering / servant leadership
Field of study (MBChB)
Medical condition</td><td>Father
Mother
Recognition through leadership roles
Serving others through mentoring/servant leadership
FVZS course</td><td>Apartheid (equity)
Human Rights (equity)
Freedom Day (equity)/1st democratic election
Youth Day (education)/Soweto Uprising
Reconciliation (unity, peace, acceptance)
#Feesmustfall , Gender-based violence</td></tr>
</table>

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Segments of Tahir's narratives:

On the role of intergenerational conversations on his leadership identity

> *"Intergenerational conversations with family members has most certainly influenced my understanding of my role as a student leader in post-apartheid South Africa. The lived experiences, wisdom and advice shared by family members contributes to the foundation that is required to excel as a student leader who has to deal with multiple complexities in post-apartheid South Africa. As a student leader, it is important that I take cognisance of what has happened in the past and ensure that I positively contribute to a present and future that promotes ethical, just and compassionate leadership in all spaces that I occupy."*

On the role of apartheid on his leadership identity development

> *"I would say it has. They (my family) always spoke about, the leaders of their time. There was Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu and others played big roles in fighting against apartheid. Seeing me taking these leadership roles, they were very proud of it because it wasn't something that was a normal occurrence for them growing up. It wasn't something they could pursue. So it was important becoming a leader as a previously marginalised group of individuals. It was very empowering to see the sense of pride and excitement in my parents' eye to see that I am trying to be a leader."*

Chad

Coloured, cisgender, "from a minority group", English-speaking (but from an Afrikaans family background), Christian male

Chad has a wealth of institutional knowledge as a student leader and has a long history as an active positional student leader, activist during the #FeesMustFall movement and involved in party politics and black student movements. He described himself as "a very driven individual who strives to do the best in anything that I decided to take on whether it be academically, socially or with regards to extramural activities - driven person, ambitious and hardworking". He comes from a household with a strong political awareness. I sensed that Chad was somewhat guarded when answering the questions during interview 1, saying just about what needed to be said and not completely trusting the process. A remark, "you said this will be confidential, right? so it's not like Y (a senior Student Affairs staff member) will know about this"? made me realise that perhaps my role within the student leadership community (and his) might have been preventing him from being entirely truthful towards me at the start of the process? As the interviews progressed, I did notice more sharing as he started to trust the process. Chad is a well-respected, seasoned student leader and well-known within the student community, Student Affairs environment and has received many awards

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for his student leadership engagement. His involvement in the 2015 #FeesMustFall movement (for which he was also arrested and had to appear to the disciplinary committee), gave him insight into the conflicting roles of leadership, activism, role of a son of a politician and being a legal scholar and the potential negative impact, it might have on his future legal career. From his 1st timeline I could immediately start extracting themes; injustices, social justice, democracy, racism, not being acknowledged or celebrated the way he should have been due to racism. His strong sense of justice drove his leadership involvement which stems from early childhood experiences where he felt not recognised as a learner of colour in a predominant white school. Although both parents are involved in his life, and he speaks highly of them, his great-grandmother and her role (and evidently his role) in church played a strong role in his formative years. Religion and leadership formed a strong relationship in his approach to leadership. Main broad themes identified in his timeline reflections are;

Leadership identity contributors		
Academic excellence Leadership roles Religion Race/apartheid Sense of justice Student movements Democracy (equity) Unity		
Identity	**Leadership Identity**	**SA History**
Multiracial school Racism Mistreatment (injustice) Outsider Academic excellence/ Scholarships Great-Grandmother Religion #OpenStellenbosch #FeesMustFall	Academic Excellence Recognition through leadership roles from school throughout university: - Accountability - Justice - Mistreatment - Black Consciousness	Founding of the ANC 1980s defiance campaign (coloureds removed from “white beaches) Democracy Elections (and father’s position) World Cup (unity) Asia/Africa conference SACTU Mandela (negotiation) SONA #FeesMustFall, #OpenStellenbosch, #EndOutsourcing

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Segments of Chad's narratives:

On the role of specific leadership opportunities on his leadership identity development:

"A conference I attended in my third year related to Diversity Studies with a theme, "let's talk about race". It was a fascinating experience- ***theory actually informed my approach towards my transformation portfolio. I didn't know about decolonisation before coming into the position, and it was just so fascinating, and I ended up doing more research on it.*** *For one of my modules in political science, I actually wrote an essay about it, and it's just a fascinating school of thought from the Latin American thinkers which has been adapted in the African context as well. That has informed my ideological viewpoint. 2) Another experience that I can talk about is also these short courses (FVZS Institute) that I've done. So for instance, the democracy and citizenship short course. I was absolutely captivated by the role of the media in politics. In fact, that also motivated me to be part of a national youth-driven non-partisan movements. These small things that you don't really think will make such a big impact, but it ended up making a big impact."*

On the role of intergenerational conversations on his leadership identity development:

"I think it affected me quite heavily because when my grandma and grandparents, also my parents would tell me stories about what it was like for them. I guess it is personal when you would see something my grandmother particular my great grandmother experienced quite a change throughout all the years. It made me question why were you doing that and why would this comment come towards you at that time? And then you start thinking about these things. ***I think maybe that's also why I was so much involved and also interested in history as a subject because I really wanted to know how did this come about****. My relatives would tell me stories about their own personal experiences as well as in the school that I was at. We would go to school, and we would be told certain things and then my parents would say no that's not how it happened for us at school. We didn't experience that. My mother told me during her matric year, there was a Market Centre and they had to go and write the exams there because it was a state of emergency. The* ***police would walk around with these big guns, and they had to walk past them to go and write the exams. I mean that is just weird for me, well I guess it's not that weird anymore. Having gone to Stellenbosch when they implemented those security measures (during #FeesMustFall)****. That's not anything that I experienced during my schooling career either. So yes, also my mother studied at UWC then she had to come back home because it was at the start of the protests, and it wasn't deemed safe to be at the university. Now I probe and if I don't get the answers, I'll go to someone else in the family. I'm just also that type of person that you must talk because I don't go away. And yes, I think* ***some family members are more open to speaking about it than others****. Conversations with my family members have shaped my understanding of the world and how*

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to relate to others. Growing up and watching how my grandparents and parents interacted with others taught me how to conduct myself and treat other people. Being able to have seen this before I could even have meaningful conversations, laid a solid foundation for when I was old enough to question the world and contribute by adding my own voice. However, I must add that the ***silence for certain things and in certain situations also taught me to be reserved*** *and cautious about what I say and when I say it – there is a time and place for everything. Those conversations that I had with them taught me about justice and has played an important role in my identity formation and expression as an individual and leader."*

On the impact of apartheid on his family

"Some of my family had a stand in an area which was declared a whites-only area. So then that part of the family had to relocate. It's not one of those things that are really just openly spoken about. I think it's also just that natural human desire to just move on and get it over and get to the next thing, instead of dwelling almost on the past. People don't think all aspects are important if that makes sense. I think it is more pronounced also for coloured people because of the diversity within ourselves that it really affected families and the Community structure as a result thereof. My Grandfather on my mother's side became a councillor in the 1st 1994 elections, and then my grandmother on my father side was also a councillor for years pre-94 elections and that obviously played a big impact. A couple of years ago they honoured the councillors. They played a crucial role in the struggle against apartheid, specifically in the coloured areas. It's just something that will always affect or influence my own understanding and that was a major moment in time in my family's history as well as mine, because it's not something that just ended in 1994. The 1999 election I think also affected me because my father became a politician. It had a fundamental impact and, in many ways, influenced my own thinking. I remember I was very, very small and there's a photo of me and my dad wearing political T-shirts and at that time my mother was busy cooking for the volunteers. Maybe that was my first introduction to politics."

On how apartheid affected him on an individual level:

"I have to take it back to both ***apartheid and British colonialism,*** *because I was raised in the formative years of my life by my great grandmother, and she experienced all these different systems of oppression. If I just think about it, especially being at Stellenbosch thinking if I'm able to achieve these things, I wonder what would have been the trajectory of my family if these opportunities were available? In that regard, that's how it affects me, particularly* ***generational wealth,*** *also a* ***feeling of belonging*** *because you fit into the culture, your personal identity and your background shaped that culture. So, in that regard 100%, but also more specifically my family had a lot of farms and I also just wonder as to how that would have been different? A school friend, coming from a very prominent Afrikaans family, became the richest family in that area and I always think of him like sure it's just quite interesting geographically. It's not that far*

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away. Also, it's just those questions that one has, so in that regard, it has affected me indirectly, but then more directly would be what I experienced now amongst my peers and growing up, that racial tension still being there. Subtle prejudices, that be more of a direct effect? But the indirect is definitely the broader issues and narratives here."

On the impact of apartheid on his identity:

*"**I think yes, definitely.** Just because the story that you are told and the importance that you place on it or that you don't place on it feeds indirectly to your own experiences. I'm that person that really places importance on things that are told, because I have this specific orientation towards history and how it affects the present, so it has played a very important role in my own leadership identity development, and I think that's also reflective of my leadership identity journey and also what I've decided to study (legal field). I have this passion for justice, and I wanted to, affect and change the world."*

On the impact of apartheid on his leadership identity:

*"I think maybe, linking it to coming from a very politically active family from both sides as we transitioned towards democracy. Due to my love for history, I became aware of the 1980s defiance campaign (whites only beaches), with various types of protests and pickets, trade unions where my family was involved, and grandfather detained without trial on various occasions. I was told of the codes being used to hide away from the police. It's really influenced my understanding and that my family was directly involved in the struggle against apartheid. Religion was also heavily impacted by the laws of the time, so those factors influenced my understanding of the past and my own personal history. I grew up by my great grandmother's house and because I loved going through old things and finding out about my own history, I found the old birth certificates and ID documents of my mother, as well as her siblings. So then I saw there the **different racial classifications**, so there would be Cape coloured, there would be other colours."*

Helena

White, heterosexual, Afrikaans-speaking Christian female

Helena described herself as, "compassionate and not afraid to challenge myself and to learn". She comes from a rural farming community background where she grew up on a farm as a daughter of a conservative father (farm manager), and liberal creative mother. Both parents encouraged debate amongst siblings and Helena, from early childhood became aware of the difference in how people of different races in their community and on the farm were treated. She started questioning this observation (racial difference and quality of life) and her Christian beliefs around equity. Her

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mother, who played a major influence on her identity and leadership identity formation as a female leader, left the Dutch Reformed church and started exploring a more spiritual belief system which Helena also found liking in (despite that it was frowned upon within the white Afrikaner farming community). She has also had a political awareness from early childhood (her grandfather was involved in local government). She has lost her father during the last year of High School, which played a big influence on their financial stability as they had to leave the farm and move to the nearest town. Suddenly she was confronted with the financial constraints so many people of colour had to deal with on a daily basis (something she mentioned which also assisted her to resonate better with the student community and the National Student Financial Aid Scheme/NSFAS challenges). She would often refer to the embarrassment she at first experienced at school, as she did not want the tag of "the girl who got a bursary to attend this prestigious school", but soon realised when arriving at university, there were many other students in a similar position. She idealises a few female leaders (Helen Zille, Margaret Thatcher) who she believes stood their ground as female leaders and who inspired her to remain feminine, yet firm in how she presents herself. She aspires to get involved in local and national politics yet at the same time she is painfully aware of what her "white Afrikaans female" profile symbolises in the student community. I would often get the impression throughout the interviews that she was slightly irritated by that, because she felt she constantly needed to prove herself as not embodying the typical positionality of that profile. She became quite emotional at times throughout interviews as she reflected on her position, the limitations of her profile for a political career in South Africa and how "boxed in" she felt by her group association. She held influential leadership positions on campus which often led to her being in heated conversations with political-oriented students of other races who questioned her credibility to resonate with the student community as a white Afrikaans female leader, despite having financial constraints. Main broad themes identified in her timeline reflections are:

Leadership identity contributors
Parents' influence
Grandparents' influence
Gender and gender-based violence
Religion
Conservative environment vs diversity exposure

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Student movements Democracy Corruption		
Identity	**Leadership Identity**	**SA History**
Family Afrikaans farming community Leaving the Dutch Reformed Church Diversity exposure from early childhood Death of father Embracing Womanhood (all-girls high school, residence)/Gender Financial Constraints Leadership roles Race Culture Saviour complex	Parents Religion Grandfather Conservative environment vs diversity exposure Gender Recognition through leadership roles	Jan Smuts (meaningful relations regardless contentious history) 2nd world war (fragile humanity) Women's March to Union Building Hellen Zille (female political leader, revealing the truth about Steve Biko's death) + Margaret Thatcher (female leader) Grandfather as executive major Mandela (democracy) Freedom Day (democracy) Nkandla (corruption) #feesmustfall Gender-based violence

Segments of Helena's narratives:

On her intersectionality (major) as contributing factor to her leadership identity:

> *"**I think the biggest factor for me that plays a role is the fact that I'm a white leader and secondary female, but definitely a white leader and coming with some contestation because as a white leader I also recognise privilege and I recognise the way I got to certain places.** Where others didn't get the opportunities or just how I was brought up. I need to check my blind spots but it's really difficult because there are certain perceptions already attached to who I am (as a white leader). I sat with questions of how can I serve my country being a white leader? Is that good enough and should I be serving in certain places, and how can I represent people that are of colour and are leaders only supposed you represent and serve for people that look the same as they do? You don't wanna play into this thing of being a **white saviour**. So yeah, that's definitely something that plays a huge role in my leadership identity. **And I don't think it's something or I've come to peace with. I think it's something I'm continuously working through,** the fact that I am a white leader but it's important to work through the fact that my race plays a big role in how others perceive me as a leader."*

On how her intersectionality (majors) as contributors to her leadership identity changed over time:

> *"I think it has definitely changed from school to university because being a leader at my high school it was a predominantly white also Afrikaans and it's an all-girls school. To a certain extend it narrowed you being a leader (my profile fitted the leadership role). Although I was aware of being a leader in such a homogeneous space and how that impacts how I can impact the lives of minority parties. It was only at university my profile no longer fit the leadership role.*

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I think that's a good thing to be challenged, getting to the core of why do you want to be a leader? What do you want to serve? Being confronted with challenging my own beliefs and stereotypes and what I believe as a leader and then also challenging especially people who don't like my profile also to show them that ***we're not all the same, not all white people and all white Afrikaans females are the same and think the same.*** *I will speak as a South African and being a leader in South Africa, we continuously have to grow in and learn and unlearn. And you know it's a process of growth as well."*

On the influence of intergenerational conversations on her leadership identity:

"That is a beautiful question. It has definitely influenced a lot of my understanding of my role as a South African as a South African leader and taking it back to understanding our history and then, learning from those before us can only empower us to understand the current so much better to unite. How do we lead from here? How can we change and learn from others mistakes and learn from those experiences. It is easy to read about history, but it is such a richer knowledge if you speak to those who have experienced it, another generation before you. I know, a lot of young people feel it's boring to speak to older people or they need to get with the times, and so maybe it's my Afrikaner culture coming through there, but I've always had a lot of respect for older people and realise that there's a lot I can learn from them even though they might not agree with everything, there's still a lot still a lot you can learn from those experiences. Having intergenerational conversations with family members definitely influenced my understanding of my role as a student leader in post-apartheid South Africa as these conversations allowed me to learn from their experiences and upbringing. These conversations made me aware of all the complexities there is in South Africa brought about our history. The insight these conversations gave me allowed me to cultivate a culture of being willing to learn, unlearn and to have empathy for those around me."

On the significance of group identity (and the impact of apartheid on her group identity):

"For me, group identity is more something I'm quite aware of, but also something I'm afraid of. I think my connotation to group identity is more negative than a positive thing. And maybe it goes back to what I said in our first conversation, is that its normal and it's a positive and a negative thing that in society we have these different layers and profiles like you said in some of the profiles you choose and some you just get its inherent. For me I don't know sometimes my profile and the groups I fit in. I won't say I always welcome and I don't think especially having an interest in politics. How can I say it, it hasn't served me that well, so because the group identity is not necessarily who makes the person I am or you know, of course it influences who I am, but I don't want because I speak Afrikaans or because I am white or I don't want to be put in that group and say that's my profile. Of course it does play a significant role, but for me it as a group identity and can almost have a negative connotation. 100% and I think my answer still stays the same and it's because my family was on the wrong side of history. I don't have the

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story that my family, was white South Africans who were struggle fighters and the freedom fighters in the apartheid era. We haven't worked through those wounds of apartheid and so little has changed with inequality and also our country still being so racialised. My group identity is still perceived as probably privileged. That's not necessarily wrong, because I'm also not oblivious to having privilege or can't recognise what's going on in our country. So, that has definitely influenced my group identity. And that is ***something I constantly struggle with because, do you spend your energy trying to prove this is not who you are or, do you just spend your energy on focusing on what you can do to actually contribute?*** *You can lose so much energy by focusing on something you can't change. "*

On her recollection of South Africa as a child:

"I think what I remember quite well is the talks about a new South Africa and I couldn't really understand. I remember asking my parents one day, why do people talk about the new South Africa, was there an old South Africa, so that was probably the first time I got introduced to the theoretical concept of apartheid. You know, it still hurts. Pretty much it is still prevalent. Lot of inequalities that still exist because of apartheid. I think like Grade 1 or Grade 2. I can't remember my parents' response about that probably told me about a party, but I think it was probably a difficult thing for him to answer as well. In our circle we had a white friend with a black name. I didn't really understand why it is special, and then growing up on the farm before realising you know, picking up subtle things of our cleaning lady who was almost like a mother to me who would call me something, she didn't actually call me but more the other children who I played with on the farm, you know, "Grootbaas", "Kleinbaas" and those names didn't make sense to me. My mother really taught us from a young age how we're all supposed to be equal in front of God's eye, but I didn't see that and definitely saw the racial lines. And when I think from my teenage years that was something I had to work through. Seeing the conflicting world views of people who went to school with me. I saw the inequalities in terms of race and maybe not other people saw it that way and I challenged racism from a young age. Especially as a teenager within my peer group. And yeah, that was also challenging because you know people or grown-ups has a certain worldview and they don't always realise what they're thinking can be quite problematic or why it is wrong to say certain things."

On the impact of apartheid on her as an individual:

"I think I've been affected in the opposite way and that's something all the bornfrees have to deal with, what South Africans have to deal with this ***white guilt.*** *It's easy to say, you shouldn't have white guilt, but you do because you also hear it. I do have certain privileges that comes with my profile and I hate it, as if people place me in a certain box. Or presume I'm going to react in a certain way, because I speak this language or I have this upbringing. This is some sort of frustration because everyone can agree we would have hoped by the year 2020, things would have looked much different, just on a basic level of inequality. We see every day how many people don't have access to water and sanitation. How many people don't have jobs and*

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how many people are really struggling because, I think with the end of apartheid we hoped that the majority of South Africa would have more opportunities. We had this dream of everything would be fine, and Kumbaya and that's not. That's not how it is 26 years. It's still small little time but it's difficult to realise, although apartheid is in the history, we are still dealing with a lot of the things that I think our parents didn't deal with. ***Some things that they don't talk about*** *and I understand that but it's unfortunate because I don't know, I would hope that if people dealt with it, had some real honest conversations 20 years ago, maybe we would have made some more progress."*

On the impact of apartheid on her identity:

"That's a tough question. I think the fact that I had family members, not probably the positive way, but active in that time has made me curious to find out about war, and perhaps because we heard stories about my grandpa or my great grandfather in the government. A lot of stories about Jan Smuts, just how things were done during that time. It has really made me curious to go and find out for myself especially because there is so many different versions of history. I think for ***my identity it encouraged me to not hide away from the past.*** *One of my strengths is that I look to the past. I think that comes from my family's experiences of apartheid as well. In order to know who you are, you need to know where you come from. It's so corny, but for me it is important because there's a* ***responsibility on me to change the direction.*** *You can't change the past, but you can definitely learn from the past mistake of my ancestors."*

On the impact of apartheid on her leadership identity:

"Definitely. It showed me that there's a lot of work to be done and you can't wait till you're in a position of power or one day you're into politics. It starts with us, conversations, challenging one another around the campfire or in the kitchen about apartheid, things would have been much different I believe. I think perception of leadership, probably very sexist, so taking that and learning from it. But is that what I also want to be as a leader? Looking at role models in apartheid and questioning how do I relate that to today? Is that still someone I can call a leader when that does not reconcile with my beliefs of what a leader should be? Also needing to investigate for yourself and try to learn from those experiences. I am a white South African in 2020 and I call myself a leader, puts a responsibility on me to know my history, what my family's role in apartheid was, just bystanders or active? ***How can I contribute to South Africa but still have wounds of apartheid if I'm not willing to learn from those wounds?"***

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Johan

Afrikaans-speaking, white heterosexual Christian male

Johan described himself as, “an enthusiastic visionary, who loves history and talking about history with people and who loves being involved”. Johan was raised by his maternal grandparents in a rural environment on a farm for the first three years of his life while his mother worked overseas. He has a high regard for his grandparents which played a major role in his formative years. Their Christian more liberal outlook on life (his grandfather was a theologian and preacher) and the way they treated their farm workers, made a big impact in his life. From early childhood he was aware of diversity and the limitations certain racial groups had (e.g., a story shared of how his grandparents sneaked the farmworkers to the beach). Language, his race and gender are aspects of his identity that he would constantly reference, i.e., “knowing what my profile can do and the limitations of my profile”, i.e., “when it is not my role to speak on an issue, but just to listen and be an ally”. At first, I got the impression that he comes from a family who were financially struggling (he had to take a gap year to finance his studies), and only at a later stage of the interview process, he mentioned his mother was a medical doctor and his father held a senior position in national government (as a white male for the ANC). My interpretation of this, was that he wanted to present himself as an individual, and not as an extension of the roles his parents were playing in society. Johan’s leadership involvement only started progressing when he arrived at university, and by accident when he volunteered to become a class representative in his faculty (he referred to himself as a loner and someone who did not quite fit in as an Afrikaans-speaking learner at the predominantly English High School he attended). He soon started taking on more leadership responsibilities within the academia space and played a significant role in assisting many students with their Higher Education Information Management Systems / HEMIS applications. I observed a maturity level in Johan from the 1st interview, as someone who showed a great interest in the South African history (something he credited to spending so much time with his liberal grandparents and his love for reading). Something that stood out for me was that he would often reference to himself as a South African and an African, due to the long history of his predecessors in South Africa and the negative connotation of his race and comments received during a student leader tour to other African universities where it was mentioned “that I can’t possibly be an African because I am white”. I observed slight frustration, but acceptance of his position as a white, Afrikaans,

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heterosexual male in post-apartheid South Africa. He would often comment on the awareness of the privilege of his role and the responsibility his "profile" has to play now – that being a builder of and collaborator in the new South Africa. The limitations of what his profile "can do", would not deter him from e.g., student leadership involvement, mentoring and applying for bursaries and scholarships, although he would understand that he would still be regarded as privileged and lower on the preferred candidate list. He became quite self-reliant from an early age (there is a 14year gap between his only sibling) where he sometimes would take on a parent role rather than a sibling role. His father, who also served on the SRC, and who was considered liberal in his time as a student in a more conservative student environment, would play an influential role in Johan's leadership identity as he would refer to the "intergenerational impact" the university had on their family (i.e., also his responsibility to honour the family legacy and figuring out what that legacy means for him at a time in the South African history where roles for white males have changed). Main broad themes identified in his timeline reflections are:

Leadership identity contributors		
Grandparents' influence Leadership roles Student movements Colonialism and ancestral influence (linked with race and language) Apartheid Democracy		
Identity	**Leadership Identity**	**SA History**
Grandparents Religion Afrikaans (attending English school) – transitioning/Language Culture/Heritage Race Gender Self-reliance and work-ethics (gap year) Siblings (birth of younger sibling) Death of grandfathers (role model) Intergenerational conversations Partner	Grandparents Recognition through leadership roles and scholarships #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall #OpenStellenbosch	Colonialism Union of South Africa Apartheid Soweto Uprising Democracy

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Segments of Johan's narratives

On intersectionality as contributor to his leadership identity:

"The importance again of intersectionality is to understand how your leadership identity is constructed because of different life experiences. If I think about my own identity, again, ***as a white Afrikaans male in South Africa that has specific connotations and impacts, not just on my place within society, but also how that informs my leadership identity.*** *In the past, if you look at the colonial eras and through most of society today as well for my grouping, if I group myself now with that identity it's almost like that is what has fit the image of the leader. If I reflect on what I spoke about in the beginning, that leader that leads from the front, is independent, almost statements from that colonialist era. I guess,* ***white male, that is the dominant archetype within media and within society or the default of what society expects.*** *That's how you should understand your own leadership identity in relation to that.* ***We have these blind spots and if I look at how my identity, shaped my leadership, besides religion as a basis, my leader(ship identity) has been forged a lot experientially. I think a lot of it has been shaped by experience and by what is from the outside.***

On the impact of intergenerational conversations on his leadership identity:

"I guess the one help is that my father was a student leader during apartheid South Africa, so I had the perspective of someone who understood the way the system worked. He could reflect to me what it was like as the student leader, but at the same time also ***understanding how that flows from a legacy. From that into that end. I had a very good understanding of the legacy that I've inherited in terms of what I should be doing in society to fix it or make it better or contributed to making it better, 'cause I can't do it myself but at the same time also from another angle. I feel like I've inherited this humanity of the individual in that is the systems and institutional aspect, but there's also the individual in human aspect of who we are as people, and I think the generational influences that I still see people as people.*** *But I understand how we fit in a wider system that has put us in these different places, and it's about how do we break down that system and build a new one in its place or change the system as it is to something that we want, so those are the perspectives I carry from my intergeneration at last. That's what I have to do in the post-apartheid South Africa. "*

On competing role identities:

"Scholar and religion; White and an African (associate your race with identity); White and being South African (historical class); Afrikaans or being an Afrikaner (especially white Afrikaans – cultural element); Afrikaans-speaking person versus the South African. It's about finding your place with that space, but it's also like there are people that would deny that. I should be a South African or should be allowed to be here or like that I've heard many people say like go back to Europe kind of thing. I don't associate my identity with Europe at all, but it comes back

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to the association of Europe with whiteness or being white means being European. I guess they're all interlinked. For example, one of the biggest things for me personally, when I hear the different roles, I'm a Christian, but I'm an academic. I'm studying the impact of science and technology on society. But for many people, faith and religion is almost an antithetical thing to act to science. My faith wants me to improve society."

On his recollection of South Africa:

"So I guess it might have been a bit different for me because I grew up in a political household because my father became well-known politician in 1999 till 2019. So, I always grew up with a socially oriented childhood. It was always about a combination of understanding the realities of South Africa beyond what my bubble would be in terms of where I would grow up, because I started on a farm, but then when I moved to a more urbanised context. And just like understanding that there are inequities, like my parents were very upfront about trying to help me understand what South Africa looks like. Maybe also more trying a bit of parenting in terms of reminding me, you were very lucky kind of thing. But it's very much about them imprinting upon me what sacrifice really looks like to understand what our world looks like. So I always grew up with that understanding. It was more in the sense of money. It wasn't so much racially orientated because for me when I was in primary school it was quite an integrated primary school, so in the beginning I never realised how racialised it was because I had always spoken to my parents about that, or at least from age 4/5. I'd say from age ¾/ish from pre-primary school they would start explaining to me what that was like, telling me about their experiences, 'cause they were born in the 60s and just what they were doing during university and after they left university was pretty much when apartheid was ending. They gave me their context. I got it from my dad, whenever my dad was watching the news I would be sitting with him and watching. So yeah, I was always interested in what was going on.

On the impact of apartheid on his family:

"Guess if I had to talk economically, at least there is one side of my family who were, I almost wanna say, dispossessed whether it was more case of, this is a very complicated story, but it's basically the only analogy I can think of, if I have to talk about Shakespeare – the Montagues and the Capulets. On the one hand there were a family who are quite high up within the wine industry and then I had family who were more labourers and more left leaning and a lot more socially active in terms of rights of people organising against the control over the system. These two sides had a lot of ructions amongst one another. But at the same time, while that was there and there was a lot of loss, still benefited from the system. The vast majority of my family. ***I had family who were people of colour who were separated because of the Immorality Act and*** *all those things that were broken off from relatives of mine. But besides that, my parents got their education. They were able to access the resources to put them where they were. So*

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overall there was minor negative impact but because of the institutional system of benefit, overall benefited them. "

On the impact of apartheid on him on an individual level:

"I benefit from my parents' benefits, e.g., my mom had access to loans, which meant there was space for her at a medical school. She could become a doctor and my father could study political science before 1994 ended. Because they had good paying jobs after they studied, I was able to benefit from that. I was ***financially secure*** *as a child,* ***material benefits*** *that accrued to me because of that. Then of course there's the nonmaterial aspect of apartheid, which is for me more legacy of not is not a disadvantage thing, but it's a harmful emotional effect in thinking about the responsibility that I carry. So, there's the* ***emotional and responsibility-oriented legacy*** *that comes from the legacy of apartheid that I have to make up for in terms of fixing it – a moral reason for the fact that we have a society that's unequal and we need to do something about it. I will always be judged for that, and it's a sad thing and it's something I understand. But it's something that feels unfair for me personally, as an individual, at least because as a group dynamic it makes sense. But as an individual it's a case of* ***the sins of the father that we carry out****. I'm Afrikaans and because I'm also white makes me racist for quite a number of South Africans. That's like the perception that exists that come out of that. Even though there is this barrier and ceiling that exists, I've always had the attitude of it's a barrier to overcome, e.g., in terms of employment or applications or funding. Both parents are examples – mother as a respected doctor in a black community, and father as a white politician in a predominantly black political party. They've never told me that they've ever experienced something where it's like, because you're white and it can't be, assisted me to better understand how I fit within South African society, but I think it had to be a lot very experiential on top of the stuff and like reading and thinking and a lot of thinking. "*

On social identities in a multi-cultural student context:

"Tough question. When it comes from being in South Africa it would be so much easier for you in another country, but I wouldn't want to be in another country. Thinking about it is the only way I found to be able to actually navigate my identity and social groupings within a context like South Africa is to just be sure, in the sense of, I'm fixed or not fixed but it's loaded in that I know what my identity is and I accept my identity. I have not going to like debate, the merits and demerits of my identity in the sense of like I just understand my identity and its place within society. But I won't be apologetic about my identity or like wish my identity was different. It's about I have a deep acceptance. And I do have a pride in my identity despite obviously all the things that have taken place based on my group identity and what it has done, which we've touched on in a previous conversation. But it's true that solidity. I guess that I'm easily able to navigate with other people because I have a deep understanding of what my identity is, but also what its role is within society and how then to navigate other identity's because I might not know what someone else is. It's like the case of it's hard to love someone else if you do not

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love yourself, an' I think that's also my thing is because I love myself in the sense of who I am. It's easy for me to love and understand everyone else. So I think that is how I've learned to navigate the system by being accepting of it and then working from there. ?

Emma

English-speaking, coloured, heterosexual female student with a disability

Emma is a kind, soft-spoken student who avoids conflict, but has a very strong sense of justice and equity which drives her involvements on campus. She describes herself as "very outgoing and who enjoys grabbing opportunities that can help me grow as a person. I enjoy problem solving and creating a process of order out of chaos. Just enjoy starting new things". Emma's disability deteriorated in high school although she continued to attend a high school with abled learners. This played a major role in her identity as well as leadership identity formation. Independence is very important to her and to ensure that not everything she does relates to the challenges associated with her disability. She expanded her leadership involvement over the years to a variety of student life activities to demonstrate the versatility of her interests and passions. Coming to university meant independence for her. She is well-known on campus due to the student engagement work she does to create awareness for universal access on campus, local and at a national student level. Although she attended multi-racial schools, it was only at university where she was confronted with the impact of racism. Her family was affected by apartheid in the sense where the maternal family structure was dismantled (her grandmother is coloured, and her grandfather was white). Their children (her aunts/uncles) were split as some of them chose to be considered white due to being lighter skinned than others. Through the storytelling of her grandparents and parents, and the family being impacted directly by apartheid, she grew a stronger sense of awareness of injustices. This awareness was not only limited to race but also due to her disability and the injustices she experienced based on ableism. What was interesting to me was, despite receiving various accolades and recognitions for her leadership, she initially did not consider herself to be a leader at all and questioned if I made the right decision to approach her for this study. This was due to her perception of leaders, often not positive (controlling, assertive – characteristics she believed she did not possess). This perception of Self, gradually changed as we progressed throughout the interview process as was evident in her answers later in the interview process where she could reflect on how her self-perception as a leader has changed.

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She believed her participation in this study formed part of her awareness of her leadership identity formation process. Main broad themes identified in her timeline reflections are:

Leadership identity contributors		
Disability Leadership roles Student movements Sense of justice Equity		
Identity	**Leadership Identity**	**SA History**
Disability Independence Diversity exposure (school and residence life) Gender Race Partner Sense of justice	Recognition through leadership roles Diversity of leadership not limited to disability Justice, Equity	Apartheid Advocacy for rights of disabled #FeesMustFall #BlackLivesMatters #antiGBV

Segments from Emma's narratives:

On her understanding of her leadership identity:

"I think my personal leadership identity is very ***values driven.*** *I stand by my values of what I think is right and wrong, what is acceptable. I do try to take into account others' values in making decisions. I'm also very decisive person and sometimes it works for me, but sometimes it doesn't depending on the situation. Taking into account how others feel and I also try to be very fair in making decisions, but sometimes like that also works against me. My main values are around respect, respect for each other, respect for each other's opinions and just overall respect for human life. And equality is another value that I stand by, also accountability. I think people need to be held responsible for their decisions that they make good or bad and there's no right or wrong answer, but it can always be a learning lesson for you.* ***If I look at my leadership identity, it's more focused on disability and advantages that I can assist in spaces that are lacking information around disabilities or assist in spaces That are trying to be more inclusive of students with disabilities. The disadvantage of my identity being centred around this concept of disabilities is that when I try to voice my opinion in spaces where they speak about race or gender, it gets dismissed because most people see me as just the disabled activists."***

On her intersectionality as contributor to her leadership identity:

"*My leadership involvement has been mainly around disability, and that's also a big part of my identity. But besides having a disability is also the way that you get treated as a female with a*

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disability or the way get treated as ***a female of colour with a disability****. Religion and sexuality aspect as well. It does contribute to my leadership, because from what I understand, if you brought up in a certain way (religion) and also sexuality. People don't think that someone with a disability can have a relationship. So, if I look at my main goal in my leadership style is to educate, I think that's informed by the intersection I have. I educate because I get treated differently because of those different aspects of myself being a female of colour with a disability."*

On the impact of apartheid on her family:

"I think there is still some hurts because of what happened during apartheid. My family history is a bit different. My ***Grandfather is white,*** *but then he* ***married a coloured woman,*** *so he was* ***disowned from his family*** *from my Grandfather's side. His side of the family we really don't know anything about, because he was disowned by his father and then had to fend for himself after he married my grandmother. My mother tells me a lot of stories about my grandmother and how they grew up and they had to move around a lot because they were a lot of children, and they were also* ***forcibly removed*** *from certain areas. And they* ***weren't allowed to all live together, because some of the children were mixed race*** *and'* ***some didn't look coloured*** *so they couldn't live with their parents. All of those laws also* ***affected their family dynamic*** *from my mother's side, because my* ***uncle was classified as white****. I think when we speak about it, she does touch a lot on how the family was forced to be separated because of the whole racial segregation during apartheid, even though they were part of the same family. My mom speaks a lot about that. I think the effects of apartheid for her, she used to struggle. 'he didn't get a chance to settle in so with post-apartheid she was relieved to settle in with her family. It wasn't all mixed race related and she could settle down in one spot. I think that's also why we haven't moved a lot. My dad lived in one area his whole life. He is not very talkative, so he doesn't tell us a lot of stories about how he grew up during the time of apartheid. My grandmother used to show as mementos and the money that they used to have and my grandparents from my dad side tell us a lot of stories about how they would get chased out of certain areas because they weren't allowed in those areas. I do also know that with the side effects of what happened during apartheid, that there is still a lot of anger within my dad that comes out in certain spaces when he feels uncomfortable. I think there was no space for them to deal with the effects that the apartheid had. I notice in certain areas when my dad is uncomfortable then he would lash out towards people."*

On the impact of apartheid on her leadership identity:

*"****I think it has influenced it a lot.*** *One of the main pushes that encouraged me to go into leadership is hearing about all of these injustices that people around you went through and then just try to not let it happen in the future. I'm just thinking about it now, just hearing about all of these stories, kind of give you a nudge to want to change the world or to want to change your environment. I said in my previous sessions, one of the main reasons I do what I have to do, in*

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the leadership sectors is because I know one day that I might have children or grandchildren that might have a disability or go through the same issues that I'm going through, and I don't want that to happen. ***I think my parents and grandparents' stories that influenced my leadership journey*** *because I'm trying to prevent it from happening in the future. I think that also links back to the whole value of accountability. Yes, we have laws, that you must be treated equally and mustn't be discriminated against, but no one is being held accountable to those 'laws. That's also why accountability is another value that's very important to me. It has definitely influenced my leadership development. Before my parents and my grandparents spoke to me about their experiences I lived in a bubble. So that's why I said in primary school and when I was younger, I didn't experience these inequalities. I didn't know what racial biases were and I didn't see someone for their race. I think when they started speaking to me about it and when I went to high school and university you learn a lot more and that has influenced my development because it's also given me a different perspective to what I was used to.* ***I think with them opening up, it's also showed me that what they went through,*** *people are still going through now and there hasn't been a change since. Now it's also giving me the different perspective, empathy of what other students are going through if I don't necessarily have those experience and so it's allowed me to engage a lot more with other students that may have come from a different or similar background to me, and my parents were from."*

Agostinho

English-speaking, white, cisgender male of Portuguese descent, first-generation student

Agostinho came across as pensive, controlled, cautious, reflective, honest, analytical, direct and to the point and admitted that he had to unlearn some of his traits as his leadership developed over time, e.g., being judgemental without realising it. He described himself as "resilient, possibly a little bit too calm and collected as I often come across as cold to other people because I wouldn't say my emotions are restricted, but I would say I spend a lot more time analysing the world than I do showing emotion. I consider myself to be strong and intelligent but a bit more feminine than most men". It was interesting to observe how his demeanour has changed gradually over the four interviews to becoming more relaxed, the sharing of dry humour, engaging, spontaneous and forthcoming with insights he had discovered about himself during the interview process. He would often mention, "I liked that question last week and it made me think…". One of these enlightenment moments, was that he realised that some of his Portuguese family connectedness, also influenced the way in which he strives to advocate for an inclusive student community (perhaps also based on their family's experiences during the apartheid years where most Portuguese migrants

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resided in Woodstock in Cape Town, also known as ”little Madeira”). His family, Portuguese immigrants during the apartheid years, struggled to make a life for themselves in South Africa, filed bankruptcy at some stage and had to rebuild their life through hard work and long hours (times where he had to keep an eye on the younger siblings which added to his sense of responsibility and diligence). He believes he resonates well with people of colour, specifically the black community and he ascribes this to the importance of family life in both the Portuguese and Xhosa culture. His grandfather played a strong role in his life in terms of how he treated his workers (people of colour) as equals and made him aware of how differently other older white people treated their workers. He would often refer to childhood memories of these images, also impacting his approach to other students. He is a 1st generation student, and from an early age realised he had to work hard to receive scholarships to attend good schools and finally to study at the university. His all-boys school experience had a strong influence on his hard-working demeanour and the awareness of male toxicity. He would often refer to the fact that he forged strong allyship with the LGBQTIAP+ student community and felt that he had the least in common with the white Afrikaans male group identity on campus. He would often refer to his positionality, being aware of “my place in the cause”, “when to speak”, even though he would be experiencing the same e.g., financial challenges as the people of colour community e.g., during #feesmustfall. He placed a strong emphasis on mentoring and how he evolved as a leader from having a more authoritative results-driven approach to a more facilitative leadership approach. He also admitted that he had to work on his “cool/distant” demeanour to improve his relatability to the student community. Mental wellbeing featured strongly in the interviews from personal experience as well as in relation to the current student challenges. Main broad themes identified in his timeline reflections are:

Leadership identity contributors		
Leadership roles Student movements Mentoring Mental wellbeing Democracy		
Identity	**Leadership Identity**	**SA History**
Family filing for bankruptcy Younger siblings (responsibility)	Recognition through leadership roles since High School	Soweto Uprising

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Murder of uncle Death of grandfathers All-boys High School/ Gender Portuguese Heritage Field of study (MBChB) 1st generation student Diversity exposure Rejection Academic excellence	#feesmustfall Facilitator Mental wellbeing Mentoring	South African leaders and the Nobel Peace Prize Democracy New constitution Thabo Mbeki (HIV/AIDS denialism Marikana Massacre #FeesMustFall #antiGBV

Segments of Agostinho's narratives

On his intersectionality as contributor to his leadership identity:

"***White male:*** *Being a white male, particularly in Stellenbosch, gives you a great amount of privilege, anywhere in the world really, particularly heterosexual white male, but at Stellenbosch specifically. If you enter as a heterosexual white male, you really have the most privilege and it was very noticeable whenever you move into any space, and that definitely did contribute I would say. It's interesting because I can't really say if it was positive in the sense that people are more willing to listen to me speak then other people who would not be a* ***heterosexual white*** *or* ***male****. It's bittersweet, because you realise that they're not listening to you because your ideas superior to anyone else, but because of who you are and after a lot of time, you start to work out who are listening to you because your ideas are good and who will listen to you because of your gender or sexuality. It was helpful in a sense, because it meant that I could often get a word in without having too many people push back. But you also have to be aware of the fact that if I spoke, I needed to be quite sure that it was the best option that I could go with.* ***Portuguese:*** *the fact that I'm Portuguese, with how I approach family and my family life. It helped me with regards to facilitative leadership and working with team members and understanding things about them. The beneficial part is that I examine culture, your particular tribe, for instance, and why it is that you do certain things, or how your family acts."*

On the impact of apartheid on his family:

"When my family came over, they were obviously considered immigrants under the apartheid rule. Some family first lived in Namibia. I don't think they could get into South Africa. My father was brought up here and as I mentioned with the ***Group Areas Act*** *are obviously certain places where people were kind of cordon off to, and* ***Portuguese immigrants had a specific area in Cape Town.*** *So that's where a lot of them ended up starting out and why everybody kind of knows each other because we all grew up in a similar area that was kind of essentially how they were originally affected. Other than that, they were essentially* ***afforded all the same privileges as white people*** *for the most part. There was a little bit of overlap because my grandfather was born in Madeira. They're all very dark people because of where they sit on the equator. If you go to Portugal,* ***everyone would be classified as coloured technically under South African demographics,*** *so it was a bit different for them because they would look at*

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him and say, OK, it's a coloured man. But then with the ***pencil test*** *was different because he had straight hair and didn't really work out. After passing the test, they were essentially afforded most of the same privileges as white people. Anyway, both families we're both quite against apartheid, and they had a great number of issues with the idea because there's not really as much of an issue with race in Portugal (a little bit of a class system there). Both families worked with people of other races and ended up getting into some trouble with regards to how people were employed and what they were allowed to do. I remember some stories about that. For the most part they were really afforded the privileges of being white."*

On his identity as enabler to address student leadership themes:

*"**Being white male leader** – helpful in advocating for anything people obviously listen to you more. If you have a higher position or you granted more respect. And if someone doesn't know what your leadership ability is, having a position helps you there, because then they recognise, OK, I may not know you, but you lead a group of 20 people and you represent almost 2000 students, so you must be pretty good at what you do, so surely, you're someone I should listen to. So at that kind of level, when you able to lead in a positional sense in a formal leadership, it's very helpful to have platform because it's much easier to voice your opinion and get it through, especially when it's systemic issues which many of the things I mentioned are, to be able to put them on a platform where it's at a universal level at the University or even national, depending on the kinds of people who involved with. I could very easily, for instance, make a proposal to senate back when I was still more involved in student leadership, because I knew that I had people who would push it through for me and make sure that is at the front of whatever they were reading. I think the fact that I'm Portuguese brings a particularly different approach because of the way I was raised to some extent also being in the middle of everything with being South African, but also not being South African. And it helped me sensing the issues people from other countries faced in xenophobia. I myself actually on several occasions been asked why I lead here or why do certain things and what I know about South Africa because they assume that I was born in Portugal. That's definitely enabled me to understand the perspective that other people are faced when it comes to immigrating to new country."*

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Khanyiso

Xhosa-speaking, black queer male, first-generation student

Khanyiso describes himself as, “friendly, honest, assertive, understanding because I’m a good listener and I'm not going to judge, very objective, I laugh a lot and I also don't dwell too much on things that bring me down. I will speak about myself as if we are a group of people because I think that I have multiple personalities that can fit in multiple scenarios. So, I speak to myself as us on how I would deal with things that come up my way”. Khanyiso has little to no relationship with his father, was raised by a single mother who passed on when he was in high school. This was a major contributing factor to his identity, and something he would later mention stood out in this regard, “I don’t get hurt by people’s comments, because when you have experienced loss like I did, nothing can hurt you”. His mother’s death impacted him greatly as he realised that he was now relying on himself, despite being part of a great family. His aunt became the primary custodian. He shared a family home with his aunt, other cousins, extended family in a Cape Town township. During our 1st conversation Khanyiso “side-stepped” some direct questions regarding intersectionality as he preferred not to put himself into boxes and argued that labels have impacted him negatively. He was almost irritated by the contrast between his “home life and university life” and how the lack of ambition by his cousins perhaps even motivated him more to not only get his degree, but “to take up space” wherever he goes. He regarded himself as someone who can give hope to others in his community to move out and “take up space”. This was exactly what he did when arriving at Stellenbosch by getting involved in a range of leadership activities, also on a national student leadership level. He described himself as a free thinker and socialite who wanted to do his own thing, someone who speaks their mind and would often be considered by others as too direct. Although he attended a black/coloured school, he was quite taken aback by how different Stellenbosch looked and felt from being a mere 30kms away from where he grew up in the township. He is very conscious of “taking up space” and aware of what being “a black gay leader” could mean within the Stellenbosch university context, although he also would not want to be the spokesperson for the black queer community. While reflecting, he realised that apartheid was something his aunt and grandmother never really spoke about because it was too painful for them. He only later heard that his grandmother was nearly shot in the township during an uprising. Later during the interview series, he would admit, “I think in my everyday life apartheid

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is prevalent as a black leader in any space. I don't know how it has impacted my leadership identity, but I am certain that it has played a big role". He highlighted the tension between coloured and black people (his grandmother's parents are black and coloured) and his aunt's negative experience of working for coloured people, sensitised his awareness of his family's direct impact by apartheid (or rather, the impact of a grandmother with a coloured parent who stayed in the black community rather than the coloured community). Main broad themes identified in his timeline reflections are:

Leadership identity		
Leadership roles Student movements Leadership programmes Apartheid Democracy Corruption		
Identity	**Leadership Identity**	**SA History**
Raised by single mother Sexuality (gay) Independence Mother's death 1st generation student Mental wellbeing Breaking ties with father Race	Recognition through leadership roles since High School Leadership programmes #anti-GBV	Apartheid Gugulethu shooting affecting grandmother Democracy Mandela's death EFF (redefining political behaviour - e.g., of "type of leadership I disagree with"). State capture #FeesMustFall #antiGBV South Africa winning the Rugby World Cup & Miss Universe

Segments of Khanyiso's narratives

On his intersectionality impacting his leadership identity:

> *" **Race:** That's it, I must say not a very tough question, but it's an intricate question to answer and I'm gonna tell you why. You know when I achieve things, it's firstly about my race, I'm black or it's about my sexuality. **Sexual orientation:** How I'm gay, you know? So whenever you're entering a space it's often about these two things and you're characterised as the first black etc., which is why I think I can include it even to my student leadership campaigning. I never went for the root of the sexuality or about a gay black man taking up space, but that's not who I am, that's just part of who I am. That's just not me. I'm the laughing person, the socialite, the fun person. All of those other things that are just natural to me and I think that natural aspect*

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often makes it taboo, you know that we're still this way we're still saying that the" first black president" and I understand the necessity to state these things in spaces we haven't been part of and it's important that the younger ones understand that they are also capable of it. I get it, but for me I just don't like it, and which is why I find it difficult to answer this question that you just posed right now, which one of my many parts of who I am, can I say like is one of my biggest parts of who I am? If I say I think it's my sexuality, I thought I've often felt like I'm reducing myself to that and that's just not fair. I'm so much more than that, which is why against being labelled as the black gay man of X township."

On the impact of intergenerational conversations (or the lack thereof) on his leadership identity:

"I think it was at a time during the birthday times – ***the only conversation I've had with my grandmother****. We were watching TV and some older woman got shot. She told me the story what happened to her years ago during a birthday. I was laughing about why was an older woman shot at? What was she doing? So as you can see how my thinking was back then. And my grandmother was like, not these things happened. I remember when I almost got shot at because I stood up for myself. So in that situation she had a face-off with the policeman, a white Afrikaans policeman. I don't necessarily recall what were the reason. I think she was in the area she was not supposed to be or she was going to work and they were blocking her off.* ***She can also speak Afrikaans because she's mix race. Some of her family are coloured people****. She was in a hostile situation. There was some sort of a shooting that broke out, so when she ran, they also shot at her, but they shot through her beret. She showed me the beret. I pulled through it so you can see a hole in the beret. I thought that was something interesting because* ***that was one of the only conversations that my grandmother and I had regarding that time, how brave she was. I've never been a brave person. I've only been a brave person as a young adult****, but from that it was a hostile situation, a situation that didn't even allow her to be as brave as she was, but she still was because she believed in what she believed in. It didn't matter that she's putting herself at risk, but what had to be said had to be said. So for me, that was like a wow moment. Maybe I need to start being brave and stand up for myself often so it was kind of like a reminder of always stand up for yourself.* ***I would say these conversations have not really influenced my understanding of my role as a student leader much or at all. Much of my understanding of this is highly informed by my experiences as a leader in all my encounters of having to step up. I believe that my own experiences have really shaped my understanding of my role as a student leader way more than anything else.***

On his recollection of South Africa's history:

"I think my environments were shielded. When others say I was raised in ***a sheltered environment****, you don't even know what happened around the country. When you asked this*

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question, I kind of like looked back and I realise that, yes it's true. All the spaces that I was in, wasn't as diverse as I thought they were so I wouldn't say that I was in a very hostile environment. Schools I attended were predominantly black and coloured, mostly coloured people and then even in high school predominantly black and coloured. High school was different from primary school because in high school it was those ex-Model C schools, so it's not your everyday people who go to that school, 'cause the fees are not accessible to everyone. So then there was also a bit of a class division. I remember coming to Stellenbosch and I've never seen so many white people at the same time. It was mind-blowing. The interesting thing, you stepped into a different space within the Western Cape, although it's literally, I think less than half an hour away from where you grew up. ***I think growing up I lived a very soft life. Right up until now. I can't even say I experience racism, which in a South African context is one of the big things.*** *I can't necessarily recall specifically or put my finger on the first time I ever experienced this. I realised I was different. Now, I think over the years I just got to learn more and more about the South African context in how it's so unique to any other space. So as a child I had the privilege of actually experiencing life as a child, taking things as they are at face value. I think it's only in high school when things happened, but you overlook them, you still give people the benefit of the doubt. But once you in the University space where you are supposed to learn and introduced different concepts, different ways of understanding and viewing the world."*

On the impact of apartheid on his leadership identity:

" ***I wouldn't say directly****, but I can say in the back burner, indirectly, it's conversations that I've had, its lessons that I've learned and its outcomes that I've been informed of. So it's something that I know and it's in, you know, a comment in the library. It's in one of the shelves in my library, in my mind, so whenever I find myself in a similar situation within my leadership time or my identity as a leader, and I definitely use or utilise those "moral of those stories" to make better judgment for myself. So I will say* ***indirectly, yes****."*

On his identity and leadership identity as enabler to address student leadership themes:

"I'll just keep it to these three that I've mentioned. On ***mental health*** *you know, I've experienced it as a leader. I've had those close to me within this university space being affected by it, I've had a family member succumb to it, so it gives me all these different views as an individual, but also all of those lessons I get to store in my mind whenever I have to think about these things as a leader and how to address all of these things. So I'm in a position of privilege to address it as an individual, have been through this, being unwell and it helped have me a greater understanding of how to tackle all these issues that have to do with mental wellbeing as a leader.* ***Gender-based violence*** *– I also look inward into my community and the relationships in family context. The dangers of our everyday behaviours over a longer period of time and*

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limitations. I'm not a woman, whenever I'm in a space whereby I am with other men I get a taste of how it would feel to be a woman on a daily basis. Everyone is objectifying you, harassing you. And that's what women can experience on a daily basis from a young age. I've acknowledged that as a limitation for me. ***Using social context to drive change*** *– The third one is I'm in the space. You know I'm trying to in as much as have conversations with other leaders about this. You trying to advance yourself, I'm trying to advance myself in academia in the way I write, in the way I do my research, alright, my thought pieces for these actions whenever I ask questions and the conversations that I carry and have in class. So, as a leader and as a student you can't like infiltrating spaces. I'm driving these conversations and I think being involved and being at the grassroots level gives me that opportunity of being ahead of other persons who are outside. I think I'm also at a great institution that allows this."*

Ntando

Xhosa-speaking, black, heterosexual Christian male, first-generation student

Ntando describes himself as, "intense, intentional, energetic and an extremist so I'm very happy and when I'm sad, I'm very sad when I am in a depressive state". Ntando grew up in a township, excelled in rugby and because of that received a scholarship to attend an all-boys school. He would often refer to himself as the "stand out kid", who had more life experience than his white private school classmates. Although he is a 1st generation student, he refers to their financial status as part of the "missing middle" group. Ntando indicated conflict between his faith (being a Seven Day Adventist) and his love for rugby (a sport played on their sabbath day). He became a father during the interview series. Fatherhood made him reflect on his responsibilities, value-alignment, congruency as a leader, but also his childhood knowing that he was not his father's son (i.e., the man who raised him). His uncle, a prominent political figure on national level, played a major role in his leadership identity formation, especially his emphasis on anti-favouritism and being a man of his word/integrity. His uncle's untimely death due to Covid-19, was a huge loss to him, as a leader role model, as he strived to become like his uncle who had great influence in the community and the political circle at large. The public recognition and affirmation of his leadership capabilities became a strong theme throughout the interviews as he would normally rather focus on purposeful non-positional leadership roles and not necessarily the typical positional leadership route a student leader would take on campus. His reference to "from stand out kid to "inbetweener" would also refer to the leadership role that he took as a connector, mediator of people and groups within the broader

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student community. Although he was still actively involved in student community, the unexpected fatherhood role, while being in the prime of his student life, lead to a phase of retrieval from most social engagements. My observation is that he felt disappointed in the fact that he viewed himself as influential within the student community, a strong religious person, and yet having a child outside marriage did not quite fit into the role model "I would have liked to be to my younger siblings, but now I'm taking responsibility to be the best father I can possibly be to this child" (note: one of the interviews took place while he had to take care of the newly-born baby). His reflection on the South African political history would often be in association with his late uncle (as his parents chose not to get involved in politics as they considered that to be a "hard life"). His recollection of key South African historical events would also focus on "the unsung heroes" or rather those who had less prominence than the late President Nelson Mandela e.g., Walter Sisulu, Steve Biko, Albert Luthuli and Chris Hani. Main broad themes identified in his timeline reflections are:

Leadership identity contributors		
Leadership roles Student movements Uncle Fatherhood Founding of the ANC Death of freedom fighters		
Identity	**Leadership Identity**	**SA History**
Race "Stand out kid" "Rugby guy"/Sport Religion Leader Fatherhood Culture 1st generation (missing middle)	"Inbetweener"/ mediator / facilitator Recognition through leadership roles since High School #FeesMustFall Uncle Fatherhood	Founding of the ANC Steve Biko's death Chris Hani's death Walter Sisulu's death Mandela's release "My uncle" Mandela's death Mark Shuttleworth #FeesMustFall

Segments of Ntando's narratives

On his intersectionality:

> "***Christianity; Sexual identity; Blackness.*** *I think they all do. I think they all do because I'm thinking pictures now. Let me try and paint this so there is a deeply entrenched interconnectedness. Everything that I do literally everything I could run a golden thread through all of it and my intersectionality because the way I lead has a lot to do with who I am, what I*

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feel I'm called to do. So first my credit, my Christianity plays a central role, but in my Christianity, there is the branch of meeting black. I've also as far as possible, try and link all of these sections to Christianity because as the central, what I feel is my sexual identity. I've had to resolve a lot of distance around it, and so all my sections are interlinked to that – my leadership and whatever other platform I might show up on, sort of received that whole web of things without a trait being stronger than others. It's also situational. If I show up as a servant leader in the transformation space, then by blackness is going to be foregrounded more than perhaps my student, I'm a scholar so certain aspects that they shop more and they all pronounce it in particular spaces. But I think they are always all featuring."

On the impact of intergenerational conversations on his leadership identity:

"I've got a role to fulfil, to right the wrongs but to resolve the injustices that were executed or that are carried out to my granddad. I think even in the student community, I feel the same. I feel this privilege of carrying out justice as far as I possibly can. And just being hypervigilant, you know at all times of what behaviours am I perpetuating, what behaviours am I condoning, what behaviours are actively, you know, am I displaying that contributes towards the marginalisation of depression? Of not only those you know within my leadership share influence, but just within the student community as a whole. My uncle, a political activist ensured that he drilled it in us that "the black man can". I got some time to reflect about this because he would have serious conversations with us children. He was the first person that I received an education on political history of the ANC or his version of it at least. The conversation has revealed to me how much of an impact the ANC has had on my life-particularly the founding principles of the organisation because I feel my uncle's teaching were influenced & aligned to those founding principles. I mention this in the reflection because much of what I ended up doing in primary & high school (in terms of standing for what I believe in through acts of protest) were predicted on the idea that it is permissible to "break the rules" so long as it is for a just cause. This is how I have always viewed the ANC and this is what my uncle has always enforced through speech and action. I remember seeing him refusing to observe traditional Xhosa custom at a family event because it made no sense to him. I too refuse to follow what makes no moral sense to me. I would much rather suffer the repercussion of such rebellion. I am not rebellious by nature because I believe that laws are meant for the most part to keep peace and promote co-existence, so I generally abide by them."

On the impact of apartheid on his family:

"My uncle was a political activist. He was a lifelong member of the ANC and as a result, my father's engagement in politics was somewhat limited because of the danger that his brother portrayed to him around politics. I think their personality is different that I think my dad is more probably more conservative and my uncle is more liberal and so a lot of the things that my uncle endured, i.e. getting arrested, getting expelled, you know my dad automatically linked political

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involvement and political engagement with breaking the law and just not being right and constantly being punished. I think my uncle's heavy involvement limited my father's involvement because he saw political involvement as this barrier to mobility. So my family was involved to that degree on my father side. On my mom side, however, they were in deep rural Eastern Cape and there wasn't too much politics, e.g. my grandmother found a dompas and didn't know what it was, but it belonged to her. I later found out that they lived quite the separate life in this haven that is removed from political South Africa, although knowing about the racial tensions. There was this internal system within the rules of the community. My grandfather's brother, however, who was a taxi driver was more exposed to the political landscape in South Africa, but he wasn't necessarily involved in any forms of activism outside of the fact that he was a taxi driver. My mom hardly has stories of being violated or actively feeling oppressed or any form of marginalisation – the environment was all black. The family had reached a level of affluence within those rural constructs. That was all they knew. That is all they have aspired to be. They all wanted to be teachers within their communities, and no one really thought outside of that, so when I reflect back on those stories now, in hindsight, knowing the context that you actually were trapped in the rural area, not because it was a safe, beautiful haven but you were forced to be there. ***The system was very effective in showing people to develop apart and their marginalisation got to even a level where people didn't even know they are being oppressed****."*

Fundiswa

Xhosa-speaking, heterosexual Christian female

Fundiswa is witty, sharp, honest and shared deep authentic timeline reflections. The first reflection prior to our first interview, made me realise how important it will be for me as the researcher to "hold the interview space as a safe space" for her. She entrusted deep reflections with me, without really knowing me. I found that I made extra effort in preparing for our interviews, because I wanted the conversation to flow as a conversation, rather than an interview. She described herself as, "damaged goods, hilarious, an introvert, love to serve people and love to uplift people. I am humorous and light-hearted and like to keep things light-hearted. I have a lot of advice that I like to share. I'm very loyal and very family orientated. I am very good at discerning energies and very open-minded". Overcoming low self-esteem as a child who was bullied at school to the point where she almost took her life, then transcending into "becoming my own hero", is admirable. She comes from a family where both parents are successful (mother as dentist and father as former student leader and her leadership mentor). She carries the responsibility of her clan's name, a unique name with a history of not being recognised as a clan in their own right (e.g., Xhosa, Zulu) –

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something their family is still pursuing to seek justice for. I observed throughout the interview cycle the importance of “leaving a legacy” or being “the first to do….” as major themes, almost as if it was a way for her to justify why her leadership is “different” from others. She would also often reflect on the privileged life she had as a black student and child of educated black parents and would refer to the regular confrontation of that privilege vs some of the family still living in rural townships and cousins who do not show the same drive to pursue study opportunities (and inherently the family envy experienced from them toward her and her family – a theme also highlighted in her timeline). The conflict of being a strong black educated woman (honouring her ancestors in this way) vs a Xhosa-child showing respect to elders, would also remind her of the responsibility she has to respect her conservative culture and heritage. Her leadership focus changed over the years from herself and her achievements to mentoring and challenging others to take on leadership roles on campus. She is strongly guided by her faith which plays a significant role in her leadership identity. During her study years she was confronted by liberalism and would often reflect on her “red pill moments” - a time when she realised that there is danger in this generation borrowing trauma from others, i.e., to create their own narrative based on their own lived experiences and not those of their older generation. This reflection led to her growth to communicate better to understand the viewpoints of conservative students, without being frustrated or angry by their conservative outlook in life. She realised that being a black female leader, meant that she had to prove herself continuously throughout her leadership career as a student, but it is also a role she accepted as part of her responsibility at the time. Her leadership has been widely recognised. Something to note; she briefly switched on her camera but preferred to have her camera switched off throughout the interview cycle. I interpreted this as being more at ease with the deep level of reflections shared during the interview. Main broad themes identified in her timeline reflections are:

Leadership identity contributors
Leadership roles
Leadership envy
Parent’s influence
Religion and servant leadership
Colonisation

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Apartheid Democracy Appreciation for conservative views (Red Pill moments)		
Identity	**Leadership Identity**	**SA History**
Mental wellbeing Suicidal thoughts Academic Excellence Religion Servant leadership Study field (MBChB) Red Pill moments (conservative view) Race Family name Culture Bullied Outsider? Rejection	Leadership envy Recognition through various leadership roles and awards Red Pill moments Father Religion (leading in church)/serving/servant leadership	Colonisation Apartheid Democracy Family name HIV/AIDS denialism Mandela's death SA Constitution Marikana Massacre Covid-19

Segments of Fundiswa's narratives

Red Pill moments:

"I came in from a conservative small town before and in 1st year we were taught about the more "liberal" perspective of life. I fell into it quite deeply and spent a lot of time researching and being angry over a lot of social injustices until my third year where I started to get the conservative perspective of issues too and they weren't half as bad as we had been taught to believe they were. Since then, I stopped jumping on to political band wagons and getting behind any sort of movement without understanding my personal standing on the matter and the core of the matter. In mainstream media, it's called getting "red pilled" when one moves from the left to the right wing which is why I title this moment as the Red Pill milestone, but I am not a right winger nor a conservative, but I am not a liberal or left winger either. I decide for myself what deserves my support and emotion and energy and what doesn't. This has spared me from so much anger and exhaustion and allows me to be open to people with any political opinion which is why my social group is probably the most diversified in all of Africa, to be honest. This has also helped me love my culture more because I don't demonize it as much as the liberal perspective does. I actually love the way things are done in my culture and the conservative nature of our tradition and have been able to embrace my culture as a part of my identity with more confidence than ever before. Welcoming a more conservative perspective in my life made it so much easier to serve and lead any and all people without prejudice. I could lead without emotional instability."

On the impact of apartheid on her leadership identity:

"Racism and discrimination being legalized due to the influence of leaders with excellent strategy and leadership ability but poor morality and poor accountability measures within the boundaries of unbiased ethics. The danger of leading from the sole perspective of one aspect

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of your identity and trying to impose that aspect (forcibly) on others through a platform that wasn't intended for that. Specifically, for me this helps to keep me in check about holding myself accountable to not use platforms to push my own identity-based agendas but to improve life and the quality of life for all by using the opportunities granted to me in a leadership position. This re-enforces that I have the responsibility to listen to the people I serve instead of me thinking I have all the solutions for people."

On "living off borrowed trauma":

*"The concept of being a born free complicates leadership in the modern context because our generation is **living off of "borrowed" trauma**. The issue with borrowed trauma is that it is incredibly difficult to heal from, which means as leaders in this time, we have to lead in the modern context whilst trying to convince our generation to heal from olden day trauma. Racial reconciliation is complicated by the ever-expanding aspects of intersectionality and our generation seems to be picking up more and more aspects of identity (which is a perk of freedom but also makes leading incredibly difficult) and our generation seems to be picking up a unique way to be offended for every aspect of their identity whilst simultaneously carrying offence on behalf of our parents. It means that leadership in the modern context is a game of healing for the past whilst strategically implementing progress for the future. I think coming to Stellenbosch was the first time I didn't have to, you know, like I said in my timeline that **living off of the borrowed trauma of my parents**, I had never really had a racist experience until I came to Stellenbosch University. And then I had to go through my own racist experiences and then face the tension that comes with having your own story of racism post-1994. So, but that for me also came with the fact that when people heard I was coming to Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch already has that stigma of it's going to be racist. So I came in with that mindset. All I am going to go through the most I'm going to be in shackles. I don't know what to expect so when I got to Stellenbosch, every little thing that was done seemed like it was on the basis of race. Um and then going through the very liberal left-wing phase in first year over to second year, did not help at all because it not only made everything about race, it made me angry about everything. **I realised it's the trauma of what our parents went through that makes us come into spaces thinking no matter what happens, I will not let a white person get the upper hand and everything is racial and everything is an attack**. The trauma my parents went through, I will never let it go. I'll never let it happen to me. Then actually understanding that is why our generation is so angry. It's not even anger of things we've done to one another. It's things that were done to our parents that we now see in each other, even though they're not necessarily there. We see them in each other, because that's how we choose to see them, and that's how we choose to interpret certain things. And now we have this generation that is completely torn apart because it's not just racism anymore. We have that intersectionality. We always say this is the hardest time to be leading ever in the world as a leader. This has to be the hardest time. Back in the day we would have apartheid, the fight was black and white. Now we have apartheid, we have World War, civil war, we have people identifying as one of 64*

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genders. So now you're not just defending my race, you need to defend the fact that I choose to identify as Z, as a black Z being, I'm not her. I am not him. So now when you address people and try to lead people with servant leadership, represent people, you don't get to say, I'm representing a black community of women. I'm representing a community of black individuals. It's very difficult to unify any group of people in our generation. It's like the church with all the denominations. There is no one single fight with our generation. It's not possible. Go to the #FeesMustFall protests. Someone is going to be fighting about racism and sexism at that same protest, and they want to put it on the same level. So that's where I'm at with South Africa. ***We sadly have a generation that is going to be the future of South Africa that is so stuck in the past that I am concerned whether we have a plan for the future at all or whether we just want revenge for the past.*** *But that the typical things that everyone puts on the news about the country. Those things worry me less, things like government officials taking Covid money and pensions and student doctors have to work this long for internship, and this is mandatory. I'm like, OK, you're concerned about what the leaders are doing, but in a few years' time we are all those leaders. I'm concerned about the mindset when it's our turn to be in Parliament because corruption isn't going to be the problem. Our generation seems to hate corruption so much, the problem is going to be what gender are we going to identify as? Will it be reversed apartheid? Will it be with them or be shut in a jail somewhere? All the white straight men will be shut in the jail, where is our generation taking our country with the fights we are picking amongst ourselves? "*

Khethiwe

Zulu/Afrikaans-speaking, pansexual Christian female

Khethiwe describes herself as, "thought-driven person, visionary, considerate, thoughtful and open-minded to whatever… I really expect anything from the world. I sometimes I feel like I'm my own therapist". Khethiwe grew up in a rural environment and lost her father at an early age. She was raised by a grandmother and later by her teacher mother. Her single mother placed strong focus on education and being an independent woman - characteristics she would embrace growing older. Her Christian beliefs and conservative church, placing women in hierarchy according to their virginity and marital status, played a significant role in Khethiwe's understanding of herself as a female, and later as pansexual female leader. Her Christian beliefs would often lead to conflicting views, e.g., being against same sex marriage in South Africa, while referring to herself as pansexual. She had to come to terms with being comfortable with her body as a female, and as someone who was raped, and had to work hard at reclaiming her confidence which she later found through public speaking. Language and public speaking became strong contributing factors to her identity and later

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leadership identity formation. She is fluent in Afrikaans and would often refer to how this made her more relatable to the white student community and less relatable to the black student community. She realised that she could either use this to her advantage as a leader but had to be mindful when *not* to apply it when leading. Her leadership has been widely recognised on campus, also as a mentor, yet she does not view herself as a leader leading from the front in an activistic manner (her negative experiences of the #feesmustfall made her realise that she prefers to be a silent one-on-one leader who facilitates conversation, rather than within a public mass address approach. As a female student in a male dominated environment she would also often reflect on storytelling as a skill she has acquired over the years to negotiate situations when her roles are conflicting. She believes her strongest attributes as a leader, also during the time she was leading in a multi-gendered residence, is her listening skills and her ability to be perceptive of undercurrents in an environment. During her leadership reign, she had to mediate many emotionally drained conversations related to inequity, and believes that by creating context, she could lead in an authentic manner. Main broad themes identified in her timeline reflections are:

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Leadership identity contributors</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Leadership roles
Student movements
Corruption
Expressing my leadership identity through the arts</td></tr>
<tr><th>Identity</th><th>Leadership Identity</th><th>SA History</th></tr>
<tr><td>Mentoring
Spiritual journey (conflict with religion)
#FeesMustFall
Health & Wellbeing
Sexuality (pansexual)
Public speaking
Gender
Race
Language
Mentor role</td><td>#FeesMustFall
Toastmaster journey
Recognition through various leadership roles
Serving others/servant leadership</td><td>Elections
Same sex marriage legalised
Mandela’s death
Xenophobia attacks
Corruption
FeesMustFall
#RhodesMustFall
#antiGBV
Climate change protests</td></tr>
</table>

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Segments of Khethiwe's narratives

On her intersectionality:

*"**Race:** race aspect until I start speaking. **Language:** And suddenly the reaction changes. Simple example is back home a lot of the white people speak Afrikaans, so when I come in, they say, "Hello, how can I help you?" And then I speak Afrikaans and suddenly they light up and get excited. Whereas before I started speaking or engaging with them, they just saw me and it is business as usual. So that's the other part that's funny how the other parts (race) can actually just kick back the other one (language). Well, I was in KZN now and obviously in KZN, there're a lot of Zulu people. And I'm black and I'm a woman. So when I speak Zulu to them they're constantly bothered by the fact where do you come from because you don't speak proper (Zulu). That has its impact on my identity and I make a lot of fun of it because I also use it as a teaching moment that where I come from, there's an integration of seSwati-speaking people and Zulu-speaking people. The dialect has changed so much that you merge the two languages that some words just don't sound Zulu to you, but they actually are isiZulu to us. So they need a teachable moment, but then there's always the thing that you're not enough. So I think actually that has played the biggest impact on the intersectionality of my identity. So my ability to speak Afrikaans and isiZulu and the accent that I have when I speak English has played a big role before I even add any other part of my identity. You are seen as the "better black" because you are most likely being accepted and most likely approved when I speak because I somehow sound like the white person or when I speak proper Afrikaans. I have seen how much they impact where I am, how I get into spaces and how I navigate through spaces. **Gender:** Being a woman and being a virgin. That has impacted my identity for as long as I have been able to understand those two things. I think the power of that has been brainwashed, a constant reminder if I were to do anything religious or if we go to church if we're praying I am dressed in a way that shows that I am a woman in that I am a virgin. So, the weight of it has been deeply ingrained like as a sexual being. Feels like a destruction of who I am and, in a way, like it's funny because on an intellectual level it is silly. I get it and I understand that it cannot be, but on a deeper level, that is both spiritual and intellectual and emotional, it's very much attached to, this is Khethiwe. The way my mom would reference, "proud of my girl", or "princess" in church context. This is consuming me the most and in a manner that is very difficult to navigate."*

On the impact of intergenerational conversations (or the lack thereof) on her leadership identity:

*"I don't believe there has been any influence based on conversations we may have had with family members, because **we haven't had any conversations about apartheid**. Well, like, almost nothing. I think the one that once may have had a little impact on me is when my mom told me that she once led a political youth organisation in her younger days, which I think may have influenced me, especially in 2016, to aspire to be in government roles/positions as an MP*

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or something. Funny enough, conversations that really impacted me are conversations with my peers based on our learnings of post-apartheid SA and the factors still at play. That affected my understanding of my role, the identity that I carry on a phenotypical level. The fact that I am a black woman in post-apartheid South Africa and being in spaces of influence matters. I only started being aware of that in 2015, when I realised that I was the only black person in my public speaking space. Even though I must acknowledge that the treatment I received placed me on quite a pedestal in that space. I would like to believe it's due to my work ethic, commitment and leadership. I am mostly mentioning this because we would have black students come to the public speaking space and be overwhelmed by the number of white people and mostly much older white people. I understood the role I had to play in these dynamics change slowly. Like I mentioned earlier, I am very much aware that my multilingualism works well in my favour, especially being able to speak Afrikaans. Within the student community, I have also seen how my role matters, especially the multilingualism part, where I often times used to translate Afrikaans spoken content to my peers during speeches or events, now I ask them to translate even though I know that they know I speak Afrikaans and understand it. I have found it to create some discomfort for the people I ask. However, I think it also creates an awareness and reminder of the diversity in the group they're addressing. ***I think it still remains that the greatest impact on my awareness and role as a student leader in post-apartheid SA has been majorly influenced by conversations I have had with peers and the short courses I did in the institution, critical engagements with the students and different platforms."***

On the impact of apartheid on her as an individual:

"I don't know. *I think maybe I remained under the* ***whiteness is more desirable than blackness idea*** *in growing up in a space where it's very much Afrikaans. The culture to me was attractive. The language, I love the language. Just my ideal life – I was around whiteness. We even used to kid around, like* ***"when I grow up I wanna be white".*** *But at the time there was no link to apartheid. Being white looked better and they seemed to have everything. In high school there was this one incident with this one guy, we didn't get along and it didn't make sense to me why? But then also we worked things out and after that we were really cool people with each other.* ***I think I was also very blind to what would even be called racism. To me it didn't exist. I didn't have a definition for it. I didn't have any other way of identifying it. I think the impact it may have had, is that I was under the impression this is what the "Rainbow Nation" is, and whiteness is a much better life experience then being black.*** *But it's also not something that I was vocal about – I'm black so I need to behave a certain way around white people. In those spaces where I speak, the language, my mindset was similar to theirs, so I was more acceptable to them, and they would even say that,* ***you're not like the other black people. And to me it was an honour to hear that.*** *I felt great about myself. I remember having this random conversation with a friend's boyfriend about how he said he didn't like black people because they killed his father. But that he likes me because I seem so much better, and I don't seem too bad. And* ***to me crime was black****. I'd* ***trust white people more***

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than I trust black people even with friendships, it would be quite challenging for me to be friends with black people, but then if I befriend a black person, would most probably be someone who has a similar understanding or someone who can speak Afrikaans, *or mostly speak English. Those are the people that I'd befriend easy or a coloured person. When I got here, it is still the same, except that I started becoming a lot more open to whoever comes in my space, and I was aware that* ***I had certain discomfort with my interaction with black people****, and that is something that I was trying to get comfortable with. We had this leadership summit and I realised that I still had a lot to do. I felt so overwhelmed and so uncomfortable, and* ***I felt guilty for being the way I am****.* ***I thought that I was not expressing enough of being black.*** *I just felt extremely intimidated, and I felt I don't fit well. To me that was a concern and something that I realise that I really need to work on because clearly there's something there. It's the space and the people because it was majority black, like so many black people. It was very sad for me to realise that, but I was so uncomfortable, and I saw that I actually reserved myself so much because I didn't feel comfortable or welcome. It's not like anyone is supposed to make me feel welcome it's just that, this is not a space for me. This is not the people for me. I'm judging myself more than anyone else. It's definitely not the other people, it's my idea of me and how I've been presenting myself. The other thing is that the way I speak, my accent, that's received in a way that feels very uncomfortable at times, especially if it's a group of majority black people."*

On the impact of apartheid on her identity:

"I don't think so. *I think the reason is because our identity was very much around our religion. As a family, anything that would refer to our identity would look very much religion-based. The church would tell us, e.g., not to change our hair type. It is gifted to you, so you must just embrace it. I think that is also what made me rooted in my identity in the way I am, but I didn't feel horrible or anything being a black person, it was more about my dark skin because I was mostly mocked about it, so I can't pinpoint in saying that apartheid may have influenced my identity."*

On the impact of apartheid on her leadership identity:

"My brain is taking me to my mom. I just didn't see how though. I think it's more recent though. We went to a private school. My mom once mentioned to me that the teachers in the community complained about how we don't greet, or we walk around the streets speaking English and Afrikaans in public which is ***an image of oh I'm the better kid****. I was so aware of it that I was very deliberate about greeting people when I passed them and be mindful of where I am and then speak Zulu and avoid speaking another language as much as possible. I think it also stems from the idea that being associated with whiteness makes you a better person or befriending white people. It puts you higher on the list of acceptable beings in society. I think that's one that I can think of and my mom's interaction with my school principal because she never really came to any events. My mom was only present as a signature to the school or paying our fees but*

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now the same person that used to complain about us, my mom became his boss. They actually had a very good relationship, and to me what I got from that was, when you need to work together there's certain standards to maintain and certain respect that you need to maintain because I was worried of how that man was going to treat my mom because he is problematic. But then it seems it hasn't been a problem, there's a mutual understanding to get things done. And to think of how that impacted my leadership? I don't know? I think it's just the idea of work with the person, especially if there's a task at hand or what you need to get done. You work with the person the best way you can, in spite of your differences."

On the impact of apartheid on her group identity:

"There's a major awareness on the impact on a much greater scale than I've ever had in my entire life where it's much easier for me to understand why a person would respond in a certain way. Let's say protest for instance. Or make a comment about poverty in South Africa. So how apartheid impacts my group identity is the fact that ***there are people who still see me for what I would have been identified as, during that era.*** *And* ***there are people who still prefer me speaking Afrikaans because they will treat me better if I do.*** *For example – I'm looking for a flat to stay for next year and some of the ads are in Afrikaans and that's immediately saying this is my target audience. If I had seen that in my first year I would have just said, OK cool and then I'd apply in Afrikaans. But now I just see it as I'm aware of what this is doing. I'm aware of how it can be exclusive. Now I'm becoming a more, I'm struggling to get a word for the part of group identity, more aware and mindful person within every group that I get involved in. They're heavily influenced and enslaved mentally in apartheid ideologies that has been enacted or is still being spoken of or entertained in various communities, and they bring it with them to the spaces, from both sides, from the part of replacing, but also from the oppressed way. A person would feel so intimidated to speak up against a white person or challenge a white person or a white student would disrespect you. There's also the part, how do I navigate these people to work in my favour where I'm able to use the language that they speak because it will benefit me more. I refuse to entertain them and I'm being confrontational about it and I use either language that I feel comfortable using in that moment. I think for group purposes and* ***especially group identity, it takes me back to advocate for the minorities, for those who feel like a space is not comfortable or safe for them to speak. I do challenge masculinity. I do challenge sexism. I challenge homophobia. I challenge racism.*** *I challenge ideas or jokes that may be funny, but if you're entertaining a stereotype that caused so much harm to other people, where is the joking in that? The reaction would be, why are you being so serious? To me, it's a moment of, I called you to be mindful what you do, you cannot say that you do not know the next time you'd tell that joke. Chances are it would click."*

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Participant Profiles (Phase 2)

Raaida

Mixed descent, gay, English-speaking Muslim female

Raaida is a vocal student leader related to transformation issues on campus. Perhaps the first observation was that she never switched on her camera and at first came across as somewhat guarded during the first focus group session. She grew up in a paternalistic Muslim household, being the only female sibling with four brothers who felt she was treated differently to her male siblings. In her reflections she mentioned how her, leaving home, “shaped her identity profoundly” as she was now able to freely express herself, also as a queer Muslim woman. Another interesting comment was her reflection that she realised that she wanted to leave positional leadership and focus more on activism - something I wanted to explore more in the second focus group session. I did find that she was more inclined to give her feedback, after I specifically mentioned her name. She demonstrated a strong emphasis on female leadership, perhaps due to her patriarchal upbringing? ‘Standing up for myself” was a strong theme in her reflections and sharing in the focus groups. Main broad themes identified in her timeline reflections are:

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Leadership contributors</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Leadership roles
Student movements
Feminism
Mental wellbeing
Independence
Corruption</td></tr>
<tr><th>Identity</th><th>Leadership Identity</th><th>SA History</th></tr>
<tr><td>Feminism (being treated differently as a female)
My sexuality
Diversity exposure at an early age
Mental wellbeing
Muslim religion (conflict)
Independence
Conservative patriarchal family
Toxic friendships
Positive role model (teacher)</td><td>Younger siblings (responsibility)
Recognition through leadership roles
All-girls high school – strong female voices
Conservative patriarchal family
Mental wellbeing
Leaving home – independence
Student movements</td><td>#antiGBV
Covid-19 (self-care)
#FeesMustFall
#BlackLivesMatter
Corruption
Kirvan Fortuin’s death</td></tr>
</table>

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Segments of Raaida's narratives

On identity contributors:

Family set-up: *"The first thing that popped into my mind was family. But I think for each of us obviously it's different. For example, in my family I grew up in a very conservative, very patriarchal type of family. I think in many ways that pushed me in the direction of feminism and if I can say assertive part of my personality from a young age."*

On intersectionality major:

Gender and sexual orientation: **"**I think the first thing that sticks out to me is whether I'm surrounded by other women or as *other feminine presenting people and whether I'm in a queer-friendly space or not. I think that frames what part of my identity is going to come to the forefront and what people interact the most with. Because I think a lot of the times for me, if I could pick one, it's usually the fact that I'm a woman. Especially within very male dominated spaces I tend to notice that the most and even within my family (having 5 brothers)."*

On historical reflections:

"I think for me growing up, my parents, well, my mom is mixed race. Her mom is from South Africa. My dad is also an immigrant. I think something that stood out for me was the fact that my parents were always very, they spoke a lot about how corrupt the new government was and about how the DA would do a much better job and how people of colour don't really know how to run things and stuff like that. There was a lot of those types of conversations growing up, especially from my gran who was a coloured woman that grew up during apartheid. She also had this internalised racism of, no, white people are just better at running things. And so I grew up automatically thinking all of these things. It was only when I reached high school and I was exposed to my own media sources and I was able to do my own research that that really changed and I could understand the context a lot better. I think growing up that was what predominated, that was the predominant conversations around South Africa."

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Zoe

Coloured, heterosexual English-speaking female

Zoe held various positional leadership positions on campus and in the residence space (in a predominantly white female residence), later employed at the university while still completing her studies. She considered her mother to be a major role model and contributor to her identity and leadership identity formation. Her independence stems from taking on the responsibility of an older sister to very young siblings, having to study and work at the same time and becoming self-reliant. Her parents' divorce had a significant impact on her identity and independence. She mentioned that she is picky with her friends and acquaintances as she needs to respect and be inspired by those she surrounds herself with. One of her main role associations is that of a facilitator and educator of groups. She is well-known on campus in the student leadership space. I was very hesitant to include Zoe in the focus group (although she met all the criteria), simply because I have worked with her on a few leadership programmes and I was not sure if this would influence the level of sharing, now as a student leader, and not as a former "colleague". I've decided to invite her and let her decide if she was comfortable to participate, which she confirmed prior and after the focus group sessions. She provided limited timeline reflection regarding South African history and its influence on her leadership identity formation. Her general comments were that she could not pin-point any significant historical South African event which truly had an impact on her leadership identity development and regarded herself as a facilitator in various groups and not necessarily aligning her group identity to her race or gender. Main themes identified in her timeline reflections are:

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Leadership identity contributors</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Mother
Leadership role
Siblings (sense of responsibility)
Leadership rejection
Student movements</td></tr>
<tr><th>Identity</th><th>Leadership Identity</th><th>SA History</th></tr>
<tr><td>Mother as role model
Younger siblings (responsibility)
Academic excellence
Parents' divorce
Independence
Career choice</td><td>Mother as role model
Family – responsibility
Recognition through various leadership roles
Leadership rejection</td><td>#FeesMustFall</td></tr>
</table>

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Segments of Zoe's narratives

On leadership identity contributors:

"Coloured #FeesMustFall leader: *Being a coloured woman in leadership, I think particularly during the #FeesMustFall moment, I was exiting residence leadership when #FeesMustFall at the university was at its pinnacle point. There was a moment where I also had to think about myself and say, what is my role in this? Am I in the frontlines of protesting, occupying buildings and so on? Or how do I support this movement in the way that really is with integrity? So, not to perform a certain way of being a black or coloured leader on campus, but really speaks to who I am as a person and my values. Burning libraries is not something that I resonated with to support the very important issues that the #FeesMustFall and even #OpenStellenbosch movements were representing on campus. I think the part of being a coloured person or at least the narrative that I grew up with was that in betweenness of not being white enough and not being black enough kind of thing. But I think that to me was more of an opportunity, especially on our campus, because I see myself a lot of times, and not just in terms of race, but a lot of times as a sort of a bridge or translator in the sense that I can deeply resonate with a lot of the issues because I've experienced it myself in terms of the class conversation that comes with education. I think the way in which I do leadership allows me to also talk to let's call it the other side because the messaging, I think I just translate it in a different way. Even though I'm saying the same thing that for instance I almost want to say frontline protestors would, the way in which I do it is just different. I think I've started to take that on as part of my identity***.”***

On intersectionality major:

"Race responsibility: *sometimes I also just want to sit in my ignorance for a little bit. In the way that I think when you think of yourself as a leader and when there is this public affirmation or support of this particular kind of identity, I think people expect of you to always know what to say, what to do, how to act. Sometimes I really just also want to be, I almost want to say I want to be sad about something. I don't just want to have to jump into action and play this strong person for everyone else. This is again in different facets of my life. Sometimes I just want to be I almost want to say a normal person that doesn't take on responsibility for making things better, for improving. Coming back to this idea of being a coloured woman in the Stellenbosch University space as a leader. I think I've shared this publicly before as well and I find it very difficult to fit the mould of what at least black leadership looks like on campus and this idea that it must always be radical, it must always be confrontational. That is definitely not the kind of leader that I was. And so I think, yes, I definitely see myself as one, but sometimes I wish that I wasn't or that other people didn't see me that way because I just want to chill, I just want to be and sit with my feelings and sit with my own ignorance and so on."*

On South Africa's history and its influence (or the lack thereof) on her leadership identity:

"*I think I had trouble finishing my timeline in relation to this theme because there was nothing that was, I almost want to say, a particular event. But when I thought about it afterwards, and also thinking about it now, I think the historical events contributed to maybe not my leadership*

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identity, but my identity in a very indirect way. Because, to give an example, one of the only conversations that I remember with my parents was my mom, I think my mom was in matric in the year of the Soweto protests. While she wasn't necessarily active, I can understand, and also with my dad, my dad never finished high school, how the education aspect of apartheid and how that influenced their life trajectory definitely had a very big impact about where I am going and what opportunities I had or didn't have. I think just in general, I feel like maybe this is important, I think that for my parents at least at some point there was some kind of acceptance about where they are and what they could achieve. I think indirectly the effects on education and opportunities for my parents had an influence on where I was and how they motivated me towards my education and learning. In a very indirect way I would say June 16 education around apartheid was something that maybe influenced me more than I thought it did, but in a very indirect way."

On the impact of apartheid on her identity and leadership identity:

"I think definitely my family's experience of apartheid has influenced my identity, not necessarily in how they articulate it, but it did. Also to draw on Archer, it conditioned the space and the kind of life I was born into. That was the first, I almost want to say that's the first moment. Apartheid conditioned who I was allowed to become just in the sense of the world. Then I almost want to say my leadership identity journey then was to either say to myself, do I accept this positioning in the world or do I do something that's a bit different that allows me to set a new course for who I wanted to be and what I wanted to become? I think my leadership identity then coincides with how I've developed my own agency with the help of other people, that really just...My agency development was me saying to the world, I don't accept what you've given me or what you allow me to be and so therefore I'm taking up all of these opportunities. I am looking at the world a little bit differently so that I can help other people have that same opportunity to just I almost want to say counter-position themselves from what they were born into, whatever that might be. If I had to just sum that up, I think that's at a more meta level how I would describe it."

Dawid
White, gay, Afrikaans-speaking Christian male

Dawid has been recognised for his extensive contribution as a leader on campus and has also received a few scholarships for his academic excellence. As a white queer male, who grew up in a rural Afrikaans Christian background (his father is a theologian and a preacher), he has experienced many situations where his contribution and limitations as a white leader felt in conflict with his liberal outlook in life. His "coming out" process played a significant part of his identity. He has been involved in transformation processes as a student leader, and at the same time had to deal with his own sense-making of his sexuality as a Christian. His legal chosen career field, led

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to him being involved in various social justice programmes on campus and as a student leader within the residence space, often as facilitator of emotionally tensed conversations with students around inequality on campus. He offered deep, authentic timeline reflections which illustrated race, language, religion, social justice, humanity, sexuality as some of the major contributing factors in his identity and leadership identity formation. Main themes identified in his timeline reflections are:

Leadership identity contributors		
Sexuality Student movements Leadership roles Expressing leadership identity through the arts Field of studies/ sense of justice Constitution		
Identity	**Leadership Identity**	**SA History**
Outsider Founding my voice through the arts Medical condition Church/religion Leadership roles My Sexuality Career choice/ Law (mixing my love for art and a just world) My name My race	My sexuality (coming out) #OpenStellenbosch #FeesMustFall Recognition through leadership roles Expressing my leadership through arts Transformation work Legal work Tutoring	Soweto Uprising Interim Constitution (1993) Democracy (1994) Final Constitution (1996) Truth and Reconciliation Hearings #FeesMustFall #RhodesMustFall #OpenStellenbosch #antiGBV Covid-19 (death of Collins Khosa & Bulelani Qolani) – economic crisis of our country

Segments of Dawid's narratives

On intersectionality and leadership:

> *"I think if I reflect back on my leadership work on the ground in Stellenbosch, I sometimes feel very guilty because although I worked very hard, I felt I was just acknowledged because I was so different than other white people or other white men. Just by engaging with things that matter to students, I was recognised. That's always a difficult thing for me, where we put leaders on pedestals in Stellenbosch and that makes you a leader, to have that position. Then at other times when I really think of myself and what sparks leadership for me, I think it's that thing inside where you can't help it, but where there's a problem or where there's something that comes up, you can't help it but to step up and get involved and help engage and help holding spaces and it's very contextual. This stage in my life I don't feel like a leader. I feel very isolated and enclosed in an academic world and you almost have to be narcissistic to get what you need to*

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get out of an academic paper or a master's or get another position. I think where I feel I'm a leader is where there is a community and I form part of the community and I carve out a specific functional role that I think the community needs. It isn't that I have one leadership voice or one leadership skill, but it's constantly something I want to contextually evaluate. That comes back to the point I'm trying to make about in my leadership time it was #OpenStellenbosch, it was #FeesMustFall. Those were the things that mattered to students and just opening up space to make that palatable for people and also trying to break stereotypes about it was then [unclear] and put me on this pedestal where I just thought, no, we're missing the point here of what we're trying to do through leadership."

On leadership identity contributors:

"Negotiating Whiteness: *My whiteness and maleness, I would for the rest of my life, at least if I want to be in Africa or South Africa, is something that I will have to negotiate. It's very difficult, you can easily slip into a* ***white guilt*** *or the white tears conversation, or you can just become* ***numb*** *and don't do anything and just sit back into isolation and privilege. But I don't think that is really helpful. I really think what is helpful is if we open up identity and if we open up what is our attention and also our attention of ourselves. I think there were real moments, obviously there was a lot of #FeesMustFall moments where you realise how powerful it is to constantly negotiate yourself and your identity and how you fit into the bigger picture and the historical setting. I think it is, if I can use a metaphor that I tried to use earlier, it is sort of that being the butter in the fridge that take up all flavours and acknowledge that you're the butter and that you're not the tomato sauce, but that the butter can be another flavour and it can take up a lot of things. I think that's my answer****).***

On the impact of apartheid on his family:

"I think my parents' inability to understand how apartheid influenced us, themselves, their possibility of upward mobility in various sectors, propelled me to, perhaps I'm overcompensation sometimes. I sit with this complex fight with them of so what were you doing during apartheid? Did you say nothing? Did you just accept it? What did you actually do? Because I think we, our generation, we have similar calls and I'm trying to think what they did and am I just silent about climate change and mental health and economic inequality? I think it has definitely shaped a lot of me, not just my parents' inability to reckon with their complicitness and the complexity of 400 years of white domination has definitely influenced a lot of what I'm doing. I can sometimes subscribe to a very radical thought school that says there's no place for white people in Africa, except under certain preconditions and some of those are coming to terms with our past, how we were part of it, and also having a responsibility for its redress. I think there the relational part comes in, what your role is in group identification. It's not that it is only white men that should play a part or they should have the biggest part or that they should have the strongest voice in the redress, but it is one mere part of it. Currently I'm quite saddened by current narratives that we really, really shame government and we conflate corruption with blackness, but when we speak about the white private sector that fraudulently is complicit in

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money laundering and fraud, we don't call that corruption. We don't think of for 400 years we only prepared for 5 million of our country in terms of infrastructure, education, hospitals and now come 1994, 1996 with our final constitution, even though we're in a formal sense of equality where 60 million people now need to use infrastructure that was only built for 5 million people, a sense of equality, not even a good sense of equality, feels like oppression."

On the impact of apartheid on his leadership identity;

"*I think, to be very honest, it's probably the biggest influence on my leadership identity and formation, is our apartheid past and where I come from and having my political awakening in university. And then finding that balance of being a "volksverraaiers", a betrayer, but also that weird space of I now suddenly become a voice of difficult things and I am privy to activist spaces. I think it's not something that I've fully come to grasp with in my life yet, but at the very least I think my family doesn't think they are influenced by apartheid. My dad's not formally schooled.* ***My mother did a diploma in higher education and on her diploma it still says "onderwys vir blankes".*** *Very much the oppressed Afrikaner, poor Afrikaner narrative, that we worked our way to where we are, not engaging the structural advantages that come into play. But I think at the one end realising that, and this will be my stance until racialised poverty is eradicated in South Africa, I don't think you can be a leader in post-apartheid South Africa and not engage your identity or your race, especially if you are white. Yes, I do think some people abuse that identity, some people use it for the wrong reasons, but to really contest that identity and your complicity. Where you should speak out and where you shouldn't is a very difficult place for me. But I think in terms of my leadership identity, it caused deep commitments for myself for the rest of my life or how I want my life to be, what part I want to play in our country's future or our continent's future. I think I can go on for hours about this question, but at the very least right now the white spaces that I am in, what I like to call the white anxiety that feels oppressed and this very unhelpful narratives of corruption and maladministration and the apartheid years was better economically for everyone, even black people, even the lady that works for us says that. So, constantly having to contest that and challenge that, redefining how you are a leader in the small moments. Am I going to freak out, give a lecture? Or am I going to really, really try and understand your window into or have a perspective that my mother and father were hit as youngsters if they didn't use the bad words for black and coloured people, also being engrained in that?"*

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Bridget

Heterosexual, English-speaking coloured female

Bridget has been recognised for her involvement in a range of leadership activities at the Tygerberg campus. As a coloured female, she mentioned her grandmother, mother and aunt as strong leadership role models who emphasised the importance of education and independence. She admitted that she had difficulty doing deep timeline reflections and could not really identify anything significant in the South African history which had impacted her leadership identity formation. Main themes identified in her timeline reflections are:

Leadership identity contributors		
Mother Grandmother Aunt i.e., strong female figure (family structure)		
Identity	**Leadership Identity**	**SA History**
Mentoring Independence Academic excellence Family financial constraints Career field (MBChB)	Mother Grandmother Aunt	"I can recognise that SA historical events have afforded me to be in spaces that I would never have been in before, but can't think of one specific event that has contributed to my leadership identity"

Segments of Bridget's narratives

On the impact of apartheid (or the lack thereof) on her identity:

> *"I struggle to find ways in which I have been affected directly by apartheid. I know my family and my relatives actually often speak about it at home. I have the same experiences that Raaida has in terms of the opinions that my parents have, my grandparents. There's always a lot of talk about it. Sometimes they reflect and they'd be like, can you see our municipality, not that great, it was never like this type of thing. It's always in the background. But for me that has just made me aware that, okay, that's how things used to be given how things are at the moment. I'm very in between with this question, with this theme. I can't say it had no effect, but I really can't think of any effects at the moment and I didn't want to put something down for the sake of putting something down. I can acknowledge that we've got many more opportunities now post-1994, but I really can't think of anything personally."*

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On leadership identity contributors:

> *"I never realised how role models for me informed my leadership identity. Good and bad role models. Specifically I mentioned my family members, like the strong women in my family like my mom, my gran, my aunts. Their example contributed a lot to how I want to be. And I mentioned specifically previous leaders that I've observed in the position that I'm currently in or the position that I've been in at my time at Stellenbosch University. That also contributes a lot to my leadership identity. Not in a sense of I want to do exactly what they did, but more like I don't think that worked particularly in their setting. I think maybe if we change it like this for our setting. That contributes a lot to my leadership identity because I don't think I have the time to make all the mistakes that everyone else did, so I'd rather be learning from them than trying to do it all myself. So, I work a lot with examples and role models."*

Olwethu

English-speaking, black female who describes her gender and sexuality as "fluid"

Olwethu's comes from a Zulu and Zimbabwean background. She grew up in a household with strong female leaders. She had to work on her self-esteem and carving her way as a leader in her own right (and not following the path of her older sibling who is a well-known student leader on campus and in South Africa/Africa). She has been involved in various leadership roles on campus and in residence and has taken a keen interest in mental health advocacy work. Based on her own experiences of self-doubt, she realised the importance of self-awareness for student leaders as part of their leadership development. Through her creativity as an artist, she could express her leadership in her own authentic way, without copying the "leadership model" often favoured in the student community. Main themes identified in her timeline reflections are:

Leadership identity contributors		
Mental health Leadership roles Gender Expressing leadership identity through the arts and mental health Student movements Apartheid Serving others/servant leadership		
Identity	**Leadership Identity**	**SA History**
Discovering my love for music	Serving others Mental health	Soweto Uprising #antiGBV

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Fight with my blackness in a white private school Being bullied Mental wellbeing My sexuality Parents' divorce Recognition through leadership roles Rejection Career field (Psychology)	My gender (female leader) Recognition through leadership roles Expressing my leadership through art and mental health Grandmother, Mother, Sister Leading in a male residence	#RhodesMustFall #FeesMustFall #EndRapeCulture Covid-19 (innovative leadership) Apartheid #blacklivesmatters

Segments of Olwethu's narratives

On intersectionality:

"The fight with blackness: *I remember at school I wrote this piece about how I just wanted to scrub the blackness off of my skin because if I'm not black and if I'm not a black woman, then I probably would have a better and an easier time navigating high school. I remember when my mom and my sister saw that piece, they were really sad about it because here's this young person who is literally saying they don't want to be black, or at least a black woman anymore because they're already able to recognise those experiences that come with being this black woman in this space."*

"Separation of race and gender: *The whole narrative of everyone always speaking about this super strong black woman, that whole narrative, which I think for a lot of my life I haven't really been able to identify with. Because I've always understood myself as more of a softy. I don't really know how to be assertive and I don't really know how to deal with adverse situations, let's say if someone was rude to me. I always think of myself as a black woman, but then I even think, but do I fit that prototype of what people think of when they think of a black woman, if that makes sense. I think maybe specifically in Stellenbosch. You step into Stellenbosch University and you look around you and most of the time you don't really see people like you. I was surrounded by just white, Afrikaans women. And when people thought of the residence babe, the residence babe was the white, Afrikaans woman and everyone else's identities were just literally omitted."*

On intergenerational conversations:

"*It's like you're carrying that trauma that may have happened to people you knew, whether it be your parents, whether it be your grandparents, whether it be people you came across a couple of years ago or people you came across just the other day. I think there's this constant transference of trauma because there is this common experience, if that makes sense. Or common experience that manifests itself in different ways depending on the context a person finds themselves in, depending on who that particular person is. I think it's super interesting, but I definitely think of it more as carrying trauma, at least from my own context, carrying that trauma and utilising that trauma as fuel, I don't know if I'm putting it correctly, but as fuel for your current context. Going back to what I said about blackness having been secondary and now understanding that blackness has been secondary and that's based on what society has*

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deemed it as. Then trying my best as a black woman to then combat that inferiority complex because of the fact that I've heard these stories, I've heard these experiences, I've had my own experiences. It's just this constant transference of experience and trauma. I think maybe carrying trauma from others would be how I interpret it."

"I've been battling between trying to situate myself in relation to what has happened and then situating myself in relation to where I am right now and what's to come. But I think that something interesting I read was how someone posted that the same things that people were fighting for in June 16th, 1976, more or less have the same underlining ideologies that we're still fighting for as the youth in this day and age. I think that's something I haven't necessarily thought about in depth yet, but just coming across that has gotten me to start thinking of how do I relate myself to what has happened and how that's affected me and affected my family and so forth, but also utilising then what has happened to cultivate what needs to happen now. I think it's that whole thing of wanting to engage in the self-reflection. I constantly speak to my grandpa about stuff like this because it's just a very interesting thing for me to understand his perspective as an 84- or an 83-year-old man now and understanding his timeline and how experienced things and seeing what we agree on and what we don't agree on. It's cultivating my own way of seeing life and doing life without neglecting the lives that have enabled me to be able to live the life and do what I'm able and capable of doing. It's really interesting. I think everything that's been asked today has been so important and I wish that more people would engage in something like this because I think it just gets you thinking a lot. I think, once again going back to the whole of idea of introspection and just that refection being such an important skill or just such an important thing to do in life, regardless of where you find yourself."

On competing role identities:

"The role of a leader and the role of just being, with a focus on mental health. *I always found myself with these two roles fighting, saying but I'm doing this leadership role because I believe that they're things that I'm capable of doing. Things need to happen. Change needs to happen. I need to be the change that I wish to see in the world. But then to what extent and at what cost is that of then one's own mental health? That whole idea of how many leaders have left leadership positions being so incredibly burnt out and not wanting to do it anymore because of the fact that they're just like, I'm over it, I did what I needed to do and I'm done with it? That's sad, but it's a reality and that's how I left my term feeling. Because I was just like, I'm trying to do all of this, but I'm also trying to just be. Going back to my whole idea, my philosophical idea of just being."*

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Participant Profiles (Phase 3) – Senior Student Affairs practitioners

Vicky

Coloured female senior Student Affairs practitioner at a HWEU

Vicky is an English-speaking, coloured female, senior student affairs practitioner who has worked at an historically white university for almost 25 years. She has experienced the changes in the student leadership profile at her campus over the past few decades. Her engagement with student leaders includes student leadership development and student governance support. Vicky's disposition in relation to the topic of this research is that this is a vital arena of study for our South African higher education context and that are multiple and complex factors that contribute towards student leadership identity formation. She believes student agency and voice is crucial in understanding student leadership in South Africa today. She views the current realities and contestations around poverty, inequalities, gender-based violence, funding of Higher Education, decoloniality., and how students have engaged with these realities, to be providing important insights and imperatives for transformation in the sector.

Nkosazana

Black female senior Student Affairs practitioner at a HWAU

In relation to the theme of this study, Nkosazana describes herself as an African-Black woman who speaks Setswana and studied in what she now considers her third language - English. She has over 25 years' experience in working with students in the public South African higher education sector. She served in different capacities at different stages of her career - lecturing, leading Student Affairs divisions and serving at executive Rectorate level and served on the Institutional Audits Committee (IAC) of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) in South Africa. In all, students and their voices remain a priority in the process of creating environments conducive for learning and sharing and transforming institutional culture to remain relevant to current regenerations of students.

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Ria

White female senior Student Affairs practitioner at a HWAU

As a psychologist, Ria has extensive experience in students' wellbeing and the impact thereof on their general student life. She has been involved in a range of student life activities over the past decade on a campus which is considered majority white Afrikaans-speaking but has experienced considerable changes in the diversity of the student leadership profile.

Alistair

Coloured male senior Student Affairs practitioner at a HWEI

Alistair is a coloured male with 20 years' experience in a range of student governance, student life and development and student support functions. He has worked at three South African universities (two historically white English universities, and a new university), and is currently a Student Affairs executive. He also serves on several national bodies addressing issues of social justice, transformation, and student affairs more broadly. Alistair was involved as a prominent student leader of colour at the time of his study career at an historically white university.

Sindiswa

Black female senior Student Affairs practitioner

Sindiswa has extensive experience as a seasoned senior Student Affairs practitioner and serves on various national bodies. She has a keen interest in research related to Student Affairs. She believes intergenerational conversations have definitely influenced student leaders' understanding of their leadership roles, among others, and their negotiation and conflict management skills have benefited. During #FeesMustFall there was a lot of mediation designed as intergenerational interventions and these left a positive influence on how student leaders perceive their roles. On a personal level, she believes the biggest influence of intergenerational conversations on her was the role of mediation in conflict resolution, especially when there is an impasse between student leaders and management.

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Final reflections from the Student Affairs practitioners

On leadership identity contributors:

*During **#FeesMustFall** there was this stark distinction between activism and leadership. I do think it is sometimes an arbitrary distinction because it's funny that after #FeesMustFall many activists then occupied positions in the SRC. I remember one of my conversations with an activist was, so you were saying you want to dismantle the SRC but now you're on the SRC and enjoying all the privileges of being on the SRC. His response was, well, from the inside we're going to try to dismantle it. We're going to break it down and really prove that this SRC structure doesn't actually work and we're going to overthrow it - **(Vicky).** I saw the same with an anti-GBV mass meeting where those who considered themselves activists didn't want to work beyond a memorandum to management - (**Nkosazana).***

Family context:** Death of a parent, father's absence, parents' divorce are strong contributing factors but not often spoken about. Some bring them to life and acknowledge the pain, and others bury them but not realising that they have impact on their lives - (**Nkosazana).** I definitely referred students in leadership for counselling due to the fact that they've got bad behaviour but that it was due to reacting from a place of hurt - **(Ria).** The absent father and role of the mother resonates – often, especially during protests some of our staff were actually asking are students searching for parents in us or in the way they are relating to us (in Student Affairs). Students call me "Ma Vicky" - **(Vicky).** On grandparents – I've interacted with some students who were raised by grandparents and how that have impacted them with grandparents' passing on - **(Nkosazana).** Over the ten years plus that I've been in Student Affairs, I have collected case studies (students who show extreme bitterness and aggression in their leadership, and at times it manifests at the level of anger that they exercise when they are triggered and also when they are not triggered). The level of anger, aggression and bitterness that is associated with their leadership, in all the cases that I've investigated, when I have a student leader who is very difficult to relate with and the peers are reporting that it is very difficult, this person is excessively angry, bitter and aggressive, the next thing that I do is to ask about family arrangements. In all cases of the extreme cases that I've looked into, it would be a person who comes from a family that does not have both parents or a broken relationship, there is a bitterness and anger and even aggression, say against the father in most cases and it manifests in their leadership identity. They just exercise a deeper level of anger, bitterness and aggression, especially when they are fighting. Sometimes it is also fighting with the mother, not just with the father. So, when a student is in a conflict situation with their family or with their parents, they can become a very difficult leader to relate with – **(Sindiswa).

Mental health:** I've also had student leaders on our campus that went through tragic experiences which became the force within their leadership identity - **(Ria).

***Leadership roles:** I've seen how the leadership roles affirmed students, "you're popular, you're known on campus", but then when they leave the leadership role, they suddenly experience a transition in*

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terms of no longer being in that position where you're going to meet the VC and minister etc. So, it really becomes part of their identity – ***(Vicky).***

Sexual orientation: *I had an experience with one student leader who just felt they didn't want to represent the issues of LGBQTI community (and limited to being a queer leader) –* ***(Nkosazana).***

Gender: *I have seen that at our campus – a black female leader also dealing with the conflict of being a female leader. She wants her identity as a leader to overshadow the female part because then people have those negative attributes that they would want to allocate to being a female leader. So, she's struggling with the gender markers that people put on her, especially when it comes to leadership and being female or being a woman. But she also enjoys the glory of being a woman leader, so it is a kind of a divided type of identity that she's struggling with –* ***(Sindiswa).***

Political affiliation: *In our context we have an ongoing argument about can you really be apolitical? What does it mean to be apolitical? Yet when we say we are political beings, we then argue being political does not mean being affiliated to a party ideology. Because party ideologies are very narrow and some of them can be extremely toxic and they can be crippling even to intellectual thinking. In our SRC there are leaders who'd want to identify as apolitical and they become highly challenged and they get into a place where they would say, I am political, but not party affiliated. You'd find both black and white students who claim to be non-political. When you dig deeper you realise that it's not necessarily that they are not politically affiliated, it's just that they believe when you say you are apolitical, you are going to be seen as a better leader –* ***(Sindiswa).***

Leadership envy: *Students talk about the blazer because our leaders wear blazers. They envy the blazer a lot. When you wear a blazer on our campus, you are treated very differently and there are high expectations. The leaders even remind each other, you can't do that in a blazer. Which means when you are in this blazer, and sometimes it means even when the blazer is not on you, but you wear a blazer some stage, these are the expectations. There is a lot of respect maybe, but also a lot of envy from the student body for those who are in blazers, meaning those in student leadership –* ***(Sindiswa).***

Religion: *At our campus you'd automatically add African spirituality because it is now high on the radar where student leaders and student activists are picking it up for university to be true to their accommodating diversity even in religion. –* ***(Sindiswa),*** *and Muslim and Judaism* ***(Vicky).***

On the impact of intergenerational conversations on student leadership identity:

If the culture at home is not talking about difficult things, without realising that you're actually shutting it out, you're just trying to focus on what you can handle right now – ***(Nkosazana).***

I find it very interesting that families aren't talking about it. It feels like it's a continuation of what happens in many of our families where the intergenerational trauma isn't being spoken about or being dealt with

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*and so that's what we seem to be still continuing. I think that's, out of this conversation, that was quite an a-ha moment for me. In terms of the family experiences and how it influenced them, you get different responses. We also have examples of students whose families might have publicly denounced the previous generation's apartheid dealings in order for them to show that they are allies. We saw this quite a lot in our context at our university where young students, there was a, I don't know if it's a myth or whether it's true, but they will always talk about this particular student whose grandparents were linked to the Verwoerd family. But she was very clearly an ally to the student movement and made it very clear that she's an ally. She rejects apartheid, her role, her family's role in apartheid. I've also seen, where students don't know about how they were affected. I don't know if it's denialism that they were affected or that there was anything like apartheid, and so there's almost a blankness. Especially like Nkosazana has said, if you haven't understood or studied the history of the country, you wouldn't necessarily be able to engage on these issues. Of course you have the students whose parents were either involved or whose parents were activists and they are obviously influenced by that and that's why the continue with the activism. The flipside, you can also have people being involved in activism even though their families weren't involved. I think it's quite a range of different approaches that student leaders take on and for a range of different reasons they get involved in this. – (**Vicky).***

On South Africa's history and students' reflections:

Recognition of the Constitution: *student leaders recognising the constitution of South Africa as the highest supreme document confirming that everybody is equal. Also, the separation of powers. You find that student leaders trying to resemble South Africa with the separation of powers, e.g., you'll find a functional student court, student parliament and the SRC bringing those arms of the executive and the legislative and judiciary into play. But, I've also seen them calling each other "honourable" because they've seen it in public. Nelson Mandela and Robert Sobukwe are other figures that played different roles in the history of South Africa whom they would refer to, and basically the role of Chapter 9 – students realising they can actually report to the commission on gender equality. Another point is on "free education" where students are very angry with some parts of South Africa and would ask "what did you fight for"? Free education is not coming in the way they were expecting it when announced by President Jacob Zuma. But then there are students who think deeper and asking, but who is paying? The taxpayers , but that is our parents, so is it actually free education? –* ***(Nkosazana).***

Clinging on to the past & reconciling the present: *There are still different groups on our campus, the one feeling that we have moved on, and the other ones that still feel that (especially when it comes to traditions in residences) it's a big problem that our leaders need to manage. There the alumni are still involved and still clinging onto our specific campus (HWAU) – (Ria). I see a divisive discourse there that always challenges our students. On the one hand there are those who believe, hey, move on, don't keep on crying about the past. Apartheid did this and that to us. The challenge as a leader is what are you doing now to bring change today, so forget about. And there are those who say, hey, we cannot ignore the pulling behind from our historical past in the sense that it has created inequality and we are still suffering the inequality today, so there's no way that we can forget about our past history. You see*

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it across even highly respected South African leaders, where others would say stop moaning about apartheid and others are saying let's redress the inequality. Even today we will never be equal if we do not address the inequality created by apartheid. That I see as a big influence in terms of dealing with the South African historical past and how it challenges leadership formation and leadership identity today – ***(Sindiswa).***

Nelson Mandela problematised: *It has to do with the promises that were made and broken. When they think of key moments, 1994 don't necessarily stand out. It's actually 1976 because they can connect with the issue of fighting the battle of education. Their models would ne Steve Biko, Sobukwe, Frantz Fanon, and feminists like Audrey Lorde. I see a difference between the 2015 group and the current group. The current group would often talk about #FeesMustFall as being key moments for them that shaped their leadership –* ***(Vicky).***

Student activism and student power: *In some instances a deep questioning of the '94 moment and what it may or may not represent. A lot of questioning around that, around the choices that were made at the time and what that might mean for us now. In our HWEU context, what is also large in our student psyche is the #FeesMustFall moment. Often when they threaten us with protest action, they will say in 2015 we brought this place to a standstill, we will do it again. And so, because we are now, many of those 2015 students are gone or are busy graduating, exiting the system at postgrad level and so on, there's also some attempts to try and keep almost that history alive and what that meant for the student movement. That historical moment in at least the higher education landscape, it's an important reference point when students think about their own activism, what possibilities might be and what they think they might be able to do. People will threaten us and say in 2015 it started at a specific university, the media was there, we will start it again, the media will come. In terms of challenging, in terms of what it means for student power and then the contestations about what the '94 moment represents and the complexity around where we are now and what that moment might have meant –* ***(Alistair).***

On apartheid's influence on student leadership:

*We struggled to attract Indian students. Once on campus they would start sharing the experiences and how they could not believe that they're able to actually be at the university and their parents would tell them about what was happening during apartheid. Black students would say, we are not actually free and we can't move freely, e.g., they cannot get into clubs etc. It makes it so alive in the minds of black students in particular and especially SASCO because they really want to address these things and to say, you know what, if we have entertainment, we have to go to the township because if you want to avoid conflict, you avoid clubs that are close by to campus. Those things become so alive in their minds and when the weekend ends, they are so angry with life again to say, I chose to come to this university, but actually it's like I chose apartheid in some aspects of my life. Because some of these things are so sophisticated and subtle, it becomes very difficult to address and that frustrates the students even further – (****Nkosazana).***

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That's exactly what we also experience on our campus, for instance, is that the clubs surrounding the university, are only catering for a certain group of students. Even some of the residences, we still have social "aksies" as they call it in the residences and then they will only play a certain type of music. But now I must also refer to some of our students who have been complaining about the same thing that is happening at another campus, for instance, where they also feel that there they only speak one language, and their functions are also catering for only one group of students. From the management side and from our leadership side we really try to make them aware that we must be very sensitive for all our students' needs, but that is definitely a problem, especially on a social level – ***(Ria).***

I think just the way students who are still living in township areas, who come from that background, as they would say, their material conditions have not changed under democracy. In some ways things are even worse and then you take on the responsibilities of the entire family, you're the first generation in higher education and all that brings with it. For many of them, based on their very own circumstances, apartheid is still very much part of their reality. They don't feel like things have changed. Many students feel that way – ***(Vicky).***

I can also maybe share an example of a student. He's in his sixth year now. He's an honours student. He was in an Afrikaans-speaking school, fluently in Afrikaans, but it's a black student from Pretoria. He has this amazing musical talent. He joined the choir from elementary school. He was in our university choir. He grew up with his grandparents. It's amazing what he could do with our students in telling them about the time of apartheid and how his grandfather shared those things with him, and he will do it in Afrikaans. He would address them in Afrikaans. There I could sense the fact that for a few of our students they were really very trapped in that, "oh, but we weren't even alive in those times" (some of our white students), it opened up their eyes to see that he (this black student) had some of these privileges being in an Afrikaans high school and being able to go overseas, but his grandfather that was part of that struggle during apartheid and that he was still living in that shack and he was staying with him there. It was amazing how this student could break that perceptions of some of our students and he was a great leader within the student community. He stood out as a great leader – ***(Ria).***

Mixed opinions. *I came to understand alongside my journey at this HWAU that it was an institutional design to put the June exam timetable fall over June 16th, because previously June 16th across South African higher education was like what we see beginning of the year where students are reminded to fight for access and financial and otherwise, academic exclusion, financial exclusion. June 16th always instigated that activism and fight in students and especially previously black universities would end up in riots. This institution tasted that a little bit after opening for black students and immediately put in a policy that the June exams must be heavy around June 16th. So, it became a culture that there is no room to celebrate June 16th and even to talk about Youth Month becomes an undoable thing because students are in exams. We even have a cooling off period that around exams and in exams we don't do co-curricular, extra-curricular things. It has been successfully built into the this institution's psyche that let's forget about that, let's move on. We once took one SRC one year very early in my career in*

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Student Affairs to a monument. It also has a name plaque of those who lost their lives to the struggle. We thought this is part of their development as leaders to understand the South African history. We walked through that memorial wall and some students cried, others were proud that they could point to family members, their family linkage to some of the names. Others were crying because they were so angry that they were being reminded that their families and fathers, great grandfathers were murderers because they killed these activists. When we came back on campus, some of them reported to the executive. I nearly lost my job. The argument was that it was a very divisive field trip, what was I thinking to expose students to the trauma of apartheid? – ***(Sindiswa).*** *When we look at the student leadership cohort, we're asking deep questions about where are the white students, where are the coloured students, where are the Indian students because in the main leadership structures, they are not visible. What we're finding in terms of in relation to apartheid for student leaders, I think they're defining their relationship with apartheid more in economic terms, that I am predominantly still poor and we are still struggling as black people and that's how they see this ongoing legacy and impact of apartheid on who they are. But there's another level where I sometimes feel that there isn't an appreciation for just exactly what apartheid was and the extent to which it impacted on the lives of South Africans, a dismissiveness, often an attitude that things are now much worse. "You people can't relate to a struggle because you're older people, you have forgotten what it's about and we are the young ones who are going now through a real struggle around the economy". A lot of it is in relation to that. But also, of course, because most of the dominant political force on my campus, ANC type politics that influences a lot of what we do. How they celebrate, what they celebrate is very much along the national party lines and so the debate is often informed by ANC politics and what happens in ANC politics –* ***(Alistair).***

On post-apartheid student leadership themes:

Student Affairs: *I think what is different is that student leaders have a voice and they are involved in the formal structures of universities. Pre-94 and even Student Affairs in general, the history of South Africa when it comes to Student Affairs in the 80s and earlier, it was about dealing with protests and all unrest on campuses. That is why in South Africa started with Deans of Students being people with a Theology background, to do counselling etc., because Student Affairs was just to fight fires and students' voice, it was a frustrating moments for students to actually address issues with the leadership of universities. Therefore they would bottle a lot of things and then resort to protests, because that was the language of the day, to say, if you want to be listened to, you must protest. Post-94, there's other ways, but there's remnants of that because people still believed that you have to protest to be listened to, but at least there are structures in place and the Higher Education Acts also recognises the SRC as a statutory body and therefore universities having to put those in place –* ***(Nkosazana).***

Post-apartheid movements: *I think some of the experiences or what students would say sometimes is almost a feeling of a sense of betrayal of the pre-1994 leadership and almost a denial from the current generation that there were even activists or people who also, can I say the extent of the state brutalisation towards young people. It's only 1976, but when you have these intergenerational conversations and you say to students but we also toyi-toyied or people have spent time in jail and*

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apartheid was a police state, it was brutality on a different level, it's almost like, oh, but that can't be true. I think there is sometimes a sense that student leaders don't want to accept that we have wisdoms and experiences to share. And so, I find that quite interesting. In terms of that in the intergenerational conversation, that sometimes come to the fore. Now there are other options that student leaders have. There are the legal options that they also have in terms of making their voices known in addition to the protest and the activism that students are now doing. I think there was a moment where students felt that they were more endangered and when you are in the heat of the protest or activism, then students feel like they are being treated so badly, but at the same time you almost have to hold up a mirror. I know there has been **police brutality,** *for example, we can't get away from that. I think there are different ways of how students negotiate this and they see themselves as different. I think definitely this generation is more courageous in the sense of opening up, having the difficult conversations and naming things and what they bring to the table in terms of addressing issues of patriarchy has taken a lot of courage. There's lots of things about this generation that is novel and different in how they push the boundaries. –* ***(Vicky).***

Mental health pre-94: *I think it's more spoken about now. Pre-94 there was no time to even talk about it. It's like even within society and the townships people joke and say, you know what, mental health, we just normalised it. You move on, you don't even focus on it. There's a lot of people with mental health issues, but they don't see it as mental health and therefore it was never recorded like that because there were other priorities –* ***(Nkosazana).***

Triggers and borrowing trauma: *Anything comes up and this generation says, "you know what, this triggers me", and avoiding to talk about it or what really is happening and really hanging onto what they are borrowing from another generation to make it their own and for you to understand that they're disturbed.* ***– (Nkosazana).*** *This just brings to mind, and maybe it was a moment of trauma, of mass trauma for us with Uyinene's passing. We had on campus the memorial with thousands of students. What ended up happening was that there was this mass of students sharing different stories of having been traumatised or raped or molested. I generally witnessed, I don't know if you can call it a mass triggering? We ended up having to redirect students to go and get counselling. And so, there was that borrowing of the trauma and the triggering and the mass triggering which I think is extremely destructive if not facilitated or contained* ***– (Vicky).*** *I also wanted to comment on borrowing trauma. I was once tempted to believe that when it comes to GBV, students borrowed trauma and I got a shock of my life of how wrong I was and how widespread gender-based violence trauma, how widely spread it is in our student body, especially male students having to deal with their fathers as abusers representing "men are trash". As for triggers, the lessons that we are learning is we really need to not shy away from this language of understanding micro-aggressions, triggers and all of that and how to deal with them, even at the level of the classroom, not just outside for co-curricular content –* ***(Sindiswa).***

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Institutional culture: *Then of course a lot of the struggle around institutional culture and what they would call we just need to breathe, we can't breathe in this space. A lot of the struggle today is around the culture, the institutional culture, the inclusivity or not of that culture now that they've arrived whereas I think previously they would say it was about the apartheid struggle, bringing down that system so that there's equality at least in terms of law –* ***(Alistair).***

On participating in this study:

"*I think this is going to really help us to understand better (the impact of apartheid on student leadership), because this is what we have been looking for. It's adding, it's making the contribution to what is a gap in our profession in the country. We can take some of this work forward, some of these insights forward in enriching our relationships with students, but also how we do our leadership development training and all of those kinds of issues – (***Vicky).***

It was a reminder to say we need to continue to listen deeper and to create spaces to talk. I know our environments are so busy at times that we do not have enough time to actually sit with the students and really not even have a formal agenda, for us to talk about things that are on their minds. Generally just to say we know that our environment is forever changing. This kind of research helps us as well because we are forever referring to experiences of other countries. We need something that is within our context and that shows that we are working hard to understand our own students in our context. Thank you very much for this opportunity, I enjoyed it. – ***(Nkosazana).***

I think we should be creating more platforms to reflect on these challenges that we are experiencing, how different they are and where the commonalities are and our contribution in pushing our institutions to better places, but also challenging our student leaders to get to those better places of living out their leadership. I've personally learned and enjoyed just being reminded of some of the things that I thought I knew about the different institutions, but also to understand at another level how things are at this stage for our student leaders – ***(Sindiswa).***

Such a powerful opportunity for us to learn from each other and for our students to learn from each other and the different experiences. At a personal level and maybe professional-personal, it's really challenged me to think quite deeply about our students, who they are, what they're about, how they come to be, the journey that they find themself on. I think it was quite challenging for me to also think about how I interpret what I'm experiencing and what I'm seeing, which I think is important for us in this space because we must constantly reflect and think and review and affirm and so on, so thank you for that opportunity, it was really important – ***(Alistair).***

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Appendix B:
Interview protocol (Phase 1)

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Title:

Contributing factors to student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa.

Main research question:

What informs student leadership identity formation in post-apartheid South Africa?

Two main sub-themes/sub-question:

- *Evaluating a phenomenon:*
    - Referring to the Leadership Identity Development (LID) Model and adopting Komives *et al.'s* (2006) argument, namely, that identity is informed by two key families of developmental theory: psychosocial and cognitive, the sub-question enquires, *in which phase of the LID Model was the key shift in this selected students' leadership identity formation and why?*
- *Explaining causes and consequences of a phenomenon, i.e. relation:*
    - Reflecting on the concept of "historical trauma" and questioning its potential effect on the selected student leaders' leadership identity formation.
        - Reviewing the South African political timeline, and leadership theory timeline: *What are the key themes in the South African history and intergenerational elements affecting the leadership identity formation of the selected group of student leaders?*

Notes:

- 4 x 2hour interviews per participant will be conducted, weekly, over a period of 1 month. Komives *et al.* (2005) served as guideline for interview duration.
- Participants will receive a notebook which they can use during the month for personal reflections (to be handed in at interview 4). Students will receive guidelines for reflection. As part of my own reflexivity process, I will also journal my reflections during the data collection phase. Komives et al. (2005) refers to reflective learning as structured opportunities for critical reflections to uncover passions, integrity and commitment to continual self-assessment and learning.
- Participants will be requested to create 3 timelines prior to interview 1,2 and 4. Students will be given an example of what a "life event" could be (taking into account that a "life event" is personal, subjective and has had a meaningful impact on their lives).
- Themes linked to the LID Model and theoretical framework of the Social Identity Theory of Leadership/ SIT of Leadership (and broader identity theory) will be used as guidelines for the questions. Although the selection of questions originates predominantly from the LID model and the SIT of Leadership theory, a wider range of identity and leadership literature has been considered.
- It is important to mention that I will not share a glossary of the constructs (identity, leader, leadership identity, leadership, intersectionality, group identification.) with the participants prior to the interview. Prior to an interview I will, however, ascertain if the student understands what is being referred to by, "identity", leadership identity" and "historical South African event" to enable them to create their timeline. My approach will be inductive, therefor their understanding will be considered first, before I will share a definition with them when clarity is needed. As a point of reference for myself, the following approaches from the literature overview will serve as guideline for this study:
    - **Identity:** Identity will be approached as grounded within social categories of gender, race (Hogg, 2001a). "Identity and self-concept are interlocked depending on the intra- and interpersonal processes mediated by the self-concept" (Markus & Wurf, 1987). "Identity is informed by two key families of developmental theory: psychosocial and cognitive (Komives, 2006).

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- **Leader:** The concept of "leader" is often referred to as what a leader is (characteristics) and what a leader does (competencies) for and in relation to others. (Bass, 1990). Hannah & Avolio (2011) refer to Bass & Bass (2008: 219) which describe leader and character of a leader as "character of a leader involves his or her ethical and moral beliefs, intentions and behaviours. Bass & Bass (2008) further suggest that leader character is linked to virtuous traits such as integrity, justice and fairness. In their definition, we can see that character is defined as a disposition or trait, a way of thinking, being guided by a set of rules or principles, and a behaviour or action. It is foreseen that in these interviews, the participants will most likely refer to character description.
- **Leadership identity:** Strauss & Corbin's (1998) first introduction of leadership development as identity development will be utilised as adopted by Komives *et al.* (2005) where identity refers to the processes of making meaning associated with particular situations or roles that influence the way individuals perceive themselves or others as leaders.
- **Leadership:** Leadership can be viewed as the outcome of mutual influence between leaders and followers, which eventually becomes diffused within a group and the broader social system (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007), thus supporting Rost (1993), Allen & Cherrey (2000), Bennis (1989), Heifetz (1994) and Wheatly (1999) who argue that society has shifted to a knowledge-based network world where leadership functionality evolves around networking, relating and influencing change and Komives *et al's.,* (1998:21) definition, that leadership is a relational process of people together attempting to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good.
- **Motivation to lead (MTL):** Motivation to lead (Chan & Drasgow, 2001) is defined as individuals' willingness to engage in leadership training activities and assume leadership roles.
- **Intersectionality:** As Warner and Shield (2013;804) proposed that intersectionality applies to all identities and that no single intersectional position experience only privilege or only oppression, I will consider a wider category (race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language.), while being mindful of Crenshaw's (1991) reference to intersectionality which often refers to the overlapping of inequalities where intersection of two minority categories (e.g. black and woman) constitute a distinct social position (black woman) and disadvantage.
- **Group identification:** Group identification within Social Identity Theory is typically limited to personal choice of the individual to the extent to which they define themselves in terms of various social cultural categories (Tajfel (1978), Turner & Giles (1981), Abrams & Hogg (1990), but for the purpose of this study I will also include groups which are ascribed by others to the individual.
- **Self-concept:** "Self-concept is negotiated from an available set of self-conceptions – a productive space/system of self-conceptions from which an individual constructs a working self-concept" (Mead, 1934). Thus, "self-concept" should be viewed as a multifaceted phenomenon, as a set or collection of images, conceptions, theories, goals and tasks" (Markus & Wurf, 1987: 301), and taking into consideration that the social environment should be regarded as a contributing factor to the stability and malleability of the self-concept (Markus & Kunda, 1986:858).
- **Social self-concept:** "The extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their relationships". Social self-concept could also be described with two distinct constructs: relational self (emanating from relationships with significant others) and collective self (based on identity with a group or social category (Uhl-Bien, 2006:657) with reference to Hogg (2001a).
- **Self-identity:** " a collection of identities that reflects the roles that a person occupies in the social structure" (Whannell & Whannell, 2015), also, "self-identity focuses on the linkages of social structures with identities and the internal process of self-verification" (Stryker & Burke, 2000).
- **Social identities:** "Social identities consist of the self's projections towards others, other's projections towards the self and reaction to the received projections and are sites in which people draw on an are imposed on by external discourses" (Beech, 2008; Beech, 2011:286) or Tajfel's (1982) simple reference to social identity as referring to that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership.
- **SIT of Leadership:** The social identity theory of leadership is a formal extension and application of social identity theory, particular the social identity theory of the group (self-categorisation theory) and the social identity analysis of social influence (referent informational influence theory) to explain leadership as a social influence phenomenon (Hogg, Van Knippenberg & Rast, 2012: 259).

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- Interviews will consist of a combination of various types of questions (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984; Bernard, 2000; Gilbert, 1993, Gilham, 2000): contrasting questions, describing questions, probing questions, cross control, normalising and indirect questions.
- Interview 4 will also allow for cross-control and for the participants to share final reflections which might not be linked to any of the probing questions. This is to allow for an opportunity to expand on the contributing factors which might differ from case to case.
- **Triangulation**: The interviews (phase 1) will be followed by a small focus group of positional leaders at Stellenbosch University (phase 2), followed by a focus group of Student Affairs Practitioners from 5 other Higher Education institutions in South Africa (phase 3).

Interview themes

Interview	Interview cycle	Interview themes	Reference to theory	Interview questions
1: *Prior to this interview participants will be requested to create a timeline of 10 markable life events that contributed to their* ***identity development.***	**Life history** Background knowledge probe (Angelo & Cross, 1993). Life narrative method (Bruner, 1987; Riessman, 1993) – allows for the broadest possible story to emerge to connect various experiences to the emergence of leadership identity (Komives *et al.*, 2005:595)	**Developing Self** **Identity**	Identity will be approached as grounded within social categories of gender, race etc (Hogg, 2001a). "Identity and self-concept are interlocked depending on the intra- and interpersonal processes mediated by the self-concept" (Markus & Wurf, 1987). Warner & Shields (2013), Crenshaw (1991)	**Identity:** - Please tell me more about yourself (background, family life, field of study, personal values)? - How would you describe yourself? - How would your peers describe you? - In what way will there be a difference? - Why? - Can you explain how has the way you have described yourself now, changed over the years? - If I mention the word, *"identity"*- what comes to mind when you think of yourself? **Intersectionality:** - If I mention the word, "intersectionality", what comes to mind? - What contributes to your identity? - Why? - Describe how these sections which constitutes your identity, have a more significant role in your life than others? - Has it always played this significant role in your perception of Self?

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				- Let's review your timeline: why did you choose these life events as contributors to your identity/sense of Self?
2: *Prior to this interview participants will be requested to create a timeline of 10 markable life events that contributed to their* ***leadership identity development.***	**Exploration**	**Leadership identity** **Broadening view of leadership**	(Komives *et al.*, 2006) Crenshaw (1991)	**Leadership as a concept:** - **What did you used to think leadership was and what do you think it is now?** - What made you change your perception of leadership? **Leadership identity:** - If I mention the word "leader", what comes to mind? - If I mention the word "leadership identity", what comes to mind? - Do you think of yourself as a leader? - When did you begin thinking of yourself as a leader? - Describe the significance of the first leadership role you occupied? - How would you describe your "leadership identity"? - How would others describe your "leadership identity"? - What informs your leadership identity? **Intersectionality:** - Going back to our first conversation about your identity – explain how (if at all) these sections of your identity are contributing to your self-perception as a leader? - Explain how (if at all) these sections of your identity contribute to your "leadership identity"? - What is the most significant section of your identity contributing to your "leadership identity"? - Has it always been the most significant **Broadening view of leadership:** - Growing up as a child, who was the first person you can remember that you have acknowledged as a leader? - What about this person made you regard him/her as a leader? - Describe the relationship you have with this person. - Let's review your timeline: why did you choose these life events as contributors to your leader identity?

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3:	**Exploration**	**Group influences** **Developmental influences** *SIT of Leadership*	Social self-concept – the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their relationships (Uhl-Bien, 2006) (Komives *et al.*, 2009) (Komives *et al.*, 2009) (Komives *et al.*, 2009) *(check for identity salience, identity standards, self-relevant perceptions, i.e. when is identity salience positively affected by the degree of commitment to the respective role and the degree to which its respective role is positively evaluated with one's performance).*	**Group identification and identity:** - If I mention the word, "group identification", what comes to mind? - How do you identify yourself within the student community? - What is the significance of group identification for you? **Social self-concept:** "The extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their relationships". Social self-concept could also be described with **two distinct constructs**: *relational self* (emanating from relationships with significant others) and *collective self* (based on identity with a group or social category (Uhl-Bien, 2006:657) with reference to Hogg (2001). - Has this description in any way changed your perception of your group identification? **1st Leadership role** - Going back to our 2nd conversation, now describe the significance of your first leadership role that you occupied. - **Leader** - Where were/are you most active as a leader right now? - Is there any specific reason you have chosen to lead this cause/group? - Describe the role you have taken on as leader? - What strategies have you used to ensure that this group/s and its goals will continue after you are no longer the leader/or on campus? - **Follower** - Where are you most active as a follower right now? - Is there any specific reason you have chosen to join this cause/group as a member? - Describe the role that you have taken on as a follower? - What strategies have you used to ensure that this group/s and its goals will continue after you are no longer a member/or on campus? - **Feedback** - To which extent did you create opportunities for feedback about your performance as a leader? - How did you adjust your performance as a leader based on the feedback received?

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			Stryker & Burke, 2000:290) (Whannell & Whannell, 2015) Self-identity- "a collection of identities that reflects the roles that a person occupies in the social structure" (Terry, Hogg & White, 1999; 227). (Komives et al., 2006) Self-concept and identity seems to be interlocked depending on the intra- and interpersonal processes mediated by the self-concept. People learn about themselves from others both through social comparisons and direct interaction (Markus & Wurf, 1987:305)	**Role identities:** - What is your opinion if I say the following; "*persons are typically embedded in multiple role relationships in multiple groups and have multiple identities, these multiple identities could either reinforce or compete"* (Stryker & Burke, 2000: 290). - Going back to our 1st conversation about identity: now describe your role identities? - When/ in which contexts, if ever, do you feel these role identities reinforce or compete? - What skills have you had to acquire over the years as a leader to manage a situation when role identities compete? **Role models:** - In session 2 you mentioned person x who made an impression on you as a leader. Can you identify the role models (adults, peers) in your life? - Why? - How has your leadership development been affected by them? **The leader as contributor to peers' and followers' leadership development :** - Have YOU mentored a peer (someone who has a similar role than yours) in their leadership development? - Have YOU mentored a follower (someone who is a member of a group which you have lead/are leading) in their leadership development? - What, if any, is the significance of this particular mentoring role to you? - How has this process contributed to YOUR leadership identity? - What other leadership development opportunities have you explored over the years which have had a significant contribution to your leadership identity? Please explain….

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			SIT of leadership: "..leadership as a social influence phenomenon" (Hogg, van Knippenberg & Rast, 2012)	

4:
Prior to this interview participants will be requested to create a timeline of 10 markable ***historical events in South Africa*** *that contributed to their leadership identity development.*
	Reflection & Meaning	**South African contextual contributing factors**	Adonis (2016) & Adonis (2018)
			
			Githaiga, Gobodo-Madikizela & Wahl (2017)
			
			Kirmayer, Gone, & Moses (2014)
			
			Lockhat & Van Niekerk (2000)
			
			Schramm
			
			(2011)
			
			Simpson, (2000)
				South African context & identity:
				- Describe the time in South Africa, that you recall growing up...as a child…teenager…student?
				- What/who has influenced your recollection of South Africa's history?
				- Please explain.
				- In what way, if any, has your family/relatives been affected by apartheid?
				- In what way, if any, have YOU been affected by apartheid?
				- Has your family's experience of apartheid influenced your;
				  - identity? How?
				  - perception of leadership? How?
				  - leadership development? How?
				  - leadership identity? How?
				  - chosen group identification (where you lead/follow). Why?
				- Now, let's review your timeline. Why were these events (community, society at large) that you've listed on your timeline significant to your leadership identity formation?
				
				Current South African student leadership context:
				- Describe your experience as a student leader today in post-apartheid South Africa?
				- In what way do you think is your experience as a student leader today **different** to a student leader prior 1994?
				- In what way do you think is your experience as a student leader today, **the same** as that of student leader prior to 1994?
				- What are the main themes student leaders are dealing with today? (*I will give examples when mentioning sociological, psychosocial, political, environmental, economical factors)*
				- Explain the extent to which you can identify with the themes that you've mentioned?

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		Linked to group influences and the SIT of Leadership		- Are there any themes which you simply cannot relate to? Why? - How does your **identity** (with reference to session 1) **enable** your role as a student leader in addressing these themes? - How does your **identity** (with reference to session 1) **challenge** your role as a student leader in addressing these themes? - How does your **leader identity** (with reference to session 2) **enable** your role as a student leader in addressing these themes? - How does your **leader identity** (with reference to session 2) **challenge** your role as a student leader in addressing these themes?
			Brown (2000) identifies a gap in Social identity Theory of leadership literature – “managing social identities in a multicultural setting”.	**Managing social identities in multicultural settings:** - If I mention “social identities” – what comes to mind? **Social identities:...**social identity refers to “that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership”. - Has this explanation, in any way changed your perception of what social identities refer to? - As a student leader in post-apartheid South Africa, how do you manage social identities in a multicultural setting (like the student community at Stellenbosch University), whilst being cognisant of your own identity? - Can you describe a time in your student leadership position, when you felt either conflicted or truly aligned with the cause/issue at hand? - Reviewing your **leadership identity** timeline, did this particular incident have any similarities with any significant incident on your timeline
		The critical incident – the KEY Shift	(Komives et al., 2006)	**Final reflections** - To summarise – in what way, if any, has intergenerational conversations influenced your understanding of your role as a student leader in post-apartheid South Africa? - **Reflecting on the past month, and the 4 conversations we had, the time you’ve spent in creating your timelines - what would you consider the major shift in defining and understanding your leadership identity?** - **Finally, to end our round of interviews: what did you used to think leadership was and what do you think it is now? (Komives *et al.*,2006).** - Do you have any final reflections you would like to share about this process and its relevance to your awareness of the contributing factors to your leadership identity formation process in post-apartheid South Africa?

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Appendix C:

Letter of consent (Phase 1)

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Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences

Letter of Introduction and Informed Consent

Department of Business Management

Title of the study
Contributing factors to student leadership identity formation in post-Apartheid South Africa.

Research conducted by:
Ms. H. October (19396440)
Cell: 084 567 2017

Dear Participant

You are invited to participate in an academic research study conducted by Heidi October, Doctoral student from the Department of Business Management at the University of Pretoria.

The purpose of the study is to do qualitative research through in-depth case studies to investigate the contributing factors to the leadership identity formation of a selected group of positional student leaders at Stellenbosch University in post-Apartheid South Africa.

Please note the following:
You are being approached to participate in this research because you have been identified as a positional student leader at Stellenbosch University who are fulfilling the requirements of this study, i.e.

- The student leader must be holding or have held a positional leadership role within the student community (e.g. Cluster Convenors, Academic Council, Faculty Council, Residence Committee Member, Primaria/Primarius, Student Representative Council).
- The student leader must have had received a "Rector's Award for Excellence in Leadership" for their contribution to the student community or based on the student leader's involvement on campus, must have made an impact or meaningful contribution to the student community as a positional leader.
- The student leader should have been at least three years enrolled as a student at Stellenbosch University, i.e. final or Postgraduate student.
- The student leader must, at the time of the interviews, still be actively involved within the student community (e.g. Student Court, Student Parliament, Mentor, Monitor, Facilitator of leadership development programmes, Faculty Mentut Programmes etc.)

Details of the data collection method:

- If you agree to participate you will be requested to participate in 4 semi-structured interviews with the researcher.
- It is foreseen that the interviews will take place weekly at a time that will suit your academic schedule and co-curriculum involvement.
- The interviews will be confidential, audio-recorded and transcribed and your real name will not be revealed in the PhD thesis. It is anticipated that each interview will take approximately 2 hours of your time commencing in September 2020 to December 2020.
- You will be required to write reflections in between your interviews which will support your leadership learning process to be handed in at interview 4. You will receive a copy of your reflections.
- The content of your interview will be used for this research purpose only and will in no way be to your disadvantage.
- This research will be following a grounded theory of student leadership identity formation and will potentially add to the leadership identity formation literature by sharing the experiences of 10 South African student cases in post-Apartheid South Africa at Stellenbosch University. It will therefore aim to address the knowledge gap of taking the South African history and intergenerational trauma and the

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students' intersectionality into account as potential contributing factors to their leadership identity formation.

- There will be no guaranteed direct benefits for the participants. It is however foreseen, that the participating student leader will gain deep reflections on their leadership journey and what could have potentially contributed to their leadership identity formation process.
- The interview cycle with the participants, will be followed by a focus group with other positional leaders at Stellenbosch University to discuss emerging themes from the interview cycle. It is therefore requested that you will regard your interview process as strictly confidential.
- The second round of focus groups will be conducted with Student Affairs Practitioners at five other Higher Education Institutions in South Africa. At no given time of this research will your name be disclosed. The purpose of this second round of focus groups, will be to discuss emerging themes that emanates from the interviews and previous focus group sessions.
- **The interviews will be conducted virtually using MSTeams,** until Stellenbosch university permits face-to-face research to continue following COVID-19 protocols, at a venue provided by the researcher on the Stellenbosch main campus (or on the Health & Medicine Sciences, Military Sciences Faculty Campuses) that will be convenient for the participants and discreet to ensure no interruptions.
- Your participation in this study is very important to us. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.
- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes only and may also be published in an academic journal. I will provide you with a summary of my findings on request.

Please contact my study leader, Prof. Derick de Jongh at derick.dejongh@up.ac.za or 012 420 3386 if you have any questions or comments regarding the study.

In research of this nature the study leader may wish to contact respondents to verify the authenticity of data gathered by the researcher. It is understood that any personal contact details that you may provide will be used only for this purpose and will not compromise your anonymity or the confidentiality of your participation.

Please sign the form to indicate that:

- You have read and understand the information provided above.
- You give your consent to participate in the study on a voluntary basis.

____________________________ ____________________

Participant's signature **Date**

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Appendix D:

Ethics approval – University of Pretoria

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RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences

Approval Certificate

14 February 2020

Miss H October
Departement: Business Management

Dear Miss H October

The application for ethical clearance for the research project described below served before this committee on:

Protocol No:	EMS016/20
Principal researcher:	Miss. Heidi October
Research title:	Contributing factors to student leadership identity formation in post-Apartheid South Africa
Student/Staff No:	19396440
Degree:	Doctoral
Supervisor/Promoter:	Prof. Derick de Jongh
Department:	Business Management

The decision by the committee is reflected below:

Decision:	Approved
Conditions (if applicable):	
Period of approval:	2020-04-01 - 2020-07-31

The approval is subject to the researcher abiding by the principles and parameters set out in the application and research proposal in the actual execution of the research. The approval does not imply that the researcher is relieved of any accountability in terms of the Codes of Research Ethics of the University of Pretoria if action is taken beyond the approved proposal. If during the course of the research it becomes apparent that the nature and/or extent of the research deviates significantly from the original proposal, a new application for ethics clearance must be submitted for review.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

pp PROF JA NEL
CHAIR: COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS

Fakulteit Ekonomiese en Bestuurswetenskappe
Lefapha la Disaense tša Ekonomi le Taolo

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Appendix E:
Ethics approval – Stellenbosch University

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NOTICE OF APPROVAL

REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form

27 May 2020

Project number: 14568

Project Title: Contributing factors to student leadership identity formation in post-Apartheid South Africa.

Dear Ms. Heidi October

Your REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form submitted on 6 April 2020 was reviewed and approved by the REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (REC: SBE).

Please note below expiration date of this approved submission:

Ethics approval period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities)	Protocol expiration date (Humanities)
15 April 2020	14 April 2023

SUSPENSION OF PHYSICAL CONTACT RESEARCH DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown measures, all research activities requiring physical contact or being in undue physical proximity to human participants has been suspended by Stellenbosch University. Please refer to a formal statement issued by the REC: SBE on 20 March for more information on this.

This suspension will remain in force until such time as the social distancing requirements are relaxed by the national authorities to such an extent that in-person data collection from participants will be allowed. This will be confirmed by a new statement from the REC: SBE on the university's dedicated Covid-19 webpage.

Until such time online or virtual data collection activities, individual or group interviews conducted via online meeting or web conferencing tools, such as Skype or Microsoft Teams are strongly encouraged in all SU research environments.

If you are required to amend your research methods due to this suspension, please submit an amendment to the REC: SBE as soon as possible. The instructions on how to submit an amendment to the REC can be found on this webpage: [instructions], or you can contact the REC Helpdesk for instructions on how to submit an amendment: applyethics@sun.ac.za.

GENERAL REC COMMENTS PERTAINING TO THIS PROJECT:

With regard to including contact information in the informed consent form: The PI is requested to make sure that this information is shared with the participant during the interview and it is suggested that a copy of the counselling service's contact information is available during the interview to give to participants should they require it then or after the interview has taken place. [ACTION REQUIRED]

INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: SBE, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (14568) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

You are required to submit a progress report to the REC: SBE before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

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Once you have completed your research, you are required to submit a final report to the REC: SBE for review.

Included Documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Investigator CV (PI)	heidioctober_cv_september2019	01/09/2019	Updated CV
Budget	hoctober_PhDBudget	30/10/2019	final budget
Proof of Ethics Clearance	UP_ETH_APPR7-2	14/02/2020	Final
Research Protocol/Proposal	hoctober_PhD_researchproposal_30october2019_finalreviewed	14/02/2020	Final
Informed Consent Form	hoctober_letter-of-introduction-and-informed-consent_feb2020	14/02/2020	Final
Data collection tool	hoctober_qualresearch_interviewsheet_final_1feb2020	14/02/2020	Final
Proof of permission	permission_servicedesk_16feb2020	16/02/2020	proofofapplication
Informed Consent Form	hoctober_letter-of-introduction-and-informed-consent_1april2020	01/04/2020	2nd version
Default	hoctober_letter-of-introduction-and-informed-consent_1april2020	01/04/2020	amended_loc_1apr20
Default	hoctober_responseletter_2april2020	02/04/2020	Response_2April2020

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at cgraham@sun.ac.za.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Social, Behavioral and Education Research

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number: REC-050411-032.
The Research Ethics Committee: Social, Behavioural and Education Research complies with the SA National Health Act No.61 2003 as it pertains to health research. In addition, this committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research established by the Declaration of Helsinki (2013) and the Department of Health Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes (2nd Ed.) 2015. Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

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Principal Investigator Responsibilities

Protection of Human Research Participants

As soon as Research Ethics Committee approval is confirmed by the REC, the principal investigator (PI) is responsible for the following:

Conducting the Research: The PI is responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC-approved research protocol. The PI is jointly responsible for the conduct of co-investigators and any research staff involved with this research. The PI must ensure that the research is conducted according to the recognised standards of their research field/discipline and according to the principles and standards of ethical research and responsible research conduct.

Participant Enrolment: The PI may not recruit or enrol participants unless the protocol for recruitment is approved by the REC. Recruitment and data collection activities must cease after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials must be approved by the REC prior to their use.

Informed Consent: The PI is responsible for obtaining and documenting affirmative informed consent using **only** the REC-approved consent documents/process, and for ensuring that no participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their affirmative informed consent. The PI must give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents, where required. The PI must keep the originals in a secured, REC-approved location for at least five (5) years after the research is complete.

Continuing Review: The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research proposals at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is **no grace period.** Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, **it is the PI's responsibility to submit the progress report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur.** Once REC approval of your research lapses, all research activities must cease, and contact must be made with the REC immediately.

Amendments and Changes: Any planned changes to any aspect of the research (such as research design, procedures, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material, etc.), must be submitted to the REC for review and approval before implementation. Amendments may not be initiated without first obtaining written REC approval. The **only exception** is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.

Adverse or Unanticipated Events: Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research-related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to the REC within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. The PI must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the RECs requirements for protecting human research participants.

Research Record Keeping: The PI must keep the following research-related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research proposal and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence and approvals from the REC.

Provision of Counselling or emergency support: When a dedicated counsellor or a psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.

Final reports: When the research is completed (no further participant enrolment, interactions or interventions), the PI must submit a Final Report to the REC to close the study.

On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits: If the researcher is notified that the research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, the PI must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.

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Appendix F:
Permission to use Stellenbosch University student data (Institutional Governance)

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INSTITUTIONAL PERMISSION:

AGREEMENT ON USE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION IN RESEARCH

Name of Researcher: Heidi October

Name of Research Project: Contributing factors to student leadership identity formation in post-Apartheid South Africa

Service Desk ID: IRPSD-1691

Date of Issue: 08 September 2020

The researcher has received institutional permission to proceed with this project as stipulated in the institutional permission application and within the conditions set out in this agreement.

1 WHAT THIS AGREEMENT IS ABOUT	
What is POPI?	1.1 POPI is the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013. 1.2 POPI regulates the entire information life cycle from collection, through use and storage and even the destruction of personal information.
Why is this important to us?	1.3 Even though POPI is important, it is not the primary motivation for this agreement. The privacy of our students and employees are important to us. We want to ensure that no research project poses any risks to their privacy. 1.4 However, you are required to familiarise yourself with, and comply with POPI in its entirety.
What is considered to be personal information?	1.5 'Personal information' means information relating to an identifiable, living, individual or company, including, but not limited to: 1.5.1 information relating to the race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, national, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental health, well-being, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth of the person; 1.5.2 information relating to the education or the medical, financial, criminal or

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	employment history of the person; 1.5.3 any identifying number, symbol, e-mail address, physical address, telephone number, location information, online identifier or other particular assignment to the person; 1.5.4 the biometric information of the person; 1.5.5 the personal opinions, views or preferences of the person; 1.5.6 correspondence sent by the person that is implicitly or explicitly of a private or confidential nature or further correspondence that would reveal the contents of the original correspondence; 1.5.7 the views or opinions of another individual about the person; and 1.5.8 the name of the person if it appears with other personal information relating to the person or if the disclosure of the name itself would reveal information about the person.
Some personal information is more sensitive.	1.6 Some personal information is considered to be sensitive either because: 1.6.1 POPI has classified it as sensitive; 1.6.2 if the information is disclosed it can be used to defraud someone; or 1.6.3 the disclosure of the information will be embarrassing for the research subject. 1.7 The following personal information is considered particularly sensitive: 1.7.1 Religious or philosophical beliefs; 1.7.2 race or ethnic origin; 1.7.3 trade union membership; 1.7.4 political persuasion; 1.7.5 health and health related documentation such as medical scheme documentation; 1.7.6 sex life; 1.7.7 biometric information; 1.7.8 criminal behaviour; 1.7.9 personal information of children under the age of 18; 1.7.10 financial information such as banking details, details relating to financial

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	products such as insurance, pension funds or other investments. 1.8 You may make use of this type of information, but must take extra care to ensure that you comply with the rest of the rules in this document.
2 COMMITMENT TO ETHICAL AND LEGAL RESEARCH PRACTICES	
You must commit to the use of ethical and legal research practices.	2.1 You must obtain ethical clearance before commencing with this study. 2.2 You commit to only employing ethical and legal research practices.
You must protect the privacy of your research subjects.	2.3 You undertake to protect the privacy of the research subjects throughout the project.
3 RESEARCH SUBJECT PARTICIPATION	
Personal information of identifiable research subjects must not be used without their consent.	3.1 Unless you have obtained a specific exemption for your research project, consent must be obtained in writing from the research subject, before their personal information is gathered.
Research subjects must be able to withdraw from the research project.	3.2 Research subjects must always be able to withdraw from the research project (without any negative consequences) and to insist that you destroy their personal information.
Consent must be specific and informed.	3.3 Unless you have obtained a specific exemption for your research project, the consent must be specific and informed. Before giving consent, the research subject must be informed in writing of: 3.3.1 The purpose of the research, 3.3.2 what personal information about them will be collected (particularly sensitive personal information), 3.3.3 how the personal information will be collected (if not directly from them), 3.3.4 the specific purposes for which the personal information will be used, 3.3.5 what participation will entail (i.e. what the research subject will have to do), 3.3.6 whether the supply of the personal information is voluntary or mandatory for purposes of the research project,

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	3.3.7 who the personal information will be shared with, 3.3.8 how the personal information will be published, 3.3.9 the risks to participation (if any), 3.3.10 their rights to access, correct or object to the use of their personal information, 3.3.11 their right to withdraw from the research project, and 3.3.12 how these rights can be exercised.
Consent must be voluntary.	3.4 Participation in the research project must always be voluntary. You must never pressure or coerce research subjects into participating and persons who choose not to participate must not be penalised.
Using the personal information of children?	3.5 A child is anybody under the age of 18. 3.6 Unless you have obtained a specific exemption in writing for your research project, you must obtain 3.6.1 the consent of the child's parent or guardian, and 3.6.2 if the child is over the age of 7, the assent of the child, before collecting the child's information.
Research subjects have a right to access.	3.7 Research subjects have the right to access their personal information, obtain confirmation of what information is in your possession and who had access to the information. It is strongly recommended that you keep detailed records of access to the information.
Research subjects have a right to object.	3.8 Research subjects have the right to object to the use of their personal information. 3.9 Once they have objected, you are not permitted to use the personal information until the dispute has been resolved.
4 COLLECTING PERSONAL INFORMATION	
Only collect what is necessary.	4.1 You must not collect unnecessary or irrelevant personal information from research subjects.
Only collect accurate personal information.	4.2 You have an obligation to ensure that the personal information you collect is accurate. Particularly when you are collecting it from a source other than the

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	research subject. 4.3 If you have any reason to doubt the quality of the personal information you must verify or validate the personal information before you use it.
5 USING PERSONAL INFORMATION	
Only use the personal information for the purpose for which you collected it.	5.1 Only use the personal information for the purpose for which you collected it. 5.2 If your research project requires you to use the personal information for a materially different purpose than the one communicated to the research subject, you must inform the research subjects and Stellenbosch University of this and give participants the option to withdraw from the research project.
Be careful when you share personal information.	5.3 Never share personal information with third parties without making sure that they will also follow these rules. 5.4 Always conclude a non-disclosure agreement with the third parties. 5.5 Ensure that you transfer the personal information securely.
Personal information must be anonymous whenever possible.	5.6 If the research subject's identity is not relevant for the aims of the research project, the personal information must not be identifiable. In other words, the personal information must be anonymous (de-identified).
Pseudonyms must be used whenever possible.	5.7 If the research subject's identity is relevant for the aims of the research project or is required to co-ordinate, for example, interviews, names and other identifiers such as ID or student numbers must be collected and stored separately from the rest of the research data and research publications. In other words, only you must be able to identify the research subject.
Publication of research	5.8 The identity of your research subjects should not be revealed in any publication. 5.9 In the event that your research project requires that the identity of your research subjects must be revealed, you must apply for an exemption from this rule.
6 SECURING PERSONAL INFORMATION	
You are responsible for the confidentiality and security of the personal information	6.1 Information must always be handled in the strictest confidence. 6.2 You must ensure the integrity and security of the information in your possession or under your control by taking appropriate and reasonable technical and organisational measures to prevent:

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	6.2.1 Loss of, damage to or unauthorised destruction of information; and 6.2.2 unlawful access to or processing of information. 6.3 This means that you must take reasonable measures to: 6.3.1 Identify all reasonably foreseeable internal and external risks to personal information in your possession or under your control; 6.3.2 establish and maintain appropriate safeguards against the risks identified; 6.3.3 regularly verify that the safeguards are effectively implemented; and 6.3.4 ensure that the safeguards are continually updated in response to new risks or deficiencies in previously implemented safeguards.
Sensitive personal information requires extra care.	6.4 You will be expected to implement additional controls in order to secure sensitive personal information.
Are you sending any personal information overseas?	6.5 If you are sending personal information overseas, you have to make sure that: 6.5.1 The information will be protected by the laws of that country; 6.5.2 the company or institution to who you are sending have agreed to keep the information confidential, secure and to not use it for any other purpose; or 6.5.3 get the specific and informed consent of the research subject to send the information to a country which does not have data protection laws.
Be careful when you use cloud storage.	6.6 Be careful when storing personal information in a cloud. Many clouds are hosted on servers outside of South Africa in countries that do not protect personal information to the same extent as South Africa. The primary example of this is the United States. 6.7 It is strongly recommended that you use hosting companies who house their servers in South Africa. 6.8 If this is not possible, you must ensure that the hosting company agrees to protect the personal information to the same extent as South Africa.
7 RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION	
You are not entitled to retain personal information when you no longer need it for the purposes	7.1 Personal information must not be retained beyond the purpose of the research project, unless you have a legal or other justification for retaining the information.

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of the research project.	
If personal information is retained, you must make sure it remains confidential.	7.2 If you do need to retain the personal information, you must assess whether: 7.2.1 The records can be de-identified; and/or whether 7.2.2 you have to keep all the personal information. 7.3 You must ensure that the personal information which you retain remains confidential, secure and is only used for the purposes for which it was collected.
8 INFORMATION BREACH PROCEDURE	
In the event of an information breach you must notify us immediately.	8.1 If there are reasonable grounds to believe that the personal information in your possession or under your control has been accessed by any unauthorised person or has been disclosed, you must notify us immediately. 8.2 We will notify the research subjects in order to enable them to take measures to contain the impact of the breach.
This is the procedure you must follow.	8.3 You must follow the following procedure: 8.3.1 Contact the Division for Institutional Research and Planning at 021 808 9385 and permission@sun.ac.za; 8.3.2 you will then be required to complete the information breach report form which is attached as Annexure A. 8.4 You are required to inform us of a information breach within 24 hours. Ensure that you have access to the required information.
9 MONITORING	
You may be audited.	9.1 We reserve the right to audit your research practices to assess whether you are complying with this agreement. 9.2 You are required to give your full co-operation during the auditing process. 9.3 We may also request to review: 9.3.1 Forms (or other information gathering methods) and notifications to research subjects, as referred to in clause 3; 9.3.2 non-disclosure agreements with third parties with whom the personal information is being shared, as referred to in clause 5.4;

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