



**DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**  
**INYUVESI YASETHEKWINI YEZOBUCHWEPHESHE**  
**CREATIVE. DISTINCTIVE. IMPACTFUL.**

**BOTTLENECKS FACED IN ADMINISTERING AND  
MANAGING STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAMMES AT A SELECTED UNIVERSITY OF  
TECHNOLOGY (UOT) IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**By**

**Kholeka Mfeka**

**20717357**

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LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AT A SELECTED  
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (UOT) IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of  
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Faculty of Accounting and Informatics at the Durban University of Technology.

**Kholeka Sengiphiwe Mfeka**

**Date: April 2024**

**Supervisor: Dr M Ngibe**

## DECLARATION

This is to certify that the work is entirely my own and not of any other person, unless explicitly acknowledged (including citation of published and unpublished sources). The work has not previously been submitted in any form to the Durban University of Technology or to any other institution for assessment or for any other purpose.

08 April 2024

Signature of student

Date

Approved for final submission

Dr M Ngibe

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## **ABSTRACT**

The primary objective of this inquiry was to educate student leaders about crucial administrative processes and challenges associated with political clubs at UoT's. We aimed to advocate for specific changes within the Department of Student Governance and Development (DSGD) to facilitate the development of policies and eliminate obstacles hindering political clubs' initiatives in fostering student leadership programmes. To guide our investigation, we adopted the social change model for leadership, which helped shape our study literature and interview questions. The investigator chose this framework because it nurtures potential leaders who share similar values with specific organisations and society, thus enhancing student learning. The research focused on assessing how streamlining administrative procedures could enhance the efficiency of political clubs and their leadership programmes. The investigator successfully demonstrated that a better understanding of administrative procedures could help UOT'S adhere to administrative standards, thereby upholding the credibility of student-associated programmes. To achieve this, the investigator employed a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to gain insights into the bottlenecks associated with administering student development programmes. In this investigation the philosophy of pragmatism was embraced, allowing for the flexibility to select methods, techniques, and procedures that best suited the research goals in exploring the correlation between leadership programmes and bottlenecks.

The study had two distinct populations: student leaders responsible for managing and administering student development programmes, and employees from the DSGD. The study primarily focused on assessing student leaders responsible for programme administration from 2018 to 2020. The aim was to understand the challenges these elected student leaders faced during this three-year period. For data analysis, we utilised the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 to analyse the surveys. This software employs both inferential and descriptive statistics to present study findings. In the case of interviews, we employed content analysis to analyse the collected data. Thematic analysis enabled us to extract meaning from participants' views, knowledge, opinions, experiences, and values, considering both written and

spoken data. The findings were presented by means of both numerical and non-numerical formats to highlight the differences in findings between students and university participants. To establish trustworthiness, the research employed triangulation to validate the findings; this involved cross-referencing information from various sources, including participants, academic articles, and various data structures, among others. Additionally, the study utilised detailed notes from diverse authors' research to draw comparisons in terms of research context and methodologies. To maintain the study's reliability, an audit trail was maintained, encompassing comprehensive documentation of the data collection, analysis, and interpretation procedures. The study's findings recommended that student leaders advocate for substantial institutional changes aligned with the goal of reducing administrative obstacles. To facilitate this, the model endorsed ongoing assessment and feedback to enhance collaboration in simplifying procedures and policies. Student leaders were encouraged to evaluate results and adjust their programs based on the evaluation's conclusions, which would facilitate effective reporting on implemented programs.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ANCWL – AFRICAN NATIONAL WOMEN’S LEAGUE

ANCYL – AFRICAN NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

ATSM – AFRICAN TRANSFORMATION STUDENT MOVEMENT

DASO – DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE STUDENT ORGANISATION

DSGD – DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

EFFSC – ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS STUDENT COMMAND

NASMO – NATIONAL STUDENT MOVEMENT

POA – PROGRAMME OF ACTION

SASCO – SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENT CONGRESS

SCM- SOCIAL CHANGE MODEL

SLDP- STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

SRC – STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

SRLS – SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP SCALE

UoT – UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Student political clubs play an integral role in the success of higher education institutions. These organisations are responsible for representing student issues and facilitating learning environments that add value to students (Ohlson and Pascale 2019).

These political clubs are expected to influence and contribute to major decision-making regarding the quality of education and the learning environment. Simultaneously, they aim to develop potential leaders who will govern the organisation in the long run or may become Student Representative Council (SRC) members in the future. These clubs are recognised by the SRC, guided by the SRC constitution, and receive a budget from the University of Technology (UOT) for their operations. They are also expected to develop and train their elected leaders through student leadership programmes that acquaint these student leaders with university procedures, policies, and the skills necessary to govern their political clubs (Middendorf *et al.* 2015).

However, the administration and management of these leadership programmes, usually funded by the university, often lack coordination and clarity in several respects. It is essential to note that political clubs should strive to maintain an inclusive and respectful atmosphere, welcoming and representing students of all backgrounds and political beliefs. This ensures that the benefits of these clubs are accessible to a diverse range of students and that healthy discussions and debates can take place. These clubs provide a platform for students with diverse political ideologies to come together, discuss their views, and learn from each other. This promotes open dialogue, political tolerance, and the ability to engage constructively.

Middendorf *et al.* (2015) pointed out that the impact of student political clubs can vary depending on the specific institution, the political climate, the economic background of

students, and the level of student engagement. While they can bring about positive change and contribute to a vibrant campus culture, political clubs can also disrupt the university's vision significantly. Therefore, it is crucial that they operate within the guidelines and policies set by the university to ensure a productive and respectful environment for all students.

This study was conducted to help understand and educate student leaders about important administrative processes and challenges related to UoT political clubs. It also aimed to advocate for specific changes within the Department of Student Governance and Development (DSGD), encouraging the development of policies as well as operating procedures to eliminate bottlenecks which hinder political clubs' initiatives in instigating student leadership development programmes.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

As part of the university mandate, each student society, club, and organisation at the UoT is expected to encompass a wide range of interests, including political, academic, cultural, religious, and social activities. For instance, at a certain UoT, there are seven political clubs, namely South African Student Congress (SASCO), African National Youth League (ANCYL), Economic Freedom Fighters Student Command (EFFSC), African National Women's League (ANCWL), African Transformation Student Movement (ATSM), Democratic Alliance Student Organisation (DASO), and National Student Movement (NASMO), and these vary from year to year. Each of these societies is represented and governed by students who are elected into leadership positions every year, with each society being partially funded by the university (Murphy and Johnson, 2016). These societies are allowed to engage in activities that do not form part of the university's academic curriculum. Their primary activities include enhancing learning and understanding of UoT policies, educating their constituencies about their club functions and mandate (Ohlson and Pascale 2019).

Leaders selected from these societies are expected to manage their affairs while communicating with both university staff and students. They hold seminars, lead student-related projects, and invite industry leaders to UoT campuses to empower

students (Govender 2018). Student leadership programmes normally facilitate learning and the development of the leadership skills required to assist student leaders in managing student-related issues and effectively advancing student activism (Taylor 2018). As a result, political clubs actively implement leadership programmes and allocate resources accordingly to facilitate these programmes (Shaw *et al.* 2018). These programmes are expected to contribute to the educational institution's mission and values (Taylor 2018).

Witte *et al.*, (2017) claimed that current student leadership development places an emphasis on traditional classroom approaches and often fail to recognise issues associated with managing and administering student development programmes. This is because traditional classroom approaches typically fail to recognise that student development programmes often encounter bottlenecks during the implementation phase (Taylor, 2018). Furthermore, it is often difficult to assess and monitor the impact of these programmes due to their nature and the amount of time programme facilitators have with students (Thomas and Brower 2017).

In order to properly assess bottlenecks faced by the UoT political clubs in the management and administration process of student leadership development programmes, the current investigation focused on three main functions of administration. Firstly, the financing for student leadership programmes; secondly, the kind of support that these clubs receive from the university, such as facilities, equipment, and training materials; and thirdly, the procedures and processes used by the UOT political clubs to evaluate leadership programmes. The investigation was guided by the social change model for leadership, and this model assisted the researcher in developing the literature study and interview questions for the investigation. The framework was selected because it facilitates student learning by developing potential leaders who share similar values and beliefs with a particular organisation, entity, and society. Therefore, this model was considered suitable for this study due to the nature and role of political clubs in the university and the positions held by elected student leaders.

### **1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT**

According to Kezar *et al.* (2017), elected student leaders are expected to actively implement, administer, and manage leadership development programmes. These student leaders are also expected to assist with student-related issues, manage student-related programmes, and oversee the objectives of their respective political organisations while upholding their own personal values. However, it remains unclear what kind of support these clubs receive from the University through the DSGD. Additionally, there is a lack of information regarding the procedures and processes used by political clubs to administer and manage student leadership development programmes. Previous studies by Komives and Wagner (2016) and Elrehail *et al.*, (2018) found that student development programmes administered by student leaders often lack the necessary programme evaluation and performance measures for their respective leadership programmes. Furthermore, there is limited research conducted on the specific bottlenecks hindering political clubs' efforts to initiate student leadership development programmes (Taylor, 2018). As part of the both global and domestic, universities have adapting programmatic efforts to meet the evolving administration policies and procedures that impede the smooth operation of student development programs. This shows that administrators have not prioritize resource allocation, streamlined policies and procedures, furthermore a lack of communication or collaboration between administrative units can lead to disjointed efforts, duplication of services, and inefficiencies in program delivery. This reflects that programmes are likely to create bottlenecks that prevent programs from evolving to meet evolving student needs.

### **1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The primary aim of this study was to identify and assess the bottlenecks faced by UoT political clubs in administering and managing leadership developmental programmes. To successfully achieve the above aim, the following objectives were addressed:

- To ascertain the kind of support provided to political clubs by UoT's to ensure the effectiveness of student leadership developmental programmes.

- To understand the influence of the university procedures on administration and implementation of student leadership developmental programmes by UoT political clubs
- To determine how political clubs at UoT's evaluate the influence and impact of these programmes on leadership development.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- What kind of support do UoT political clubs receive from the university to administer student leadership programmes?
- What has been the impact of the university procedures on administration and implementation of student leadership programmes by UoT political clubs?
- How do political clubs at UoT's evaluate the influence and impact of these programmes on their leadership development?

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The significance of this study is the identification and evaluation of bottlenecks within leadership development programmes at universities. By addressing the obstacles encountered in leadership development, universities can gain insights into the administrative challenges faced by UoT political clubs in their leadership development initiatives. The ultimate goal is to enhance educational quality and nurture future political leaders. This inquiry aimed to determine how streamlining administrative procedures can improve the efficiency of political clubs and their student leadership programmes. The study successfully illustrates how a better understanding of administrative procedures can assist UoT's in adhering to administrative standards, thereby maintaining the credibility of programmes associated with students.

## 1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1.7.1 The role of political clubs in higher education institutions

Political clubs typically facilitate the development of leadership skills among their elected officers, often achieved through student leadership development programmes. Witte *et al.* (2017) also noted that these programmes are conducted throughout the year to prepare leaders for governing student-related issues, running political campaigns, and executing the agendas of political clubs. Throughout the year, political clubs allocate resources to develop young leaders who can contribute to their respective club's mission and values (Peck and Callahan 2019). Furthermore, studies by Kezar *et al.* (2017) and Kouzes and Posner (2018) highlighted that political clubs in higher education institutions have created certain perceptions and expectations regarding their leaders' ability to represent student interests effectively and influence decision-making within their universities.

Student clubs are primarily responsible for structuring, directing, administering, and managing their own leadership development programmes. This encompasses planning, recruiting, and organising these programmes, and programme organisers often employ a systematic approach for structuring, planning, and implementing these programmes to enhance student development (Kezar *et al.* 2017). These programmes may include skills training, delegation of activities, project management, and the implementation of political club policies. To ensure that competent leaders ascend to their elected positions, it is crucial to identify bottlenecks associated with the administration and management of these developmental leadership programmes. This identification can lead to a reduction in the time and resources allocated to such programmes and an improvement in their effectiveness. As stated by Kezar *et al.* (2017), student leaders are often insufficiently prepared to deal with the ongoing changes in processes and information management in higher education. Therefore, there is a need to enhance the abilities of selected leaders of political clubs to effectively manage and administer developmental leadership programmes aimed at enhancing the abilities of selected leaders in contemporary times (Komives and Wagner 2016).

### **1.7.2 Student leadership development programmes**

Witte *et al.* (2017) asserted that leadership development programmes aim to empower students, helping them achieve higher proficiency levels, build leadership skills over time, and expand their capacity for leadership roles and processes. This is particularly crucial in the context of higher education systems which face complexities and challenges necessitating changes in educational approaches. As a result of these complexities, higher education institutions have established and promoted student societies responsible for training future leaders.

Political clubs typically play a role in facilitating the learning and development of leadership skills necessary for elected leaders to govern student-related issues, contribute to policy changes within institutions, negotiate on behalf of students, and allocate resources to various projects (Peck and Callahan 2019). These clubs also motivate their members to engage in activities that enhance their overall competencies within their immediate environment, fostering sequential development. Hence, higher education institutions require leadership development programmes capable of promoting self-management, facilitating work, and encouraging student cooperation (Kezar *et al.* 2017).

According to Ohlson and Pascale (2019), various bottlenecks are encountered during the facilitation of student leadership development programmes. These bottlenecks are typically observed during the learning process and negatively impact student engagement, motivation, and academic performance—all essential factors for improving the quality of leaders (Kiersch and Peters 2017). One common shortcoming of many student programmes is their failure to account for the personal characteristics of leaders, including their self-directed learning motivation (Kouzes and Posner 2018). Many student development programmes also overlook the specific learning environments in which these leaders operate, influenced by the unique characteristics of each institution's educational system and students' prior educational backgrounds (Mugume and Luescher 2017).

Leaders engaged in the learning process often lack the social skills needed to manage the learning environment effectively (Middendorf *et al.* 2015). Active student leaders reflect the characteristics and perspectives of learners, and insufficient training or development in this regard can contribute to further bottlenecks in managing and implementing student development programmes (Day *et al.* 2016).

Ohlson and Pascale (2019) identified three types of bottlenecks that hinder students' ability to learn and retain knowledge effectively: procedural, emotional, and epistemological bottlenecks occurring during the planning, implementation, and management of student development programmes. Procedural bottlenecks arise when students' perceptions of how the work aligns with their expectations differ, leading to emotional resistance towards the thinking and activities required for effective learning (Middendorf *et al.* 2015). Epistemological bottlenecks occur when students struggle to understand how knowledge is constructed within a discipline, including the type of data, language, sources of information, and logical reasoning used to form arguments (Shaw *et al.* 2018). Emotional bottlenecks stem from students' emotional responses to the training and subject matter, hindering learning due to attitudes or beliefs about certain topics, such as politics, religion, values, and family orientation (Ohlson and Pascale 2019)

### **1.7.3 Bottlenecks faced by political clubs in administering and managing leadership developmental programmes**

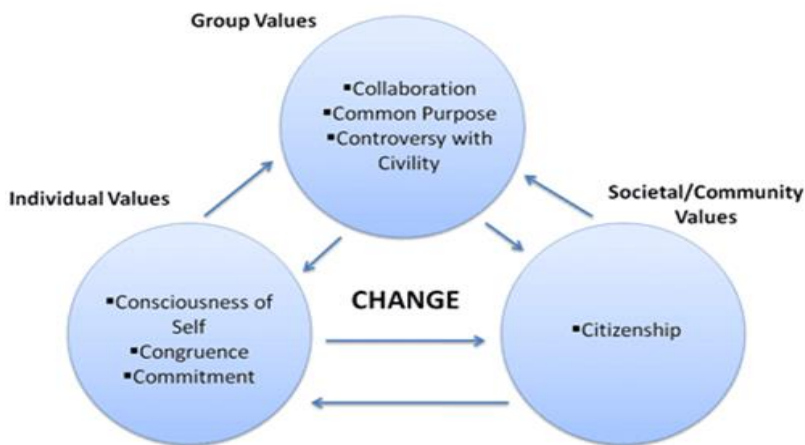
Political clubs frequently operate with limited budgets, which can pose challenges in allocating sufficient resources for leadership development programmes. This limitation can hinder their capacity to provide high-quality training, materials, and support to programme participants. As noted by Ohlson and Pascale (2019), effective leadership development programmes necessitate knowledgeable and experienced facilitators or trainers. Political clubs may encounter difficulties in finding individuals with the requisite expertise to effectively lead these programmes.

Kezar *et al.* (2017) highlighted that leadership development programmes often incorporate sessions on various practical skills, such as time management, goal

setting, proposal writing, negotiation skills, and interview skills, which can significantly enhance a student's overall development. However, the lack of knowledge and exposure to these skill sets among student leaders can lead to bottlenecks. These bottlenecks may result from the limited training and development of student leaders by administrators, ultimately negatively impacting both the student leaders and their constituencies.

#### **1.7.4 Theoretical framework: social change model (SCM)**

For this study, the social change model was used. This leadership framework aims to enhance student learning by developing each student or potential leaders who share similar values and beliefs with a particular organisation, entity and society (Aleixo *et al.* 2018: 451). The framework has three key elements, namely, individual, group and community values. These elements facilitate the development of self-knowledge and an understanding of one's values, interests and talents. The framework assumes that values and skills developed through the use of these elements will closely be related to the student's ability and capacity to become an effective leader (Aleixo *et al.* 2018). The authors also explain how individual dimension consist of the consciousness of self, congruence, and commitment, and the group dimensions consist of the values common purpose and collaboration. Finally, the societal and community dimension consists of the value of citizenship. This framework was used to explain how social changes in the university can add to or reduce the number of bottlenecks due to procedural and policy changes in the university. It also assessed how elements found in the framework can lead to a lack of support from the university which can result in further bottlenecks from both internal and external sources.



**Figure 1.1: SOCIAL CHANGE MODEL**

Source: Komives and Wagner (2016).

The social change model provides a structured framework for explanatory research that seeks to understand how individuals and groups contribute to and drive social change. Researchers use this model to explore the processes, dynamics, and factors that facilitate or hinder positive change in society. It focuses on how individuals, groups, and communities can work together to create positive and meaningful change in society. The social change model is often used in explanatory research to investigate and explain the factors and mechanisms that drive social change. In this research study the model enabled the researcher to identify shared values among the study stakeholders, including the University, administrators, student leaders, and students. These values allowed the investigator to provide a holistic overview regarding the necessary skills needed to navigate bureaucratic processes and advocate for change. The model was also able to recognise that leadership skills encompass not only individual competencies but also interpersonal, group, and societal dimensions. This model is based on the idea that leadership is not just about individual skills and traits but is deeply intertwined with social responsibility and the ability to effect positive change within a community or society.

## 1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN

### 1.8.1 Research approach

This investigation used a mixed method approach to uncover new concepts and ideas about bottlenecks faced by political clubs in the development and implementation of

leadership developmental programmes. Mixed methods strategies involve collecting, analysing, and interpreting both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or in a series of studies that investigate the same underlying phenomenon (Sekaran and Bougie 2016). This approach allowed the researcher to present both numerical and non-numerical data in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the bottlenecks associated with administering student development programmes (Gott *et al.* 2019). An exploratory design was used to collect and analyse data. According to Noble and Smith (2015: 122), exploratory research is defined as research to investigate a problem which is not clearly defined so is conducted to have a better understanding of the existing problem. The first phase of the investigation involved the researcher starting with a general idea to identify bottlenecks related to student development programmes followed by identifying qualitative and quantitative research findings to help support the rationale behind the study. This was done to develop data collection instruments and review existing data sources in order to understand the research topic in depth. This design was chosen because it allowed the researcher to carefully investigate and interrogate specific characteristics associated with the research problem and in order to narrow down research into a specific theory.

### **1.8.2 Target population and study site**

According to Nagda (2019) a target population is a group of individuals that the intervention intends to conduct research with and draw conclusions from. The investigation consisted of two populations, namely, student leaders responsible for managing and administering student development programmes and two employees from the DSGD. Elected student leaders are often assigned to different official roles and are required to manage different issues associated with student affairs on a daily basis. As a result, only a selected few are expected to develop, manage and administer student programmes throughout the year but also manage different projects in their respective political clubs. However, this study only assessed student leaders who were responsible for administering these programmes from 2018 to 2020 in order to gain insight into bottlenecks experienced by elected student leaders throughout these years.

The Department at one of the selected UoT consists of six staff members who serve the role of being custodians of student organisations and formations as well as facilitating programmes for student development. The UoT's were selected because they allowed the researcher to gather more knowledge and perspectives from different political branches instead of focusing on a single location.

### **1.8.3 Sampling approach and size**

Non-probability sampling involves sampling techniques to randomly select units from the population the researcher is interested in studying, while non-probability sampling strategies are selected based on the subjective judgement of the researcher (Gohlmann 2018). Non-probability sampling is both cost and time-effective since it is easy to use compared to probability sampling. This sampling method can also be used when the population is too small for random sampling (Komives and Wagner 2016). In this study, a non-probability (purposive) sampling technique was used. This sampling technique was chosen because of its ability to allow the researcher to select participants based on the judgement of the researcher and the availability of participants (Nagda 2019). Furthermore, student participants were purposely selected based on their knowledge of student leadership development programmes. The department employees were selected using purposive sampling because it was easy to use and it can allow the study to observe habits, opinions, and viewpoints in the easiest possible manner.

### **1.8.4 Sample size**

Sample size refers to the number of participants or observations included in a study (Sekaran and Bougie 2016). For this investigation the data collection was broken down between student leaders and the officials from the selected department. The selected UoT has a total number of 14 clubs (2018-2020). The student sample was guided by the SRC Constitution which requires political clubs to have a minimum of 6 members in their executive committee, 6 executive member's X 14 clubs = 84 X over 3 years = 252. In order to ensure the study's credibility and validity the researcher used the Sekaran and Bougie (2016) table of population to ensure the correctness of the data

and maintain 95% confidence of interval. Therefore, the actual sample size for student leaders was 132 participants based on the Sekaran and Bougie sampling table. This means that the overall sample size for this study was 134 participants (132 student leaders and 2 staff members from the DSGD).

### **1.8.5 Data collection instruments**

In order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the role played by the DSGD, two interviews were conducted to collect data from these representatives. These interviews were semi-structured in nature and typically included a few predetermined questions while the rest of the questions were not planned in advance (Sekaran and Bougie 2016). According to Gohlmann (2018) semi-structured interviews are an attempt to combine both unstructured and structured interview styles in order to allow objective comparisons between participants. Semi-structured interviews allow flexibility and ensure that the researcher gains a broader understanding of the problem.

For the student representatives questionnaires with closed-ended questions were used. Data collected using this tool can be presented in a statistical and numerical manner. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, online tools such as MS Teams were used for interviews and QuestionPro was used for online surveys. These online tools allowed the researcher to not have only recorded data but also to save the data collected from the study in case of accidents.

### **1.8.6 Data analysis**

Data analysis is defined as a process of cleaning, transforming, and modelling data to discover useful information for business decision-making with the purpose of extracting useful information from data sets (Day *et al.* 2016). For this investigation interviews conducted during the course of the study were analysed using thematic analysis, while surveys were analysed using inferential and descriptive statistics to present the findings of the study.

According to Govender (2018), thematic analysis is a data analysis method used to analyse qualitative data collected by the researcher. This method closely examines the data collected from interviews to identify themes, ideas, patterns and topics in order to gain the meaning of the participants views, knowledge, opinions, experiences and values. Furthermore, themes for this study were analysed using a computer software named NVIVO version 12. This computer software encompasses steps which makes it easy for the researcher to become familiar with the data through development of codes and themes (Gohlmann 2018). Surveys conducted in this investigation were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. This computer software used different kinds of statistical research formulas to provide statistical analysis and interpretation of numerical data. SPSS is commonly used by market researchers, survey companies, government entities, marketing organisations and data miners in order to process and analyse data (Kouzes and Posner, 2018).

### **1.8.7 Pilot study**

According to Murphy and Johnson (2016), a pilot study is an experimental pre-study used to test the logistics of the study and collect information prior to the study. The authors further stated that pilot studies are conducted to improve the quality and efficiency of the research. The rule of thumb proposed by Thomas and Brower (2017) was used to determine the sample size for the pilot trial. This rule states that there is a general rule to use at least 30 subjects or participants to obtain a greater estimate of the parameter (Thomas and Brower 2017). The student participants were broken down into three groups with ten (10) participants per year from 2018 to 2020. For this investigation 30 surveys were initially the target number for the sample, these surveys were only sent to student leaders to be completed online via the UoT QuestionPro. Only a total of 23 student leaders responded to the initial link that was sent to them. The UoT QuestionPro software enabled the researcher to save and store the data collected from student leaders efficiently. The researcher did not receive complaints from the participants regarding the structure of the survey and the questions found in the survey. While for the department officials only one pilot interview was conducted, this interview was conducted via Microsoft teams for a duration of 24 minutes. This interview was recorded and saved for data analysis purposes. The pilot study for the

department officials revealed that some interview schedule questions need to be refined to improve the quality of information and data. These suggestions were incorporated prior to the collection of the main data for the study.

#### **1.8.8 Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

Inclusion criteria comprise the attributes that prospective research participants must have in order to be included in the study, and the attributes of potential participants who should not be included in a study Rahman (2017). Exclusion criteria are designed to filter out irrelevant data that do not directly contribute to addressing the research questions or objectives. The inclusion criteria encompassed several aspects. The study exclusively targeted former and current student leaders from political clubs who had knowledge of Student Leadership Development Programmes (SLDPs) and participated in the planning and execution of SLDP programmes, and participants must have worked directly with student governance department administrators when planning their SLDPs. These individuals were required to have been student leaders at the UoT campuses. Student governance staff inclusion criteria included the number of years working with student leaders, involvement of staff members in the administration process of programmes relating to political clubs as well as understanding of university policies and procedures.

Exclusion criteria included students not part of student leadership, student leaders who do not directly plan SLDPs, who have no direct contact with student governance administrators, and student governance staff who had worked within the Department for less than a year.

#### **1.8.9 Validity and reliability**

“Data quality is an assessment of the data fitness and quality in order to serve the purpose it was given” (Thomas and Brower 2017). Data quality is dependent on the research approach to the study either qualitative or quantitative. For this study, three aspects of data quality were taken into consideration, namely, credibility, transferability and confirmability (Kiersch and Peters 2017). In order to ensure credibility, the study

used triangulation to test the accuracy of the findings. This process included using multiple data sources such as participants, journal articles, and structures to name a few. Furthermore, the study used specific notes taken from different studies to compare similar research situations and research methods. The study compared studies that highlighted relationships between student development programmes and leadership in order to ensure transferability. For this study, an audit trail was used in order to ensure the conformability of the study. The audit trail included details of the data collection, analysis and the interpretation processes (Gohlmann 2018).

## **1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

This research study conformed to all ethical processes and was cleared of all ethical issues as per the Faculty Research Ethics Committee. A rigorous process was followed and subsequently, an ethical approval letter was granted (Appendix C).

Confidentiality and privacy of all data collected from participants was maintained; the research did not expose, nor harm participants, and kept the details of participants confidential to ensure privacy. Data collected by the researcher was treated with ethical consideration and at no point did the researcher compromise the integrity of the participants. The researcher issued a Letter of Information explaining the scope of study (Appendix A). The letter also indicated that the participants had a right to withdraw at any time, and that participation was totally voluntary. A Consent Form (Appendix B) were also issued to participants to complete and return it to the researcher prior to the start the survey/interview. Participants were contacted via e-mail, WhatsApp, text and phone calls with the request to participate in the study. Data collected was stored online via QuestionPro and cloud should any investigation arise. Code names were used. Data will be destroyed safely after eight years.

### **1.9.1 Anonymity and confidentiality**

Anonymity refers to the state of being anonymous, where a person's identity is concealed or unknown. It is commonly used in situations where individuals want to keep their identity hidden from others, often for privacy or security reasons.

Confidentiality relates to the protection of sensitive information and ensuring that it is kept secret and only accessible to authorised individuals. Ensuring anonymity and confidentiality in mixed research methods, which often involve both quantitative and qualitative data collection, is essential to protect the privacy and rights of research participants. Prior to the study all participants received a letter of information which explained the purpose of the study, the data collection methods, and how their data would be used. Participants provided voluntary and informed consent before participating in the study. All data collected avoid personally identifiable information (PII) such as names, email addresses, or phone numbers. The interviewees in this study were referred to via pseudonyms. Finally, since most of the data collected in this study was electronic the data files are encrypted and password protected to prevent unauthorised access and secured server with restricted access.

## **1.10 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS**

This dissertation consists of five chapters, and they are presented in the following manner:

### **Chapter 1: Introduction and overview of the study**

This chapter serves as an introduction to the dissertation. It includes background information, the research problem, the objectives or purpose of the study, the significance of the research, and an outline of the dissertation's structure.

### **Chapter 2. Literature review**

This chapter reviews and analyse relevant literature related to the research topic. It discusses existing theories, models, and previous research findings that are pertinent to the study. The literature review established the context for the research and identified gaps that the study aimed to fill. This review was later used to interpret the findings of the study for both student's leaders and the department officials.

### **Chapter 3: Research methodology**

This chapter details the research methods and techniques used to collect and analyse data. It includes information on the research design, data collection methods, data

analysis procedures, and ethical considerations. This chapter explains how the research process was conducted and interpreted to solve the research problem and address any shortcomings in the study.

#### **Chapter 4: Statement of findings, interpretation, and discussion of the results**

In this chapter, the study presented both qualitative and quantitative data for both students and the department officials. The findings were described in detail with all the necessary tables and figures to interpret the results. Furthermore, this was supported by all the relevant theories that supported the practicality of the study. This included analysing interviews via thematic analysis in order to fully comprehend the findings of the study. Qualitative and quantitative data findings of the study were presented so as to fully understand and interpret the bottlenecks associated with the UoT administration process.

#### **Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations**

The chapter discussed the implications of the findings and related them back to the research questions and objectives. This final chapter summarises the study, restates the research objectives, and provides conclusions based on the research findings. It offers recommendations regarding several issues which hindered the administration of student leadership development programmes and proposes future research studies emanating from the current study.

### **1.11 CONCLUSION**

This chapter provided a comprehensive preview of the study, introduced the topic of interest, provided context of the study and further provided a breakdown of research problem, aims and objectives. The literature review in this chapter introduced the analysis of previous studies which were closely related to this study. Furthermore, this chapter gave a glimpse into the research methodology that was adopted in this study.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The chapter presents the literature review. According to Ohlson and Pascale (2019), a literature review discusses relevant published knowledge and information related to a particular subject area. The review summarises secondary data and information in order to solve the research problem. Conducting a literature review helps the researcher build knowledge in the field of interest and identify the areas of a topic that have not yet been researched in detail. In this case the literature review included learning about important concepts in student leadership and gaining insight into how current and past student leaders deal with bottlenecks. In addition, the following review highlighted the principles used in student leadership development, including the characteristics of student leadership as well as the programmes used to develop such leaders (Cupido and Norodien-Fataar 2019).

### **2.2 THE ROLE OF POLITICAL CLUBS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

Cupido and Norodien-Fataar (2019) state that the governance of the systems of higher education should be democratic, representative and characterised by tolerance and mutual respect within the higher education institutions. Structures and procedures should be put in place to ensure those affected by the decisions of their leaders have a say in the decision making process, either directly or through elected representatives (Govender 2018). This includes the performance of oies and use of the institution resources in a transparent manner and explaining shifts in the decision making process (Govender 2018). The absence of transparency has historically contributed to the occurrence of unethical behaviour from student leaders in their respective roles, despite the fact that these leaders showed inspirational leadership skills during protests (Brankovic 2018).

Historically, student political clubs have often implemented strategies similar to their parent political organisations in developing leaders. This includes, at times, appointing

leaders from within the structures of the political club without undergoing proper leadership development processes and strategies (Reddy 2018). To gain a better understanding of student activism in South Africa, it is essential to briefly identify the key issues that have thrust student political clubs and their leaders into the spotlight within higher education institutions (Findler *et al.* 2019). Previous studies by Findler *et al.* (2019) and Taylor (2018) have primarily focused on the differences between national political organisations and student political clubs across the country, rather than examining the decision-making process, student support services, and the impact of student leaders in South African higher education. South Africa boasts over 36 public higher education institutions, comprising more than 21 traditional universities supported by 15 University of Technologies (UoTs) (Taylor 2018).

Political clubs can be found in most institutions, with a few exceptions among private higher education institutions. One criticism faced by these clubs has been their perceived inability to address traditional student issues such as academic funding, financial exclusion, and academic disputes (Taylor 2018). A study by Cupido and Norodien-Fataa (2019) indicates significant changes in student political clubs, transitioning from protest-related activities to more professional engagements. However, Taylor (2018) argues that student movements in South Africa still predominantly lean left in orientation and remain heavily influenced by racial issues, which continue to dominate political actions. The role of political clubs has been centred on addressing student debt issues, particularly academic and financial exclusions, which are predominantly experienced by African students (Findler *et al.* 2019).

UoT's grapple with recurring mass protests as student leaders express dissatisfaction with the limited role they play in addressing political concerns as opposed to economic ones (Reddy 2018). Consequently, government control over higher education has become a common theme in the country, highlighting the need to involve student leaders in policy development due to the limited roles these institutions have assigned to students (Reddy 2018). Such an approach could provide student organisations with the ability to predict future trends in higher education and contribute to legislation that facilitates political socialisation. This has led student leaders to take their grievances

nationwide and openly oppose government policies in order to exercise their right to protest. Protests that have not aligned with national political issues have often been overlooked (Reddy 2018).

The roles of student leaders have largely revolved around political dynamics, often modelled after civil rights movements. These roles encompass demonstrations on campuses, marches for fees, political socialisation meetings, classroom disruptions, vandalism, and anti-government protests (Townsend 2021). Additionally, student leaders have shown external support for banned political movements and academic boycotts that aim to address academic policies hindering student progress (Townsend 2021). Monitoring student behaviour provides programme developers with an opportunity to design programmes aligned with student values and aimed at addressing social challenges faced by students (Olsen and Elliott 2017). Informal leaders typically assume responsibilities during student affairs, movements, and protests. Informal leaders often have a large number of followers and are considered social influencers (Manzano *et al.* 2017: 20). These leaders can be developed through informal means such as family, school, sports clubs, and political clubs.

### **2.3 THE ROLE OF STUDENT LEADERS IN POLITICAL CLUBS**

Gott *et al.* (2019) emphasise the crucial role of political clubs in the success of higher education institutions. These clubs are responsible for nurturing student leaders who advocate for student concerns and create a conducive learning environment. Student leaders often transition from political clubs to become members of the Student Representative Council (SRC), where they actively engage in policymaking and collaborate with university management on student-related issues. Political clubs are instrumental in developing leadership skills necessary for addressing student concerns, and they actively implement student leadership programmes to groom leaders who can advance their club's objectives (Tondi and Nelani 2017).

Student organisations ensure that their elected student leaders take on various responsibilities tailored to meet the needs of the student body. These responsibilities include overseeing student organisation meetings, event planning, maintaining

records of residences and contact information, implementing the organisation's constitution, managing academic disputes, amending student residence bylaws, and submitting semester reports on student organisation activities (Dykhne *et al.* 2021). Higher education institutions often entrust political clubs with managing student-related issues, allowing students to acquire leadership skills in preparation for annual student leader elections (Dykhne *et al.* 2021). Senior students within political clubs typically apply for leadership roles through a competitive electoral system held across different campuses, followed by the completion of a leadership application form outlining their interests, skills, and capabilities (Manzano, Poon, and Na 2017).

Higher education institutions commonly permit student clubs to mentor leaders who align with their values and policies. Senior leaders within these clubs assist junior leaders in identifying potential new members within the university community. Before ascending to senior roles within the club, new members often participate in the student committee—a group consisting of current or former student leaders that convenes regularly to discuss student issues and opportunities (Gott *et al.*, 2019). Each political club is expected to establish a student committee that holds regular meetings, typically at least once a month, during which committee members share ideas from their peers about enhancing the learning environment (Dykhne *et al.* 2021).

These meetings provide guidance on existing projects and prevalent issues within higher education. Student committee members are nominated for various leadership roles and understand that they will be representing the entire student committee when they speak on matters related to student governance (Mugume and Luescher 2017). Student leadership committees also coordinate opportunities for committee members to develop leadership abilities through experiential and transformative programmes that complement the university's co-curricular and academic activities (Soria and Horgos 2021). These roles give student leaders a voice in articulating concerns, issues, and opinions from a student perspective, offering feedback on university programmes, facilities, support services, campus life, and overall effectiveness (Govender 2018). This dedicated group of students may also take on responsibilities throughout the year, planning and hosting events, attending networking events in the industry, and proposing changes to students' daily routines (Aleixo *et al.* 2018).

At UOT, student committees collaborate with other political clubs and the DSGD. student leaders require ordinary members to monitor student behaviour on different campuses to provide consistent feedback. Effective communication is essential, particularly for organisations with large memberships, necessitating thoughtful communication methods (Govender 2018). Monitoring student behaviour offers leaders an opportunity to acquire social skills necessary for making informed decisions and creating a responsive learning environment that adapts to social and educational changes (Soria and Horgos 2021). Leadership plays a critical role in effectively monitoring student behaviour and facilitating communication among stakeholders (Manzano *et al.* 2017: 20).

According to Cupido and Norodien-Fataar (2019), the action leadership model is recommended for introducing student leaders to new roles. This model incorporates reflection on personal leadership philosophies and the recognition of one's ability to lead groups, individuals, and communities. It acknowledges that a leader may have multiple identities that intersect and interact, with their prominence shifting based on the context (Skalicky *et al.* 2020). These identities are rooted in the student's personality and guide planners in designing an environment that supports the actions of student representative councils and student structures (Skalicky *et al.* 2020). The model aims to enhance programme delivery, enriching student life within the learning environment. Its core functions include improving the quality of work done by leaders and increasing student leadership participation in student governance and community activities on and off campus (Skalicky *et al.* 2020).

The development and review of policies and constitutions governing student governance structures provide support by offering information, rules, and procedures to students (Dykhne *et al.* 2021). The DSGD is responsible for various aspects, including SRC induction, team building, conflict intervention and management, policy development and analysis, and regular communication with the office of the elected student president to advocate for preventive measures (Mugume and Luescher 2017). The Department also guides political clubs in addressing social issues such as diversity, equity, and inclusion to promote cultural competence and multicultural

leadership that fosters connections across diverse cultures (Aleixo *et al.* 2018). The Department encourages strategic policies that boost student participation in higher education institutions and facilitates collaboration between student representatives and their universities to address student concerns (Witte *et al.* 2017). Department officials may attend committee meetings to provide input if they have plans related to the committee's goals

## **2.4 CURRENT CHALLENGES WITH STUDENT LEADERS**

Key issues have emerged concerning the manner in which student leaders campaign and show their activism; activism includes campaigning for economic and political sanctions to be imposed against government policies (Townsend 2021). However, some leaders have been criticised for being too focussed on spending too much time on, issues they cannot solve during their time in office, including debt and redress issues, mobilising broad student support, redress funding, and governance projects that take place at universities (Townsend 2021). Due to focusing on issues student leaders cannot solve during their time in office, these leaders jeopardise taking charge of HIV/Aids campaigns, gender based violence and mental issues concerns, although student participation in these awareness programmes around health and education issues which have remained relatively low. The same is true of anti-racist campaigns that largely pass as low-key support for student claims that racism explains high failure rates in particular courses at universities (Olsen and Elliott 2017).

Student organisations in South Africa continue to identify systemic educational issues as important. The Technikon Student Union (SATSU), in particular, has identified anti-privatisation and anti-racist campaigns as key strategic areas in which students can contribute to institutional and system-wide change (Olsen and Elliott 2017). However, the role of student leadership related to anti-privatisation and anti-racist awareness campaigns still remain minimal, which is in sharp contrast to student activism in the previous era (Olsen and Elliott 2017). For example, at several black universities, where protests consumed much energy during the 1980s and 1990s, events were depicted as representing the will of the majority and as being in alignment with the national consciousness of oppressed groups (Townsend 2021).

Historically, the social demand for higher education among working class communities resulted in student debt and financial aid emerging as key concerns (Jung *et al.* 2018). However, whereas campaigns around debt and redress issues earlier involved class boycotts, mobilising broad student support, violent mass protests, hostage taking, and looting, current efforts around debt, redress funding and governance projects are being taken up through negotiations at universities and with the education ministry (Jung *et al.* 2018). Further, while the students' case merits empathy, it does not imply that student representatives are organising political support on their behalf or that the institution will be affected by student activism. This characterisation of student activism stands in sharp contrast to previous descriptions of events that highlighted collective actions (Jung *et al.* 2018).

There are increasing concerns about a clear decline in the association between student leaders and national political organisations, amounting to the dissipation of a common vision that binds student activities and shifts in favour of co-operative governance at all institutions (Brankovic 2018). This has changed the nature of student struggle from anti-government and university council activities to participation in elected forums and representing students around institutional issues. More broadly, it signals a shift from focusing on national issues to narrowly addressing institutional concerns. Student politics shows a decline in the scale and scope of mass student demonstrations and students seem to have a lack of interest in political activities (Brankovic 2018).

## **2.5 STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES (SLPD)**

Student leadership development programmes (SLDPs) are designed to foster the growth of creative, innovative, independent, and community-minded students who can contribute positively to the learning community (Manzano *et al.* 2017: 20). These programmes offer various workshops, seminars, workshops, speakers, and individual projects aimed at equipping students with the skills needed to thrive in leadership roles (Shaw *et al.* 2018).

Upon acceptance into an SLDP, students are grouped and engage in assessments throughout the programme's duration, which can vary from one week to several, and some components may be conducted online. Additionally, students may be called upon to assist the university with tasks related to registration, demonstrating their commitment (Soria and Horgos 2021). After programme completion, students often undergo extended leadership training, including workshops and smaller projects, and they are recognised for their achievements (Gott *et al.* 2019).

In some SLDPs, students are encouraged to maintain a personal leadership journal to document their milestones and accomplishments (Soria and Horgos 2021). Alternatively, programmes may suggest that students write articles for the university newsletter. The overarching mission of SLDPs is to serve as a resource for higher education professionals interested in student leadership training, education, and development (Jung *et al.* 2018). These programmes aim to share best practices, critically evaluate the field, establish standards for leadership programmes, support national and regional efforts to develop student leadership programmes, contribute to the literature, recognise exemplary programmes, and provide a forum for new ideas (Soria and Horgos 2021).

To participate in an SLDP, a student must be enrolled for the term in which they apply, and selection is based on meeting specific criteria outlined in the application (Gott *et al.* 2019). These programmes typically involve small group settings with approximately 15 students per group. Training comprises two main components: developing the skills necessary to facilitate programmes for diverse student groups, and a comprehensive exploration of SLDP content (Soria and Horgos 2021). Participants can expect to acquire valuable skills such as classroom management, group facilitation, activity planning, public speaking, and team building. They also have the opportunity to network with fellow student leaders on campus (Gott *et al.* 2019).

Successful completion of an SLDP Facilitator-in-Training programme often leads to co-curricular recognition and the chance to apply for paid positions as Student Leadership Development Facilitators within the Student Life office (Gott *et al.* 2019).

Current literature on leadership development offers complex frameworks that aim to cultivate various leadership styles. However, there is a growing need to focus on programmes that bridge the gap between theory and practice, empowering students to construct their own frameworks for leadership development (Cupido and Norodien-Fataar 2019). Well-structured leadership programmes have a direct impact on individuals, enhancing life skills, self-esteem, and social status, in addition to academic achievements (Day *et al.* 2016).

A critical aspect is fostering a positive association between student participation and expected health behaviour (Aleixo *et al.* 2018). Unfortunately, some past leadership programmes have been influenced by external factors, leading to accusations of student leaders commercialising student politics, misusing university resources, and causing campus disruptions (Mugume and Luescher 2017).

Student development programmes aim to instil non-technical elements such as leading people, teams, and organisations. They provide insights into the tools needed to become effective leaders who motivate others (Day *et al.* 2016). However, aligning programme objectives with personal values and ethics is essential to deliver better value (Govender 2018). Large-scale development programmes often prioritise conceptual knowledge and personal growth activities but may overlook authentic leadership development, including ethical behaviour and decision-making (Kezar *et al.* 2017).

Authentic leadership theory, as discussed by Findler *et al.* (2019), emphasises characteristics such as honesty, integrity, and respect. Authentic leaders are self-aware and aligned with their values and morals, fostering transparency in their actions to build positive relationships with followers (Nagda 2019: 30). Research by Skalicky *et al.* (2020) emphasises the importance of SLDPs, offering various frameworks, leadership-focused courses, formats, and unique educational experiences. However, these programmes need to consider individual characteristics, including the willingness to learn independently (Kouzes and Posner 2018).

Student developmental theories fall into various theoretical categories, including psychosocial, cognitive-structural, person-environment, typology, maturity, social identity, integrative theories, and critical theory frameworks (Skalicky *et al.* 2020). Higher education institutions face a high demand for student leadership participation across various clubs and organisations. Unfortunately, many universities in South Africa struggle to apply non-traditional management methods and address the communication and leadership challenges posed by student leadership programmes (Nagda 2019: 30). Negative effects, such as decreased student engagement, motivation, and academic performance, highlight the need for enhancing the calibre of leaders (Gott *et al.* 2019).

Curriculum implementation issues have led to ineffective student programmes, failing to engage diverse students seeking leadership roles (Olsen and Elliott 2017). Many higher education institutions do not create a supportive culture that aligns with student priorities (Rosch and Collins 2019). Integrating student leadership programmes with business objectives is essential to empower leaders to solve student problems and influence policy (Thomas and Brower 2017).

The duration of student-led programmes has been criticized for not providing students with adequate time and resources compared to university-funded leadership programmes (Aleixo *et al.* 2018). Programme organisers must prioritise self-discipline, strategy development, and financial analysis while ensuring open communication, proper governance, and budgeting (Ohlson and Pascale 2019). Despite shorter durations, these programmes still contribute to leadership development, but traditional political clubs often fail to customise programmes to meet the quality expectations of ordinary students (Dykhne *et al.* 2021). Measurement challenges arise because programmes may not cover the entire curriculum or set of activities needed to assess essential leadership skills developed over time (Janke *et al.* 2016).

While the literature presented provides limited feedback from participating students, it emphasises the perspectives of programme planners, which can appeal to a wide range of student interests (Olsen and Elliott 2017). Forward-thinking universities have transitioned many student development programmes online. This shift involves

students participating in interactive online platforms like Google Documents (Rosch and Collins 2019). The trend is towards customising e-learning programmes to structure leadership programmes with personalised content tailored to student specifications (Kiersch and Peters 2017:11).

Student leadership programmes, unlike employee programmes, can take both formal and informal structures. Formal leadership development includes roles with titled positions, offering leaders an authority base. In contrast, informal leaders rely on personal and interpersonal skills to gain influence (Olsen and Elliott 2017). Participants in leadership development opportunities often receive informal verbal feedback and evaluations from those involved in the activities (Komives and Wagner 2016). These programmes map various career paths, focusing on retaining student members and providing opportunities for leaders to learn from their experiences (Aleixo *et al.* 2018). They often use frameworks to plan and execute SLDPs, aligning programme objectives with students' success and accrediting body requirements (Kouzes and Posner 2018).

Helping students navigate their leadership journey when they first arrive on campus is crucial, and orientation programmes often include leadership workshops to showcase students' leadership skills (Janke *et al.* 2016). Students are made aware of available leadership development opportunities and assess whether these align with their desired skill development (Janke *et al.* 2016). This process also helps student clubs identify new members and integrate them into plans that connect students to courses and programmes enhancing their leadership capacity.

Student leaders are increasingly tasked with designing and teaching first-year seminar classes and developing frameworks to help students succeed academically (Olsen and Elliott 2017). The integration of key competencies related to student success and achievement can enhance academic performance and retention (Aleixo *et al.* 2018). Leadership competencies include facilitating activities that promote self-discovery and learning methods. Information centres play a vital role in highlighting various experiences across campus (Gohlmann 2018). The design of major-specific leadership programmes based on required competencies or having students from a

particular major participate in existing programmes can be beneficial (Kouzes and Posner 2018).

While some programmes may measure success through headcounts and satisfaction surveys, aligning programmes with leadership competencies offers a more robust way to assess leadership development (Gohlmann 2018). Leadership development, through programmes like SLDPs positively impacts personal, academic, and well-being outcomes for students, enhancing socioeconomic benefits (Janke *et al.* 2016). Although few reports document outcomes, they generally indicate a range of positive effects. Developing students into productive citizens who can drive positive societal change can be enhanced through well-planned leadership training development programmes (Brankovic 2018). Implementing more project-based peer evaluations adds sophistication to grading and encourages students to take responsibility during group projects (Gohlmann 2018). Leadership development methods should be tailored to each generation, as the needs and expectations of students change over time.

## **2.6 BOTTLENECKS ASSOCIATED WITH STUDENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES**

The majority of student leadership programmes in higher learning institutions were created to provide educational training modules for a specific group of employees or students (Gott *et al.* 2019). Day *et al.* (2016) stated that leadership programmes are likely to experience bottlenecks due the different procedures and management personnel involved in the designing and implementation done by each individual faculty, department and social club. Gott *et al.* (2019) further stated that this is because each individual entity or business branch have their own form of implementation of leadership programmes. In addition, programme designers in higher education institutions are likely to face common challenges and typically attempt to design leadership programmes with some of these challenges in mind (Aleixo *et al.* 2018).

Murphy and Johnson (2016: 33) supported this statement by stating that ethical leadership and accountability are common challenges that programme planner's attempt to develop and educate potential leaders about. Student leadership

programmes have failed to identify potential good leaders and develop new skills needed for good leadership; the curriculum set for student development programmes has not been structured to be coherent with student leadership goals (Day *et al.* 2016). Students have shown a preference for more autonomy in the programmes they normally participate in, wanting to be more responsible for decision-making, creativity and problem making. These students see the need to take part in meaningful leadership development and for exposure to leadership work related experience (Aleixo *et al.* 2018). As a result, Fishbone diagrams have been introduced to help entrepreneurs, industry leader and almost any industry or person having a problem (Davey and Morell 2020).

Professional diagramming software may help project planners in the creation of Fishbone diagrams (Figure 2.1). This model was originally developed as a quality control tool and the Fishbone diagram is helpful when used in many cases, such as to analyse a complex problem when there are many causes, and for identifying all possible root causes for an effect or a problem (Davey and Morell 2020). The framework can assist in the development of different points of view on a problem, to uncover bottlenecks and identify where and why a process does not work, and for accelerating a process when traditional ways of problem solving consume too much time (Radziwill 2017). The fishbone diagram technique combines brainstorming and mind mapping to discover the cause and effect relationship of an underlying problem (Radziwill 2017). It pushes leaders, managers and supervisors to consider nearly every possible cause of an issue instead of just getting stuck on the most obvious ones (Davey and Morell 2020). Not only does it help the organisation get to the root cause of a problem, but it also uncovers bottlenecks in processes and identify areas where processes are not working.

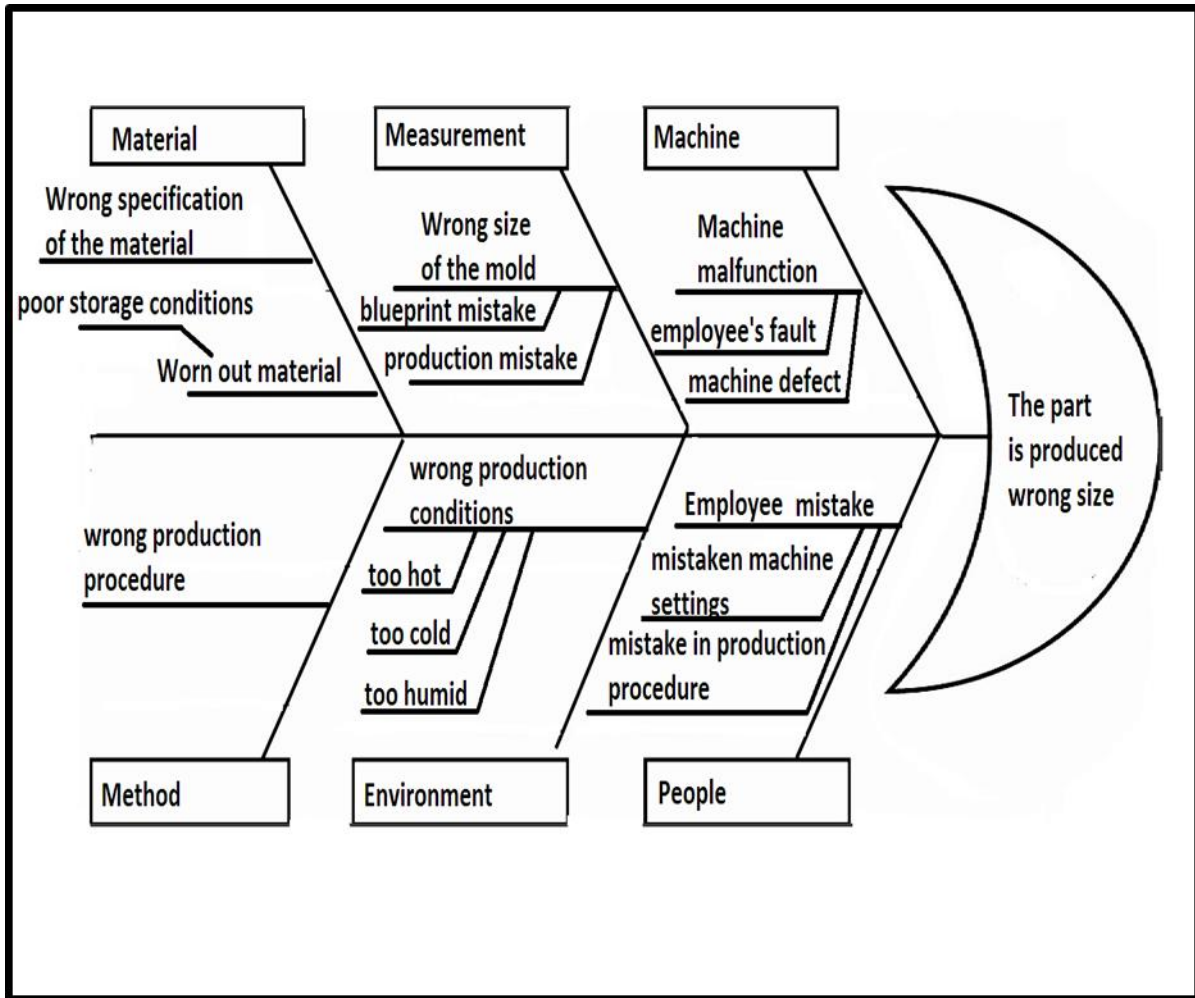


Figure 2.1: Fishbone Ishikawa diagram graphic method.  
 Source: Radziwill (2017).

### 2.6.1 Lack of support from management

South African higher education has a history of stopping student’s movements and academically excluding leaders who have engaged in these negotiations (Taylor 2018). Both student leaders and educational institutions have developed a culture of spreading misinformation and resolving internal issues through legal actions. Taylor (2018) stated that youth and educational institutions have to work towards a common goal and each do their part to ensure effective leadership development. Student leaders can be more effective in planning and decision-making when they are informed about the policies to be taken in the university in advance. Despite higher education institutions creating online platforms to engage students, there is still an opportunity to further increase the role of these institutions in encouraging students to be leaders in the society (Janke *et al.* 2016). One of the problems identified in the study has been

the lack of internal dialogue between current student representatives and university management. Most dialogue occurs as a result of unrest on campuses and housing problems for students (Taylor 2018).

Current student leaders often go into negotiations with universities to fix existing issues without the proper training required to handle such negotiations. In addition, Brankovic (2018) identified lack of understanding from student leaders such as adaptability, political awareness, social awareness, less criminal activity, lower public expenditures, social returns, economic returns to the country, productivity, and greater citizenship. Brankovic (2018) recognised many private benefits including personal development, life enrichment, development of knowledge and skills, monetary benefits, cognitive growth, emotional awareness, moral development, and practical competence. Each student stands to gain more skills through leadership training and education than those who do not participate. This differentiation in the individual attainment of private and public benefits is the result of personal motivation playing a significant role in the acquisition of skills. Leadership programmes serve society and the individual in multiple ways, which add value to the overall purpose of higher education (Olsen and Elliott 2017).

The goal for most institutional leadership programmes is to reach as many students as possible through their various structured and unstructured programmes, but often the training initiatives rests on the assumption that one size fits all (Rosch and Collins 2019). This includes teaching participants the same group of skills or style of leadership regardless of strategy, organisational culture, or political culture mandate. In the earliest stages of planning a leadership initiative, universities should ask themselves a simple question: what, precisely, is this programme for (Olsen and Elliott 2017)? If the answer is to grow by capturing organic opportunities, the programme coordinator will probably want people at the top who are good at nurturing internal talent. Focusing on context inevitably means equipping leaders with a small number of competencies that will make a significant difference to performance, instead, what we often find is a long list of leadership standards, a complex web of dozens of competencies, and corporate-values statements (Olsen and Elliott 2017). The review found that when small organisations identify a small number of leadership capabilities

essential for success in its business such as high-quality decision making or stronger coaching skills it achieves far better outcomes.

### **2.6.2 Lack of funding to support student leadership skills**

Higher learning institutions have not prioritised financial support for leadership programmes including policies that can foster and develop leadership skills (Taylor 2018). The author further states that limited funding has hindered the involvement of student leaders in South African universities. In addition, the lack of a clear national educational policy has also affected all levels of education in the country thereby creating a trade-off between financial support for students and the management of the resources within these institutions (Murphy and Johnson 2016). Many student-led organisations, campus groups and clubs do not have the necessary financial support from the universities that they are based in despite providing a platform to support emerging student leaders (Rosch and Collins 2019). Their study followed higher education's support for student-based programmes including access to the university resources and negotiations with top management about policy issues,

Ohlson and Pascale (2019) found that policy implementation by universities on student-led issues lack an understanding on presently running developed programmes and their practices. Their study included a secondary explanation of the inability of the university management and faculties to champion the development of student policies. According to Taylor (2018) current incumbent student leadership normally face financial constraints due to the lack of financial support from both the government and educational institutions. These incumbent leaders have to quickly learn about the existing barriers and constraints of their respective universities. Student leaders should monitor participants' career development paths before and after training, including evaluating how many were appointed to more senior roles even after exiting the programme (Davey and Morell 2020). It should also look into how many student leaders did the organisation develop over a given period of time (Day *et al.* 2016). Finally, it should try to monitor the programmes' impact, especially when training is tied to breakthrough projects.

### **2.6.3 Lack of policies to support student leadership development**

The investigation looked at student governance policies and the use of effective student development programmes including focus on personal growth and skills capacity. As a result, similar strategies have begun to gain attraction for leadership development with non-student populations in most developing communities (Gohlmann 2018). Kouzes and Posner (2018: 2) support this statement by stating that higher education institutions have begun to realise the need to create an environment that acknowledges the importance of a sustainable learning environment that will have a positive impact on students. Evidence-based recommendations should be made regarding the development of executive coaching, mentorship and self-awareness for practical for standard leadership behaviours (Kouzes and Posner 2018). Kouzes and Posner (2018: 22) also explained how highlighting these issues can broaden the context necessary for effective development of student leaders, in order to create a supportive working and learning environment.

Student leaders must recognise the personal values that guide them in order to set an example for the behaviours they expect from others; leaders must find their own voice and then make a clear behavioural statement of their values (Kouzes and Posner 2018). This kind of behaviour is consistent with a key dimension of transformational leadership, which involves the pursuit of higher order values that motivate leaders and followers to perform above expected levels (Kouzes and Posner 2018). They realise, as well, that it is the consistency between their espoused values and their actions that grants them genuine respect and credibility, and take great care to ensure that they are fully cognizant of aligning their words and actions. In sharing their values with others, leaders also ensure that people adhere to the shared values of the group (Kouzes and Posner 2018). This creates an environment in which leaders are more concerned with directing their followers by focusing on what they have in common rather than highlighting their differences.

Leadership programmes often follow the philosophy that leadership can be learned through motivation and training, and only a few leadership skills are innate; (Davey and Morell 2020). Davey and Morell (2020) explore the dearth of leadership that exists

in society today and support this statement through explaining the differences between a leader and a manager. This requires the management, administering and maintenance of education systems by focusing on control and maintaining a more immediate and short term view of situations that can keep an eye on the bottom line (Day *et al.* 2016). The dearth of leadership can often be attributed to the lack of leaders who make decisions with integrity, ethical standards, an understanding of the interests of all people, and a focus on the present and future. These concepts identify an important goal of leadership programmes to develop leaders who can be managers so that managers who cannot lead are reduced and the public and private benefits are maximised for society and the individual (Davey and Morell 2020).

Evaluation of leadership development begins and ends with the feedback provided by the participants. A study by Rusk *et al.* (2018) found that trainers cannot deliver a syllabus that is pleasing and challenging to the participants, even though certain targets cannot be set, achieved and monitored. Tracking the performance of the programme cannot be assessed once the programme is complete and leaders can learn from successes and failures over time and make the necessary adjustments (Rusk *et al.* 2018). One approach is to assess the extent of behavioural change, perhaps through a 360 degree–feedback exercise at the beginning of a programme and followed by another one after 6 to 12 months. Leaders can also use such tools to demonstrate their own commitment to real change for themselves and the organisation.

#### **2.6.4 Bottlenecks during the implementation and management of SLDP**

Formal student leadership development programmes enhance what students learn in the sessions by giving them powerful tools for personal and professional success (Reddy 2018). They help universities attract more high-ability students, distinguish themselves from peer institutions, and increase the value of a student’s education. Leadership development helps students strengthen their communication and collaboration skills, develop resilience, become more adaptable, and prepare for a world in which they will be expected to be agile and innovative (Kiersch and Peters 2017: 5). Implementing a successful leadership development programme is

challenging, however, and there is no single template or approach that works across the board. Assessments for students that have participated in the training programmes varies with the programme organisers of the selected political club on campus, programme organisers prefer inviting guest speakers to motivate and inspire potential leaders (Kiersch and Peters 2017: 5). Witte *et al.* (2017: 29-30) explained that the selection of guest speakers partially depends on speakers' ability to align their message with the leadership theme of the class.

Facilitators of leadership development programmes have failed to design activities that can measure the effectiveness derived from the programme. Resource facilitators need to ensure that programmes run well and that participants have an opportunity to ask guest speakers questions on leadership abilities and about the line of communication between students, facilitators, program organisers and administrators (Aleixo *et al.* 2018). Student leaders need to share a clear vision with their followers as most leaders are selected based on their commitment to student's visions and issues. Strong and effective leaders normally have a good educational background that will help to prepare them for leading during difficult times (Witte *et al.* 2017). One of the problems that lead to persisting bottlenecks is programme organisers who do not have the necessary skills to properly plan and implement quality student development programmes. This is because programme organisers are expected to acquire the necessary skills to lead and motivate different groups of people in higher education institutions (Aleixo *et al.* 2018).

South African higher education institutions have come under scrutiny for their failure to provide opportunities for students to become skilled leaders, including learning soft skills such as inclusiveness and equality (Davey and Morell 2020). Emerging student leaders need to be provided an opportunity to develop both their hard and soft skills in order to become an invaluable resource in both educational institutions and communities (Witte *et al.* 2017). Kezar *et al.* (2017) state that programme organisers can use a systematic approach to structuring, planning and implementing change initiated by participants in order to innovate and add value to existing programmes. This may include a change in organisational or club policy and systems to ensure that

effective leaders are developed to deal with processes and information management changes (Kezar *et al.* 2017).

Jacob *et al.* (2018) found that offering workshops and retreats as part of student leadership programmes have provided an avenue for ongoing development and increased effectiveness of programme management. The authors further state that effective student leaders who have the necessary skills to lead are rare, uncommon and lacking in society. Most developing societies have showed a lack of confidence in student leaders. Leaders are expected to demonstrate the ability to apply, integrate and demonstrate sound, systematic knowledge and skill regarding leading people, strategy, teams, leadership communication, valuing diversity, growing a new culture, change and transformation (Jacob *et al.* 2018). Project executors should spend the bulk of their time on site dealing with day-to-day problems becoming skilled project directors who can manage relationships with governments, joint-venture partners, and important customers (Reddy 2018).

## **2.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THE SOCIAL CHANGE MODEL**

One of the possible models to teach leadership is the social change model (SCM), the SCM was developed to act as a curriculum to aid in the development of individual values, group values, and community values (citizenship). According to Komives and Wagner (2016) SCM provides a framework suited to contemporary post-industrial leadership models, where leadership is seen in a much more democratic way, with two basic premises: Firstly, the model is designed to include all levels of leadership: those with assigned roles and those without fixed roles. Secondly, leadership is seen as a process rather than a title or a position. The SCM model promotes the values of social justice, equality, self-knowledge, empowerment, partnership, citizenship and community service by covering three distinct dimensions of leadership development: personal, group and community values (Jung *et al.* 2018).

Most student leadership research from the last few decades has focused on individual students and how those students mature into their own leadership worldview, while a smaller branch has focused on whether or not a particular programme is meeting the

learning objectives of being a top-notch leadership programme or intervention (Kezar *et al.* 2017). Even with numerous leadership studies completed, little is known about how leadership develops or how a student's leadership voice evolves over time (Kezar *et al.* 2017). Therefore, the process of studying leadership as a teachable skill is a much more modern paradigm. Leadership articles, books, and studies abound, but few research projects test models to examine leadership development which would eventually inform practitioners (Kezar *et al.* 2017). Past research by Murphy and Johnson (2016: 8) and Witte *et al.* (2017) investigated knowledge retention and skill development over the span of a semester, with regards to university student leadership development.

Kiersch and Peters (2017: 5) suggested that leadership knowledge learned in an academic classroom can be retained by students at a similar rate up to three years after course completion. Kezar *et al.* (2017) found that student perceptions of their own leadership skills improved over the span of a semester with both practical and theoretical skills enhanced in a formal setting. While these studies targeted measures applicable to their specific settings, the study attempted to use a widely recognised curriculum known as the SCM and measured students development using the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS). Previous research projects have tested models during a classroom experience and showed a change but the study incorporated a control group. Therefore, the study attempted to show that any change in pre/post test scores occurred as a result of the intervention. While specific knowledge retention is not the key focus of this project, student knowledge does lend itself to personal growth to develop leadership skills (Kiersch and Peters 2017: 5).

This curriculum, when combined with purposeful application and theory-based activities, clearly creates a well-rounded classroom experience (Jung *et al.* 2018). In (Kiersch and Peters 2017: 5). study, a test group will be exposed to an intervention based on SCM and staff who support student life programmes with the premise that leadership comes from outside the classroom and goes beyond a college degree. As a result, leaders are developed outside of the classroom through student organisations, leadership roles, weekend training programmes, and speaking events. The goal may be to develop leaders, but that scope may be too broad. Therefore, the

SCM should be used as a thematic context for leadership training programmes. Each of the three aspects (individual, group and community) can all be focused on improving appropriate training programmes for students.

For the past few decades, colleges and universities have developed leaders inside and outside of the classroom. Leadership educators and planners should embrace newly emerging paradigms (Jung *et al.* 2018). These newer ideas see leadership as a skill to be nurtured and fostered both inside and outside of the classroom as outlined in the post-industrial view of leadership. If the development of future leaders is an ongoing goal for institutions of higher learning, then it is time to embrace that important challenge by viewing leadership development as a holistic process which includes all levels of leadership training, both formal and informal (Jung *et al.* 2018). Since the intervention was effective with this population, more intentional, structured leadership opportunities based in both theory and practice should be made available for university students.

This model can be easily adapted and used at other universities. The staff who facilitate student life programmes and residential life programmes understand that leadership emerges outside of the classroom and that it transcends a college degree. As a result, leaders have been developed outside of the classroom by means of student organisations, leadership roles, weekend training programmes, and lecture events (Murphy and Johnson 2016: 8-12). The goal may be to develop leaders, but that scope may be too broad. Therefore, the SCM should be used as a thematic backdrop to co-curricular leadership education programmes. Each of the three aspects: individual, group, and community can be focused on to enhance proper training programmes for students (Murphy and Johnson 2016: 8). Consequently, a programme which focuses solely on service or on team building or on self-discovery will not be as successful as the one which can focus on all three (Figure 2.1).



**Figure 2.2: Social change model of leadership**  
 Source: Jung *et al.* (2018)

## 2.8 CHAPTER 2 SUMMARY

In conclusion, this chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of literature closely related and highly relevant to the study at hand. It not only synthesises existing knowledge but also delineates key topics that will be explored in-depth throughout this research. The insights gleaned from this review served as the foundation for crafting pertinent research questions, which, in turn, guided the data collection process.

Furthermore, the concept of employing ongoing cohorts within leadership programmes emerges as a promising avenue to foster the formation of micro-groups of students who journey together throughout their university experience. This approach holds the potential to create a supportive and cohesive learning environment, facilitating both personal and academic growth among participants.

# **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

## **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter covered the literature review, which conveyed other studies and theories related to the investigation research topic. This chapter provides and explains the study's chosen research methodology and further explains the rationale for the research approach, research context, research sample and data sources, data collection and analysis methods, issues of trustworthiness and limitations and delimitation of the study. The research methodology is the procedures and strategies used by the investigator to properly understand the research problem and fulfil the study research objectives.

## **3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH**

Sekaran and Bougie (2016) stated that there are two main research approaches namely an inductive and deductive research approach. The author indicated that an inductive research approach focuses on methods used by the researcher to collect and analyse data to develop theories, concepts, or hypotheses based on patterns and observations seen in the data. This approach uses a "bottom-up" method in which the researcher starts with specific observations and then moves on to more general theories or ideas. Inductive research is often used in exploratory studies or when not much research has been done on a topic before. While a deductive research approach is a type of research in which the researcher starts with a theory, hypothesis, or generalization and then tests it through observations and data collection. It uses a top-down method in which the researcher starts with a general idea and then tests it through specific observations. For this study an inductive research approach was used to learn more about the research problem since there was a limited amount of previous research on the subject. Both approaches have their strengths and weaknesses and are often used in combination depending on the context and goals of the research or problem-solving task. But an inductive approach was suitable for this study since it allowed the researcher to generate meanings from the data set collected in order to

identify patterns and relationships to build a theory around bottlenecks faced by student leaders for SLDP.

According to Gott *et al.* (2019) there are three types of research design, namely: qualitative, quantitative and mixed. Gohlmann (2018) stated that qualitative research relies on verbal narrative like spoken or written data and only a few cases are used as a sample to develop an initial understanding. Quantitative research uses logical and statistical observations to draw conclusions. This approach is used to generate numerical data and facts by employing statistical, logical and mathematical techniques (Sekaran and Bougie 2016). Mixed methods research combines and integrates both qualitative and quantitative research methods in a single research study so as to understand a phenomenon better and answer the research questions.

Mixed methods research combines elements of quantitative research and qualitative research; it involves collecting, analysing, and interpreting both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or in a series of studies that investigate the same underlying phenomenon (Sekaran and Bougie 2016). This approach was chosen to enable the researcher to collect both numerical and non-numerical data in order to get a comprehensive understanding of the bottlenecks associated with administering student development programmes (Gott *et al.* 2019).

The researcher opted for an exploratory research design to collect and analyse the data. Noble and Smith (2015: 122) define exploratory research as a method employed to investigate a problem that lacks a clearly defined scope. This approach aims to provide a deeper comprehension of the existing problem by delving into various facets of the issue.

The initial phase of the investigation involved the researcher starting with a broad idea and gradually narrowing this down to identify specific bottlenecks associated with student development programmes. Qualitative research findings were juxtaposed with quantitative research findings to offer comprehensive insights and substantiate the rationale behind the study. This holistic approach facilitated the development of robust

data collection instruments and the refinement of existing data sources, ultimately enabling a more profound understanding of the research topic.

### **3.3 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY**

There are four types of research philosophies suited for mixed research studies namely phenomenology, interpretivism, pragmatist and positivism. Qu and Dumay (2018) state that the phenomenological philosophy typically shares the view that the world is socially constructed and is subjective. This philosophy focuses on finding the meaning of human behaviour. Phenomenological philosophies suggests that certain types of information and knowledge can be deduced in a logical manner based on uncontrollable events and natural phenomena such as natural disasters in order to draw conclusions based on experience and rationality (Noble and Smith 2015). This research philosophy typically describes philosophical approaches that are more reliable than explanations and typically generate ideas by means of induction and human interest. Positivism views society as different individuals with different beliefs that shape their actions; this philosophy tends to construct its theories based on social facts, sociologists and researchers who are able to identify correlations and relationships between two or more variables (Noble and Smith 2015). Interpretivism is a branch of epistemology which investigates the differences between humans as social factors. The issue of difference is emphasised to differentiate research among people rather than objects such as medicines and computers (Mehra *et al.* 2018). In this philosophy, interpretation of social roles is presented with respect for their own sets of meaning.

Pragmatist research philosophy deals with the facts and claims that the choice of research philosophy is mostly determined by the research problem. In this research philosophy, the practical results are considered important (Mehra *et al.* 2018). The authors further state that pragmatic philosophies do not belong to any philosophical system as such, but instead rely on facts, knowledge, experience and real world social models. For this investigation pragmatism philosophy was selected and used by the researcher, in order to find a correlation between leadership programmes and bottlenecks. Furthermore, this philosophy provided the researcher with the freedom to

choose the methods, techniques, and procedures that best meet their needs and scientific research aims in order to solve the study research problem.

### **3.4 TARGET POPULATION**

A target population is a group of individuals that the researcher aims to investigate, with the goal of drawing conclusions based on their findings. This group typically comprises individuals with various traits and characteristics of interest to the researcher (Mehra *et al.* 2018). The purpose of studying the target population is to gain insights into and assess their preferences and behaviours, whether related to marketing a product or service or studying specific elements such as behaviour patterns.

In this investigation, there were two distinct populations involved: student leaders responsible for managing and administering student development programmes, and employees from the DSGD. This study specifically focused on assessing student leaders responsible for programme administration from 2018 to 2020. The aim was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by elected student leaders during these three years.

### **3.5 SAMPLING**

Murphy and Johnson (2016) outlined two primary sampling methods available to researchers: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is a technique in which the researcher selects samples from a larger population using a method rooted in the principles of probability theory, namely, random selection. This method employs statistical theory to randomly pick a small group of individuals from a larger population and assumes that their responses will reflect the overall population.

Conversely, non-probability sampling encompasses a group of sampling techniques that assist researchers in selecting units from the population they intend to study. Non-probability sampling strategies are based on the researcher's subjective judgement (Gohlmann 2018). Unlike probability sampling, this method does not prioritise the

precise representation of all members of a large population within a smaller sample group of participants. Consequently, not all members of the population have an equal chance of participating in the study.

For this investigation, a non-probability sampling method was chosen because it allowed the researcher to connect with expert participants more easily. This approach facilitated the study's execution, even though student leaders were located in different areas. Moreover, this method proved to be cost-effective and time-efficient when compared to probability sampling. Tufford and Newman (2017) identify of the main types of non-probability sampling strategies as being quota, convenience, purposive, and snowballing.

### **3.5.1 Sampling strategy**

Purposive sampling is a non-probability strategy that selects participants based on specific characteristics of the population and the objectives of the study (Mehra *et al.* 2018). This approach is chosen when the researcher anticipates that the targeted population can provide insights that are applicable to other similar cases. Moreover, purposive sampling permits the researcher to select participants based on their judgement and their availability (Nagda 2019).

In this investigation, student participants and were purposefully selected due to their knowledge of student leadership development programmes. Department employees were also sampled using purposive sampling (Mehra *et al.* 2018). This specific strategy was chosen because it allowed the researchers to recruit participants easily and obtain their opinions and viewpoints in the most straightforward manner possible.

### **3.5.2 Sample size**

Thomas and Magilvy (2018) define sample size as a portion of the population that enables the researcher to draw inferences about the entire population. Sekaran and Bougie (2016) describe sample size as a direct count of the number of participants or observations to be included in a study.

For this investigation, data collection was divided between student leaders and officials from the selected department. The selected UoT has a total of 14 clubs (2018-2020), with seven located in various campuses. The student sample size was determined by the SRC constitution which mandates that political clubs have a minimum of 6 members in their executive committee. Therefore, the calculation is as follows: 6 executive members x 14 clubs = 84 x over 3 years = 252. Thus, the estimated number of student leaders who participated in administering these student development programmes is 252.

To ensure the study's credibility and validity, the researcher consulted Sekaran and Bougie's (2016) table of population to ensure the accuracy of the data and maintain a 95% confidence interval. Therefore, the actual sample size for student leaders was 132 participants, based on the Sekaran and Bougie sampling table.

The Department at the selected UoT consists of six staff members who serve the role of being custodians of student organisations and formations as well as facilitating programmes for student development, one staff member was selected for the pilot study and two were selected for the study. This means that the overall sample size for this study was 134 participants (132 student leaders and 2 staff members from the DSGD).

In total, 132 questionnaires were emailed to student leaders that were purposely selected for this study, using the QuestionPro software. All the questionnaires were returned, which is a 100% response rate. The high response rate was due to the software making it easy for the participants to access the questionnaires and the students were communicated with prior to the study and during the study to encourage them to complete the questionnaire. The two staff members were interviewed to collect data.

### **3.6 Pilot study**

A pilot study is an experimental pre-study used to test the logistics of the study and collect information prior to the study and thus improve the quality and efficiency of the main study (Murphy and Johnson 2016; Gott *et al.* 2019). The 'rule of thumb' was used to determine the sample size for the pilot trial resulting in 30 subjects (Thomas and Brower 2017) divided into three groups of ten student participants per year from 2018 to 2020 and one staff member.

A pilot study enables the researcher to identify or refine the research questions, figure out what methods are best for pursuing them, and estimate how much time and resources are necessary to complete the larger version, among other things. For this investigation 30 questionnaires were emailed to student leaders to be completed online via QuestionPro software, with 23 students responding. This software allowed the researcher to save and store the data collected. The researcher received no complaints from the participants regarding the structure of the survey or any of the questions. One pilot interview was conducted with a Department official via Microsoft teams which lasted 24 minutes. This interview was recorded and saved for data analysis purposes. The pilot study for the Department official revealed that some interview schedule questions needed to be refined to improve the quality of information and data collected.

### **3.7 Data collection**

Data collection is the process of collecting, measuring and storage of information collected during a research study (Noble and Smith 2015). The data collection process is dependent on the research type, and methods of data collection (observation, questioning, measuring, or a combination of different methods). For this study a questionnaire and interview research questions served as the primary data sources. These tools enabled the researcher to collect data directly from the participants, while the study literature review provided the researcher with secondary data. An online closed ended questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data, from the student leaders. Closed-ended questions are defined as question types that ask respondents

to choose from a distinct set of pre-defined responses, to multiple choice questions. In a typical scenario, closed-ended questions are used to gather quantitative data from respondents. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data from Department officials. Semi-structured interviews combine unstructured and structured interview styles in order to allow objective comparisons between participants. This data collection tool provides flexibility to the interviewer and ensures that the researcher gains a broader understanding of the problem (Gohlmann 2018).

### **3.7.1 Data collection process**

The data collection process started with emails to elected student executives who are responsible for administering student leadership programmes, describing the purpose of the study and containing a link to the survey. After distribution of the link, students were phoned to confirm that they had received the email containing the link. QuestionPro platform was used which allowed the researcher to easily collect, monitor, manage and save the data collected from the study. However, collecting data from student leaders proved to be a time-consuming process, taking well over a month. Student leaders were initially unresponsive to email requests, and as a result, WhatsApp messages were sent to encourage their participation.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two officials from the DSGD. These interviews were conducted via MS Teams and lasted no longer than 25 minutes.

The research instrument consisted of 17 items with a level of measurement at a nominal or an ordinal level. The questionnaire was divided into four sections comprising demography and the three research objectives.

### **3.7.2 Data analysis**

Data analysis involves the process of cleaning, transforming, and modelling data to extract useful information for business decision-making (Day *et al.* 2016). In this investigation, the surveys conducted were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. This computer software utilises various statistical research formulas to perform statistical analysis and interpretation of

numerical data. SPSS is commonly employed by market researchers, survey companies, government entities, marketing organisations, and data miners to process and analyse data (Kouzes and Posner 2018).

The analysis of surveys involved both inferential and descriptive statistics to present the study's findings. Descriptive statistics included measures of central tendency such as the mode, median, and mean.

Regarding the interviews conducted in this investigation, content analysis was employed to analyse the data collected from the participants. Content analysis is a qualitative method that focuses on recorded human artefacts such as manuscripts, voice recordings, and journals. It serves as the initial stage of analysing qualitative data and typically investigates written, spoken, and visual data. The subsequent stage involved the use of thematic analysis to analyse the data derived from the first stage. As described by Govender (2018), thematic analysis is a data analysis tool used to examine qualitative data collected by researchers. This method closely scrutinises the data from interviews to identify themes, ideas, patterns, and topics, thereby deriving meaning from the participants' views, knowledge, opinions, experiences, and values. The research instrument consisted of 17 items with a level of measurement at a nominal or an ordinal level. The questionnaire was divided into four sections comprising demography and the three research objectives.

### **3.7.3 Validity and reliability**

Data quality plays an important role in ensuring that the data collected meets the required validity and integrity, this process typically follows more standardised procedures and protocols of collecting data during the investigation (Kouzes and Posner 2018). Thomas and Magilvy (2018) state that data quality provides summarised assessments of data in order to identify, examine, implement and align data quality procedures. Trustworthiness is a measure of confidence in the data and includes the principles of transferability, confirmability, dependability and credibility.

In order to ensure credibility, this study used triangulation to test the accuracy of the findings which involved using multiple data sources such as participants, journal articles. The study compared studies that highlight relationships between student development programmes and leadership in order to ensure transferability. An audit trail was used in order to ensure the confirmability of the study. The audit trail included details of the data collection, analysis and the interpretation processes (Gohlmann 2018).

#### **3.7.4 Inclusion and exclusion**

Inclusion criteria are the attributes that prospective research participants must have in order to be included in a study, and exclusion are the criteria used to identify individuals who should not be included in a study (Rahman 2017). The inclusion criteria for student leaders were former and current student leaders from political clubs who had knowledge of SLDPs and participated in the planning and execution of SLDP programme who must have worked directly with student governance department administrators when planning their SLDPs. These individuals were required to have been student leaders at UoT campuses. Student governance staff inclusion criteria considered the number of years working with student leaders, involvement of staff members in the administration process of programmes relating to political clubs as well as understanding of university policies and procedures.

Exclusion criteria are designed to filter out irrelevant data that do not directly contribute to addressing the research questions or objectives. This approach ensured that only participants relevant to solving the research problem were included. Exclusion for student leaders applied for general students registered at UoT and not part of student leadership, student leaders who do not directly plan SLDPs, have no direct contact with student governance administrators. Student governance staff who had worked within the department for less than a year were excluded.

### **3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethical considerations in research are the principles that guide the research designs and practices. The purpose of ethical consideration includes understanding real-life phenomena related to the topic under study (Gohlmann 2018). For this investigation, ethical considerations included issues of confidentiality and measures taken to ensure trustworthiness. A letter of information and consent based on the UoT research requirements was read and filled in by participants. All ethical considerations were integrated into the investigation thus ensuring compliance.

### **3.8.1 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality and privacy of all data collected from participants was maintained--the researcher did not expose, nor harm participants, and data were kept confidential to protect the details of participants and ensure confidentiality and privacy. Data collected by the researcher were treated with ethical consideration and at no point did it compromise the integrity of the participants.

### **3.8.2 Trustworthiness**

The first step of this investigation was to establish prolonged engagement with the data and triangulate different data collection modes; this involved the documentation of reflective thoughts and potential themes to be used in the study. Furthermore, records of the data collected were kept and stored accordingly, this included detailed notes about the data processes that were used in the development of certain concepts and themes. Data collected was stored in the cloud. The cloud is password protected and can only be accessed by the researcher, so users can rest assured their data is safe. This was further supported by an audit trail that details each step of data analysis and shows that the findings were not biased but accurately portray the participants' responses.

### **3.8.3 Letter of information and consent**

The researcher issued a Letter of Information explaining the scope of study (Appendix A). The letter informed the participants that they had a right to withdraw from the study

at any time, and that participation was totally voluntary. Prior to collecting data, a Consent Form (Appendix B) was issued to participants to complete and return to the researcher. Participants were contacted via e-mails and WhatsApp, with phone calls only being used when the investigator could not access the participants to participate in the study.

#### **3.8.4 University ethical processes and compliance**

The researcher was able to obtain ethical clearance and a gatekeeper's letter (refer Appendix C) from the UoT Research Office and the data that was collected from the study was stored in the cloud. The protocol of the research office initially stated requires that code names be used by the researcher in order to protect the information collected. In addition, data collected from the investigation will be destroyed safely after five years. Paperwork will be shredded and recordings will be deleted including back up recording.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter highlighted the study research methodology and chosen research tools. It covered the research strategies used by the researcher to obtain data from the participants including the ethical considerations.

## **CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

The previous chapter provided an overview of the study's research methodology, highlighting the tools and strategies employed by the researcher throughout the study. This chapter will present the quantitative data (Part I) and qualitative data (Part II) findings and analysis.

### PART I – QUANTITATIVE

This part will focus on the interpretation of quantitative findings obtained using SPSS version 28.0. The data collected from the responses was analysed using this software, and the results are presented through descriptive statistics, such as figures, cross-tabulations, and other graphical representations. Inferential techniques, including correlations and chi-square tests, were used, and their interpretations are based on the p-values with  $p < 0.05$  being regarded as significant.

#### **4.1 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

The research instrument consisted of 17 items with a level of measurement at a nominal or an ordinal level. The questionnaire was divided into four sections comprising demography and the three research objectives.

##### **4.1.1 Reliability statistics**

Cronbach's alpha score is an indication of the reliability (covariance) of items in a questionnaire (Thomas and Magilvy 2018). A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or greater is regarded as acceptable.

**Table 4.1: Research objectives (RO)**

Research Objectives	Sections	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
RO: 1	The type of support provided by the UOT to ensure the effectiveness of student leadership developmental programmes.	6	0.882
RO: 2	To identify the influence of the university procedures in the implementation and management of student leadership developmental programmes.	5	0.751
RO: 3	To establish the evaluation process used by the UOT political clubs in order to determine the influence and impact of leadership developmental programmes.	4	0.762
<b>All items included</b>		15	0.916

Table 4.1 shows that the reliability scores for all sections exceeded the recommended Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70. This indicates an acceptable degree of internal consistency for each section of the questionnaire. The calculated value for RO 1 is 0.882, RO 2 is 0.751 and Ro is 3 0.72.

#### 4.1.2 Factor analysis

Factor analysis, as defined by Qu and Dumay (2018), is a statistical technique primarily used for data reduction. It is commonly employed in survey research when researchers aim to represent multiple questions with a smaller number of hypothetical factors. This technique helps determine whether various measures actually assess the same underlying concept, as highlighted by Noble and Smith (2015). If they do, these measures can be combined to create a new variable known as a factor score variable, which assigns a score to each respondent based on the identified factor. Factor analysis can be applied to various situations to uncover underlying structures in data.

The process of factor analysis is typically preceded by an assessment of the data's suitability for structure detection, as reflected in the summarised table displaying the results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test. The KMO measure indicates the proportion of variance in the variables that can be attributed to underlying factors. High KMO values, approaching 1.0, suggest that factor analysis can be effectively applied to the data. Conversely, if the KMO value is less than 0.50, it is unlikely that factor analysis will yield meaningful results (Qu and Dumay 2018).

Bartlett's test of sphericity, on the other hand, examines the hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, implying that the variables are unrelated and

unsuitable for structure detection, as described by Tufford and Newman (2017). Significance levels with values below 0.05 suggest that factor analysis can be appropriately employed with the data.

Factor analysis in this study was conducted based on the Likert scale system, and certain components were further subdivided into finer components. This process is elucidated in the rotated component matrix.

#### 4.1.3 KMO and Bartlett's tests

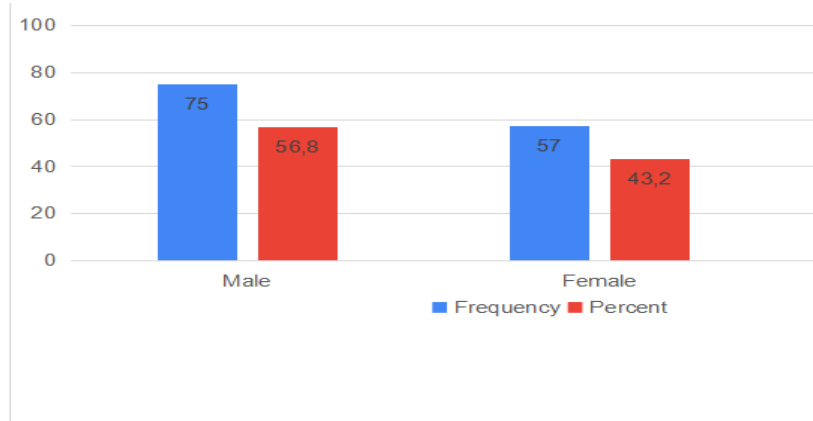
The KMO determines sampling adequacy (whether the responses given with the sample are adequate) and should be over 0.5 for a satisfactory factor analysis to proceed (Thomas and Magilvy 2018). The recommended accepted hypothesis for this research will be greater than 0.5 (value for KMO), with values ranging from 0.7 to 0.8 acceptable. Table 4.2 shows that RO 1 has a KMO of 0.871, RO 2 has a KMO of 0.709, and RO 3 has a KMO of 0.737, all of which are acceptable. Bartlett's test is another indicator of how closely the factors are related (McLoughlin 2021).

**Table 4.2: KMO and Bartlett's test**

Research Objectives	Section	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
			Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.
RO: 1	The type of support provided by the UOT to ensure the effectiveness of student leadership developmental programmes	0.871	390.155	15	< 0.001
RO: 2	To identify the influence of the university procedures in the implementation and management of student leadership developmental programmes	0.709	202.736	10	< 0.001
RO: 3	To establish the evaluation process used by the UOT political clubs in order to determine the influence and impact of leadership developmental programmes	0.737	149.118	6	< 0.001

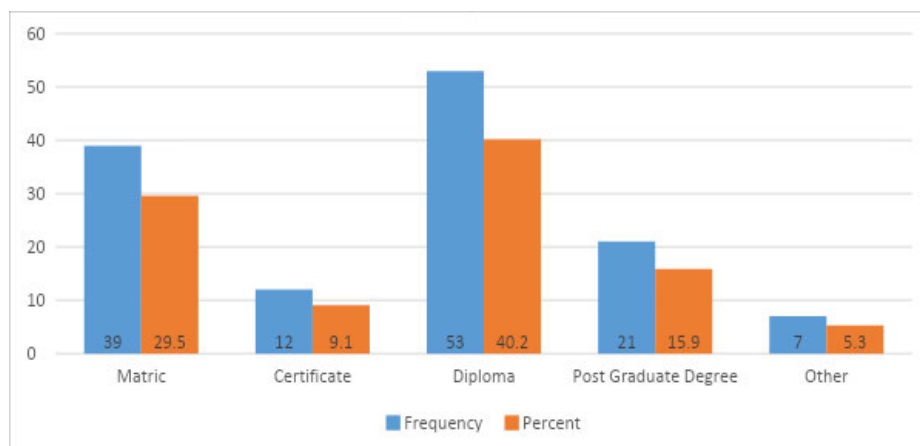
All the conditions are satisfied for factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy value should be greater than 0.500 and the Bartlett's test of Sphericity sig. value should be less than 0.05. In this case, the identification of the correlation matrix as an identity matrix is being evaluated. Table 4.2 shows that the significance of Bartlett's test of sphericity is < 0.001, therefore the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix. This means that factor analysis is possible

## 4.2 SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA



**Figure 4.1: Gender**

Figure 4.1 depicts the gender of the study participants, showing that 75 (57%) of the participants were male and 57 (43.2%) were female.



**Figure 4.2: Highest level of education attained**

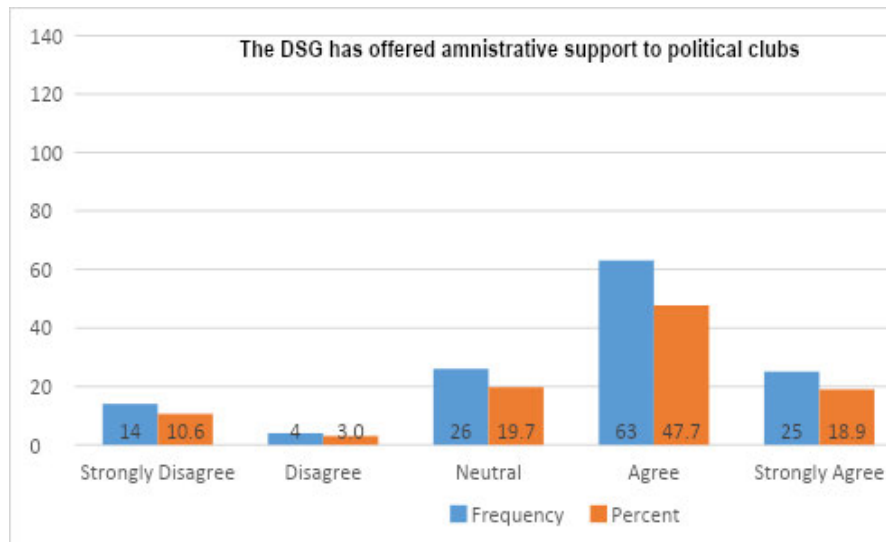
Figure 4.2 shows that 53 (40.2%) participants had previously obtained diplomas, 39 (29.5%) matric, 21 (15.9%) postgraduate degrees and 12 (9.1%) higher certificates. This shows that the majority of students had obtained diplomas, and that most of the participants have already graduated and were either pursuing their postgraduate qualification, or were seeking employment or already employed.

### **4.3 SECTION B: THEMES OF THE STUDY**

This section deals with participants' perceptions of the bottlenecks facing University of Technology political regarding administration and management of student development programmes (SDP). Theme 1 identifies the types of support provided by the UoT to ensure the effectiveness of student leadership developmental programmes, Theme 2 identifies the influence of the university procedures on the implementation and management of student leadership developmental programmes, and; Theme 3 relates to the evaluation process used by the UoT political clubs in order to determine the influence and impact of leadership developmental programmes.

#### **4.3.1 Theme 1: Assistance given to student political clubs by the DSGD**

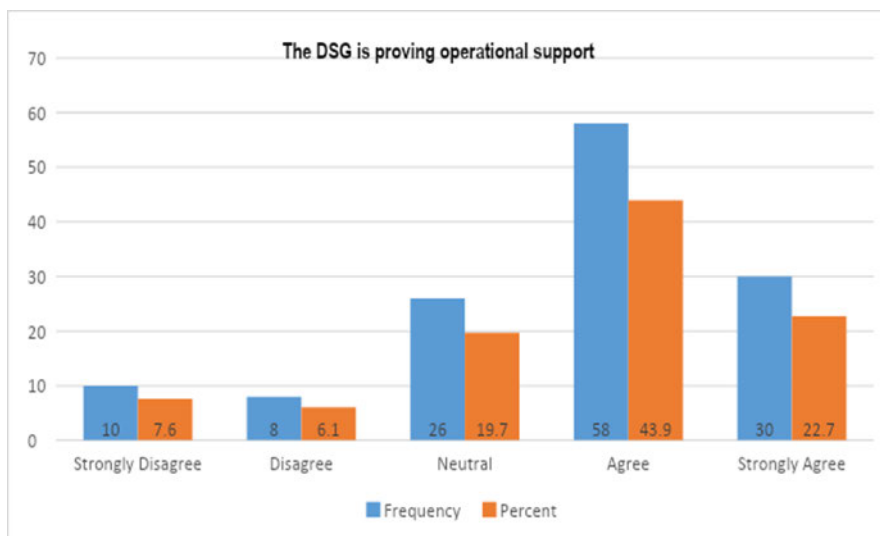
The DSGD aids student political groups. By aiding student political clubs, the DSGD helps to foster students' civic involvement, critical thinking, and leadership skills. These programmes assist students get a better grasp of political processes, public service, and community involvement, which can benefit both the university and society. The DSGD's support for student political groups indicates the institution's dedication to creating a diverse and inclusive campus climate that encourages student engagement and active participation in the democratic process. The results indicate that a high level of support is provided by the Department, as revealed by the high levels of agreement within this research objective which indicates that the results are likely to be both reliable and valuable. There was minimal difference between the participants' neutrality and overall low levels of disagreement for this research objective. There are a total of six figures in this theme and they are also supplemented by rotated component metrics analysis.



**Figure 4.3: The Department of Student Governance and Development has offered administrative support to political clubs**

According to Figure 4.3, 63 (47.7%) of the participants agreed that the DSGD has offered administrative support, 26 (19.7%) remained neutral, 25 (18.9%) strongly agreed, 14 (10.6%) strongly disagreed, and 4 (3%) disagreed. Figure 4.3 shows that most participants believe that the DSGD has helped political clubs with their administrative needs. This is shown by 66.6% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the DSGD has provided administrative support to political clubs. The presence of consistent agreements within this research statement indicates that the results are likely to be both reliable and valuable. When there are consistent agreements, it can be inferred that the outcomes are dependable and relevant across different situations for this assertion. Furthermore, this shows that the data is spread out thereby indicating that there is quite a large variation of the views from the sample of student leaders. Administrative assistance ensures that numerous student-related operations, such as event planning, budget management, and record keeping, are carried out in an efficient and effective manner. This process of simplifying procedures lowers bottlenecks and administrative errors. This ensures that important information reaches students in a timely manner and helps prevent misunderstandings. Offering assistance to student political organisations is vital, according to Choi and Chandler (2020), to manage support operations such as scheduling, booking venues, procuring equipment, and assigning programme resources. This facilitates the production of future political leaders who are well-informed and willing to make a positive impact through workshops and training sessions tailored to the specific needs of student

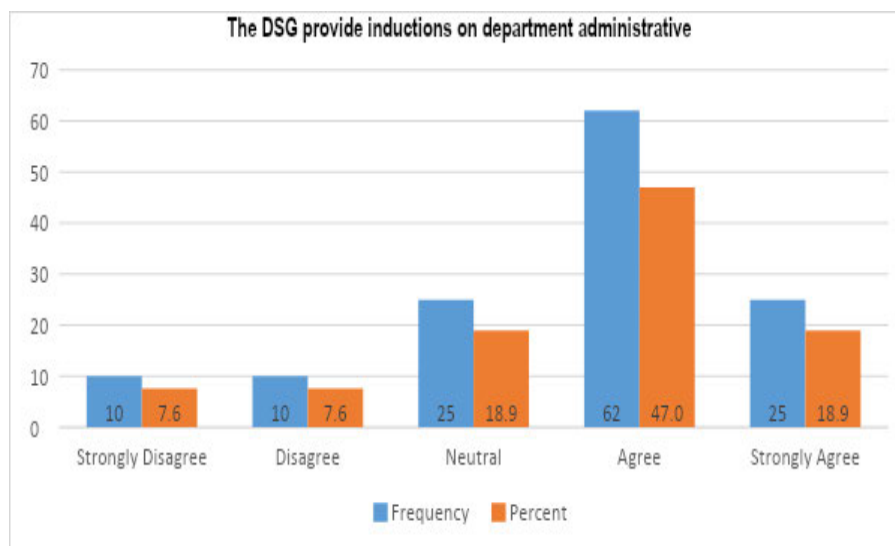
political groups. Administrative support can help facilitate clear and consistent communication between students, and the university. Allocating resources, such as funding for student clubs and organisations, facilities for events, and other logistical support helps ensure that student initiatives have the necessary resources to succeed and often involves interacting with DSGD and student leaders.



**Figure 4.4: The DSGD is providing operational support**

Figure 4.4 shows that the majority of participants agreed that the DSGD is providing operational support. The results show that 58 (43.9%) agree, 30 (22.7%) strongly agree, 26 (19.7%) remained neutral, 10 (7.6%) strongly disagree and 8 (6.1%) disagree. The results demonstrate that the data is dispersed, indicating that the perspectives of the sample of student leaders range widely. The figure shows that there is a high rate of students agreeing (63.6%) that DSGD provides operational support. Despite this, some reservations are expressed by the participants (19.7%), who remained neutral and disagree (13.7%). Consistent agreement suggests that the findings are more likely to be trustworthy and applicable in a variety of circumstances for this claim. According to the findings of He's (2021) study, administrative support can take many different forms, such as assisting with event organisation, managing paperwork and documentation, providing financial or budgetary support, advertising events, and assisting with communications. Most of the time, the level of administrative assistance provided by DSGD varies depending on the programmes each club conducts as well as the requirements of each particular club. The major goal is to create an environment inside campus for political clubs that encourages student

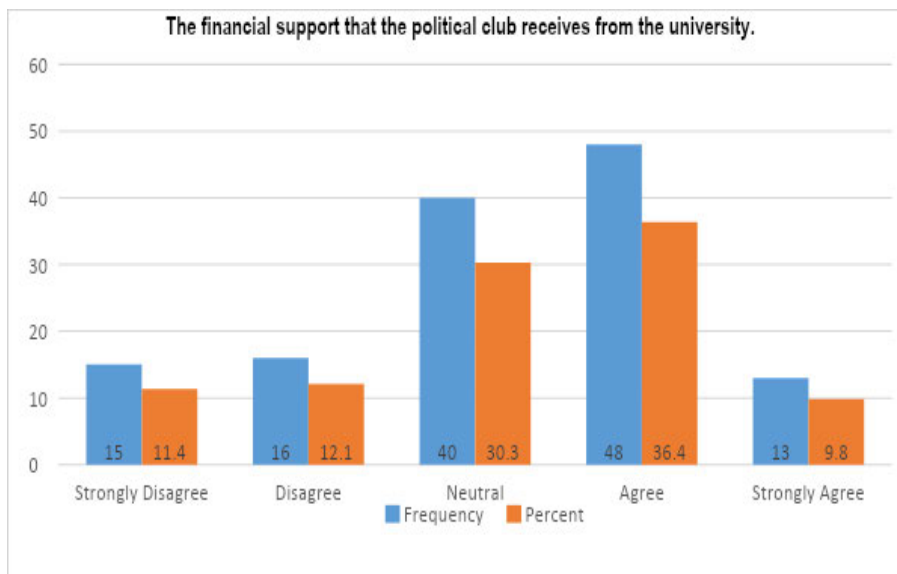
engagement, leadership development, and a healthy exchange of ideas. According to Blessett *et al.* (2019) and Tamtik and Guenter (2019), most student clubs still encounter severe administrative obstacles. The authors note that the student handbook for the university or something similar usually contains the policies and guidelines required to direct student organisations. Depending on the policies and procedures of the educational institution, a university’s support for political clubs or any other student organisations may differ. The DSGD and other administrative entities with comparable responsibilities oversee regulating student organisations, clubs, and activities at many universities and colleges. He (2021) indicated that these administrative procedures are essential for maintaining organisation, complying with regulations, and delivering the intended benefits to students; this information helps in making improvements for future iterations of the programme.



**Figure 4.5: The DSGD provides induction on department administrative procedures.**

The results in Figure 4.5 show that 62 (47%) of the respondents agree with the statement that the DSGD provides inductions on department administrative procedures, 25 (18.9%) strongly agree, 18.9 (18%) are neutral, 10 (7.6%) strongly disagree and 10 (7.6%) disagree. The results indicate that most respondents (65.9%) concur that the DSGD provides training on department administrative processes, while 15.2% disagree and 18% are neutral. Participants in this situation exhibited consistent agreement in relation to the statement above and the variations that are shown in this situation indicate that the study data is robust enough to withstand small variations. Furthermore, the data is also skewed and piled to the right with the tail pointing to the

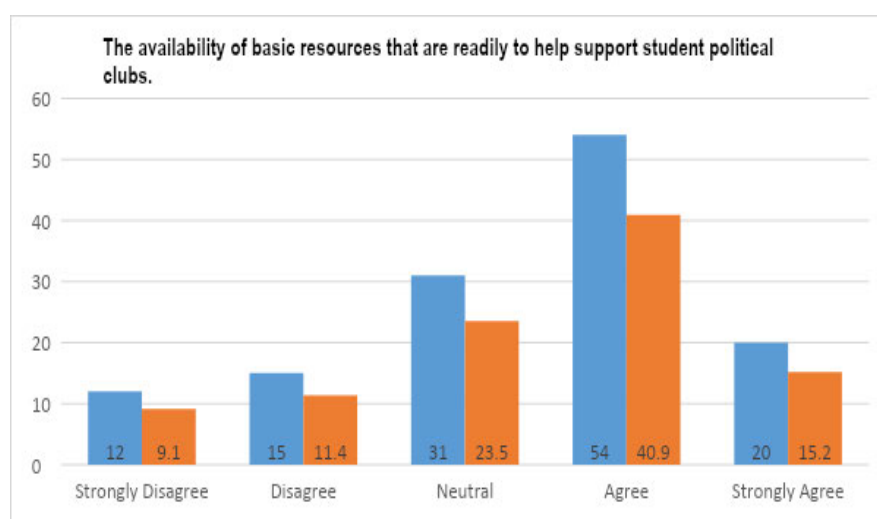
left. The DSGD oversees the induction of student leaders in order to enable student leaders to properly carry out their obligations on campus. Furthermore, by offering full inductions regarding Department administrative procedures, student leaders will be better prepared to handle their responsibilities and contribute to the Department's overall growth and success. According to Blessett *et al.* (2019), university inductions are responsible for educating student leaders about their rights and obligations as members of the university community. According to the findings, inductions are critical for ensuring that students understand their rights, obligations, and chances for participation in decision-making processes affecting their experience and campus life. According to He (2021) partnering with student leaders to develop clear goals and objectives for the next year's training programmes, as well as collaborating with inductions to provide an overview of the student governance system within the Department, can add value to programme implementation. Induction includes an explanation of the various governing bodies within the clubs and their roles and responsibilities, such as student councils, committees, and associations.



**Figure 4.6: The financial support that the political club receives from the university**

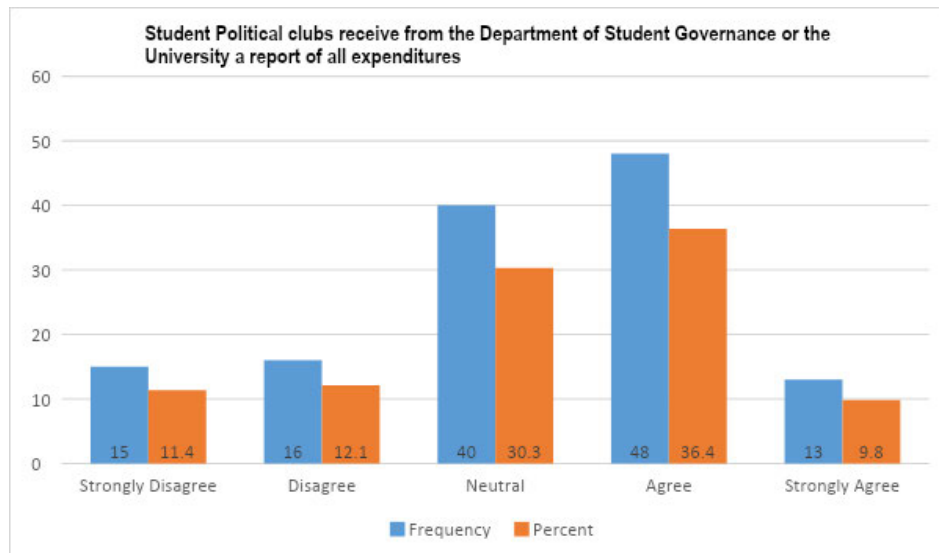
Regarding the financial support the political club receives from the university, Figure 4.6 shows that 48 (36.4%) agree that political clubs receive financial support, 40 (30.3%) were neutral, 16 (12.1%) disagree, 15 (11.4%) strongly disagree and 13 (9.8%) strongly agree. The results show that more participants (46.2%) overall agree that political clubs have received financial support from UoT than disagree (23.5%).

However, a large percentage of participants (30.3%) remained neutral. The combination of disagree and neutral amounts to 53.8% suggests that the perception of financial support is divided. This could be based on a variation of factors such as the funding model used by DSGD or inadequate funds based on each club's requirements. However, even though there are variations in this specific situation, the findings imply that the data collected in the study holds a satisfactory level of reliability. The study results can withstand minor discrepancies or inconsistencies without significantly affecting the overall validity of the findings. Due to cues from the study design or their understanding of what is expected, participants in this scenario might give inconsistent responses. This implies that further investigation is necessary to determine whether participants are actually in agreement or whether other factors are at work. In this case, the skew is negative when the data are piled to the right. Stahl and McDonald (2022) state that student political clubs are expected to allocate a percentage of their funds to assist students. The amount of financial support varies by institution and is frequently established through a formal application procedure or distributed based on the size and activity level of student organisations. Ibsen and Levinsen (2019) state that using university communication channels or offering operational, financial, and administrative support to groups involves ensuring that the clubs meet the rules and guidelines for functioning as an approved student organisation. According to the current study's findings, most participants believe that UoT's provides financial support to political organisations.



**Figure 4.7: The availability of basic resources to help support student political clubs.**

Figure 4.7 displays the perception of availability of basic resources to support student political groups. The results show that 54 respondents (40.9%) agreed, 31 (23.5%) remained neutral, 20 strongly agree (15.2%), 15 disagree (11.4%), and 12 strongly disagreed (9.1%). Thus, most participants concur that there are sufficient resources to sustain student political clubs (56.1%). There was a high level of neutrality (23.5%) in response to this statement which is essential for producing reliable and impactful research outcomes. This impartiality helps to maintain the validity of the research process by making it simpler for other researchers to reproduce the study and independently verify the findings. This figure makes it clear that the data is negatively skewed and packed to the right, with the tail oriented to the left. Given that the data are stacked to the right, the skew in this case is negative. Basic resources that are easily accessible to support student political clubs include the DSGD assistance in planning and organising events by offering advice on event logistics, venue reservations, audio-visual equipment, and required permissions or approvals. Since most student political clubs need money to host events, workshops, seminars, or guest lectures, financial support can be viewed as an example of the availability of fundamental resources. The DSGD can help reduce the neutrality and disagreement by supplying details on financing options, assisting clubs with the application process, and ensuring correct financial distribution. The DSGD may adapt these tools and resources in accordance with the individual goals and objectives. According to a study by Stahl and McDonald (2022), the viability and potency of student political clubs depend greatly on the accessibility of basic resources in colleges. These tools significantly contribute to the development of student organisations, encourage involvement, and build an atmosphere that is favourable to political debate and engagement. According to Liu *et al.* (2023), student political clubs can plan events, discussions, debates, and campaigns thanks to routine evaluation and upgrading of resource offerings, which attract students with diverse interests and viewpoints. This active engagement makes it easier to provide the necessary tools and support that can help students develop their political awareness, advocacy skills, and engaged campus community.



**Figure 4.8: Student political clubs receive reports of all expenditures to help them incorporate plans for the following years' training programmes**

Figure 4.8 depicts how participants perceive the issue of receiving a report of all expenditures from the DSGD. The results show that 48 (36.4%) agree, 40 (30.3%) are neutral, 16 (12.1%) disagree, 15 (11.4%) strongly disagree, and 13 (9.8%) strongly agree. Thus, most participants agree. The evidence clearly demonstrates that 46.2% of the participants in total agree that the DSGD provides student political clubs with reports on all expenditures. However, there was a large variation of the perceptions with 30.3% of participants remaining neutral and overall disagreement at 23.5%. The findings shown in Figure 4.8 correlate with the findings shown in Figure 4.6 on financial support provided to political clubs. This correlation clearly indicates that further investigation on this aspect should be conducted. Overall, a high level of neutrality turned out to be crucial for producing reliable and valuable research findings. By making it simpler for other investigators to duplicate the study and independently verify the results, this neutrality contributes credibility to the research process. High degrees of objectivity in this study have proven essential in this case for generating trustworthy and helpful research results. This strengthens the validity of the study's findings. Zeebaree *et al.* (2019) claim that financial resources are needed to buy research supplies, get in touch with business executives, and support student leadership development. As a result of policy compliance and regulations, they can ensure that their expenses adhere to the rules and provide contact information for any questions or clarifications. These reports are meant to provide student leaders with a comprehensive overview of expenditures, insights into cost efficiency, and the

knowledge needed to create well-planned training programmes in future. These reports also assist with political clubs' accountability as they need to also report to their constituency. This procedure includes comparing actual expenditures to budgeted amounts for each training programme and detecting any significant variations between budgeted amounts and actual spending. According to Adhariani and De Villiers (2019), student leaders must outline the total amount allocated to student political organisations in order to provide an overview of financial activities and any significant changes from the previous reporting period when reporting all expenditures to the university. Student leaders will be able to decide which programmes were more successful and therefore deserve to be continued in the future using financial analysis (Esch *et al.* 2019).

**Table 4.3: Rotated component matrix for Theme 1**

Theme one:	Component
	1
Q1: The Department of Student Governance provides operational support to student's leaders during preparation, running and review of LDP (Operational support in this case includes booking of venues, procuring necessary items, arrangements for guest speakers.	0.808
Q2: The Department of Student Governance has offered administrative support to political clubs in terms of processing requests to conduct LDP	0.820
Q3: The Department of Student Governance provide inductions on department administrative procedures to be followed arranging LDP	0.829
Q4: The financial support that the political club receives from the university has contributed to the development and management of student leadership development	0.699
Q5: Basic resources (in this case resources include, venues and equipment) are readily available to help support Student Political clubs to be operative within the structures of the University	0.842
Q6: Student Political clubs receive from the Department of Student Governance or the University a report of all expenditures to help them incorporate plans for the following years' training programmes	0.766

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 component extracted.

Table 4.3 includes estimates of the correlations between Theme study objectives and the estimated components of this investigation. There is only one component extracted for this matrix, means that there is little variation in the manner the participants answered. Each component has strong positive factor loadings that are highly connected with the types of support offered by UoT's to assure the effectiveness of student leadership development programmes; this was shown by the correlation found in Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5, and Q6. In this case the types of support provided by the UoT to ensure the effectiveness of student leadership developmental programmes is highly correlated with Theme 1. This shows a linear relationship between all variables found

in Theme 1 since it is greater than 0.5. The values found are not lower than the required value of 0.5, with little variation in the values identified in the component matrix values.

#### 4.3.2 Theme 1: Summary

Theme 1 of the study, which focused on the assistance given to student political clubs by the DSGD, yielded several noteworthy findings:

1. **High agreement levels:** Participants in the study generally exhibited high levels of agreement with the statements presented in Q1 to Q6, as evidenced by the high frequencies in the figures. This suggests that most participants believe their respective political clubs receive some form of support from the university or the DSGD.
2. **Low disagreement levels:** Conversely, there were low levels of disagreement with the statements in Q1 to Q6. This indicates that disagreement with the idea of support for political clubs was relatively rare among participants.
3. **Neutral responses:** Neutral responses were the second-highest category of responses, suggesting that some participants remained neutral on certain aspects of Theme 1, possibly due to mixed experiences or perspectives.
4. **Financial support acknowledged:** Many participants agreed that financial support from the university has contributed to the development and management of student leadership development (Q4). This finding aligns with the idea that financial support can enhance the functioning of student political clubs.
5. **Resource availability:** A majority of participants believed that ample resources were available to sustain student political clubs (Q6). This indicates a perception among participants that resources were accessible to aid student political groups in their activities.
6. **Statistical significance:** Statistical analysis revealed that the differences in responses among participants were statistically significant, underscoring the importance of these findings.

These findings suggest that, according to participants, student political clubs do receive support from the university or the DSGD, including financial assistance. However, it is essential to note that the study's findings may not fully align with previous research or contradict some prior claims, as highlighted by the references to Caeiro *et al.* (2020), Taylor (2018), and other researchers.

The study's results provide valuable insights into the perceptions of participants regarding the support provided to student political clubs, but it also highlights the need for further research and examination of the factors that may influence the extent and impact of this support. The differences in findings between this study and previous research suggest that there may be contextual or situational factors at play that warrant further investigation.

#### **4.3.3 Theme 2: The influence of the university procedures in the implementation and management of SLDP**

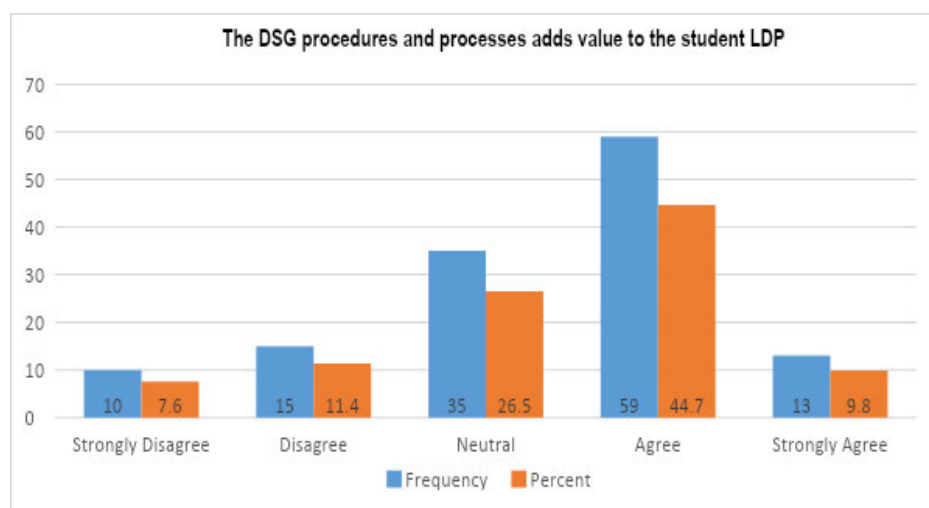
Theme 2 of the study explores the influence of university procedures on the implementation and management of student leadership development programmes. The investigation reveals that university procedures play a significant role in shaping these programmes and ensuring their alignment with the institution's mission, principles, and educational objectives. Here are some key findings from Theme 2:

1. **Alignment with university mission:** University procedures often mandate that student leadership development programmes align with the university's mission, values, and educational goals. This alignment ensures that these programmes contribute positively to students' personal and professional growth.
2. **Endorsement process:** These programmes typically undergo an endorsement process to ensure their positive impact on students' development. This process helps in evaluating and approving the programmes based on established criteria and objectives.
3. **Consistent agreement:** The participants in the study generally exhibited consistent agreement with the statements related to Theme 2. This suggests a

shared understanding among participants regarding the role of university procedures in shaping student leadership development programmes.

4. **Trustworthiness of data:** The study emphasises the trustworthiness and reliability of the data gathered. Despite minor deviations in responses, there is a persistent alignment of participants with the statements related to university procedures.
5. **Rotated component metrics analysis:** The study utilised a rotated component metrics analysis to supplement its findings. This analysis provides additional insights into the role of university procedures in student leadership development.

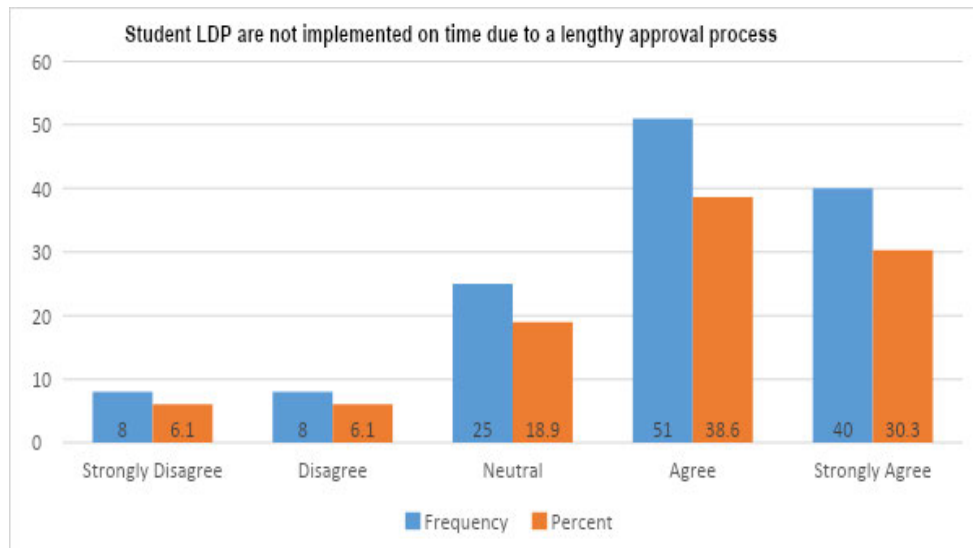
In summary, the findings from Theme 2 underscore the importance of university procedures in guiding the implementation and management of student leadership development programmes. These procedures help ensure that these programmes are in line with the institution’s overarching goals and values. The consistent agreement among participants highlights the reliability of the data and the shared understanding of the role of university procedures in this context.



**Figure 4.9: The DSGD procedures and processes add value to the student LDP**

Figure 4.9 shows that the DSGD procedures and processes add value to the student LDP. The majority of the participants’ responses reflected in the above figure shows that 59 (44.7%) of participants agreed, 35 (26.5%) neutral, 15 (11.4%) disagreed, 13 (9.8%) strongly agreed, and 10 (7.6%) strongly disagreed. As illustrated in the figure, most participants agree that DSGD strategies and tactics improve student LDP

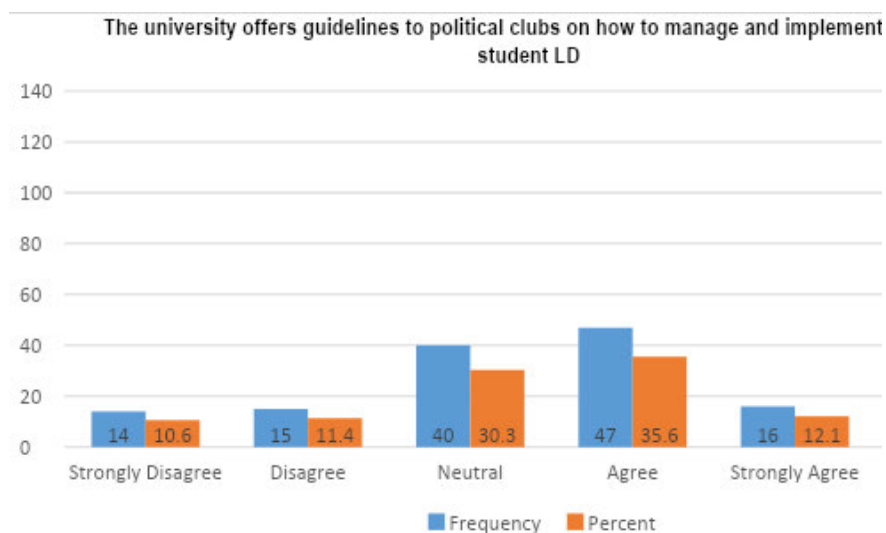
(54.5%) while the overall disagreements were 19%, with only 26.5% remaining neutral. This suggests that slight contradictions or inconsistencies in the study's results will not have a significant impact on the overall validity of the findings. Participants in this scenario may produce consistent responses due to clues from the study design or their understanding of what is intended. The evidence shows that the data is negatively skewed and heaped to the right in this case, with the tail oriented to the left, which is why this occurs. Esch *et al.* (2019) stated that student governance often involves dealing with conflicting opinions and interests. Learning how to navigate and resolve conflicts constructively helps students develop strong interpersonal skills and promotes positive value adding activities that help facilitate the administrative process. Ibsen and Levinsen (2019) supported this view by indicating that governance procedures provide students with hands-on experience in developing value-added leadership that help facilitate decision-making and problem-solving. DSGD methods and processes improved the student LDP, teaching students how to manage resources, handle conflicts, and make informed choices skills that are invaluable for their personal and professional growth.



**Figure 4.10: SLDP is not implemented on time due to a lengthy approval process**

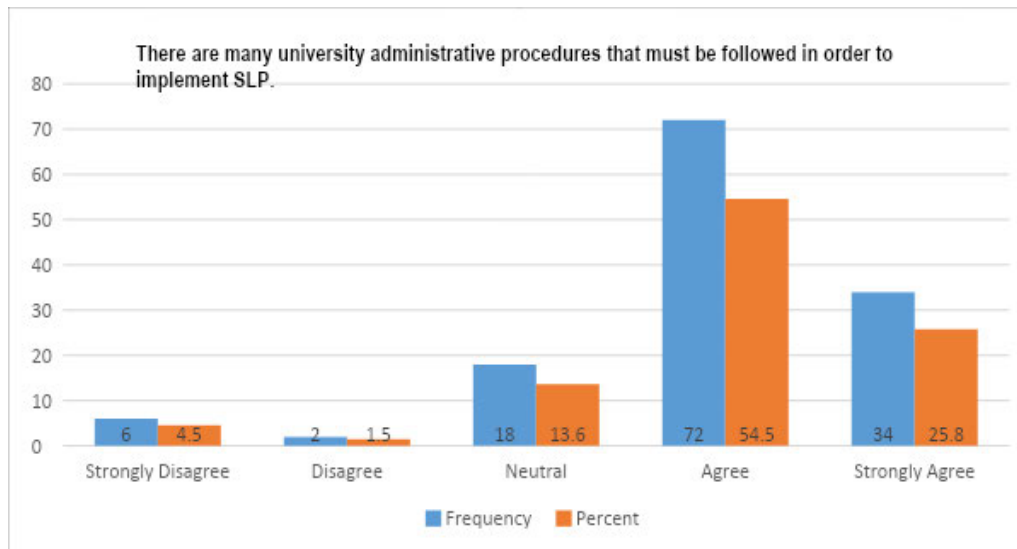
Figure 4.10 indicates that the majority of participants agreed that SLDPs are not implemented on time due to a protracted approval process. The findings show that 51 (38.6%) agree, 40 (30.3%) strongly agree, 25 (18.9%) are neutral, 8 (6.1%) strongly disagree, and 8 (6.1%) disagree. In this situation, the data shows that there was an overall agreement of 68.9% from the participants with only 12.2% of the participants

disagreeing. This is shown by the skew being negative, which happens when the data is stacked to the right and the evidence shows that the tail is oriented to the left. Due to cues from the study design or their comprehension of the expected results, participants in this scenario might give inconsistent responses. Stahl and McDonald (2022) found that long lead times can be challenging, due to the university or the department arranging resources in order to adequately plan and consider all relevant factors which will help ensure that the programme meets its objectives and prepares students for future leadership roles effectively. Delays can be related to organising events, workshops, training sessions, and other activities involved in the programme that require careful planning and coordination. Lead times can be influenced by factors like venue availability, scheduling, and coordinating with external speakers or trainers (Liu *et al.* 2023). The delay in implementing SLDPs can deter and demotivate student leaders and their constituency, thus affecting the level of participation and subsequently the intended intention of imparting knowledge to students on aspects or topics of relevance planned. These delays also affect the year plan of political clubs due to them not being able to fulfil all their planned programmes aims and objectives for the year. Engaging key stakeholders in the planning and development phase of the programmes is essential in order to help address concerns and gather input early on, reducing the need for extensive revisions during the approval process.



**Figure 4.11: The university offers guidelines to political clubs on how to manage and implement student LDP**

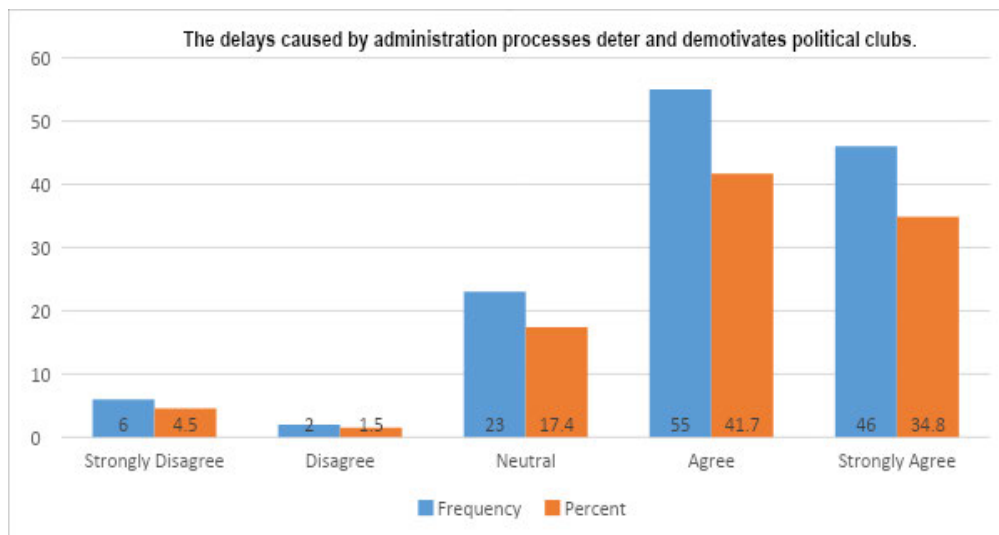
Figure 4.11 shows the perceptions of participants regarding the statement that the university provides guidance to political clubs on how to administer and implement student LDP. The results show that 47 (35.6%) agree, 40 (30.3%) remain neutral, 16 (12.1%) strongly agree, 15 (11.4%) disagree, and 14 (10.6%) strongly disagree. The data indicates that there was an overall agreement of 47.7% from the participants with only 22% of the participants disagreeing with the notion that university provides guidance to political clubs on how to administer and implement student LDP. However, the combination of participants who remained neutral and disagreeing (52.3%) indicates that there could be a number of factors at play, for instance, while there may be guidelines offered by SGD they are probably generic and do not necessarily speak directly to political clubs, guidelines may be obsolete, or, alternatively, SDG does not comply with their guidelines. Further investigation on this aspect is essential in order to gain more insight. This is evident from the fact that the data is negatively skewed and packed to the right in this instance, with the tail oriented to the left. There were variations in this particular case, however, the study found that participants consistently agreed with the previously stated statement, suggesting that the data collected in the study has a satisfactory level of reliability. This implies that minor discrepancies or inconsistencies in the study's conclusions will not significantly affect its overall reliability. The high agreement in Q9 correlates to the level of the combination of disagreement and neutral (52.3%) in Q 10, indicating that lack of clarity on guidelines has direct impact on the implementation of SLDPs. These findings are supported by Zeebaree *et al.* (2019) who ascertained that providing guidance to political clubs on how to administer and implement programmes should be consistent with the general mission of the university and the political club. Therefore, Tamtik and Guenter (2019) advised that providing guidance to political clubs involves hands-on exercises and tasks that allow participants to put their leadership skills to use in real-world situations, such as arranging events, leading conversations, or volunteering. These aims might involve the enhancement of leadership skills and an increase in participation in community affairs.



**Figure 4.12: There are many university administrative procedures that must be followed in order to implement SLP.**

Figure 4.12 depicts participants' perceptions regarding university administrative procedures that must be followed in order to implement SLP. The results show that 72 (54.5%) agree, 34 (25.8%) agree strongly, 18 (13.6%) remain neutral, 6 (4.5%) strongly disagree, and 2 (1.5%) disagree. This data shows that there was an overall agreement of 80.3% from the participants with only 6% of participants disagreeing with the notion that several DSGD procedures must be followed in order to adopt SLP. Figure 4.12 demonstrated consistent agreement across this research statement; the findings for this claim are more likely to be reliable and applicable in a variety of circumstances, due to consistent agreements. This condition shows that the study's data is strong enough to withstand small changes and certain variations. This finding indicates that the data obtained for the study was reliable. The skew is negative in this case, which occurs when the data is stacked to the right. These findings are supported by Taylor (2018) who indicated that implementing student development programmes at universities often involves various administrative procedures to ensure successful and effective execution. These administrative procedures enable the initiation of student development programmes and create detailed programmes that outline the goals, objectives, target audience, budget requirements, and expected outcomes. Caeiro *et al.* (2020) stated that developing a plan to sustain the student development programme over the long term is essential in seeking resources and demonstrating the programme's impact. The author stated that this can be achieved by integrating it into the university's overall strategic plan. Therefore, securing the necessary

resources may require navigating through budgeting processes and demonstrating the potential impact of the program on student success. This is why Liu *et al.* (2023) indicated that by following these administrative procedures, universities can effectively implement student development programmes that contribute to students' holistic growth and success during their academic journey and beyond. UoT's have a multitude of bureaucratic processes that can slow down decision-making and implementation. This can hinder the efficient execution of student development programmes. Therefore, it is essential for UoT's to have well-defined administrative procedures in place to ensure the smooth implementation of student development programmes.



**Figure 4.13: The delays caused by administration processes deter and demotivate political clubs**

Figure 4.13 shows that 55 respondents (41.7%) agreed with the statement that delays caused by administration processes deter and demotivate political clubs, followed by 46 (34.8%) who strongly agreed, 23 (17.4%) who remained neutral, 6 (4.5%) who strongly disagreed, and 2 (1.5%) who disagreed. This shows that most participants concur that administrative delays discourage and demotivate political clubs, as can be seen from the overall agreement of 76.5% from participants, with only 6% of the participants disagreeing with this notion. Consistent agreements in the findings of this claim are more likely to be trustworthy and applicable in a variety of contexts. The above scenario indicates that the study's data is robust enough to withstand minor changes despite occasional discrepancies with the statement. It is evident from the evidence that the data is negatively skewed and packed to the right in this instance,

with the tail oriented to the left. SLDPs often involve multiple stakeholders, including student development officers, administrators, students, and sometimes external partners or organisations. Depending on the scope and nature of the programme, obtaining the required approvals from higher authorities, such as the university administration or the relevant managers, can be time-consuming. Clearly articulating the programme’s goals, benefits, and alignment with the university’s mission can help in obtaining the necessary approvals swiftly. Taylor (2018) also supported this statement by indicating that gathering input, getting buy-in, and aligning the interests of these stakeholders can take time, especially if there are differing opinions or priorities. Fatani (2020) supports these finding and further claims that student political clubs often rely on funding from the institution or student government to support their activities and when these funds are not acquired or attained early, administrative delays are experienced which subsequently discourage and demotivate political clubs, thus affecting their objectives, limiting their impact and reach. According to Alayoubi *et al.* (2020) implementing a comprehensive student development programme might have a specific timeline, especially if it is tied to academic calendars. The authors further stated that coordinating events, training sessions, and activities within these timelines can be demanding, which is why creating a detailed timeline and contingency plans for potential delays can be helpful.

**Table 4.4: Theme 2 rotated component matrix**

Theme 2	Component	
	1	2
Q7:The university administrative procedures and processes adds value to the student LDP	0.070	0.865
Q8:There are many universities administrative procedures that must be followed in order to implement SLP	0.706	0.453
Q9:Student LDP are not implemented on time due to a lengthy approval process	0.901	-0.041
Q10:The university offers guidelines to political clubs on how to manage and implementation of student LDP	0.185	0.841
Q11: The delays caused by administration processes deter and demotivates political clubs to sought for student LDPs	0.844	0.203

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation.  
 Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

This table includes estimates of the correlations between theme two study objectives and the estimated components of this investigation. Since there were two components extracted for this matrix, this means there is a big variation in the manner that the

participants answered. For the components discovered in Q7, Q8, Q10, and Q11, each component has substantial positive loadings of variables that are highly connected with the influence of university procedures in the implementation and management of student leadership development programmes. The results demonstrate that Theme 2 and the identification of the influence of university procedures in the implementation and management of student leadership development programmes are strongly correlated. In this case, only Q9 had a negative value that was less than the required value of 0.05. This shows a linear relationship between all variables found in Theme 2 since it is greater than 0.05. The values found are not lower than the required value of 0.05. There is a big variation in the values identified in Q9 with a negative component matrix for component two.

#### **4.3.4 Theme 2: Summary**

Theme 2 of the study delves into the influence of university procedures on the implementation and management of SDLPs. The findings reveal that university administrative procedures and processes play a significant role in shaping the success and impact of SDLPs. Here are some key findings from Theme 2:

1. **Value addition:** Participants generally agreed that university administrative procedures and processes add value to student SDLPs. These procedures help ensure that programmes align with the university's mission and objectives, contributing positively to students' personal and leadership development.
2. **Complex bureaucracy:** Participants recognised that administrative processes within educational institutions can sometimes involve complex bureaucratic procedures and red tape. These processes may lead to time-consuming delays which can be frustrating for student political clubs.
3. **Navigating administrative challenges:** Participants acknowledged that navigating administrative challenges requires effective communication, strategic planning, collaboration, and perseverance. Working closely with stakeholders and demonstrating the value of SDLPs can help overcome bureaucratic hurdles.

4. **Impact of delays:** Delays caused by administrative processes can negatively impact student political clubs by reducing enthusiasm and motivation among members. These delays may also lead students to act outside university policies, potentially decreasing engagement and success.
5. **Alignment with university mission:** The study emphasised the importance of aligning student development programmes with the overarching university mission and specific goals of political clubs. This alignment is crucial for fostering leadership skills, political engagement, diversity, and inclusivity.
6. **Consistent agreement:** Participants generally exhibited consistent agreement with the statements related to Theme 2. This suggests a shared understanding of the influence of university procedures on SDLPs among the participants.
7. **Need for administrative protocols:** The findings highlight the need for well-defined administrative protocols within the university to ensure the seamless execution of student development initiatives.

In summary, the findings underscore the significant role of university administrative procedures and processes in shaping the implementation and management of student leadership development programmes. While these procedures add value by aligning programmes with the university's mission, they can also introduce complexities and delays that need to be navigated effectively. The impact of administrative delays on student political clubs underscores the importance of streamlining administrative processes to support the success of SDLPs.

#### **4.3.5 Theme 3: The evaluation process used by UoT political clubs in order to determine the influence and impact of leadership developmental programmes**

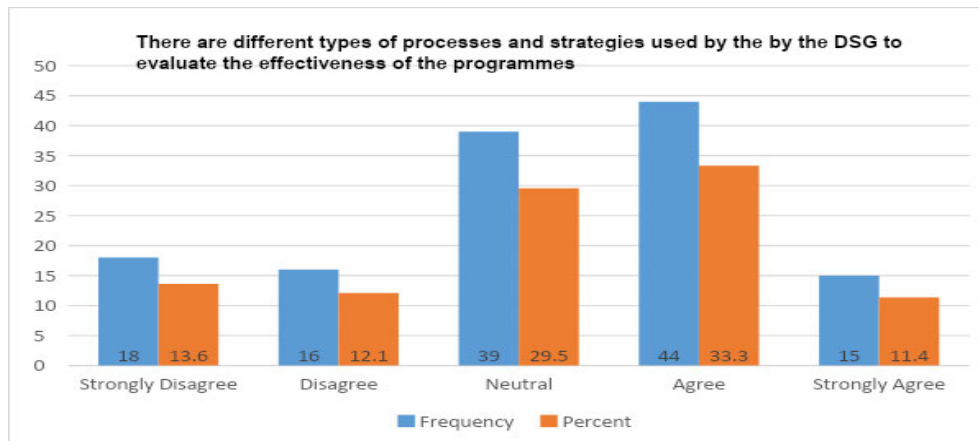
Theme 3 of the study focuses on the evaluation process used by UoT political clubs to determine the influence and impact of leadership development programmes (LDPs). Here are some key findings from Theme 3:

1. **Lack of initial assessment:** Prior to the commencement of LDPs, there was a notable absence of assessment regarding participants' existing skill levels,

attitudes, and knowledge. This absence of assessment posed challenges in ensuring that the design of the LDPs effectively aligned with the established objectives.

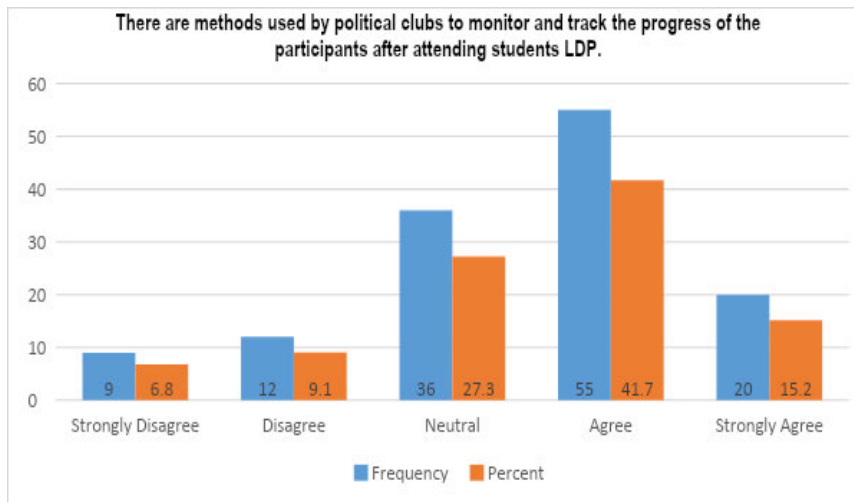
- 2. Need for programme adjustments:** The evaluation results suggest that there could be a requirement for programme adjustments in subsequent iterations. These adjustments might involve alterations to content, delivery approaches, or a stronger focus on areas requiring improvement.
- 3. Difficulty in monitoring engagement:** Organisers of LDPs encountered difficulties in monitoring participant engagement throughout the programme. This indicates a need for better tracking and assessment mechanisms to ensure active participation and engagement.
- 4. Consistent agreement:** Participants generally exhibited consistent agreement with the statements related to Theme 3. This suggests a shared understanding among participants regarding the need for improved evaluation processes within political clubs.
- 5. Challenges in evaluation:** The spread of neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree responses within this theme indicates that there might be challenges in the current evaluation tools or processes used by student leaders. There could also be a lack of oversight from the DSGD in this regard.

In summary, the findings highlight the need for improved evaluation processes within UoT political clubs. The absence of initial assessment, challenges in monitoring engagement, and the need for programme adjustments indicate areas where enhancements can be made. Consistent agreement among participants suggests a shared recognition of the importance of robust evaluation mechanisms for LDPs. Addressing these challenges and implementing effective evaluation processes can help political clubs better understand the influence and impact of their leadership development programmes.



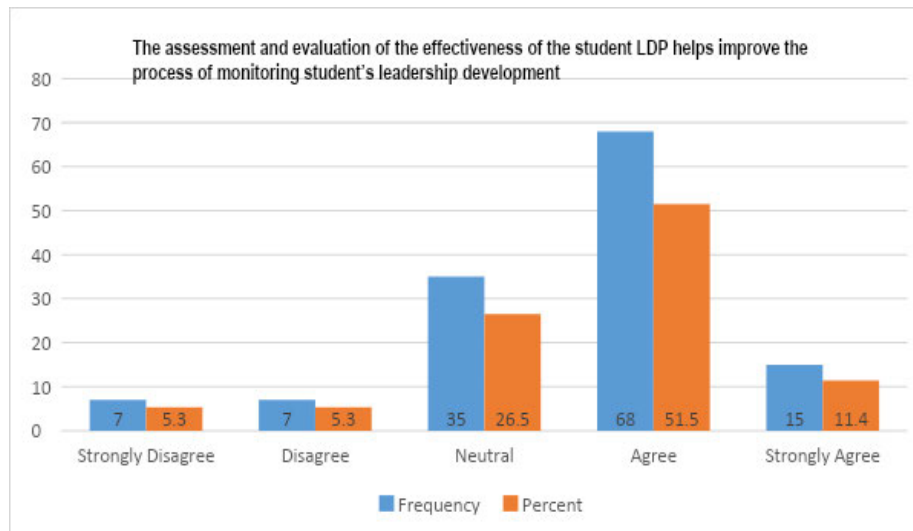
**Figure 4.14: There are different types of processes and strategies used by the DSGD to evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes**

Figure 4.14 shows the perceptions of participants regarding the different types of processes and strategies used by the DSGD to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme. The results show that 44 (33.3%) agree, 39 (29.5%) were neutral, 18 (13.6%) strongly disagree, 16 (12.1%) disagree and 15 (11.4%) strongly agree. Thus, the data shows that there was overall agreement from 44.7% of the participants and disagreement from only 25.7% of the participants with the notion that there are different types of processes and strategies used by the DSGD used to evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes attended. Figure 4.14 shows that 29.5% remained neutral. Overall, this statement exhibited high levels of neutrality which are critical for generating trustworthy and significant research findings. This objectivity makes it easier for other researchers to replicate the study and independently confirm the findings, which helps to sustain the legitimacy of the research process. Figure 4.14 shows that the combination of participants who were neutral and disagreed was 55.2% which was higher than participants who agreed. This clearly implies that there is significant lack of clarity on whether there are processes put in place by SDG to assist clubs to evaluate programmes. In this situation, the skew is negative, which happens when the data is stacked to the right. Mugume and Luescher (2017) stated that the type of the student development programme, the resources available, and the amount of information needed for assessment all have an impact on the choice of evaluation strategies and procedures. Rusk *et al.*'s (2018) discoveries reveal that acquiring feedback from participants entails pinpointing student development initiatives that aim to enhance quality and choosing suitable approaches for soliciting feedback.



**Figure 4.15: There are methods used by political clubs to monitor and track progress of participants after attending student LDP**

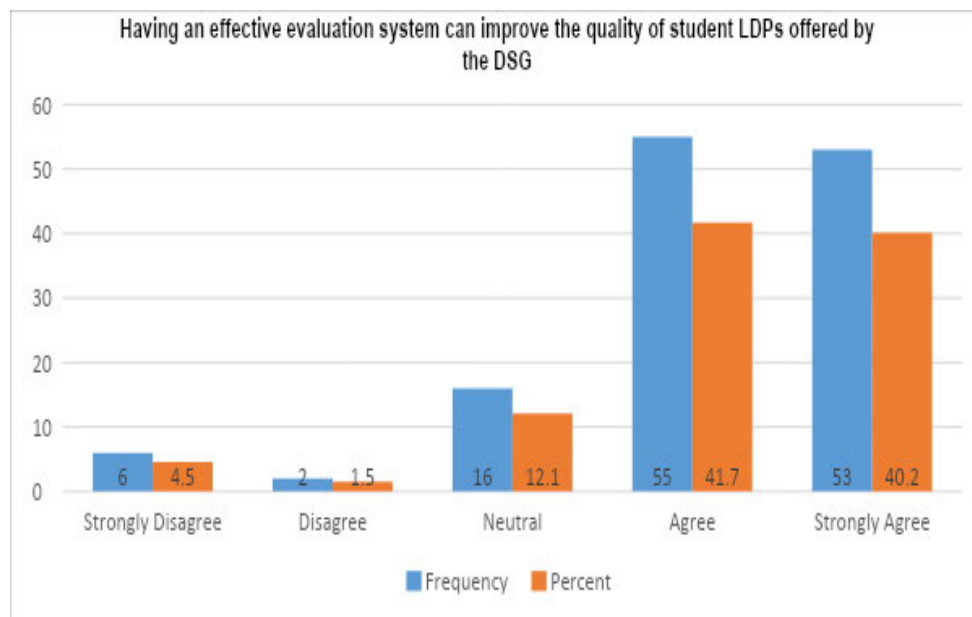
Figure 4.15 shows participants' perceptions regarding the methods used by political clubs to monitor and track progress of participants after attending student LDP. The results show that 55 (41.7%) agreed, 36 (27.3%) were neutral, 20 (15.2%) strongly agreed, 12 (9.1%) disagreed, and 9 (6.8%) strongly disagreed. The figure shows that there was an overall agreement of (56.9%) from the participants and only overall disagreement of 15.9%. Despite the fact that there were slight variations in this specific case, the results were consistent with the previously supplied assertion. If the findings of this claim are consistent, they are more likely to be credible and applicable in a variety of scenarios. The preceding scenario demonstrates that the study's data is robust enough to withstand minor challenges. The data is clearly negatively skewed and packed to the right. Adhariani and De Villiers (2019) indicated that political clubs need to frequently combine techniques and processes to evaluate the effectiveness of student development programmes. This requires having specific learning objectives that can be integrated into projects, presentations, or standardised assessments. The inquiry demonstrates that obtaining input from both participants and SGD officers who engage with programme attendees can offer extra viewpoints regarding the effects of student development programmes and their impact on students.



**Figure 4.16: The assessment and evaluation of student LDPs helps improve the process of monitoring student leadership development**

Figure 4.16 relates to the statement that monitoring is made better by assessing and evaluating student LDPs. According to the participants' responses, 68 (51.5%) of them agreed, 35 (26.5%) of them remained neutral, 15 (11.4%) strongly agreed, 7 (5.3%) strongly disagreed, and 7 (5.3%) disagreed. The results show that most participants concur that student LDP assessment and evaluation helps to enhance the monitoring process, as indicated by overall agreement of 62.9% and overall disagreement of only 10.6%. The evidence shows that the data in this case is negatively skewed, packed to the right, and has a tail that is oriented to the left. Continuous monitoring allows SGD to gather real-time data about student progress, which can help identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Caeiro *et al.* (2020) indicated that evaluating LDPs can help identify any learning challenges or obstacles students might be facing, enabling timely interventions and adjustments to the programme to ensure students stay on track. Assessment and evaluation provide insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the LDP. This was supported by Alayoubi *et al.* (2020) who indicated that assessing and evaluating student learning and development plans is a vital aspect of effective monitoring in a learning environment. This helps student leaders understand what aspects of the programme are working well and where improvements are needed. Also, by conducting assessments at multiple points throughout the programme, student leaders can track participants' progress over time and show how participants' skills and behaviours are evolving as a result of the programmes. With ongoing monitoring, student leaders can identify students who might be struggling and

provide targeted support. Individualised attention can lead to better outcomes by addressing specific needs and challenges. Based on the data collected, programme organisers can make adaptive changes to the programmes offered, delivery methods, and resources used. This flexibility ensures that the program remains relevant and effective as it responds to the evolving needs of the students.



**Figure 4.17: Having an effective evaluation system can improve the quality of student LDPs**

Figure 4.17 demonstrates relates to the statement that having an effective evaluation system can enhance the calibre of student LDPs. The results show that 55 (41%) agreed, 53 (40%) strongly agreed, 16 (12.1%) were neutral, 6 (4.5%) strongly disagreed, and 2 (1.5%) disagreed. The data shows that there was overall agreement of 81.9% with overall disagreement from only 6% of the participants. The study found that participants in this situation consistently agreed with the previously stated argument, despite slight differences in this particular scenario. If the findings of the assertion are consistent, they are more likely to be credible and applicable in a variety of scenarios. The scenario described above demonstrates that the study’s data is dependable enough to withstand minor modifications. The preceding statement appears to be contradictory, but the outcomes are more likely to be true and useful. A study by Fatani (2020) also stated that a well-functioning assessment system holds significant importance in enhancing the calibre of programmes aimed at nurturing student leadership. The author further stated that assessment of university

programmes can allow coordinators to spot areas that need refinement. Alayoubi *et al.* (2020) supported this statement by indicating that programmes can remain relevant by having an effective evaluation system that can enhance the quality of student programmes. This can lead to the continuous growth and development in adapting the evaluation system to ascertain the comprehensive efficiency and influence of the leadership development program. This, in turn, assists administrators and prospective student leaders in modifying delivery approaches and tackling specific hurdles encountered by participants by understanding participants' experiences and satisfaction through evaluation.

**Table 4.5: Rotated component matrix for Theme 3**

Theme 3:	Component
	1
Q:12 There are different types of processes and strategies used by the by the Department of Student Governance or the University to evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes attended	0.757
Q13: There are methods used by political clubs to monitor and track the progress of the participants after attending students LDP	0.822
Q14: The assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of the student LDP helps improve the process of monitoring student's leadership development	0.872
Q15: Having an effective evaluation system can improve the quality of student LDPs offered by the Department of Student Governance or the University	0.609

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  
a. 1 component extracted.

Table 4.5 shows the correlations between Theme 3, the study objectives, and the estimated components of this investigation. There is one component which is interpretable to have strong positive factor loadings that are highly correlated with the evaluation processes used by the UoT political clubs in order to determine the influence and impact of leadership developmental programmes. In this case investigators wanted to assess the evaluation process used by the UoT political clubs in order to determine the influence and impact of leadership development programmes, which is highly correlated. This shows a linear relationship between all variables found in Theme 3 since it is greater than 0.5. The values found are not lower than the required value of 0.5, indicating that there is little variation in the values identified in the component matrix values.

#### 4.3.6 Theme 3: Summary

Theme 3 of the study assessed the evaluation process used by UoT political clubs to determine the influence and impact of leadership development programmes (LDPs).

Here are some key findings and observations:

1. **High agreement on the importance of evaluation:** Participants generally showed high levels of agreement with the importance of having an effective evaluation system for student LDPs. This suggests a recognition among participants that evaluation plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality of these programmes.
2. **Challenges in the current evaluation process:** Despite the agreement on the importance of evaluation, the spread of neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree responses within this theme indicates that there might be challenges in the current evaluation tools or processes used by student leaders. This suggests room for improvement in how student clubs evaluate their programmes.
3. **Data-driven monitoring and improvement:** Participants acknowledged the importance of data-driven approaches to monitoring and tracking progress after students attend LDPs. Using data to identify trends and areas for improvement can lead to more effective support systems and strategies.
4. **Significant differences in responses:** The statistical analysis of responses indicated significant differences between how participants scored on the questions related to theme three. This suggests that there are varying opinions and experiences regarding the evaluation process and its impact on student leadership development.
5. **Importance of communication channels:** Effective communication channels, such as surveys, feedback sessions, and open forums, were mentioned as vital for continuous improvement. These channels allow students to provide feedback and contribute to enhancing the quality of LDPs.
6. **Overall impact of evaluation:** While the findings indicate that the evaluation process used by political clubs contributes to determining the influence and impact of LDPs to some extent, there may be opportunities for more systematic and comprehensive evaluation approaches.

In summary, the study underscores the importance of having an effective evaluation system for student LDPs. While there is agreement among participants on its significance, there are also indications of challenges in the current evaluation processes. Data-driven monitoring and communication channels were highlighted as key factors for improvement. The findings suggest that enhancing the evaluation process could further improve the impact of leadership development programmes at UoT's.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSIONS**

In Theme 1 the data collected focused on the support provided to student political clubs by the DSGD and the University. This theme encompassed six figures, supported by a rotating component metrics analysis. The statistical analysis revealed that participants expressed a significantly high degree of agreement with most of the statements presented in Q1 to Q6, as evidenced by the pronounced frequencies depicted in the figures above. While the levels of agreement were notably high, other degrees of agreement remained lower but still exceeded levels of disagreement. Furthermore, minimal disagreement was observed in response to the statements encompassed in Q1 to Q6.

Participants also displayed a substantial degree of concurrence with Q2, which sought to inquire about the DSGD's involvement in addressing political clubs' requests for the organisation of leadership development programmes (LDP) and the associated administrative challenges. The introduction and management of student leadership development programmes can be significantly influenced by university regulations. These procedures, which are frequently prescribed by institutional policies and guidelines, influence how such programmes are planned, implemented, and monitored.

Theme 2 aimed to identify the influence of university procedures on the implementation and management of student leadership developmental programmes. The data illustrates how participants responded to Theme 2, comprising a total of five figures along with a rotating component metrics analysis to substantiate the research

findings. The high scores indicate that a majority of participants concur that university policies exert a considerable influence on the administration and management of student leadership development programmes. UoT's typically establishes the criteria for political clubs to meet to ensure their effectiveness, inclusivity, and alignment with UoT's objectives. In summary, higher educational institutions can inadvertently create unfavourable and disempowering environments for student political clubs by not mitigating administrative delays. These delays may also diminish participation and hinder the success of these clubs' operations.

For Theme 3, the investigator sought to assess the evaluation process employed by UoT political clubs to gauge the influence and impact of leadership development programmes. The exploration of this theme is meticulously detailed through a total of four figures. Although Q14 and Q15 garnered significant levels of disagreement, the overall distribution of agreement surpasses the degrees of disagreement. Furthermore, minimal disagreement is observed with the assertions made in Q14 through Q15. Notably, neutral scores emerge as the second-highest category in Theme 3. Political clubs' methods for monitoring and tracking participants' growth following their involvement in student leadership development programmes should ideally be data-driven. This data-driven approach ensures that resources are allocated effectively to cater to the needs of student leaders and the broader student population

## PART II – QUANTITATIVE

### **4.5 INTRODUCTION**

The researcher employed thematic analysis to interpret the interviews conducted during the investigation. The researcher closely examined the data to identify common themes, ideas and patterns that come up repeatedly during the interviews. The interviews were semi-structured in nature and the interpretation resulted in three themes being identified: student programmes, collaboration, and departmental support and procedures.

#### 4.6 DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE STUDY

Two officials from the DSGD were interviewed, one male and one female, both between 31 and 40 years. Both respondents had obtained postgraduate degrees. Thus, these respondents were mature and experienced enough to have solid insights about the phenomenon being investigated.

#### 4.7 EMERGING THEMES AND SUBTHEMES FROM THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

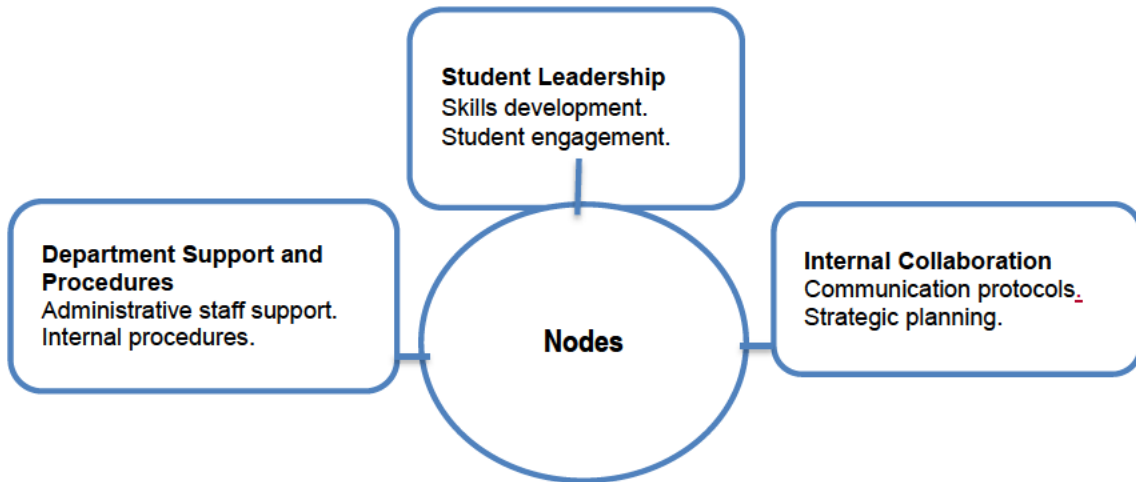
In this investigation, only two semi-structured interviews were conducted using an interview guide (Appendix D). The researcher employed thematic analysis to gather insights into the perspectives, opinions, knowledge, experiences, and beliefs of Department officials.

The initial stage involved transcribing the interviews, allowing the researcher to identify any potentially relevant information for the investigation. Subsequently, the interview transcripts were imported into Nvivo, facilitating the creation of nodes and themes for the research.

In the following section, each research goal and its corresponding research question is addressed individually as the empirical field research findings are thoroughly examined. A thematic map is utilised to analyse and interpret each theme, providing a comprehensive understanding of the collected data. Table 4.6 and Figure 4.18 show the themes and sub-themes.

**Table 4.6: Themes and sub-themes emerging from the interviews**

Theme	Sub-theme
4. Student leadership.	1) Skills development. 2) Student engagement.
5. Department support and procedures.	1) Administrative staff support. 2) Internal procedures.
6. Internal collaboration.	1) Communication protocols. 2) Strategic planning.



**Figure 4.18: Representation of themes and sub-themes**

#### **4.7.1 Theme 4: Student leadership**

Student leaders are provided opportunities to practise their leadership abilities throughout their leadership period. The findings of the study were that the Department sees student leadership as a critical component for internal communication and coordination of activities within these clubs. Student leaders are expected to take charge in most activities that happen within their respective clubs with limited interference from the DSGD. The Department typically facilitates activities that are aligned with the university function, while the student leaders facilitate the student development programmes for their political clubs. This demonstrates that the student leaders of each political group can plan and carry out programmes using a variety of methods, strategies, and techniques. This is because each club is given particular authority over the management of each program in order to incorporate both short- and long-term perspectives into their programmes. The investigation revealed that student leaders are given the freedom to act independently and make choices in order to further the goals of their political clubs. Student leadership committees also coordinate opportunities for committee members to develop leadership abilities through experiential and transformative programmes that complement the university's co-curricular and academic performance (Soria and Horgos 2021). These roles provide voices to student leaders in bringing forward and articulating concerns, issues and opinions from a student perspective and provide feedback regarding the university programmes, facilities, support services, campus life, and overall general

effectiveness (Govender 2018). The findings in this study are similar to those of other studies and theories found in the literature review. The participants stated the following in relation to Theme 1.

The department does not set objectives for clubs and an approach on how clubs should be developed, but we let clubs develop their own objectives, leaders are required to submit their Programme of Actions (POA) at every beginning of academic year, these POAs consist of details of programmes they wish to conduct throughout the year, for each programme political club leaders are required to compile and submit a detailed programme of how that particular programme will roll out, and that proposal also details any specific assistance that might be required from Student Governance staff. (Respondent 1)

Hmm typically student leaders are responsible for recruiting their own guest speakers, with us not taking any part in the guests that come to the student programmes. Political student leaders structure their programmes according to the issues and needs that their members have. Based on that the student leaders compile programmes that would address those needs and issues. Some programmes are facilitated by senior student leaders and in some cases guest speakers would be invited to facilitate the sessions. (Respondent 2)

#### **4.7.1.1 Sub-Theme 4.1: Skills development**

Within the scope of this investigation, the first sub-theme to explore is skills development. This sub-theme relates to students being able to pinpoint particular opportunities for applying their acquired skills through formal or informal leadership roles, collaborative projects, and strategic planning.

The investigation underscored that respondents recognised the role of student development programmes in equipping leaders with skills essential for facilitating, communicating, and coordinating with both department officials and the broader student community. However, respondents' awareness seemed limited to these skills, with little knowledge of other competencies often required by student leaders, especially in the realm of training.

This study unveiled that student leaders still encounter various challenges within the learning environment that hinder hands-on experience. Consequently, they find themselves in need of skills encompassing planning, decision-making, effective communication, and teamwork. These findings are in line with Soria and Horgo's (2021) assertion that higher education institutions encourage student organisations to identify critical skills that will empower students to become effective leaders in their future careers.

Interestingly, the investigation disclosed that the Department does not actively engage in the skills development process of club members. Instead, it entrusts political clubs with the task of identifying and fostering skills that align with each club's unique needs and objectives. This approach underscores the belief that student leadership skills not only enhances academic performance but also enables new leaders to adapt to evolving circumstances and the expectations of their environment.

As part of the induction process, DSGD conducts a leadership workshop and provides student leaders with opportunities to showcase their leadership skills as future leaders. Additionally, students are informed about specific leadership development prospects available to them and are encouraged to assess whether these opportunities align with the skills they aspire to cultivate (Janke *et al.* 2016).

The department aims to develop the necessary skills that will be needed for leadership in support of the LDP which are held on a continuous basis such inductions, workshops and seminars, student leaders are also provided with guidance material which consist of a number of templates which act as a guide for preparation of their programmes. These include POA templates, proposal templates, reporting templates as well as evaluation templates. Student Governance still has to do more training for student leaders, further training on policies and guidelines related to clubs and societies. (Respondent 1)

The Department runs a leadership and mentorship programme which some student leaders enroll in to develop their skills such as public speaking, communication, presentation, business development, these are some of the skills that these student leaders use when they are conducting their programmes. The Department however needs to make attendance of these programmes compulsory for all student leaders,

currently student leaders enrol based on interest to such programmes. On the other hand, induction training is currently conducted for some executive members for each club, generally three executives get an opportunity to interact and attend induction even though clubs have over six executive members. (Respondent 2)

#### **4.7.1.2 Sub-Theme 4.2: Student engagement**

The capacity of student leaders to engage with fellow students and contribute to policy assessment has been hindered by higher education's failure to integrate student leadership programmes into their overarching business objectives, as noted by Thomas and Brower (2017). This disconnect is partly attributed to the educational backgrounds of university management and the institution's long-term goals. The programmes led by student political leaders often take place outside regular business hours, limiting their accessibility to the broader student population. Consequently, many students miss out on these valuable opportunities due to the after-hours scheduling.

Interview data revealed that the DSGD at UoT's have extended support to political clubs in designing programmes aimed at enhancing student engagement within the accessible student community. Fostering a university environment that encourages the camaraderie required for achieving educational goals, as championed by student leadership, is crucial. When the learning environment promotes collaboration and provides assistance to students facing academic challenges, the likelihood of academic success increases. This principle extends to student engagement programmes, where political clubs need capable leaders who can not only oversee their own initiatives but also encourage their constituents to actively participate in developmental programmes aligned with their interests. Effective leaders must be equipped to adapt to change and promote continuous learning.

The investigation's findings underscore the DSGD's commitment to encouraging students and clubs to develop innovative plans that support students' growth as future leaders and facilitate positive student engagement. However, there appears to be a shortfall in terms of participation in policy development and reviews. The DSGD

typically seeks capable leaders who can contribute to other university-wide events and initiatives.

Student engagement plays a pivotal role in fostering a positive university climate, with a substantial body of research linking it to academic achievement and institutional stability. Students demonstrate behavioural engagement through consistent attendance, completion of tasks, preparedness for programmes, and active participation.

Most of our engagements happen at the beginning of the year and when the year finishes, this is where we get feedback from the leaders of these clubs to review the targets that were set earlier. Student leaders submit their POA beginning of each year. Their programmes are designed to encourage student engagement, these are programmes for students by students. They are structured in different forms such as seminars, guest lectures, debates and sessions which are entertainment based. These programmes see students being involved in planning, mobilising for the event and through active participation from students affiliated to that particular club. The clubs are required to provide reports quarterly to the Department of Student Governance, which enables SGD to gain insights of progress, level of engagement between students, as well as to identify support that might be required in future. The student leaders sometimes have challenges when it comes to policies, challenges on how they affect them and what they do on a daily basis. (Respondent 1)

Student leaders are given the liberty to function on their own. They are provided with the necessary resources to facilitate engagements with their members. These engagements could be about university policies that affect student leaders. Such engagements allow students to share different views from different students who come from different backgrounds. The outcomes from student engagements provides a holistic view on issues being discussed by these students which affect them directly or indirectly. (Respondent 2)

#### **4.7.2 Theme 5: Department support and procedures**

Theme 5 reveals that the DSGD has established comprehensive support systems and procedures to guide both staff and students regarding expectations and requirements.

These guidelines are instrumental in managing various situations that may involve instances of abuse, violence, or threatening behaviour, whether originating from staff or students. The aim is to ensure that proper systems and processes are adhered to in such cases. These guidelines set stringent standards and enforce accountability among departmental staff and students, aligning with the university's established procedures.

Within the department, designated representatives are responsible for overseeing political clubs' induction, management, policy development, and analysis, as noted by Mugume and Luescher (2017). Regular communication with the selected political club executives is essential to facilitate students' ability to voice concerns and request support for the implementation of their programmes. The DSGD's role extends to providing support to ensure that all decisions and actions comply with university policy directives and administrative guidelines. These policies and guidelines, subject to periodic revisions, play a pivotal role in establishing operational standards, ensuring equitable servicing of student leaders, and upholding accountability on both sides.

Day *et al.* (2016) proposed that leadership programmes should be designed and implemented at the individual faculty, discipline, department, and club levels. This approach recognises that each entity may encounter unique challenges in the implementation of leadership programmes. Furthermore, higher education programme designers often anticipate common challenges and aim to incorporate solutions into the design of their leadership programmes (Aleixo *et al.*, 2018). Departmental representatives emphasise that the department's operations and structures are vital for fulfilling the university's long-term objectives and academic requirements while aligning with student programmes. The subsequent sub-themes serve to bolster the findings of Theme 5.1.

Yes Student Governance provides support and has procedures in place, are they sufficient? Maybe not. Data is provided to political clubs to help them manage their programmes, however due to the COVID 19 the venues and information could not be provided like we did pre-COVID. We hope to help clubs develop programmes which are in line with Envision 2030 mainly on stewardship and society. (Respondent 1)

Procedures are in place for clubs, Student Governance have set up online forms which consist of all details and requirements relating to all requests that clubs require. These forms allow requests to be processed without delays and comebacks. (Respondent 2)

#### **4.7.2.1 Sub-Theme 5.1: Administrative staff support.**

Administrative staff play a pivotal role within DSGD by facilitating the dissemination of knowledge to student leaders through structured processes, financial allocation, venue management, and the application of policies. These policies serve as a crucial framework to align the support provided to political clubs with university procedures, thereby fostering the attainment of programme objectives. Administrative personnel exhibited an unwavering commitment to optimising the outcomes of student leadership programmes by meticulously designing administrative processes.

As noted by Thomas (2021: 233), the responsibilities of administrative support staff encompass a wide array of tasks, ranging from assisting current and prospective students with the application process to clarifying programme details and admission standards. They also play a significant role in application review and guiding students through the enrolment process. Additionally, staff members frequently provide information on various forms of financial support available to political clubs. These findings are consistent with the insights offered by McNeil and Polly (2021), who emphasise the multifaceted role of higher education administration. In addition to coordinating student orientation programmes, they extend their support to counselling and advising services, and actively contribute to managing classrooms, resources, and administrative aspects of academic and extra-curricular programmes in collaboration with faculty and academic departments.

The interviews revealed that Department officials are expected to possess a working knowledge of database applications, administrative business systems or enterprise resource planning systems, and other applications utilised within the University or Department. As articulated by Govender (2018), student leaders are tasked with elucidating concerns, challenges, and ideas from a student perspective, as well as offering feedback on support services, student life, and overall effectiveness. Consequently, student leaders are entrusted with the administrative responsibilities

assigned to their respective clubs. The Department anticipates seeking consultation and guidance from the administrative team and student executives, who often handle sensitive, private, and politically significant matters that are pivotal to the unit's overall functioning and the university's stability. This aligns with the findings of Thomas (2021) who highlights the significance of administration familiarity in comprehending institutional policies and procedures. Therefore, all stakeholders involved with the institution are expected to possess effective communication skills, enabling them to engage with students and university officials proficiently to provide administrative support in higher education.

The findings of the current study is that the involvement of administrative staff in programmes for developing student leaders is primarily limited to their standard administrative support responsibilities, which primarily revolve around ensuring that clubs adhere to university policies. This limitation has the potential to result in unequal access to educational opportunities and challenges within the Department. Ineffectual management can lead to resource misallocation, such as the allocation of employees, and can hinder the provision of essential knowledge and experiences required for the success of SLDPs. Furthermore, administrative staff typically engage in customary administrative assistance tasks, including managing logistical needs of campus operations, handling maintenance requests, organising events, and facilitating space allocation, as evident from Ali *et al.*'s (2020) assertions.

There is a level of support provided to clubs, while they are allocated venues, provided with finance there is also often red tape that all these resources come with. Understandably so, Student Governance staff are required to follow the UoT's procurement policy for example when it comes to issues related to financial requests, and that often times frustrate clubs with their processes. (Respondent 1)

Administrative staff support clubs, they ensure that all processes and procedures relating to club's programmes align with the University. This ranges from development, sharing of working templates clubs can use, proposals, evaluations and reports which all are regarded as administrative support Clubs are also allowed to consult for any assistance with administration related queries. (Respondent 2)

#### 4.7.2.2 Sub-Theme 5.2: Internal procedures

The study has effectively elucidated how internal procedures play a pivotal role in ensuring adherence to institutional policies, legal requirements, and regulatory standards within the DSGD. By adhering to established procedures, the Department can uphold accountability and transparency in its operations, a crucial aspect of higher education institutions where compliance with an array of regulations and legislation is imperative, encompassing areas such as student privacy, financial management, research ethics, and accrediting standards.

As articulated by Stukalina (2021), internal processes serve as guiding principles for various actions, including curriculum development, programme evaluation, and programme reviews. They contribute to ensuring that academic programmes align with predetermined standards, educational objectives are met, and appropriate student support services are provided. Despite the wealth of available information, Witte *et al.* (2017) contend that internal measures are implemented to ensure comprehensive security measures are in place. According to Elrehail *et al.* (2018), internal processes are essential for overseeing and monitoring student programmes. The department responsible for student affairs meticulously manages paperwork and documentation to harness the higher education framework, reducing departmental risks, minimising error rates, and ensuring that activities are in alignment with the plan and relevant norms or regulations. In the context of a larger institution, the establishment of a robust internal control system is imperative to guarantee compliance in all facets of the business.

Political clubs, operating under the purview of UoT's, must conduct their student activities within the bounds of the law, in compliance with UoT standards, and in alignment with departmental regulations. Internal controls, in this context, are instrumental in formulating systems and regulations to safeguard UoT's assets and to ensure that all actions adhere to the law, the rules, and the university's ethical code of conduct. Gilal *et al.* (2019) aptly note that the adoption of internal processes with clear communication channels and consistent procedures fosters cooperation and enhances the effectiveness of teamwork. Furthermore, well-coordinated internal

processes such as these aid in identifying and mitigating risks within departments. By implementing appropriate controls and checks to ensure efficiency, compliance, quality, and risk management, institutions can significantly reduce the likelihood of errors.

The study emphasise the existence of internal processes that provide a framework for consistent operations, ultimately contributing to the realisation of the institution's mission and goals. Department officials need to possess an in-depth understanding of the agency's internal operations to effectively transmit this information to the clubs. This finding aligns with Ali *et al.*'s (2020) suggestion that administrative staff furnish clubs with comprehensive documentation outlining the procedures, serving as a vital reference for political clubs to consult with whenever they need clarification regarding any particular protocols.

Political clubs are expected to follow the Department's own internal procedures especially when they request financial assistance, venues, refreshments or any other support from the university. This is important because like other departments, Student Governance also goes through the process of external auditing. We are typically expected to assist in preparing reports and maintaining compliance with regulatory requirements by ensuring that such procedures are followed to create an environment conducive to achieving the institution's mission and goals. (Respondent 1)

Administrative staff members are required to follow University processes at all times. They are expected to be accountable and keep up to date records. This then implies that administrative staff must cascade down the internal procedures to clubs, in order to ensure that adequate reports and information is submitted to Student Governance staff, and that all information is in line with University processes and requirements This is done to demonstrate accountability and transparency in its activities in order to facilitate clear communication channels and consistent procedures which encourage cooperation within the department. (Respondent 2)

#### **4.7.3 Theme 6: Internal collaboration**

This investigation has illuminated the pivotal role of internal collaboration in enhancing the quality of SLDPs. This is exemplified by the emphasis placed on filing and documentation procedures which requires that student leaders be well-versed in the Department's internal protocols. Respondents underscored that internal collaborations are typically embedded within the Department's structure which serves as a mechanism to ensure seamless operations in compliance with established rules and regulations.

The absence of internal cooperation between current student representatives and university administration, as noted in Taylor's (2018) study, underscores the significance of internal collaboration, when stakeholders engage in internal collaboration they can leverage their unique knowledge and resources to provide comprehensive support for student growth. In the pursuit of a collaborative environment that fosters teamwork, upholds and advances the university's vision, the DSGD is expected to forge a common vision and strategy with student development programmes. Flexibility and adaptability are essential traits to carefully assess the performance of student development programmes and solicit input from a diverse range of stakeholders, a point supported by Kiersch and Peters (2017). Engaging student representatives from student clubs is vital for alignment on the overall direction, programme design, and implementation plan. Additionally, internally developed values can significantly enhance the overall quality and impact of student development programmes, as indicated by the authors' findings.

Furthermore, when various departments and stakeholders within an educational institution framework engage regularly, leaders involved in SLDP can harness unique knowledge and resources to provide holistic support to other students. Julin *et al.* (2022) argue that collaborative evaluation enables a comprehensive assessment and ensures the continuous improvement of student-related programmes. The Department must prioritise internal communication ahead of the activation of student programmes organised by political clubs. This facilitates shorter lead times and eliminates obstacles that could otherwise impede procedures, underscoring the importance of regular collaboration among all stakeholders to achieve their objectives. Cooperation across diverse administrative divisions, such as finance, human resources, and academic

affairs, can streamline processes, enhance communication, and promote overall efficiency in the institution's operations, in line with Taylor's (2018) findings. The study's results underscore this by demonstrating that internal cooperation contributes to a thorough examination of SLDP to ensure alignment with UoT's values, ultimately enhancing the student experience. Therefore, department representatives and political groups must collaborate effectively to elevate student initiatives and foster an environment of growth and development.

Student leaders are expected to internally collaborate to successfully enhance student initiatives. This requires a different departments and stakeholders internally collaborating within an educational institution framework. Most student leaders have collaborated and communicated with the department to successfully monitor the implementation of some of the programmes that need to be held during the year. (Respondent 1)

Hmm in my case effective internal collaboration has led to shorter lead times in order to eliminate obstacles that would have otherwise prolonged some procedure. This requires effective communication and planning strategically throughout the year to enhance the experience of students. Hindrance may also occur due to failure of internal collaboration in some of the programmes that student leaders hold in their respective clubs. (Respondent 2)

#### **4.7.3.1 Sub-Theme 6.1: Communication protocols**

Communication protocols in higher education, as defined by Gott *et al.* (2019), are established means and channels for sharing information and messages among various stakeholders within an educational institution. These protocols serve as central points for activities such as announcements, submissions, discussions, and programme adjustments. In the context of the current study, UoT's have implemented collaboration platform solutions like Microsoft Teams and QuestionPro, enabling project collaboration, real-time messaging, file sharing, and video conferencing. These platforms facilitate meeting planning and event preparation, as well as the dissemination of critical messages and event notices through digital bulletin boards, as described by Davey and Morell (2020).

Communication protocols can vary among institutions, and each may have additional channels or protocols tailored to their specific needs, as noted by Dykhne *et al.* (2021). Consequently, student leaders must grasp these communication protocols to effectively manage resources and foster student discourse during SLDP. In organisations with diverse racial or cultural backgrounds, accurate information sharing is crucial to prevent miscommunication or misinterpretation, fostering the Department's ability to understand and address the challenges students face when implementing student development programmes, in line with Soria and Horgos's (2021) perspective on team collaboration.

Effective communication procedures, according to Gott *et al.* (2019), facilitate conflict resolution, create a healthy working environment, and ensure that differences of opinion do not hinder student development. It is imperative to establish a systematic framework that holds students accountable for their tasks and ensures their active participation and contribution to the development process, as emphasised by the authors' findings. The DSGD plays a vital role in ensuring adherence to these communication procedures, fostering clear and effective communication among student leaders and between the department and students.

Most of the student leaders are expected to follow the specified communication protocols to convey SLDP to communicate announcements and any material that is related to UoT. This is done to protect the university and students. Most of our meetings with student leaders we stress the importance of effective collaboration among team members to ensure the established guidelines are followed. This is why we prefer using emails, MS Teams and face-to-face consultations, this makes it easy to liaise with the relevant students with planning and organising their programmes. (Respondent 1)

Most of our communication these days occurs online, due to new communication protocols which required we either through emails or calls through teams, the Covid-19 pandemic limited face-to-face meetings. This why after the pandemic we started to use WhatsApp groups, MS Teams meetings as well as face-to-face engagement. (Respondent 2)

#### 4.7.3.2 Sub-Theme 6.2: Strategic planning

Participants emphasised that the strategic planning process should incorporate flexibility and adaptability to allow for frequent evaluations and updates. This flexibility is essential to align the plan with the changing needs and aspirations of student leaders. Elrehail *et al.* (2018) supported this viewpoint, highlighting that poorly structured leadership programmes often fail to engage participants and overlook existing trends, leading to accessibility issues for both organisers and students. Neglecting existing challenges can have unexpected consequences, affecting leader behaviour, programme objectives, and club members' expectations. Aleixo *et al.* (2018) also underscored the importance of various planning steps in student leadership, assisting leaders in defining objectives, creating effective strategies, and implementing plans. Additionally, they recommended routine evaluations of the strategic planning process in light of achieved milestones and goals.

The study results underscored the critical importance of maintaining open communication channels within student political clubs. This involves identifying the necessary tools to execute action plans in response to thoughtful inquiries, subsequently reporting these actions to the DSGD. Janke *et al.* (2016) supported these findings by demonstrating that when student leaders are educated about policies, they become more effective in planning and decision-making. The key takeaway from their study was that higher education institutions should provide limited oversight to ensure that the leadership development framework is effective, allowing leadership programme officers to work directly with each academic unit. Shaw *et al.* (2018) found that student development programmes often receive guidance from various stakeholders regarding duty assignment, responsibilities, plan preparation, and resource allocation. According to Shaw *et al.* (2018), it is crucial for the strategic planning process to allocate resources effectively, add new activities or resources, adjust delivery strategies, and address specific student needs over time.

Yes, student leadership programmes are part of the plan to develop young leaders who work with people from other institutions to benchmark processes in order to improve. During the strategic planning process, we often collaborate with student leaders to ensure that leaders communicate to the department. Our role is typically

restricted to assisting student leaders from various clubs in coordinating political club network-related activities, inviting industry executives, booking venues, and inviting guest speakers. But I must emphasise that our engagement is restricted because we oversee admin process like the posters that will be used, the availability of venues, and the coordination of certain activities. Strategic planning of their programmes is entirely depended on political clubs. From our side we expect that each programme aligns with their POA. (Respondent 1)

Occasionally, getting help takes a number of weeks, and service providers take their time fulfilling requests. To eliminate delays clubs are required to strategically plan the execution of their programmes. Given the status of the economy, the University doesn't allocate much funds to clubs so that they can conduct their programmes as effectively as possible. In order to adjust to shifting student needs, new trends, and best practices in leadership development, clubs would strategically plan to assess and update the programmes on a regular basis, prioritising and reallocating their funds based on nature of each programme. (Respondent 2)

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

The interviews conducted in this study revealed a beneficial relationship between the Department's involvement and the successful execution of student programmes. This relationship allowed for the exploration of several themes related to the variables identified in the analysis. This alignment ensures that the study's themes and hypotheses derived from the literature review are well-founded. The researcher can maintain confidence in their understanding of the department officials' contributions throughout the study. It is worth noting that students may have varying learning styles and may require individualised instruction to comprehend departmental procedures effectively. Therefore, a student's ability to learn and communicate with department officials can be influenced by their personal connection and specific educational needs.

Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the interviews conducted in this study, allowing for a better understanding of the perspectives and viewpoints of the participants. This chapter has outlined how the interview themes were developed and aligned with the study's objectives. The themes discussed above demonstrate a clear

correlation between the bottlenecks identified by students and the roles of Department officials. This correlation illustrates that the support provided by the Department primarily involves administrative assistance, such as offering templates for proposals, report writing, evaluation, and budget planning. However, the Department's involvement does not extend to handling administrative tasks and procedures within the operation of the student clubs.

Regarding the bottlenecks identified during the planning phase, it is evident that the Department allocates time and resources to each political club. However, it is also apparent that policies are not thoroughly workshopped and understood by the clubs, leading to delays in processes. As a result, each club must make adjustments to their programmes based on the allocated budget and the involved implementation processes.

# CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter discussed the empirical findings of the study, and comparisons with those from the literature review. This chapter explains the study's purpose and objectives in order to make recommendations, draws additional conclusions, and examines limitations encountered by the researcher. The interpretation of this study is based on the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data acquired from UoT's DSGD administrative staff members and student leaders of political clubs affiliated by the SRC.

## 5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The purpose was to identify bottlenecks faced by UoT political clubs in administering and managing student leadership developmental programmes

To meet the aim, the researcher formulated the following objectives:

- To ascertain the kind of support provided to political clubs by the UoT to ensure the effectiveness of student leadership developmental programmes.
- To understand the influence of the university procedures on administration and implementation of student leadership developmental programmes by the UoT political clubs.
- To determine how political clubs at UoT evaluate the influence and impact of these programmes towards their leadership development.

## 5.3 KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

### 5.3.1 Literature review

Chapter 2 provided a foundation of literature-based evidence, shedding light on the current contributions in the field. Day *et al.* (2016) emphasised that leadership

programmes should be tailored to each faculty, discipline, department, and club, considering the unique challenges they may face during programme implementation. Shaw *et al.* (2018) suggested that programme managers should carefully evaluate the roles and impacts of student leaders on the campus climate, recognising their direct influence on students and university management. Ineffectual leadership, as noted by the authors, can lead to instability within the university, affecting resource allocation, rewards, management, and opportunities for student discourse. It's imperative that student leaders possess a strong educational foundation to effectively navigate challenges and articulate a clear vision to their followers (Witte *et al.*, 2017).

The study investigation highlighted a significant gap in filing and documentation practices, from both DSGD and clubs which are essential for the department's monitoring and tracking of efficient student programmes. Implementing internal controls within the university's structure is crucial to reduce risks, minimise error rates, and ensure smooth operations in compliance with established rules and regulations. This underscores the importance of fostering a collaborative environment that values teamwork, systems, and processes to enhance programme execution and efficiency. For department officials, successful collaboration is pivotal in achieving both university and departmental goals while ensuring positive programme outcomes. Flexibility and adaptability are key to attaining these successful outcomes (Aleixo *et al.*, 2018).

Furthermore, Aleixo *et al.* (2018) highlighted the importance of political clubs conducting their student programmes in a manner that adheres to legal requirements, complies with regulations, and operates within the constraints set by department officials. This emphasis on adherence to legal and regulatory standards underscores the need for accountability and responsibility in student programme management.

### **5.3.2 Social change model (SCM)**

In this study, the social change model was applied. This concept was used to explain how institutional social changes can either lead to more or fewer bottlenecks as a result of procedural and regulatory changes or lack of such. It also takes into account how some elements of the framework can contribute to a lack of university support,

leading to more bottlenecks from internal and external sources. The model requires the growth of personal consciousness, therefore student leaders being aware of the needs of the university community as well as of bottlenecks and how they affect overall performance. This entails being aware of and understanding the changes in policies and procedures that cause bottlenecks, and being able to balance individual opinions and beliefs with those shared by the university community. By taking part in discussions and debates, people can find points of agreement and establish principles related to effectiveness, fairness, and efficiency. Due to alignment, student leaders are better able to understand the commitment required of them to take an active role in the process. If student leaders are working with multiple people, knowledge of systems, resources, and abilities to discover creative solutions, this can involve advocating, bringing up problems with pertinent stakeholders, or submitting proposals for change. This can involve being aware of revised policies, rules, or protocols in response to social changes that take place in the university and which can lead to an increase or decrease in bottlenecks. The study was able to pinpoint a lack of university support as one of the obstacles that led to more blockages for student political clubs from both internal and external sources. It was unclear what kind of assistance political clubs received from the university through the DSGD. There was a lack of information about the policies and procedures that political clubs used to administer and manage SLDPs. Furthermore, there was a deficiency in programme evaluation.

The study's findings suggest that student leaders should promote more extensive institutional changes that align with the objective of reducing bottlenecks. In order to ensure that, cooperative efforts to improve working groups dedicated to simplification of procedures and policies and the model encourages ongoing assessment and feedback. Student leaders should evaluate the results and modify their programmes as needed in light of the evaluation's conclusions. This process will also enable effective reporting of programmes implemented. By clearly defining shared goals and intended outcomes, individuals and groups can work together towards a single vision while fostering cooperation and commitment among stakeholders. This collaborative approach promotes the exchange of best practices as well as the identification of systemic changes. Student leaders can navigate differences, establish common ground, and develop solutions that benefit the entire university community by fostering

open and inclusive discussions. Thus, this model stresses the importance of the university community working together to minimise bottlenecks generated by procedural and policy changes. This strategy promotes teamwork, shared accountability, and a shared goal, resulting in a more efficient and successful campus environment. Student leaders are typically required to seek resources such as books, online courses, or workshops in order to provide guidance and knowledge to develop a strong foundation to combat bottlenecks brought on by university procedure and policy.

### **5.3.3 Achievement of the objectives of the study**

This section discusses how the aim and objectives of the study were achieved based on the supporting literature and the empirical findings of the study. This section deals with bottlenecks faced by a selected University of Technology political clubs' leaders in their administering and management of SLDPs. The study was divided into three objectives as reiterated at the beginning of this chapter.

#### **5.3.4 Objective 1: To ascertain the kind of support provided to political clubs by the UoT to ensure the effectiveness of student leadership developmental programmes.**

##### **5.3.4.1 Student engagement**

Student engagement stands as a pivotal form of support extended to political clubs by UoT's, aiming to ensure the effectiveness of the SLDP and contribute to a positive university climate. This engagement is demonstrated through behavioural involvement, encompassing actions such as attendance, task completion, active participation, and preparedness. The findings indicate that departmental engagement has, to some extent, bolstered student involvement in recent years. This is evidenced by the moderate level of assistance provided by the DSGD in resource allocation. However, student leaders generally believe that the support extended to political clubs by the university has had limited impact on the development and management of SLDP. This suggests that the DSGD might not have played a particularly supportive

role in co-curricular activities related to SLDPs implemented by political clubs. These co-curricular activities can offer students opportunities to establish partnerships with various stakeholders and facilitate networking with alumni and industry professionals.

While 'agree' and 'strongly agree' rates were notably high in Theme 1, the presence of participants who remained neutral or expressed disagreement throughout the theme indicates that DSGD may not be consistent in providing strong support to political clubs. The interviews revealed that for student engagement programmes to thrive, political clubs require capable leaders who can also support other university initiatives and motivate their constituencies to engage in developmental programmes aligned with their own. In essence, student engagement and departmental support are interdependent, working in tandem to create a nurturing and supportive learning environment by actively involving student leaders and providing assistance to political clubs. The findings suggest that, to some degree, departmental assistance has been offered to political clubs at the selected UoT for programmes designed to enhance student engagement within the accessible student population. As illustrated in Figure 4.4, the majority of participants agree that the DSGD provides operational support, with an overall agreement rate of 63.6%, while only 13.7% of participants disagree with this notion. Therefore, it can be concluded that, in Theme 1, most participants concur that political clubs receive some form of support from the university or the DSGD. Given these findings, Department officials are expected to possess a working knowledge of, or the ability to learn and use, database applications, the administrative business system, or other systems and applications used within the university or department to efficiently and effectively provide administrative support to political clubs.

#### **5.3.4.2 Skills development**

The investigation showed that participants knew that student development programmes typically help leaders with skills to facilitate, communicate and coordinate with university officials as well as their constituency. These programmes aim to equip students with the necessary skills to meet the demands of programmes that provide students with comprehensive knowledge that are not directly related to academic

information but empowering them to understand their political club's vision and its contribution to socio-economic factors. The investigation was able to reveal that the student leaders are still confronted with several obstacles that require skills such as planning, decision-making, communicating, and working together to fulfil SLDP goals. This finding was supported by Soria and Horgos (2021) who added that higher education institutions typically encourage student clubs to identify essential skills that will assist students in becoming leaders in their careers. The current study findings show that the Department does not take part in the SLDP but allows political clubs to identify and develop the skills most suited to each club. This finding shows that the majority of participants favour the idea that the DSGD should support student leaders by offering inductions on department administrative procedures, despite some participants having reservations. The literature shows that the majority of studies show that gaps still exist in research conducted on the actual bottlenecks hindering political club's initiatives of instigating student leadership developmental programmes.

Additionally, as part of the induction to student leaders, student governance department has offered leadership workshops where students take part in leadership to enhance their skills as future leaders. Students are made aware of specific leadership development opportunities available to them and to assess if the opportunities align with the skills they might want to develop (Janke *et al.* 2016). Taylor (2018) in his study indicated that universities have not prioritized financial support for leadership programmes including policies that can foster and develop leadership skills, the authors further stated that limited funding has hindered the involvement of student leaders in South African universities, this was to an extent contradictory to the findings of this study. According to the study, participants in this circumstance consistently agreed with the previously provided assertion, even though there were only minor variations in this particular case. The DSGD's support for student political groups indicates the institution's dedication to creating a diverse and inclusive campus climate that encourages student engagement and active participation in the democratic process. This is reflected in the results related to this objective which show the high levels of agreement to the presence of consistent agreements. This indicates that the results are likely to be both reliable and valuable.

### **5.3.5 Objective 2: To understand the influence of the university procedures on administration and implementation of student leadership developmental programmes by the UoT political clubs**

#### **5.3.5.1 Department support and procedures**

Overall, university procedures play a crucial role in shaping the administration and implementation of SLDPs. They ensure adherence to institutional policies, maintain quality standards, safeguard student welfare, and promote the integration of these programmes within the broader educational framework of the university. The findings show that the skew is negative and packed to the right with the majority of participants agreeing that there are many DSGD procedures that must be followed in order to implement SLDP. These procedures may involve the submission of programme proposals, assessment of programme objectives and outcomes, and alignment with the university's mission and strategic goals. The approval and review processes ensure that programmes meet the university's standards and contribute to the overall learning experience. Approval of financial aspects of programmes also ensures that expenditure is in line with university policies. Ali *et al.* (2020) proposed that administrative staff provide clubs with extensive paperwork describing the procedures. The majority of participants agree with the notion that the SLDP is not implemented on time due to a lengthy approval process. Dealing with a lengthy approval process requires advance planning, patience and the ability to manage frustration and an understanding of the processes, as well as possessing effective communication skills in order to implement student development programmes. This includes creating timelines, setting goals and milestones, coordinating resources, and managing any necessary documentation. Based on information in this study the majority of participants agree with the notion that the university offers guidelines to political clubs on how to manage and implement student LDP. The findings of the study reveal that the Department sees student leaders as integral to internal communication and coordination of student programmes within the university. Student leaders are expected to take charge in most activities that happen within their respective clubs with limited interference from the DSGD. The DSGD only provides support to ensure that all decisions and actions are in compliance with university policy directives,

administrative policies and guidelines, which are frequently revised to guide operations related to student governance. It is important to note that specific support and procedures can vary from one political club to another based on their needs; this is reflected in Figure 4.3 where clubs respond to the notion that the DSGD has offered administrative support to political clubs; While the 'agree' rate is higher the rate of neutral, disagree and strongly disagree reveals that a standard procedure is not in place and a certain level of flexibility is exercised when assisting political clubs. Policies and guidelines are crucial because they establish standards for operations, service student leaders in a fair manner, and ensure accountability from both parties.

### **5.3.5.2 Administrative staff support**

Administrative employees provide major contributions to political clubs by motivating, distributing, and instilling knowledge in student leaders through organised procedures, funding distribution, venue allocation, and policy implementation. Adherence to university legislation is required in order to meet the SLDP goals and support political clubs in compliance with the required administrative processes. The study was able to recognise that the need to influence the outcomes of student leadership programmes means that administrative personnel need to go above and beyond the call of duty to ensure the execution of SLDPs. The findings of Thomas from (2021) indicated that most universities have procedures in place to manage risks associated with student activities and are expected to cover areas such as safety protocols, insurance requirements, liability waivers, and emergency response plans. These results were also emphasised by McNeil and Polly (2021), who stated that higher education administration is expected to assist in coordinating student orientation programmes, supporting counselling and advising services. This is why UoT political clubs need to submit reports quarterly on financial and non-financial resources allocated to them. To this end the department supports clubs with templates for reporting in order to guide them with their reports. Based on the findings, most of the participants agree that the DSGD has offered administrative support to political clubs for implementation of implementing SLDP. In this situation a majority of the student participants revealed that university procedures often require the reporting and evaluation of SLDPs. These procedures may include the submission of programme reports, data collection on

participant outcomes, and assessment of programme effectiveness. Reporting and evaluation processes enable universities to assess the impact of the programmes and make informed decisions for improvement as well as creating programmes that can enhance the overall experience of a UoT student. The study revealed that an effective evaluation tool is currently not in place for SLDP as reflected by Figure 4.17, where 81.9% participants overall agreed that having an effective evaluation system can improve the quality of student LDPs and can clearly reflect areas that require support.

### **5.3.5.3 Internal procedures**

Stukalina (2021) asserts that internal processes offer guidance for actions like curriculum development, programme evaluation, and programme reviews. The link between university administration processes and SLDPs' internal procedures ensures that these programmes are well-integrated, efficiently administered, and consistent with the university's broader mission and values. It promotes a holistic approach to learning that encourages students to acquire not only academic talents but also crucial leadership skills. This link contributes to the creation of a structured and organised environment that fosters the growth of student leaders and improves the overall university experience. The general framework under which these programmes operate is provided by university administrative procedures. This alignment guarantees that student leadership efforts contribute to the general goals of the university and follow the requirements of the institution. Additionally, student leaders can engage the DSGD staff who can serve as mentors, facilitators, or guest speakers, sharing their expertise and insights with the participants, provide ongoing support and resources to assist students in further developing their leadership skills. According to Elrehail *et al.* (2018) internal processes are implemented to oversee and track student programmes; The Department has to internally handle paperwork and documentation, this is done to ensure that university framework is observed by departments to mitigate risks, lower error rates, and guarantee that activities adhere to the plan and any applicable norms or regulations. UoT's must have a thorough internal control system in place to guarantee that every area of their organisation is compliant. Political clubs must conduct their student activities in a way that ensures all acts are lawful, comply with UoT standards, and are within departmental bounds. Internal controls and regulations

preserve UoT assets and ensure that everyone observes the university's ethical code of conduct. Proper documentation and record-keeping are beneficial for student leadership initiatives as well as university administration processes. This involves recording the goals, processes, evaluations, and results of the programme. The evaluation and ongoing development of administrative procedures as well as student leadership activities are made easier by effective record-keeping. Furthermore, the university procedures dictate how funds and resources are allocated for SLDPs. This includes budgeting processes, funding application guidelines, and approval procedures. These procedures can impact the availability of financial resources and support for programme implementation. The findings of this study correlated with the findings of Ali *et al.* (2020) who claimed that inefficient management can lead to the misallocation of resources like funds and employees which can lead to the failure to impart to student leaders the knowledge and experiences they need to be successful in their SLDP. While these processes are crucial, most of the participants agree that the delays caused by administration processes deter and demotivate political clubs with the overall agreement rate at 68.9%, as reflected in Figure 4.10.

#### **5.3.5.4 Internal collaboration**

Internal collaboration is important for UoT because it helps participants work well together, share ideas, accomplish shared objectives, and define particular metrics and indicators that will be used to gauge the impact of student leadership programmes. University administration policies cover a wide range of tasks, including planning, scheduling, allocating resources, and documenting. The effectiveness of UoT political clubs' SLDPs is directly impacted by these methods. These processes offer the required backing for the implementation of these programmes when they are in line with their goals and objectives. There must be a link between university administrative practices and the internal collaboration of SLDPs for these programmes to be successfully launched and maintained. The DSGD's administrative practices can support, facilitate, and integrate with the objectives of these programmes. They do so by fostering an environment that encourages collaboration, properly allocates resources, and ensures that the programme has a positive impact on both the development of individual students and the university community as a whole. Internal

collaboration is an effective strategy for gathering different viewpoints, insights, and data to evaluate the influence of student leadership programmes and produce recommendations for improvements or modifications to increase the programme's influence and impact. The student leadership program should incorporate internal cooperation between the DSGD and UoT political groups, allowing participants to gain valuable skills while promoting a feeling of community and shared purpose. Effective communication among programme coordinators and university administrators is required for internal collaboration within student leadership programmes. The findings of this study reveal that some work requires to be done in order to fully achieve this aspect; the lack of outright agreement in Figure 4.11 reflects that there is a lack of communication about and clarification of these guidelines and processes, which also indicates inconsistency in administration practices and internal collaboration.

#### **5.3.5.5 Communication protocols**

Communication protocols play a significant role in the administration and implementation of student leadership developmental programmes at universities. These protocols provide methods and norms for efficient communication between the programme's numerous participants, including university administrators, instructors, student leaders, and programme participants. UoT communication protocols ensure that information about student leadership initiatives is disseminated in a timely and accurate manner. According to Davey and Morell (2020), digital bulletin boards are used in university buildings or online platforms to display vital news, forthcoming events, and other alerts. As a result, Dykhne *et al.* (2021) noted that communication protocols can differ among institutions, with each having additional channels or protocols tailored to their specific demands. Student leaders must be able to effectively communicate in order to successfully manage resources and opportunities for student dialogue during SLDP. The study shows that communication blunders or misinterpretations can affect the quality and accuracy of information shared, for instance sending wrong emails, misuse of intranet portals, or social media platforms. Additionally, the study was able to discover that the DSGD communication protocols facilitate collaboration and networking among student leaders and other stakeholders. The DSGD uses protocols to outline the use of online collaboration tools, discussion

forums, or social media platforms to connect participants and encourage sharing of ideas and best practices. The study was able to discover that the Department has room to improve on effective communication protocols that can foster a supportive and inclusive environment for student leaders to learn from each other and build valuable networks. According to Gott *et al.* (2019), having clear communication standards in place can help students resolve disputes amicably, foster a positive work atmosphere, and guarantee that disagreements will not obstruct their progress. The current study findings also highlight the need to create an organised structure that holds students accountable for their work, ensuring that they take an active part in and contribute to the development process. According to the investigation, the student governance department has primarily demonstrated effective interpersonal communication with political clubs. This is why student leaders are required to ensure that their respective political clubs can effectively communicate with the department to receive necessary support to implement SLDP. Overall, communication protocols create a structured framework for communication and collaboration in student leadership developmental programmes. By setting clear guidelines and expectations, these protocols help streamline administrative processes, enhance programme effectiveness, and ensure a positive experience for all participants.

### **5.3.6 Objective 3: To determine how political clubs at the UoT evaluate the influence and impact of these programmes towards their leadership development**

#### **5.3.6.1 Evaluation process used by the UoT**

According to Mugume and Luescher (2017), the type of student development programme, available resources, and the volume of data required for the assessment all influence the decision about evaluation approaches and procedures. Adhariani and De Villiers (2019) state that political clubs typically need to combine strategies and processes to evaluate the success of student development programmes. Assessing and evaluating the importance of student leadership programmes involves considering their impact on various aspects of students' personal and professional development. These programmes are designed to cultivate leadership skills, promote personal

growth, and prepare students for future responsibilities. The specific focus areas to be examined are determined by UoT political clubs through aspects such as the programme's duration, objectives and outcomes, and clearly defined objectives and outcomes of programmes which enable the development of an efficient evaluation instrument. The refinement of an evaluation instrument can be driven by identification of new challenges or areas that require additional attention. Data can be used to evaluate the impact of improvements on student outcomes and overall quality. Soliciting input on student development programmes from both participants and instructors who engage can provide new perspectives. Student leaders are able to evaluate the successes and failures of their plans, come to data-driven conclusions, and continuously improve the participants' learning experiences through effective evaluation. Evaluation generally includes the use of surveys, feedback sessions, and open forums, which all promote ongoing improvement. The study showed (Figure 4.15) that participants agreed that there are different types of processes and strategies used by the DSGD to evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes; the correlation reflected by Figure 4.17 implies that an effective evaluation system can improve the quality of student LDPs and that an effective evaluation process is currently not in place and current processes needs refinement. This is reflected by the high percentage of students who agree with this notion.

#### **5.3.6.2 The influence and impact of student LDPs**

The university student leadership programmes involves the entire UoT community as well as professionals from diverse industries. Student involvement in these SLDPs can lead to beneficial mentorship, collaboration, and networking opportunities for students and provides hands-on, real-world learning experiences to supplement classroom learning. Student leadership programmes frequently emphasise the development of a wide range of abilities such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, decision making, and time management. Students become more adept at interacting with administrators, presenting their views, and tackling concerns through channelled student activism as they develop these skills. An effective assessment system, according to Fatani (2020), is critical to improve the efforts aimed at the development of competent student leaders. Prior to the start of the SLDPs, informal assessment of

participants' pre-existing skill levels, attitudes, or knowledge can be conducted, and the data used to assess the long-term advantages of the SLDP and identify any areas that may require additional support. Administrators can measure participants' progress over time and demonstrate how their abilities and habits change as a result of the programmes by observing behavioural change, and the influence in institutional culture, the changes observed reflects the influence and impact of the student LDPs. Political clubs can track the advancement of their members by assessing their level of participation, contributions to club events, and improvement in their skill and knowledge bases. Furthermore, the findings of Rusk *et al.* (2018) suggest that in order to obtain feedback from participants, one must first identify student development programmes that aim to improve quality and then choose acceptable strategies for doing so. With constant observation, instructors may identify students who are having difficulty and provide them with tailored support.

### **5.3.7 Summary of critical bottlenecks faced by UoT political clubs**

Most universities, require extensive bureaucratic administrative processes that stymie leadership programme approvals and implementation. Obtaining approvals, securing financing, and managing university restrictions are all part of the process, but these processes are a major bottleneck for political clubs. Due to such processes it can be difficult to implement leadership development programmes. The lack of open, transparent communication about operational processes with student leaders and club members, and the general student body, is critical. The lack of documented operational guidelines and policies creates inconsistencies and promotes bias from DSGD staff which can be discouraging for student leaders. Assessing the impact of leadership development programmes and conducting assessments that appropriately represent programme achievements is difficult and is a common bottleneck faced by institutions. It is challenging to continue regular engagement for certain people who do not immediately recognise the benefits or who prioritise other activities, which complicates evaluation of the impact made by SLDPs. Other difficulties include: accessibility to participants from a variety of backgrounds; developing and implementing programmes that are inclusive, equitable, and diverse; leadership development being low on the list of goals for members of political clubs. It may be

difficult to maintain a long-term commitment to these programmes due to competing demands, affecting programme attendance and the impact intended.

#### **5.3.7.1 Lack of integrated knowledge management systems**

Integrating knowledge management systems with student clubs in higher education can be a beneficial strategy for improving communication, collaboration, and the overall efficiency of club operations. However, the DSGD faced bottlenecks in using the management system to manage SLDP, including managing knowledge related to SLDP event calendars, registration process, and streamlining attendance tracking. The results of the study show an inability to leverage the collaboration and communication features of the knowledge management system to facilitate interaction among club leaders and faculty advisers. Furthermore, existing integrated systems have not made improvements and adjustments as needed to meet the specific requirements of student clubs. An example of this bottlenecks can be seen in the way political club leaders do not regularly update and maintain the content within their dedicated spaces on the knowledge management system. This includes documenting files related to meeting minutes, and assessing how political clubs manage resources during the development of SLDPs.

#### **5.3.7.2 Vertical communication problems**

Vertical communication problems between student clubs and universities can hinder the effectiveness of both parties and create frustration and inefficiencies. These problems can occur for various reasons, and addressing them is essential for fostering a positive and productive relationship. However, in the case of UoT political clubs there were bottlenecks in vertical communicating information and relaying messages to students that were supposed to align with the needs and goals of both student clubs and the institution. This can be seen in the manner the respondents sometimes did not understand how to upload and access information, collaborate, and communicate within university platforms. This bottleneck affects communication, collaboration, and overall club operations since it requires a proactive approach from both parties. The UoT has not addressed these vertical communication problems and sometimes

university staff may take a long time to respond to club inquiries or requests, causing frustration among club members. The respondents also highlighted that political clubs may struggle to access necessary resources, such as funding, meeting spaces, or promotional support.

#### **5.3.7.3 Bureaucratic red tape with UoT administration**

The DSGD is noted to have complex administrative processes and bureaucratic red tape can impede clubs' ability to access resources or gain approval for events. This has led to student leaders struggling to identify the appropriate university personnel to communicate with, leading to confusion and delays. Additionally, there are no dedicated channels of communication with specific university staff members or offices responsible for club interactions. Contact information on the university website must be kept up-to-date.

#### **5.3.7.4 The lack of standardisation between student political clubs and the DSGD**

Inconsistent standards can lead to unequal opportunities for students. Clubs with more resources may have an advantage over clubs with less resources, potentially creating disparities in student experience. The lack of standardisation between student clubs and universities has both challenges and opportunities. Striking a balance between flexibility and support can help universities create a more equitable and enriching environment for student clubs, which can lead to the development of unique and creative approaches to student engagement. Without standardised guidelines, universities may struggle to maintain quality control over the various student clubs. This can lead to a wide range of club experiences for students, some of which may not align with the educational mission of the institution.

#### **5.3.7.5 Alignment with educational goals with student development programmes**

Aligning student development programmes with educational goals can be a challenging task, and several bottlenecks or obstacles can arise during this process. SLDP often face bottlenecks in strategic planning student development programmes with UoT educational goals and regularly evaluate and adjust their student development programmes to ensure they are aligned with educational goals. Additionally, ongoing communication and engagement with all stakeholders has not overcome resistance and ensured successful alignment. When educational institutions lack well-defined and clear educational goals, it becomes challenging to align student development programmes with them. Without a clear roadmap, it is hard to determine what skills, competencies, and experiences students need to achieve these goals. Therefore, a lack of long-term planning and commitment shown in the case of the selected UoT has led to clubs missing opportunities that might otherwise be beneficial.

#### **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENT GOVERNANCE DEPARTMENT AND POLITICAL CLUBS AT UOT**

The following recommendations were derived from a careful consideration of the findings and conclusions of this study.

##### **5.4.1 Mentorship and guidance**

The UoT DSGD can assign experienced mentors or advisers for each political club who can guide and support student leaders in their roles. These mentors can offer advice, share their own experiences, and provide feedback to help students develop their leadership skills. By providing support, knowledge, and encouragement, mentors can help students enhance their leadership abilities, navigate challenges, and make a positive impact within their communities. Additionally, the department can offer timely and constructive feedback to help the student refine their leadership skills, with a focus on specific behaviours, actions, and areas where improvement is needed while highlighting their strengths. The DSGD can help the student navigate challenges and setbacks by encouraging them to see them as learning opportunities. Assist in problem-solving and encourage resilience, adaptability, and perseverance.

Professionals from different industries and successful alumni to share their experiences and insights with students. These speakers can provide valuable guidance and inspiration for personal and professional growth. These mentors and advisers unlike student governance staff will be able to be involved to a certain extent in the planning process of programmes and attend them in order to assist clubs evaluate and compile reports, and on the other hand will be able to give student governance in-depth feedback that is based on their own direct experience of how the programmes were rolled out, this feedback will assist student governance with their processes and also with a clear indication on what development to implement to advance the leaders who manage SLDP's.

#### **5.4.2 Resources and materials**

The university DSGD can provide access to relevant resources and materials that can assist student leaders in their roles. Librarians can be requested to structure such development, this could be through creating a pertinent resource centre within student governance that will include books, articles, online courses, and other educational materials focused on governance, leadership, politics, and public speaking and develop an online repository where students can easily access these resources. Provide a wide range of resources like articles on student activism, networking guides, business templates, and conversation starters to assist students in making meaningful connections, provide resources such as guidelines, training materials, and suggested activities to facilitate effective mentor-mentee relationships. Such offerings must be regularly evaluated and updated to meet the evolving needs of the students. The DSGD needs to review templates provided to student leaders and amend them where necessary in order to attain relevant information for research and development purposes. Development of a functional evaluation system for SLDPs that will assist by collecting data that will contribute to the improvement of programmes conducted for students. DSGD should migrate manual processes and make them online; this is more efficient, environmentally friendly and a more reliable approach as it can be accessible from anywhere thus increasing efficiency which allows more time to engage in development of student leaders rather than administration.

### **5.4.3 Administrative services**

The DSGD should conduct comprehensive orientation sessions for political club leaders at the beginning of each academic year to ensure effective administration of SLDPs, and conduct refresher sessions quarterly. The orientation should cover pertinent topics such as event planning, budget management, and university policies and procedures. The DSGD should offer ongoing training workshops on leadership skills, team management, and conflict resolution to empower student leaders with the necessary skills to conduct their SLDPs.

The development of a clear set of standard operating procedures (SOPs) that outline the steps involved in organising SLDPs, securing funding, and adhering to campus regulations would guarantee effective administration of SLDPs. Provide easy access to these SOPs through a resource centre, online portal or handbook. This would help political club leaders navigate bureaucratic hurdles with confidence.

The DSGD should establish a feedback loop where club leaders can provide input on their experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improvement. This feedback can inform ongoing enhancements to the administration support provided by the DSGD office. The office as part of administration should also recognise and celebrate the achievements of political clubs and societies through awards, certificates, or public acknowledgements. They can also offer incentives for successful events, innovative initiatives, and exceptional leadership to motivate student leaders to run SLDPs.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UOT POLITICAL CLUBS**

The following recommendations stem from a thorough examination of the study's findings and conclusions:

### **5.5.1 Regular evaluation and feedback**

Political clubs should consider conducting surveys or interviews to gather feedback from programme participants. This feedback can serve as a valuable tool for

identifying areas requiring improvement and making necessary programme adjustments. Moreover, DSGD can provide regular feedback to student leaders individually, acknowledging their strengths and offering constructive criticism to support their growth. Implementing self-assessment components to measure changes in students' self-perception and confidence as leaders is also beneficial. Surveys or self-reflection exercises can effectively gauge students' perceptions of their own leadership abilities and track their growth throughout their term of office. This process should commence when they assume office and continue on a quarterly basis to closely monitor the progress of each student leader throughout their term of office.

### **5.5.2 Evaluate skill acquisition**

Political clubs should assess the acquisition of specific leadership skills and competencies among participants. This evaluation could encompass skills such as public speaking, teamwork, conflict resolution, strategic planning, or community engagement. Employing a rubric to rate the level of proficiency attained by student participants through pre- and post-programme assessments is recommended. Pre-programme assessments can establish a baseline of leadership skills and knowledge, while post-programme assessments evaluate the progress made during the programme. Given that political clubs often operate with limited financial and human resources, strategic design and planning are imperative. This involves learning how to maximise resources efficiently. Additionally, political clubs can collaborate with SGD administrators, Student Parliament, and university researchers to advance specific policies and social reforms. Students should become more aware of the challenges associated with translating policy into action. Student leaders need to be well-informed about policies affecting students and take an active role in policy reviews and educating their constituencies to facilitate ongoing engagement.

### **5.5.3 Align goals with UOT vision**

Political clubs can work collaboratively with the DSGD to gain a comprehensive understanding of and contribute to the realisation of UoT's vision. This alignment with the university's vision enhances the importance of these programmes and encourages

their integration into the institution's long-term strategies. By aligning with the university's vision, political clubs can contribute to the broader objectives of the institution while gaining access to additional resources, expertise, and a larger platform to promote their club's mission. Regular engagement with university key stakeholders and open channels for student engagement on relevant issues will facilitate mutual understanding and ensure the resolution of issues affecting students. Such partnerships can play a pivotal role in driving positive change within the university. Effective communication, clear expectations, and collaborative work are crucial to the success of this partnership. Ensuring that programme leaders and administrators make decisions with a clear understanding of the programme's objectives and needs is essential. Administrative support can also help overcome any barriers or challenges that may arise during programme execution.

To help improve the administrative processes between the political clubs and the DSGD, the following administrative processes have been implemented.

#### 5.5.4 Administrative process between political clubs at UoT and DSGD for administering SLDPs

**Key components and factors include:**

##### 1. INITIATION:

- **Internal factor:** A student club or society expresses the intention to organise an event or programme.
- **External factor:** University's DSGD is responsible for overseeing and assisting student clubs



##### 2. EVENT/PROGRAMME PROPOSAL:

- **Internal factor:** The student club creates a detailed proposal outlining the event or programme's purpose, goals, budget, and timeline.
- **External factor:** DSGD reviews the proposal for alignment with university policies and guidelines. **(3-7 days)**



### 3. BUDGET APPROVAL:

- **Internal factor:** The student club submits a budget request for the event/programme.
- **External factor:** DSGD evaluates the budget and ensures it complies with financial regulations.



### 4. RESOURCE ALLOCATION:

- **Internal factor:** The student club receives approval and allocated resources (funding, venue, equipment, etc.) from the university.
- **External factor:** DSGD manages the allocation of resources. **(7-14 days)**



### 5. EVENT/PROGRAMME PLANNING:

- **Internal factor:** The student club proceeds with detailed event/programme planning, including logistics, marketing, and participant registration.
- **External factor:** DSGD may provide guidance and support during the planning phase.



### 6. EVENT/PROGRAMME EXECUTION:

- **Internal factor:** The student club hosts the event/programme as per the plan.
- **External factor:** DSGD may oversee compliance with university policies during the execution. **(3-5 days)**



## 7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

- **Internal factor:** The student club assesses the success of the event/programme and gathers feedback from participants.
- **External factor:** DSGD may request post-event reports and evaluations.



## 8. FEEDBACK AND REPORTING:

- **Internal factor:** The student club submits a report to the DSGD, including outcomes, financial details, and lessons learned.
- **External factor:** DSGD reviews the report and provides feedback.



## 9. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD KEEPING:

- **Internal factor:** The student club maintains records of all event/programme-related documents.
- **External factor:** DSGD maintains records for auditing and reference.



## 10. FEEDBACK IMPLEMENTATION:

- **Internal factor:** The student club implements improvements based on feedback and evaluation results.
- **External factor:** DSGD may offer recommendations for enhancing future events/programmes.



## 11. CLOSURE:

- **Internal factor:** The event/programme is concluded, and the student club evaluates the overall success, including evaluation of DSGD staff and external processes involved in implementation of SLDPs.
- **External factor:** DSGD closes the administrative process for the specific event/programme.



## 12. CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION:

- **Internal factor:** The student club maintains ongoing communication with the DSGD for future collaborations and support.
- **External factor:** DSGD continues to assist and guide student clubs as needed. (2-4 days)

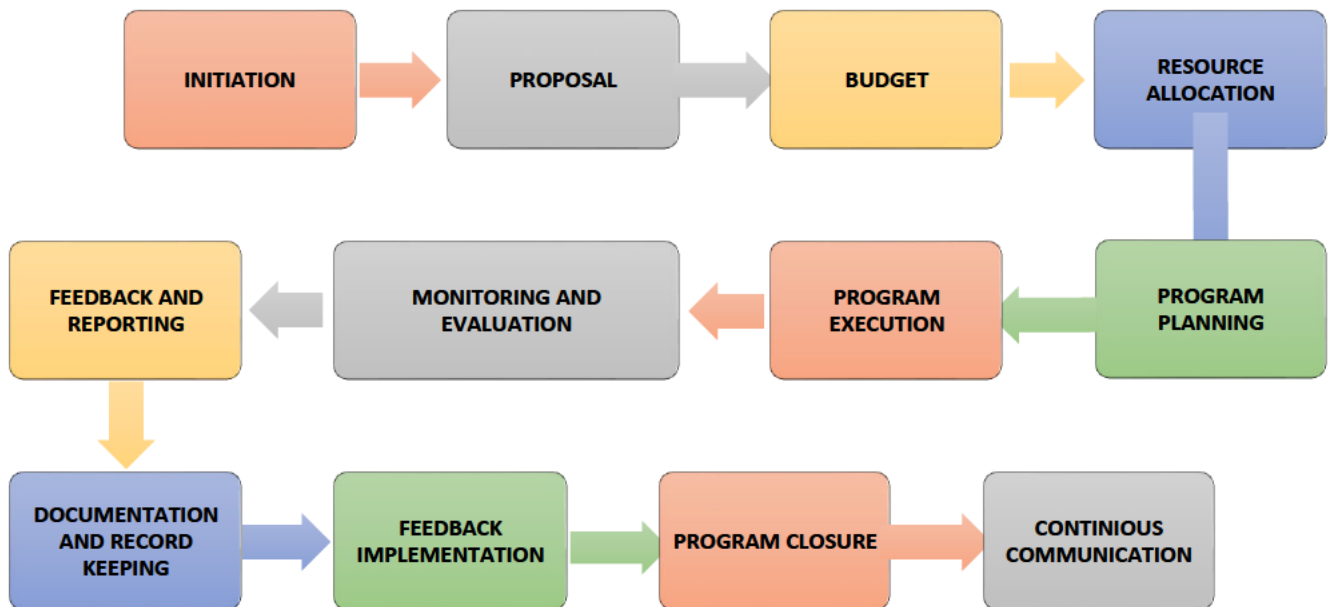


Figure 5.1: SLDP administrative process

## **5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

### **5.6.1 Complexity**

Integrating qualitative and quantitative data presented inherent challenges due to differences in methodologies, data types, and analysis techniques. Combining distinct data sets and deriving meaningful conclusions can be intricate, demanding advanced statistical and analytical skills. To overcome this complexity, future research might involve collaborating with larger research teams from various methodological backgrounds to ensure transparent data collection and analysis procedures.

### **5.6.2 Interpretation and synthesis**

The study's limitations included the challenges of interpreting and synthesising qualitative and quantitative findings. Researchers must carefully consider how to reconcile and interpret diverse data types while presenting integrated results in a meaningful and coherent manner. Adequate resources should be allocated to collect, analyse, and interpret both types of data effectively. Researchers must also be transparent about limitations and potential biases in their findings.

### **5.6.3 Measurement variability**

Measurement variability was another limitation, arising from the use of different samples, measurement tools, scales, or methodologies. Researchers should strive to employ standardised measurement protocols and appropriate statistical methods for harmonising measurements. Proper accounting for disparities through data weighting or scaling can prevent over- or under-representation of certain groups.

### **5.6.4 Time and resource constraints**

Mixed research methods can be more time, resource, and effort-intensive compared to single-method studies. Adequate planning and resource allocation are essential to ensure data quality throughout the research process. Researchers must transparently

report their methods and results while critically evaluating potential biases and limitations.

### **5.6.5 Accessibility**

Accessibility challenges were posed by participant recruitment and retention, particularly for student leaders who may have had limited access to technology and internet connectivity. Future research should consider employing a combination of traditional and innovative recruitment strategies, establish trust, ensure clear communication, and maintain participant confidentiality.

## **5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

### **5.7.1 Policy and institutional support**

Future studies can delve into the role of institutional policies and support in fostering effective student development programmes. Research could identify strategies for promoting the influence of institutional policies in allocating financial resources, providing administrative support, and engaging in programme outcomes. Researchers can also explore the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at supporting marginalised student groups, creating inclusive campus environments, and promoting equitable opportunities for all students.

### **5.7.2 Cross-cultural studies**

Future studies can carefully conduct cross-cultural studies to understand how student development programmes can effectively address the needs and expectations of participants from different cultural contexts. These future studies can compare the effectiveness of programme designs, delivery methods, and support systems in diverse cultural settings. Identify cultural factors that influence programme outcomes and adapt programmes accordingly. This research could examine cross-cultural challenges faced by student leaders such as cultural adjustment, language barriers, and identify effective support mechanisms to enhance their experiences and success.

### **5.7.3 Adopt participatory research approaches**

Future researchers can engage participants as active collaborators in the research process through participatory research methods. This approach involves involving stakeholders in problem identification, data collection, analysis, and interpretation, ensuring that research outcomes are relevant and applicable to the communities being studied. Traditional research often relies on cross-sectional data, which captures a snapshot of a particular point in time. To gain a deeper understanding of dynamic processes and changes over time, consider employing longitudinal studies that collect data from the same participants at multiple time points. Real-time studies, enabled by technological advancements, allow for capturing data in real-world contexts as events unfold.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, identifying bottlenecks faced by university political clubs in administering and managing student leadership developmental programmes is crucial for improving their effectiveness and overall impact. By understanding and addressing these challenges, the clubs can create an environment that nurtures students' leadership skills and enhances their personal and professional growth. Identifying and addressing bottlenecks faced by university political clubs in administering and managing student leadership developmental programmes is crucial for their success. By focusing on securing adequate funding, recruiting experienced mentors, streamlining administrative processes, promoting student engagement, and expanding networking opportunities, these clubs can create a conducive environment for students to develop their leadership skills and make a meaningful impact on campus and contribute positively to the stability of the university. Furthermore, a lack of student engagement and participation can be a bottleneck for leadership development programmes. It is crucial for clubs to create inclusive and diverse environments that attract a wide range of students and DSGD should be an enabler to create these spaces and not be a hindrance. By actively promoting their programmes, organising engaging events, and fostering a sense of community, clubs can encourage more students to get involved

and benefit from leadership opportunities. Developing mentorship programmes, internships, and collaborative projects can also increase student engagement and provide practical experiences. Dealing with paperwork, event approvals, and coordination with university departments can be time-consuming and overwhelming for student leaders. Simplifying administrative processes and migrating manual processes to online systems can be beneficial, pairing each political club with a mentor or adviser, establishing clear communication channels with relevant university departments, and providing adequate training and resources to club members can help alleviate these bottlenecks.

Additionally, leveraging technology and online platforms for communication and administrative tasks can streamline processes and enhance efficiency. Political clubs often rely on the guidance and support from SGD members, alumni, or external professionals to provide valuable insights and mentorship to student leaders. However, finding and retaining qualified mentors can be challenging. It is essential for clubs to establish robust networks and partnerships with professionals in the political field who are willing to volunteer their time and expertise. Balancing academic responsibilities, extracurricular activities, part-time jobs, and personal commitments may make it difficult for students to fully commit to leadership development programmes. To overcome these bottlenecks, political clubs can consider implementing strategies such as securing additional funding or seeking sponsorships, actively promoting leadership programmes through multiple channels, offering flexible programme formats, establishing mentorship programmes, leveraging technology for virtual engagement, and collaborating with other campus organisations or departments to enhance resources and opportunities. Political clubs may lack proper mechanisms to evaluate students' learning outcomes, measure programme success, and collect feedback for improvement. Incorporating regular assessments and feedback loops can aid in programme evaluation and improvement.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR STUDENT LEADERS



### LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR STUDENT LEADERS

**Title of the Research Study: BOTTLENECKS FACED IN ADMINISTERING AND MANAGING STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AT A SELECTED UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (UOT) IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**Dear Student Leader:**

We would like to invite you to take participation in the following study regarding bottlenecks faced by the selected University of Technology political clubs in administering and managing student leadership developmental programmes. If you decide to take part in the study a researcher will get in touch with via cell phone and email, afterwards you will receive a link that will take you a website called Question-pro where the study research questions will be found and this would take is small amount your time. The questions found on this survey will be structured in Likert scale system and before, you take part in the study please read the consent information leaflet carefully. After, you have completed the survey make sure submit all your responses and recorded by the website. However, if you are interested in taking part of the study feel free to stop at any time as you will not be forced to participate. But if you would like to find out more about the study give your contact details to the researcher working on the study. She will contact you within the next four weeks to discuss the study.

Thank you for your help

Yours sincerely

Mrs Kholeka Mfeka

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: Kholeka Mfeka

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Musawenkosi Ngibe, PhD

**Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:**

Political clubs normally facilitate the development of leadership skills among its elected officers. The development of these skills is often done through student leadership development programmes. Leadership development programmes are aimed to empower students to achieve greater levels of proficiency, build leadership skills over a period of time and expand student's capacity in leadership roles and processes. The University through the SRC provides these clubs with a budget and a collective mandate to develop and train their respective elected leaders through student leadership programmes since these student leaders are expected to have knowledge of the university procedures, policies and skills needed to govern their political clubs. However, the administration and management of these leadership programmes, which are supposedly funded by the university, seem to be lacking coordination and clarity on many aspects, especially the influence these programmes should have towards the development of future leaders within the respective political groups.

Therefore, this study seeks to critically assess and identify bottlenecks faced by the selected University of Technology political clubs in administering and managing leadership developmental programmes. This inquiry will take a mixed method approach with the aid of semi-structured interviews and surveys being utilised as data collection methods. The investigation will consist of two populations, namely, students leaders responsible for managing and administering student development programmes and two employees from the DSGD.

**Purpose of the Study:**

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the kind of support provided to political clubs by the UoT to ensure the effectiveness of student leadership developmental programmes. This will include improving student leadership qualities, contribution towards the political club and influence in university decision making as well as determining the extent to which a change in an outcome can be attributed to the programme. Furthermore, this study will help the researcher ascertain influence of the university procedures on administration and implementation of student leadership developmental programmes by political clubs.

**Outline of the Procedures:**

In order to obtain a comprehensive understanding about bottlenecks faced by political clubs in the development of student leadership programmes surveys will be used to obtain data from student leaders. These surveys will use a likert scale system consisting of questions like strongly agree or disagree and will have a fixed number of questions. Due to the current COVID 19 pandemic an online tool named Question-pro, furthermore data collected from this questionnaire will be stored on an encrypted media storage device.

**Risks or Discomforts to the Participant:**

From participating from this study you will not be exposed in any risks or discomforts. Explain to the participant the reasons he/she may be withdraw from the Study: You will not be forced to partake in the study and you are entitled to withdraw from the study at any time should you wish to do so. During your participation, you will be treated with respect and the researcher will provide you with the appropriate methods of communications and times in which you can contact the researcher.

**Benefits:**

Will include an understanding of SDP within political clubs and the bottlenecks that these clubs in their administrative procedures and implementation of student leadership developmental programmes.

Remuneration: You will not be paid for participating in this study. Participating in this study is therefore, free and will not result in any form of remuneration.

**Costs of the Study:**

You will not be liable for any costs for participating in this study. However, since the survey will be done online the costs of data or internet connection will be liable to you.

**Confidentiality:**

Anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained, as the information of the participants, identify and names will not be disclosed. All data will be coded, only the supervisor, researcher and the statistician will have access to the data. This aligns with the PIP

Act (protection of personal information), where written consent will be obtained, all the information will be accurate, de-identified, stored securely and deleted after five years.

**Results:**

The dissertation will be made available to the DUT library. The dissertation will also be disseminated in the form of a journal type to be published in an accredited journal. The study will be made available to the participants upon request.

**Research-related Injury:**

The study will be conducted online, therefore there will be no injuries as interaction with the participants will be done online. Storage of all electronic and hard copies including tape recordings: Data collection and analysis will be online. Therefore, data collected in the study will be stored on cloud storage.

**Persons to contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:**

(Musawenkosi

Ngibe, [musawenkosin1@dut.ac.za](mailto:musawenkosin1@dut.ac.za) ) Please contact the researcher (079 217 2451), my supervisor (031 373 5858) or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031

373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the Director: Research and Postgraduate Support Dr L Linganiso on 031 373 2577 or [researchdirector@dut.ac.za](mailto:researchdirector@dut.ac.za)

## APPENDIX B: LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS



### LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS

Dear participant,

I hope you are good and doing well. You are kindly invited to participate in this research study. Kindly read the below information for your attention.

**Title of the Research Study:** BOTTLENECKS FACED IN ADMINISTERING AND MANAGING STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AT A SELECTED UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (UOT) IN SOUTH AFRICA

**Principal Investigator/s/researcher:** Kholeka Mfeka (B. Tech Office Management and Technology)

**Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s:** Dr M Ngibe (PHD)

#### **Brief introduction and Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the kind of support provided to political clubs by the UoT's to ensure the effectiveness of student leadership developmental programmes. This will include improving student leadership qualities, contribution towards the political club and influence in university decision making as well as determining the extent to which a change in an outcome can be attributed to the programme. Furthermore, this study will help the researcher ascertain influence of the

university procedures on administration and implementation of student leadership developmental programmes by UoT political clubs.

**Outline of the Procedures:**

In order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the role played by the DSGD, interviews will be held with department representatives. These interviews will be semi-structured interviews and typically include a few predetermined questions while the rest of the questions are not planned in advance. Due to the current COVID 19 pandemic, online tools such as MS Teams will be used to conduct and record interviews, furthermore data collected from interviews will be stored of different media storage's and online tools such as google drive. Before the interview commerce, participants will be required to confirm their attendance e-consent form thereby inviting staff members to participate in the study. Once the dates have been confirmed, reminders will be sent to the participants in order to prepare them for the interviews.

**Risks or Discomforts to the Participant:** From participating from this study you will not be exposed in any risks or discomforts, there might be minimal risks, should participant feel any discomfort he/she may withdraw at any time.

**Explain to the participant the reasons he/she may be withdraw from the Study:** Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you are entitled to withdraw from the study at any time should you wish to do so. During your participation, you will be treated with respect and the researcher will provide you with the appropriate methods of communications and times in which you can contact the researcher.

**Benefits:**

Will include an understanding of SDP within political clubs and the bottlenecks that these clubs in their administrative procedures and implementation of student leadership developmental programmes.

**Remuneration:** You will not be paid for participating in this study. Participating in this study is therefore, free and will not result in any form of remuneration.

**Costs of the Study:** You will not be liable for any costs for participating in this study. However, since the interviews will be conducted on Ms Teams, the participant will handle accesses to Ms Teams.

**Confidentiality:** Anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained, as the information of the participants, identify and names will not be disclosed. All data will be coded, only the supervisor, researcher and the statistician will have access to the data. This aligns with the POPI Act (protection of personal information), where written consent will be obtained, all the information will be accurate, de-identified, stored securely and deleted after five years.

**Results:** The dissertation will be made available to the DUT library. The dissertation will also be disseminated in the form of a journal type to be published in an accredited journal. The study will be made available to the participants upon request.

**Research-related Injury:** The study will be conducted online, therefore there will be no injuries as interaction with the participants will be done online.

**Storage of all electronic and hard copies including tape recordings:** Data collection and analysis will be online. Therefore, data collected in the study will be stored on cloud storage.

**Persons to contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:** (Musawenkosi Ngibe, [musawenkosin1@dut.ac.za](mailto:musawenkosin1@dut.ac.za) ) Please contact the researcher (0785456416), my supervisor (031 373 5858) or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the Director: Research and Postgraduate Support Dr L Linganiso on 031 373 2577 or [researchdirector@dut.ac.za](mailto:researchdirector@dut.ac.za).

## APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM



### LETTER OF CONSENT

Full Title of the Study: BOTTLENECKS FACED IN ADMINISTERING AND MANAGING STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AT A SELECTED UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (UOT) IN SOUTH AFRICA

Names of Researcher/s: Kholeka Mfeka

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Kholeka Mfeka about the nature, conduct, benefits, and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: \_\_\_\_\_
- I have also received, read, and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

I, Kholeka Mfeka Therewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

## APPENDIX D: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

### RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Brief Overview of the Study

This study seeks to critically assess and identify bottlenecks faced by the selected University of Technology political clubs in administering and managing leadership developmental programmes. Since these political clubs are expected to influence and contribute to major decision making about student issues, will focus on three main functions of administration namely financing for their student leadership programme, the kind of support that these clubs receive from the university such as facilities, equipment and training material. The last function will be the procedures and processes used by the political clubs to effectively manage leadership programmes.

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION:

- Please indicate your answers by making use of the sign “X” or “√” to indicate your answer,
- Please kindly complete all questions and where necessary, provide justification for your answer.

#### i. SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

Please Indicate your age group

1. Less than 18 years	2. 18-20 years	3. 21-30 years	4. 31-40 years	5. More than 40 years

#### ii. Please indicate your gender

1. Male	
2. Female	

#### iii. Highest level of education attained

1. No Formal Education		2. Matric		3. Certificate	
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4. Diploma		5. Post Graduate Degree		6. Other	
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**SECTION B: PROGRAMMES THAT ARE ADOPTED TO AID THE SMOOTH TRANSITION**

The section below is intended to investigate student that have been involved in the administrating and management of leadership programmes.

Please indicate your answer by ticking (X) the relevant and applicable option below. Where “1” represents your highest level of disagreement and “5” representing your highest level of agreement with the statements.

**1.The type of support provided by the UoT to ensure the effectiveness of student leadership developmental programmes.**

	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5
1.1 Existing university procedures contribute to the challenges that the political club encounter during the administering of student leadership programmes.					
1.2 The support that the political club receives from the university contributed to developing student leaders.					
1.3 Student political clubs encounter challenges in efforts to obtaining and using resources provided by the University.					
1.4 These challenges are consistent throughout the duration of the project.					
1.5 LDP possess the capacity to provide and deliver leadership skills that will benefit student leaders in the long run.					

**2.The influence of the university procedures on administration and implementation of student leadership developmental programmes by the UoT political clubs**

	<b>Strongly disagree 1</b>	<b>Disagree 2</b>	<b>Neutral 3</b>	<b>Agree 4</b>	<b>Strongly agree 5</b>
2.1 Procedures add value to the student leadership developmental programmes.					
2.2 There is a collaboration between the university procedures and your respective political club.					
2.3 Social and policy changes in the university could add or reduce the number of bottlenecks experienced by LDP.					
2.4 LDP typically experience administrative challenges when dealing with the department procedures and policies.					
2.5 Existing procedures and policies within the political club a play a pivotal role in developing student leadership.					

**3.How political clubs in UoT’s evaluate the influence and impact of these programmes towards their leadership development.**

	<b>Strongly disagree 1</b>	<b>Disagree 2</b>	<b>Neutral 3</b>	<b>Agree 4</b>	<b>Strongly agree 5</b>
3.1 Management methods used by political clubs sufficient in developing and managing student leadership programmes.					

3.2 Individual values considered in the development of these student development programmes.					

3.3 Traditional classroom approaches fail to recognise issues associated with managing and administering student development programmes.					
3.4 Student development programmes do not take into account the environment these leaders operate in.					
3.5 Leadership developmental programmes do not have the capacity for self-management, work facilitation and the cooperation of students are needed by higher education institutions.					

**YOUR PARTICIPATION IS HIGHLY APPRECIATED.**

**THE END.**

## APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Title: BOTTLENECKS FACED IN ADMINISTERING AND MANAGING STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AT A SELECTED UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (UOT) IN SOUTH AFRICA.

#### Brief Overview of the Study

This study seeks to critically assess and identify bottlenecks faced by the University of Technology political clubs in administering and managing leadership developmental programmes. The investigation will focus on three main functions of administration namely financing for their student leadership programme, the kind of support that these clubs receive from the university. The last function will be the procedures and processes used by political clubs to effectively manage leadership programmes. You are kindly requested to follow the instruction below for successfully completing this questionnaire

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of the interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Permission to record the session granted: Yes

#### Interview Schedule Instruction

##### Section A: Demographics

##### 1. Please Indicate your age group

1. Less than 18 years	2. 18-20 years	3. 21-30 years	4. 31-40 years	5. More than 40 years

**2. Please indicate your gender**

1. Male	
2. Female	

**3. Highest level of education attained**

1. Matric		2. Certificate		3. Diploma	
4. Post Graduate Degree		5. Other			

**4. Name of Current Position**

\_\_\_\_\_

**4.1 Number of years in the position**

Less than 1 year	1-2 years	3-5 years	More than 5 years

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**1. SECTION B: SUPPORT PROVIDED TO POLITICAL CLUBS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

This Section is designed to identify the type of support provided by the UoT to ensure the effectiveness of student leadership Developmental Programmes.

1.1 What kind of support does the department provide to student political clubs in their efforts of establishing, governing and leading LDP?

1.2 What kind of Professional Development does the Department offer to student leaders beyond LDP? Do you think the learning environment presented by the University support the development and implementation LDP?

1.3 Does the department offer collaborative sessions with other institution of higher learning to help in the governance of LDP?

1.4 Does the department offer any academic support resources such as In-classroom observation, support student success plans, and reporting on results of interventions plans, curriculum resources and assessment strategies to help student improve leadership skills?

1.5 In your opinion, do you believe that the department provides enough financial support to help political clubs to effectively run their LDP? If yes, substantiate your answer, if no, how can the department improve its financial support to student leadership development?

1.6 How does the department ensure that LDP's implemented by political clubs are line with the department objectives and will be suitable for financial support?

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## **2. SECTION C: EVALUATION PROCESS THAT ARE IMPLEMENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OR THE UNIVERSITY**

This subsection that intends to evaluate the influence of the university procedures on administration and implementation of student leadership developmental programmes by the political clubs.

2.1 Do you believe that the department does enough monitoring and evaluation of LDP? Please explain your answer?

2.2 What kind of criteria does the department use to monitor and evaluate LDP after their initial instigation? If criteria exist, then is there a process in place to review the impact of these LDP's by both the department and the different political clubs?

2.3 What are the administrative procedures that the political clubs have to follow in order to organise, run and implement LDP?

2.4 Does the administration process involved in preparing to run the LDP's and to acquire/book for training take long to process? If yes or no, kindly explain.

2.5 What are the administrative challenges that your Department experiences when organising and implementing these LDP?

2.6 What kind of complaints do you receive from student's leaders regarding these administrative processes and procedures?

2.7 How many LDP do political clubs attempts to run and facilitated during one calendar year? Is there a particular reason for this frequency?

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME**

## APPENDIX F: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

### Ethical Clearance



Faculty Research Office  
Durban University of Technology  
03 March 2022

Student: KS Mfeka  
Student Number: 20717357  
Degree: Master of Management Sciences in Administration and Information Management  
Email: 20717357@dut4life.ac.za  
Supervisor: Dr M Ngibe  
Supervisor email: musawenkosin1@dut.ac.za

Dear KS Mfeka

I am pleased to inform you that the Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) following feedback from two reviewers, has granted preliminary permission for you to conduct your research "Identifying bottlenecks faced by the Durban University of Technology political clubs in administering and managing student leadership developmental programmes".

When ethics approval is granted:

You are required to present the letter at your research site(s) for permission to gather data. Please also note that your research instruments must be accompanied by the letter of information and the letter of consent for each participant, as per your research proposal.

This ethics clearance is valid from the date of provisional approval on this letter for one year. A student must apply for recertification 3 months before the date of this expiry.

Recertification is required every year until after corrections are made, after examination, and the thesis is submitted to the Faculty Registrar.

A summary of your key research findings must be submitted to the FRC on completion of your studies.

Kindest regards.

Yours sincerely

Dr Olga Sizakele Ndlovu  
FREC Chair  
Faculty of Accounting and Informatics  
Durban University of Technology  
Ritson Campus  
Durban, South Africa  
4001

## APPENDIX G: CORRELATION TABLE

### CORRELATION TABLE

		The Department of Student Governance provides operational support to student's leaders during preparation running and review of LDP (Operational support in this case includes booking of venues, procuring necessary items, arrangements for guest speakers/)	The Department of Student Governance has offered administrative support to political clubs in terms of processing requests to conduct LDP	The Department of Student Governance provide inductions on department administrative procedures to be followed arranging LDP	The financial support that the political club receives from the university has contributed to the development and management of student leadership development	Student Political clubs receive from the Department of Student Governance or the University a report of all expenditures for each political club to help them incorporate plans for the following years' training programmes	Basic resources (in this case resources include, venues and equipment) are readily available to help support Student Political clubs to be operative within the structures of the University	The university administrative procedures and processes adds value to the student LDP	There are many university administrative procedures that must be followed in order to implement SLP	Student LDP are not implemented on time due to a lengthy approval process	The university offers guidelines to political clubs on how to manage and implementation of student LDP	The delays caused by administrative processes deter and demotivates political clubs to sought for student LDPs	There are different types of processes and strategies used by the Department of Student Governance or the University to evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes attended	There are methods used by political clubs to monitor and track the progress of the participants after attending student LDP	The assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of the student LDP helps improve the process of monitoring student's leadership development	Having an effective evaluation system can improve the quality of student LDPs offered by the Department of Student Governance or the University
The Department of Student Governance provides operational support to student's leaders during preparation running and review of LDP (Operational support in this case includes booking of venues, procuring necessary items, arrangements for	Pearson Correlation	--														
	N	132														
The Department of Student Governance has offered administrative support to political clubs in terms of processing requests to conduct LDP	Pearson Correlation	.638**	--													
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000														
The Department of Student Governance provide inductions on department administrative procedures to be followed arranging LDP	N	132	132													
	Pearson Correlation	.621**	.676**	--												
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000													
	N	132	132	132												

The financial support that the political club receives from the university has contributed to the development and management of student leadership development	Pearson Correlation	.507**	.438**	.460**	--										
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000											
	N	132	132	132	132										
Student Political clubs receive from the Department of Student Governance or the University a report of all expenditures for each political club to help them incorporate plans for the following years' training programmes	Pearson Correlation	.523**	.490**	.493**	.523**	--									
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000										
	N	132	132	132	132	132									
Basic resources (in this case resources include, venues and equipment) are readily available to help support Student Political clubs to be operative within the structures of the University	Pearson Correlation	.554**	.635**	.668**	.480**	.647**	--								
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000									
	N	132	132	132	132	132	132								
The university administrative procedures and processes adds value to the student LDP	Pearson Correlation	.434**	.507**	.578**	.520**	.521**	.614**	--							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000								
	N	132	132	132	132	132	132	132							
There are many university administrative procedures that must be followed in order to implement SLP	Pearson Correlation	.496**	.417**	.397**	.334**	.311**	.352**	.381**	--						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000							
	N	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132						
Student LDP are not implemented on time due to a lengthy approval process	Pearson Correlation	.227**	.189*	.212*	0,103	0,038	0,002	0,106	.526**	--					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,009	0,030	0,015	0,238	0,668	0,978	0,227	0,000						
	N	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132					

The university offers guidelines to political clubs on how to manage and implementation of student LDP	Pearson Correlation	.520**	.597**	.514**	.554**	.540**	.612**	.524**	.440**	0,142	--					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,105						
	N	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132				
The delays caused by administration processes deter and demotivates political clubs to sought for student LDPs	Pearson Correlation	.421**	.295**	.230**	.244**	.173*	.176*	.228**	.557**	.622**	.338**	--				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,001	0,008	0,005	0,048	0,043	0,009	0,000	0,000	0,000					
	N	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132				
There are different types of processes and strategies used by the by the Department of Student Governance or the University to evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes attended	Pearson Correlation	.401**	.420**	.478**	.433**	.533**	.529**	.587**	.383**	0,018	.583**	.203*	--			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,838	0,000	0,020				
	N	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132			
There are methods used by political clubs to monitor and track the progress of the participants after attending students LDP	Pearson Correlation	.396**	.385**	.395**	.313**	.488**	.363**	.385**	.351**	.288**	.423**	.373**	.505**	--		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,001	0,000	0,000	0,000			
	N	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132		
The assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of the student LDP helps improve the process of monitoring student's leadership development	Pearson Correlation	.516**	.484**	.552**	.358**	.527**	.509**	.446**	.419**	0,155	.547**	.413**	.538**	.645**	--	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,076	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000		
	N	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	
Having an effective evaluation system can improve the quality of student LDPs offered by the Department of Student Governance or the University	Pearson Correlation	.486**	.396**	.372**	.369**	.248**	.292**	.278**	.674**	.500**	.388**	.629**	.266**	.312**	.439**	--
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,004	0,001	0,001	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,002	0,000	0,000	
	N	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132	132

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

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

## APPENDIX H: EDITING CERTIFICATE

### DR RICHARD STEELE

BA HDE MTech(Hom)

**HOMEOPATH**

Registration No. A07309 HM

Practice No. 0807524

**Freelance academic editor**

Associate member: Professional Editors'  
Guild, South Africa

154 Magenta Place  
Gxarha [Morgan Bay]  
5292  
Eastern Cape

082-928-6208  
rstele@vodamail.co.za  
rstele201@outlook.com

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### EDITING CERTIFICATE

**Re: Kholeka Mfeka**

Master's dissertation DUT: **IDENTIFYING BOTTLENECKS FACED BY THE DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY POLITICAL CLUBS IN ADMINISTERING AND MANAGING STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMMES**

I confirm that I have edited this dissertation and the references for clarity, language and layout. I returned the document to the author with track changes so correct implementation of the changes and clarifications requested in the text and references is the responsibility of the author. The intellectual content of the document is the responsibility of the author. I am a freelance editor specialising in proofreading and editing academic documents. My original tertiary degree which I obtained at the University of Cape Town was a B.A. with English as a major and I went on to complete an H.D.E. (P.G.) Sec. with English as my teaching subject. I was a part-time lecturer in the Department of Homoeopathy at the Durban University of Technology for 13 years and supervised many master's degree dissertations during that period.

Dr Richard Steele

**10 October, 2023**

*per email*