A POLICY ANALYSIS OF THE KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CLUSTER SYSTEM WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION CLUSTER AS A CASE STUDY.

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As the candidate's supervisor, I approve this dissertation for submission

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MI Rieker

2015

Declaration

I, Sinamuva Vusumuzi Wiseman Nxumalo declare that:

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.

2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

3. This thesis does not contain other person's data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

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Abstract

The focus of this study is to determine whether the Governance and Administration Cluster could be considered as a policy network within the cluster system of the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal. The study looks at the provincial government clusters, in particular, the Cluster for Governance and Administration, as policy networks that facilitate policy coordination and implementation within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal.

The challenge of improving policy coordination and implementation continues to confront all spheres of government in South Africa. This is despite the introduction of the cluster system in 1999 which sought to resolve coordination and implementation problems at national and provincial levels. Government is still confronted with gaps in the implementation of public policy, poor implementation or lack of implementation due to uncoordinated implementation efforts by departments. The study acknowledges that policy coordination, integration and implementation in government is inherently complex.

It is argued that governance and public administration increasingly take place in network-like settings where sustainable patterns of interaction between actors have formed in a specific area of public policy and that public problems are dealt with in highly interactive processes.

The study points out that clusters play a dual role of being an interorganisational forum for integrated policy making as well as the role of being a tool for implementation of government policy. All respondents were unanimous in that the clusters have been the most effective tool of coordinating collaboration in policy making and implementation within the provincial government. However, the cluster system does not facilitate collaboration with private actors and civil society due to its closed nature and restrictive membership.

The study of the cluster system within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal has revealed that the clusters, in particular, the Governance and Administration Cluster lacks some of the key characteristics of a policy networks approach. Most provincial government clusters do not meet the basic features of a policy network such as autonomy of actors, equal participation of state and non-state actors in policy making, interdependence, sharing of resources, goals and strategies, voluntary participation, identifiable stakeholders, interrelationships and interactions. It can be argued that the Governance and Administration Cluster, as an overall and overarching coordinating instrument in the Office of the Premier, operates along the lines of the central-rule model which emphasises hierarchy and a single command authority for coordination of policy making and implementation.

The Cluster for Governance and Administration in the Office of the Premier in the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal can be considered as an intergovernmental structure that brings together government officials both political and technical from different levels of government for coordination of policy making and implementation.

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Chapter 1   Introduction and background

1.1 Introduction

This research study investigates the challenges and successes of the implementation of the cluster system within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal in order to improve public policy coordination and implementation. The study examines the cluster system to determine whether it can be regarded as policy networks that facilitate inter-departmental collaboration, interaction and resource-sharing within provincial government in order to improve policy coordination and implementation. The policy networks perspective, implementation theory and interorganisational implementation theory provides the framework to analyse policy coordination and implementation within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal.

The research was undertaken in the Office of the Premier as a case study, which is the centre of provincial government, charged with the responsibility of coordinating policy formulation and implementation in the province. It has a direct relationship with a number of government departments and other entities. Provincial policies are processed by various inter-departmental clusters before adoption by the Provincial Executive Council which is located in the Office of the Premier. The implementation of such policies is also coordinated in the Office of the Premier through inter-departmental clusters and Cabinet Clusters.

1.2   Background to the study

The South African national government is responsible for formulating public policies to be implemented by the provincial government departments. These public policies are mandatory to the provincial government departments, and they are funded by the National Treasury based on the programmes entailed in the departmental strategic plans. However, these public policies that are mandatory to the provincial government departments require strong technical capacity for policy and programme coordination in the Office of the Premier as the centre of governance. The above policy and programme coordination imperative necessitated the adoption of coordination mechanisms/structures such as the Cabinet Cluster system that was established in 2004.

The cluster system was introduced in the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal in 2004 to facilitate resourceful, cross-sectoral thinking on public policy issues and to enhance an integrated approach to policy making and governance. This approach requires Members of the Executive Council (MECs) and Heads of Departments (HODs) to involve the entire cluster when developing or initiating government policy and legislation in their respective areas of jurisdiction. There are currently four clusters in the KwaZulu-Natal provincial government that facilitate such coordination and collaboration: the Governance and Administration Cluster; Economic Sectors and Infrastructure Cluster; Social Protection, Community and Human Development Cluster; and the Crime Prevention and Security Cluster (Province of KwaZulu-Natal Cabinet Manual 2011: 37 – 40).

The National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030 acknowledges this challenge by observing that departments often pursue competing goals and that there are implementation gaps where no department takes responsibility as well as areas where departments could be more effective if they were to cooperate to achieve synergy (NDP 2012: 429).

Although this study focuses on the effectiveness of the cluster system as a coordination mechanism to improve public policy implementation within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal, it is also concerned with the broader issue of implementation in a policy network setting. Hence, the broad aim of the study is to examine the role of policy networks in implementation.

The significance of the study cannot be over-emphasised. Policy implementation is critical to the delivery of public services, to develop and improve standards of living for the citizens of KwaZulu-Natal. Poor implementation or lack of implementation could lead to widespread service delivery failures and the wastage of public resources. The study recognises that implementation of public policy across sections and spheres of government is inherently complex, because it involves many role players and that significant challenges arise in coordination and integration. Ultimately, it seeks to contribute to the resolution of some of

the implementation challenges facing the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal by proposing solutions that could overcome some of these challenges.

An attempt is made to use policy network theoretical framework as an integral aspect of public governance to examine the effectiveness of Governance and Administration Cluster in KwaZulu-Natal. In doing so, the researcher will use the features of policy network as defined by different scholars to determine whether Governance and Administration Cluster could be considered as a network or not.

1.3   Problem statement

To determine whether the Governance and Administration Cabinet Cluster functions as a policy network or not in executing its mandatory role of provincial coordination in the Office of the Premier in the KwaZulu-Natal province.

The broad research problem dealt with by this study is the challenges of policy coordination and implementation in government. The need for improving policy coordination and implementation remains a challenge to all spheres of government in South Africa. During the second term of the democratic government (1999 – 2004), the cluster system was introduced to resolve these problems. However, gaps remain in the implementation of public policy. Inter-departmental collaboration and cooperation is still weak when it comes to cross-cutting sectoral policies (National Development Plan 2012: 430).

1.4   Hypothetical Statement

Uncoordinated implementation efforts, lack of cooperation and collaboration among departments, and a lack of interaction among key stakeholders continue to challenge policy implementation. This results in poor service delivery which is a considerable challenge facing government 20 years into democracy, despite the creation of a number of implementation forums across all spheres of government.

It is for this reason that this study argues that the network approach to governance offers solutions to policy implementation challenges due to its emphasis on collaboration, interaction and partnership among stakeholders.

1.5   Preliminary Literature Review

This study investigates the effectiveness of policy networks as a mechanism for policy coordination and implementation. Rhodes (cited in Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan 1997: xii), contends that "Interorganisational linkages are a defining characteristic of service delivery. The term 'network' describes the several interdependent actors involved in delivering services. These networks are made up of organisations which need to exchange resources (for example, money, authority, information, expertise) to achieve their objectives, to maximise their influence over outcomes, and to avoid becoming dependent on other players in the game". The network approach to governance promotes cooperation, interdependence, interaction and resource-sharing among the actors involved in policy formulation and implementation which results in improved service delivery.

The present study is in line with previous studies on the role and effectiveness of policy networks in the implementation of public policy. Like previous studies, it adopts a policy network perspective whose main argument is that "no single agency or organisation can work alone to address a given social problem". The concept "policy network" connects public policies with their strategic and institutionalised context: the network of public, semi-public, and private actors participating in certain policy fields (Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan 1997: 1)

Previous studies in the field of public policy implementation have used the policy network theory as a framework to analyse policy implementation. In his thesis on "A policy analysis of the merits of policy networks in policy decision-making: A case study of the Premier's Office, KwaZulu-Natal", Mpanza (2004) observes that, in theory, policy networks facilitate coordination and the participation of different stakeholders across different levels of government. The study notes that time constraints prevent stakeholders from being fully involved in policy networks. The aim of the study was to investigate the challenges

confronting policy networks within government and to determine the types of policy networks that exist within the Premier's Office in KwaZulu-Natal.

Kubheka's (2009) study on "Policy Networks and Environmental Policy-Making and Implementation: The Case of the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Business (Msunduzi Municipality)" found that the Msunduzi Municipality confronted different challenges which were attributed to a lack of resources and appropriate organisational infrastructure for environmental policy implementation. As a result, the municipality struggled to meet its environmental management mandate. Kubheka argues that policy networks, which are achieved through collaboration and partnerships between state environmental managers, the business sector and civil society, can lead to more effective environmental management.

Tahboula's (2010) investigation of "Implementation in a Policy Networks Setting: A Case Study of the Association For Rural Advancement's Implementation of the Farm Dwellers' Project from 1994 until Today", found that the implementation of South Africa's land reform policy was threatened as a result of the government's adoption of the market approach of willing-seller, willing-buyer. Tahboula contends that the implementation of the land reform programme could be improved by more effective utilisation of the policy networks approach. The research investigated how the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA) used policy networks to implement its Farm Dwellers Project.

Another study on policy networks as a framework to analyse policy implementation was carried out Nkoma in 2013. His thesis entitled "A Policy Network Analysis of the Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) in Ethiopia" argues that policy networks are a mechanism and structure for public policy making and implementation. The characteristics of policy networks include the exchange of resources and formal and informal interdependencies among stakeholders. Policy networks arise from the realisation that a single, top-down approach to governance is ineffective for policy implementation; hence the need for mutually beneficial solutions, exchange of

resources and cooperation. The study found that relationships among the CAADP policy network partners are typically collaborative, complex, reciprocal and trust-based. As a result, implementation of the CAADP takes place through what can be termed "network governance".

Mubangizi, Nhlabathi and Namara's (2013) journal article on "Network Governance for Service Delivery: Lessons from South Africa and Uganda" argues that, in a decentralised system of governance, all spheres of governance confront challenges of coordination and the alignment of scarce resources for the public good. In a multi-level governance system characterised by decentralisation, the challenges of poverty, inequality and improved service delivery require a coordinated response by all spheres of government. The need for well-coordinated implementation of public policy becomes crucial; the network governance approach may provide a useful model for coordinating a joint response to complex social problems. The scholars conclude that in a decentralised system of governance, network governance can enhance service delivery in the face of scarce resources especially if there is strong and effective collaboration across different spheres of government, the private sector, and civil society.

All these studies and others on policy networks as a framework to analyse the implementation of public policy concur that the network approach to governance offers a solution to a number of implementation failures associated with the traditional, single-authority form of governance. They note that policy networks promote collaboration, partnerships, interaction and the exchange of resources between public and private actors which result in joint action leading to improved policy implementation. Policy networks are based on the notion that no single agency can solve social problems. Therefore, interdependence among the actors becomes crucial in the network approach to governance. Most of the previous studies reviewed investigated the key central problem of improving implementation of public policy. They sought to determine the causes of implementation failures and to offer possible solutions, using the policy network approach.

There is consensus among these authors that a policy networks approach as a form of governance is capable of enhancing policy implementation as opposed to the traditional, single-authority top-down form of governance. They attribute this capability to a policy network's ability to promote collaboration, interaction and resource exchange among public, private and civil society actors in order to solve social problems. However, the studies reviewed failed to go beyond the policy networks approach to analyse policy implementation. They neglect other frameworks, including the inter-organisational implementation theory, organisational theory, implementation theory, and New Public Management, to name but a few. A comparison of the use of these different frameworks to analyse policy implementation would have identified the approach that best addresses implementation challenges.

In addressing this limitation, the current study uses the implementation theory and interorganisational implementation theory as well as a policy networks perspective to analyse policy implementation. The discussion on the implementation theory focuses on the top-down/bottom-up debate on implementation approaches which was heavily influenced by the question of how to separate implementation from policy formation (Hill and Hupe 2002: 43). A theoretical perspective on interorganisational policy implementation arises from cooperation across agency lines and levels of government. Such patterns of cooperation are responses to policies that involve inter-agency cooperation.

The interorganisational implementation perspective requires that organisations act in a coordinated fashion and provides a mechanism to achieve cooperation over time (O'Toole, Jr. and Montjoy 1984: 491). Another useful attribute of the interorganisational implementation theory is that the framework conceptualises the implementation environment as comprising of a number of organisations that have a relationship with the central organisation. The focus of interorganisational analysis is thus the relations between organisations, exchanges of resources between them and organisational arrangements that are developed to secure coordination (Levine and White 1961, Litwak and Hylton 1962, Negandhi 1975, cited in Kickert et al. 1997: 20). The interorganisational approach is very useful in this study which examines policy coordination and implementation within an environment

which comprises a number of departments that have a direct relationship with the centre of government, the Office of the Premier.

1.6   Research Objectives

The pertinent research objectives to be pursued by the researcher in this study are outlined as follows:

- To explore and understand the meaning and purpose of the Cabinet Cluster system in the Office of the Premier.
- To examine and present the policy framework guiding the functions and role of Cabinet Clusters within the Office of the Premier in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal.
- To determine whether Cabinet Clusters with special emphasis on the Governance and Administration Cluster could be regarded as policy network.
- To examine the effectiveness of Cabinet Clusters in provincial policy and programme coordination.
- To present challenges and successes of the Governance and Administration Cluster in policy coordination in KwaZulu-Natal.
- To provide recommendations for the challenges and draw a conclusion of the study.

Research Questions

The following key questions guide the study:

- Can the cluster system within provincial government be considered as analogous to policy networks?
- What is the role of clusters in policy coordination and implementation within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal?
- How is the cluster system functioning within provincial government?
- What policy coordination challenges were experienced by the Governance and Administration Cluster between 2009 and 2014?
- Has the cluster system been effective in addressing coordination challenges or failures?

1.7   Delineation of the study

The focus area of the study is the Governance and Administration Cabinet Cluster in the Office of the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal Province. The study cover a period between 2009 and 2014. The rationale behind the study focus on period is presented in the manner stated below.

Although the Provincial Executive Council Cluster system was introduced in 2004 within the provincial government cascading from the national government, this cluster system was not functional in KwaZulu-Natal until 2009. It is at that time (2009), that the Cabinet Office Secretariat started to convene official meetings for both political and technical clusters. Before 2009 these four clusters were not meeting and some Head of Departments (HoDs) were unable to attend and at times organised cluster meetings that could not constitute a quorum. There was no programme of action for clusters. The only time that clusters managed to function effectively and make resolutions and progress reports on the implementation of those resolutions was 2009 to date. So the above explanation justify the case for this study focus on the period between 2009 and 2014.

It is during this period that the clusters adopted the provincial programme of action for implementation by respective and relevant sectoral departments to the specific areas of focus. Therefore, it is during this period that clusters could be regarded as operational in their attempt to coordinate programmes of the provincial government.

1.8.   Research methodology

The study begins by providing an analytical framework for the research project. This entails a detailed review of the literature on the policy networks approach, followed by an analysis of the literature on implementation theory and the interorganisational theory of implementation. In the main, sources such as Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan (1997); Agranoff (2007); Hill and Hupe (2002); Pressman and Wildavsky (1984); O'Toole, Jr. and Montjoy (1984); O'Toole, Jr. (1993, 2000) were consulted.

The case study entailed an empirical qualitative study of both primary and secondary sources of data available within the provincial government in the Office of the Premier and the Presidency of the Republic of South Africa. Primary sources of data included interviews with select government officials as well as observations through attending meetings. Secondary sources consisted of data that were readily available in the form of official documents, reports, agendas and minutes of cluster meetings as well as strategic plans. The purpose of qualitative research is to gain in-depth insight into the problem or questions under investigation. The information generated from primary and secondary sources is analysed towards the end of the study in order to respond to the research questions.

1.8.1   Methodology

A qualitative research methodology enables a researcher to gain in-depth understanding of the issues under investigation. This is an empirical study using both primary and secondary sources mainly gathered from the research site. Purposive sampling was used to select respondents. This sampling approach allowed the researcher to identify respondents who were relevant to the study. The researcher used his judgement to select respondents, guided by the purpose of the study. The six respondents consisted of government officials responsible for supporting clusters in the Office of the Premier.

1.8.2   Data collection tools

Data collection tools included open-ended interviews with selected government officials who support clusters in the Office of the Premier. The interviews were used to gather in-depth information on the functioning of the cluster system including challenges and successes. Other primary data sources included attendance of cluster meetings. Secondary sources consisted of available documents such as reports, minutes, agendas, presentations, policies and other official documents. These yielded valuable information that enhanced the understanding of how clusters operate as policy networks for coordination and implementation. They also revealed some challenges and successes of these policy networks.

1.8.3   Data analysis

This qualitative study used primary and secondary data sources available from the Office of the Premier and The Presidency. Primary data from the interviews with selected government officials and observations of cluster meetings was analysed to support the data obtained from official documents. Secondary data was drawn from official documents, and collated and analysed using content analysis. Conclusions were drawn from the data analysis.

1.9   Structure of dissertation

This dissertation is divided into four chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

This chapter presented the study's aims and the significance of the research topic. It provides the background to the study by reviewing previous studies in the field of implementation and explains the research problem and research methodology.

Chapter 2: Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This chapter presents the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study. It begins with a discussion on the policy networks approach. This is followed by a discussion on the implementation theory where the top-down/bottom-up argument is presented. The chapter concludes by presenting the interorganisational theory of implementation to provide the context for the analytical framework for the case study.

Chapter 3: Case Study

This chapter presents the case study in four parts. The first part discusses the role of the Office of the Premier as the centre of governance in the province. Part two highlights the cluster system in the Office of the Premier and how it is being implemented within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal. This includes a discussion on the implementation of the cluster system at national level. The third part discusses clusters as policy networks and the inter-organisational theory of implementation. Finally, part four presents the data collected from primary sources.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Conclusion

This chapter concludes the study by analysing its key findings and observations. It responds to the study's key questions, followed by a summary of the findings as well as the key theoretical arguments.

Chapter 2:   Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

2.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the conceptual and theoretical frameworks underpinning this study. It begins with a detailed discussion of the policy networks perspective which provides the study's analytical framework. This is followed by a discussion of implementation theory which presents various theoretical arguments on implementation. The review of the literature on implementation analyses the ways in which policy implementation is construed by different scholars and the approach/s that are useful to investigate the research problem. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the interorganisational theory of implementation which is useful in the study of clusters within provincial government as they operate in a framework of interorganisational relations and cooperation across agency lines and levels of government. This constitutes the theoretical framework for this study on clusters as policy networks for policy coordination and implementation within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal.

2.2   The Policy Networks Perspective

The policy networks perspective derives its theoretical basis from interorganisational theory (Klijn cited in Kickert et al 1997: 14). This perspective focuses on the ways networks influence the making and implementation of public policy. The concept is based on interorganisational policy making and implementation and most studies apply it at the meso level of specific policy fields. The policy networks perspective develops the policy science tradition of analysing policy processes "as complex interactions in which many actors participate and processes are ambiguous as a result of the multiple goals and strategies of actors and uncertainty about information and outcomes" (Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan 1997: 6).

In the foreword to Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan's (1997: xii) study, '*Managing Complex Networks'*, Rhodes observes that interorganisational relations are a crucial characteristic of service delivery. He refers to the term 'network' as a combination of several interdependent actors involved in delivering services (Rhodes 1981, cited in Kickert et al 1997: xii). These

networks are made up of interdependent organisations which need to exchange resources such as information, money and expertise in order to achieve their objectives. In the 21st century, government is but one of many actors that influence the course of events in a social system. As the central actor, government no longer acts alone and the political system is increasingly differentiated. As a result, there is a shift from government to governance with the latter concerned with managing the networks of actors operating in the public space.

Government's task is to facilitate socio-political interactions, encourage cooperation between many actors in order to solve social problems and distribute services among the several actors. Interaction to address social problems includes public-private partnerships, network governance, cooperative management, and self-and co-regulation arrangements (Rhodes cited in Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan 1997: xii).

The policy networks approach analyses organised social complexity, focusing on organisational interdependence between public organisations and private interests. It examines organisations and the relationships between them and describes the processes whereby organisations manage these relationships (Rhodes 1997: 11-12).

The concept of policy networks emerged as a result of on-going debate on governance and as a response to other perspectives. Previously, government was seen as standing above society and being able to steer it. Public policy was considered from a strongly conventional steering perspective with a strict division between politics and policy. In this respect, policy formulation was the sole preserve of politics with implementation left to neutral actors. This approach disregarded the government's fundamental dependence on individuals, groups and organisations in its policy environment. It was therefore seen as one of the major reasons for the disappointing results of governmental steering since it failed to take into account government's dependence on its social environment, and its interdependence with many other social actors (Kickert et al 1997: 3 – 5).

Kickert et al. (1997: 6) observe that "policy networks develop around policy problems and resources which are needed or are generated to deal with policy problems". This creates interdependence and interactions between various actors in a bid to solve social problems. Policy networks take the view that no single organisation can solve social problems acting alone. Hence, Kickert et al. (1997: 6) define policy networks "as stable patterns of social relations between interdependent actors, which take shape around policy problems and or policy programmes".

2.2.1 Characteristics of policy networks

Policy networks emerge as a result of the interdependencies that have recently become prevalent in both public and private organisations. As a result, public policy is made and implemented in networks of interdependent actors. The interdependence of the actors in a network setting involves sharing information, goals, resources and even strategies (Agranoff and McGuire 1999: 20). Agranoff and McGuire add that policy networks are "structures of interdependence involving multiple organisations or parts thereof, where one unit is not merely the formal subordinate of the others in some larger hierarchical arrangement" (1999: 20).

As a public and governance model, policy networks show patterns of relations between the interdependent actors involved in public policy making processes. These actors are interdependent because they cannot achieve their goals alone. They need other actors' resources to achieve their individual goals. Addressing public problems involves interaction between governmental agencies, semi-public bodies and private actors. Interdependency is based on the distribution of resources over various actors, the goals they pursue and their perceptions of their resource dependencies (Kickert et al 1997: 6). It is clear that interdependence is the key characteristic of the policy networks perspective as a form of governance.

According to Kickert et al. (1997: 2), "public policy of any significance is the result of interactions between public and private actors. Public policy is made and implemented in networks of interdependent actors. It is clear that a network perspective differs in a number of ways from more conventional views on governance and public management. All kinds of actors are involved in governance". They add that public management should be seen as a form of governance confronted with the major challenges of managing networks, and situations of interdependencies. In this respect, public management should be considered network management. Agranoff (2007: 2) refers to these governance structures as 'public networks' that he defines as "collaborative structures that bring together representatives from public agencies and NGOs to address problems of common concern that accrue value to the manager/specialist, their participating organisations, and their networks".

Policy networks are described as bodies that connect "public policies with their strategic and institutionalised context: the network of public, semi-public, and private actors participating in certain policy fields" (Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan 1997: 1). Klijn (2003a: 32) further notes that "networks facilitate interaction, decision-making, cooperation and learning, since they provide the resources to support these activities, such as recognisable interaction patterns, common rules, and organisational forms and sometimes even common language".

Policy networks as a mode of governance involve cross-sectoral collaboration between public, civil society and private actors. According to Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff (2000: 168), "state-civil society networks can be defined as cross-sectoral collaborations whose purpose is to achieve convergent objectives through the combined efforts of both sets of actors, but where the respective roles and responsibilities of the actors remain distinct". The main purpose of this cross-sectoral collaboration is to achieve synergies among the actors which yield more positive outcomes for the network partners than would have been the case if they had operated independently (Evans, Lowndes, and Skelcher cited in Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff 2000: 169).

Most collaborative efforts involve goal-directed activities that have multiple dimensions. Cross-sectoral collaboration is characterised by interactions between actors in which information, goals and resources are exchanged in order to achieve common goals. In this regard, cross-sectoral interaction and collaboration become a prerequisite in a network setting (Agranoff and McGuire 1999: 26).

Networks are fundamentally different from other classical management models which emphasise hierarchy and central control. Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff (2000) argue that despite the fact that the network approach imposes interdependence of actors, it does not rely on a single command authority for coordination of network activities. Policy networks depend on the coordination of effort and effective linkages among the actors involved in a network setting. In this respect, all the actors in a network are equal and each brings and keeps his/her authority. There is joint management of the network without any hierarchical command and control of one actor by another.

The network perspective regards public policy making and governance as taking place in networks made up of various actors (individuals, coalitions, bureaux, and organisations), none of which possesses the power to determine and impose strategies on other actors. The government is no longer regarded as occupying the central position, but is an equal partner. In this regard, policy making within networks is about cooperation between interdependent and equal parties with different and sometimes conflicting goals, interests and strategies (Kickert et al 1997: 9).

Agranoff and McGuire (1999: 19) argue that "managing public policy networks is not based on central authority and cannot be guided by a single organisational goal as is the case in the classical management approach". In this respect, networks coordinate and facilitate the actors' activities. No manager in a network environment enjoys formal and superior authority over others across the environment as a whole. It is clear that in a network setting a single

central authority; a hierarchy of command and control; and a single organisational goal do not exist.

2.2.2   Network management

Network management involves managing flexible structures towards collective efficiency. This view of network management considers networks as structures of interdependence involving multiple organisations which are equal; each structure brings and keeps its authority. Such structures can be formal, informal, inter-sectoral, or inter-governmental. No structure is subservient to another but maintains its autonomy and authority. In this network setting, management cannot be based on a hierarchical arrangement but should adopt a collaborative approach. In this respect, network management should not be confused with managing hierarchies (Agranoff and McGuire 1999: 19).

Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff (2000: 169) maintain that "another issue central to managing networks is how to harmonise and integrate the actions of the network partners so as to achieve the network's shared objectives. They argue that, tensions and possible conflicts can arise from the "insecurity caused by intra-organisational control and the need for intra-organisational implementation of inter-organisational compromises". In this regard, a network manager becomes "a mediator, process manager, network builder and he/she guides interactions and provides opportunities for flexibility and adaptation". It is clear from the literature that network management takes place at the level of horizontal coordination rather than at the vertical level because all the actors enjoy equal status and authority.

Network management is viewed as an activity that is directed at governance and public management in situations of interdependence. The primary aim of network management is to coordinate the activities, strategies and goals of various actors who collaborate to address a certain problem or solve a policy issue within an established network arrangement of interorganisational relations. At its most basic level, network management as a form of governance and public management is an interorganisational activity (Kickert et al 1997: 10).

Managing networks should not be confused with the classical management approach because in a network setting, there is no hierarchical authority and no single organisational goal. All the actors enjoy equal status and are able to maintain their individual authority. In this regard, network management aims to initiate and facilitate interaction between actors (Friend et al 1974, cited in Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan 1997: 11).

Cooperation is an important element of network management. This calls on actors to work together to find common solutions to common problems. Kooiman (1993) cited in Kickert et al. (1997: 40) refers to this as "co-governance" which is a new form of steering. He describes it as "doing things together instead of doing them alone, either by 'state' or 'market'. This situation requires actors to see some advantage in joint action. When actors do things together, the solution achieved jointly is far greater than the outcomes achieved alone. Actors must be prepared to exchange their 'go alone strategies' for collaborative strategies. They must realise that cooperation is to their advantage. Network management provides a way for actors to cooperate without solutions being forcibly imposed or cooperation becoming redundant as a result of decentralisation of privatisation"(Kickert and Koppenjan 1997: 40 - 43).

Network management enhances interaction which is one of the key elements of policy networks. Furthermore, it is seen as a form of steering which seeks to promote joint problem solving or policy development. Networks management calls on actors to be flexible in their attempts to influence policy in situations of mutual dependency. It involves steering efforts which seek to promote cooperation and joint action in policy within the network setting. In this respect, network management may also be seen "as promoting the mutual adjustment of the behaviour of actors with diverse objectives and ambitions with regard to tackling problems within a given framework of interorganisational relationships" (Kickert and Koppenjan 1997: 43 – 44). It can therefore be concluded that network management is a new form of coordination which takes place through interaction in the form of negotiation and consultation between actors.

Network management is also regarded as an attempt to intervene in an existing pattern of relations, build consensus and solve problems. Hanf (1978) cited by Kickert and Koppenjan (1997: 45), refers to the concept of "interorganisational coordination" which he defines as "intervening in the existing structure of interrelationships in order to promote the interactions appropriate for mobilising a concerted or coordinated effect consistent with the objective interdependencies of the problem situation". Agranoff (1986) cited by Kickert and Koppenjan (1997: 45) emphasises the importance of coordination and cooperation in problem-solving within the existing patterns of interorganisational relations. It can therefore be argued that network management aims to stimulate negotiation which is a form of coordination that promotes interaction between the actors in a network setting.

2.3   Three models of the policy networks approach

This section discusses and compares three models of the policy networks approach to governance. The discussion takes place against the backdrop that the policy networks perspective is a mode of governance. The three models are: the central-rule model, the multi-actor model, and the network model. Kickert et al. (1997: 7) describe these models as theoretical frameworks which social scientists use to reflect on policy making and implementation in the public sector.

2.3.1   The central-rule model

The central-rule model or the conventional steering model is a single actor model which places the government at the centre of public policy. This model regards public policy making and governance processes as characterised by the strict separation of politics and administration. The policy formulation phase is the domain of politics where the parties involved reach consensus on problem formulation. Policy makers (government) use their scientific expertise to design public policy as well as an implementation programme. After authoritative policy making by government, policy implementation is regarded as non-political but as the administration's responsibility. This model assumes that "public policy making and governance can be improved by the rationalisation of policies, clarification of

policy goals, reduction in the number of participants in the implementation phase, better information concerning the intentions of the policy, and increased monitoring control of activities" (Kickert et al 1997: 8).

2.3.2 The multi-actor model

The multi-actor model differs from the central-rule model in its perspective on governance. Unlike the latter, which is based on the top-down approach to governance, the multi-actor model favours the bottom-up approach. This model takes the interests of local actors as its point of departure. It is concerned with the extent to which public policies provide local actors with sufficient resources as well as policy discretion to enable them to tackle the problems they encounter. Public policy making and implementation are seen as fundamental political processes in which local actors assess their interests and purposes. Local actors' knowledge, skills and goals play a crucial role in the policy making stage. Policy making and implementation are interrelated processes and should not be separated. Public policies and governance are considered successful if they provide local actors with sufficient resources and policy discretion (Kickert et al 1997: 7 – 8).

2.3.3 Network model

The network model is also based on a bottom-up approach. It views public policy making and governance as taking place in networks consisting of various actors including public, NGO and private actors. None of the actors wields considerable power to impose his/her strategy on other actors. The network model does not see the government as occupying a superior position that is above society; it occupies the same position as other social actors. Public policy making in networks is about cooperation between interdependent actors with conflicting interests and strategies. Policy processes are not viewed as the implementation of existing goals, but "as an interaction process in which actors exchange information about problems, preferences and means, and trade off goals and resources" (Kickert et al 1997: 9). The network model stands in sharp contrast to the central-rule model. In the network model, policy processes are not steered by a central actor. Public policy is the result of interactions

between public and private actors and is made and implemented in networks of interdependent actors. These networks develop around policy problems and resources which are generated to address policy problems. Network actors have the opportunity to accomplish their goals and interests.

2.4   Implementation theory

Implementation theory and research is built on the premise that implementation is always linked to specific policies as direct responses to specific problems in society. Public policies are expected to be related to the social problems which they seek to solve. Therefore, the implementation context is important (Hill and Hupe 2002: 5).

Hill and Hupe (2002: 2-3) argue that the phenomenon called "implementation" had long been in existence before it gained prominence after the publication of Pressman and Wildavsky's influential book '*Implementation*' in 1973. They also argue that "implementation theory" existed before and beyond studies devoted to this phenomenon. Hill and Hupe (2002: 3) define implementation according to Webster and Roger's understanding of the term to mean "to carry out, accomplish, fulfil, produce, complete". They then pose the question: "but what is it being implemented"? The answer is: a policy. "There must be something out there prior to implementation; otherwise there would be nothing to move toward in the process of implementation" (Hill and Hupe 2002: 4).

Hill and Hupe (2002: 4) adopt Hogwood and Gunn's (1984) definition of policy and observe that, although policy is separate from decision making, it should not be separated from implementation. In this respect "policy involves behaviour as well as intentions, and inaction as well as action. Policies have outcomes that may or may not have been foreseen. While policy refers to a purposive course of actions, this does not exclude the possibility that purposes may be defined retrospectively. Policy arises from a process over time, which may involve both intra- and inter-organisational relationships".

In their seminal review of the literature on implementation, Pressman and Wildavsky (1973: xii) argue that implementation may be viewed as a "process of interaction between the setting of goals and actions geared to achieving them". They add that implementation "is the ability to forge subsequent links in the causal chain so as to obtain desired results" (Pressman and Wildavsky 1973: xii-xiii). The study of implementation requires an understanding that it is a complicated process and that a simple chain of events depends on numerous, complex reciprocal interactions. Therefore, each part of the chain should be connected to the other parts. The separation of policy design from implementation is fatal (Pressman and Wildavsky 1973: xvii).

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) cited in (Hill and Hupe 2002: 7), provide one of the most influential definitions of implementation. "Implementation is the carrying out of a basic policy decision, usually incorporated in a statute but which can also take the form of important executive orders or court decisions. Ideally, that decision identifies the problem(s) to be addressed, stipulates the objective(s) to be pursued, and in a variety of ways, "structures the implementation process. The process normally runs through a number of stages beginning with passage of the basic statute, followed by the policy outputs (decisions) of the implementing agencies, the compliance of target groups with those decisions, the actual impacts – both intended and unintended – of those outputs, the perceived impacts of agency decisions, and finally, important revisions in the basic statute". This definition adopts a top-down approach to policy implementation in that it views implementation as the execution of decisions made by the central steering actor. It prescribes what must be done and how to the implementers. The definition does not provide for other actors to participate in both policy formulation and implementation. This chapter concludes with a discussion that highlights the debate between the top-down and bottom-up perspectives on implementation.

2.4.1   Policy process and implementation

Before considering implementation as a phenomenon, it is useful to analyse the policy process in order to explore the stage at which policy implementation occurs. "What can be called 'public policy', and thus has to be implemented, is the product of what has happened

in the earlier stages of the policy process" (Hill and Hupe 2002: 6). As a driver of change, public policy goes through phases and activities in search of a solution to a particular social problem. Some scholars refer to this process as the policy cycle (Colebatch 2002: 50).

Many scholars have adopted the policy cycle or stagist approach as the basis for both the analysis of the policy process and analysis in/and for the policy process. The strength of the stagist approach lies in its ability to provide a rational structure within which scholars can consider the multiple realities and complexity of the policy process. Each stage provides a context in which scholars can use different frames, Parsons (1995: 80). The argument in support of the stagist model is that it is analytically and heuristically useful for both the study and practice of the policy process, Hill and Hupe (2002: 6). "It facilitates the understanding of public policy-making by breaking the complexity of the process into a limited number of stages and sub-stages, each of which can be investigated alone, or in terms of its relationship to any or all the other stages of the cycle" (Howlett and Ramesh 1995: 12).

The strength of the stagist model is that it provides a systematic approach to capture the complexity and multiplicity of reality. Each stage relates to a specific part of the problem for which public policy is being made, and within that part of the problem, various variables and approaches can be seen as relevant, Hill and Hupe (2002: 6). It is argued that rejecting the stagist model as a framework for the analysis of the policy process would leave scholars with a confusing range of models, theories and ideas, or the adoption of an alternative model. In broad terms, the stagist model allows policy scholars to analyse the complexities of the real world, provided they understand that it has all the limitations of any framework, Parsons (1995: 80).

There is no consensus among policy scholars on how many stages constitute the policy process. Many scholars have come up with models of these 'stages' which include the processes of problem identification, agenda setting, policy formulation, decision-making, policy implementation, and policy evaluation (Colebatch 2002: 50; Cochran and Malone 2005:

44). Parsons (1995: 77) identifies the key stages as problem definition, agenda setting, decision-making/identifying alternatives, implementation, and evaluation. Howlett and Ramesh (1995: 11) identify five stages of the policy cycle: agenda-setting (the process by which problems come to the attention of governments); policy formulation (the process by which policy options are considered by governments); decision-making (the process by which governments adopt a particular choice to solve a problem); policy implementation (the process by which governments implement a chosen option aimed at solving a problem); and policy evaluation (the process by which the results of policies are monitored by both government and actors outside of government).

Lindblom (cited in Parsons 1995: 22) maintains that the stages of the policy process "are not an accurate portrayal of how the policy process actually works. Policy-making is, instead, a complexity inter-active process without beginning or end". Other critics of the stagist framework (Stone 1989; Nakamura 1987; Lindblom and Woodhouse 1993 (cited in Parsons 1995: 79)) argue that "it creates an artificial view of policy policy-making. The real world is far more complicated and not composed of tidy, neat steps, phases or cycles". One of the weaknesses of the stagist model is that it lacks any notion of causation; it does not indicate what or who drives a policy from one stage to the next. This is a matter of great interest to many scholars (Howlett and Ramesh 1995: 12).

The stagist model emphasises that policy does not end with decision-making. The emphasis on process, expressed in the continuum between policy and action, implies that policy making continues in the implementation stage. Interaction can also occur between the different phases as well as between functionaries playing different roles such as those of decision maker and implementer. In this respect, there is a need to combine the analytical benefits offered by the stagist model with an acknowledgement of the interaction between the stages. This is best achieved by talking of policy formation which refers to the combination of policy making and implementation. In this way, policy will continue to be shaped during implementation. Consequently, if the term 'policy making' represents the entire policy process, then both policy formation and implementation refer to 'late' and 'early' sub-

processes in the whole process (Hill and Hupe 2002: 8). Policy making is a continuous process. It does not come to an end once a policy is adopted. Anderson (1975, cited by Parsons 1995: 462) argues that "policy is being made as it is being administered and administered as it is being made. Implementation is policy-making carried out by other means".

The study of the policy process has tended to overemphasise the distinction between policy making and implementation. There has been a tendency to treat policies as clear-cut, uncontroversial entities, whose implementation can be studied separately. Several public policy studies make this distinction between policy making, policy implementation and the evaluation of policy outcomes. Scholars that adopt this model stress the need to disaggregate the decision system so that it is not so much of a 'black box'. This usually involves making a distinction between policy making and implementation. This implies that implementation is defined according to its relationship with policy (Hill 1997: 128). The policy cycle is widely considered to represent the top-down perspective of the policy process.

Van Meter and Van Horn (1975, cited in Hill 1997: 129) define the implementation process as "those actions by public or private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions", while Pressman and Wildavsky (1973, cited in Hill 1997: 129) maintain that "the process of putting policy into action is deserving of study, and that it is wrong to take it for granted that this process will be smooth and straightforward. Indeed, in many ways these studies are concerned with the discovery that many things go wrong between policy formulation and output".

Implementation is complex as it operates at different levels, involves many different stakeholders, and depends on resources and capacity. As Ripley and Franklin (cited in Hill and Hupe 2002: 61) observe, "implementation processes involve many important actors holding diffuse and competing goals who work within a context of an increasingly large and complex mix of government programmes that require participants from numerous layers and units of government who are affected by powerful factors beyond their control". It is for this reason

that Pressman and Wildavsky (1973, cited by Hill 1997: 129) are concerned with the extent to which successful implementation depends upon linkages between different organisations and departments at the local level. They argue that "if action depends upon a number of links in an implementation chain, then the degree of cooperation between agencies required to make those links has to be very close to 100 percent if a situation is not to occur in which a number of small deficits cumulatively create a large shortfall". Hence, they introduce the concept of an 'implementation deficit' which arises when there is no cooperation or linkages between organisations at the implementation level.

The study of the policy process has resulted in an emphasis on the importance of implementation. As Marsh and Rhodes (1992b, cited in Rhodes 1997: 12) observe, "the importance of policy networks varies with the stage of the policy process". They emphasise the relevance of the policy process for analysing policy implementation. This has resulted in debate between implementation scholars who support the top-down approach to implementation and those that support the bottom-up approach. The top-down/bottom-up debate is useful for analysing the cluster system as a network model for policy coordination and implementation within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal. Both approaches are present. The cluster system operates within a bureaucratic setting which is based on a top-down approach to policy implementation, whereas clusters as networks operate within the bottom-up approach characterised by cooperation, interaction, and the exchange of resources. In this regard, the study seeks to combine the two approaches in order to analyse the management of networks in complex implementation situations.

2.4.2 Top-down approach to implementation

Implementation studies were motivated by interorganisational theory and developed in reaction to the top-down approach to implementation which was viewed from the perspective of goals formulated by a single central authority (Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan 1997: 18).

The essential features of a top-down approach are that it starts from the perspective of central decision-makers and assume that the framers of the policy decision are the key actors in the policy making process. This approach is concerned with the extent to which the actions of implementing agents and target groups, and the impacts are consistent with the policy objectives (Sabatier 1986: 22).

The top-down perspective has sought ways to structure policy mandates so that implementers have little chance of exercising discretion (O'Toole, Jr. and Montjoy 1984: 491). According to the top-down perspective, implementation is a process of interaction between the setting of goals and the actions designed to achieve them. It involves the ability to create linkages in a 'causal chain' so as to implement policy effectively. It is argued that implementation will be weak if the linkages between the organisations involved in carrying out a policy suffer an 'implementation deficit'. In this respect, goals have to clearly defined and understood, resources provided, and the chain of command made capable of assembling and controlling resources. Implementation requires a top-down system of control and interactions and resources facilitate the process of implementation (Parsons 1995: 464).

Proponents of the top-down approach argue that effective implementation will occur when there is a good chain of command and capacity to coordinate all the agencies involved in the process as well as efficient management of resources. This is essentially a prescriptive model of implementation which leaves implementers with little discretion. The top-down/bottom-up debate was significantly influenced by the question of how to separate implementation from policy formation, a very complex process that occurs across time and space and involves multiple actors (Hill and Hupe 2002: 43).

2.4.3   Bottom-up approach to implementation

The bottom-up approach rejects the notion of a central ruler who advocates a distinction between policy making and implementation and views implementation from the perspective of a single actor. It favours the perspectives of the implementing bodies and target groups,

irrespective of whether they are governmental, semi-governmental or private actors. The interests of local actors are regarded as crucial in the analysis and evaluation of public policies and their implementation. The central focus of the bottom-up approach is the extent to which central policies provide local actors with sufficient resources and policy discretion to solve their social problems.

Public policy making is regarded as an intrinsically political process in which local actors assess their interests and purpose. Local actors' participation in the policy design phase is considered crucial given the fact that policy formation and implementation are interrelated. The failure of public policies is attributed to the exclusion of local actors from local decision-making, too little local policy discretion and insufficient resources provided to local actors (Kickert et al 1997: 8).

This approach starts by identifying the network of actors involved in service delivery in one or more local areas. It is concerned with the goals, strategies, activities and contacts of these actors and identifies the local, regional, and national actors involved in the planning, financing, and execution of relevant governmental and non-governmental programmes (Hjern, Porter, Hanf and Hull 1978, cited in Sabatier 1986: 32).

The bottom-up approach places great emphasis on the relationship between policymakers and policy implementers. This model argues that policy implementers have discretion in how they implement public policy. In his seminal work on '*Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*', Lipsky (1980: xii) argues that "the decisions of street-level bureaucrats, the routines they establish, and the devices they invent to cope with uncertainties and work pressures , effectively become the public policies they carry out". He refers to those who are responsible for policy implementation as 'street-level bureaucrats' because they have direct contact with target groups. He adds that public policy is not best understood as made by policy-makers alone, because practically it is made in crowded offices where the public is served by street-level bureaucrats in their daily encounters with clients.

The bottom-up model places significant emphasis on the fact that policy implementers have discretion in how they implement policy. Implementation necessarily requires a high margin of discretion (Parsons 1995: 469). Other bottom-up theorists include Hjern (1982, cited in Hill and Hupe 2002: 54) who argues that this perspective focuses on interactions between several different organisations. In this respect, effective implementation depends on the network of organisations working together in which field-level decision making actors implement their activities without predetermined assumptions about the structures within which the activities occur.

As far as implementation is concerned, the 'top-downers' and 'bottom-uppers' have been motivated by somewhat different concerns which has led to the development of different approaches to implementation. Top-down proponents are preoccupied with the effectiveness of specific government programmes and central decision makers' ability to guide and constrain the behaviour of implementing agents and target groups. On the other hand, bottom-up proponents are concerned with mapping out the strategies of the network actors who are involved in solving a policy problem. Their primary focus is on understanding actors' interactions in a specific policy sector (Sabatier 1986: 36).

"Whether the mode of implementation is top-down or bottom-up, those on the front line of policy delivery have varying bands of discretion over how they choose to exercise the rules which they are employed to apply" (Parsons 1995: 469). Top-down and bottom-up theorists have not yet reached consensus on a predictive theory of implementation or even which variables are the most significant (O'Toole, Jr. and Montjoy 1984: 491).

2.5   A Policy Network Approach to Implementation

The central assumption of the policy network approach is that "policy is made in complex interaction processes between a larger number of actors which takes place within networks of interdependent actors" (Klijn and Koppenjan 2000: 139). Patterns of interaction evolve

around policy problems and resource clusters. Therefore policy networks can be defined as (more or less) stable patterns of social relations between interdependent actors, which take shape around policy problems and programmes. Policy networks influence the making and implementation of public policy. Interdependency between actors is the fundamental element in the network approach (Kickert et al 1997: 6).

The terms 'policy networks' and 'networks' are used interchangeably in the discussion. The concept of 'policy networks' links public policies with their strategic and institutionalised settings comprising the network of public, semi-public, and private actors participating in certain policy areas. Public policies of any significance are the result of interactions between public and private actors and they are made and implemented in networks of interdependent actors (Kickert et al 1997:1-2). Networks are structures of interdependence involving multiple organisations or parts thereof, where one unit is not merely the formal subordinate of the others in some larger hierarchical arrangement. Actors in networks are interdependent because they cannot achieve their goals alone. Public problems involve interactions and cooperation between public, semi-public and private organisations. Interdependency requires actors to share resources for the attainment of joint goals (Kickert et al 1997: 6).

Policy networks are the context in which policy processes take place. The network approach builds on the foundations of interorganisational theory. The use of the network approach to analyse policy processes is preceded by the process approach to policy. Unlike the rational actor model which assumes that policy processes proceed in stages comprising mainly of policy formulation, decision and implementation, the process approach considers public policy the result of interactions between various actors trying to influence the policy process in a direction favourable to them. It emphasises the dynamics of policy making (Kickert et al 1997: 16). The process approach focuses on the complexity of public processes. This complexity is caused by a number of factors including the variety of actors, conflicting interests and preferences, problem definition, and complex interactions of different forms of strategic action. In terms of the process approach, policy making takes place in settings characterised by many actors where preferences, information and the strategies chosen are

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ambiguous and occur within certain interorganisational networks. Hence, policy formation and policy implementation are inevitably the result of interactions among a plurality of diverse actors with separate interests, goals and strategies. Policy analysis should therefore be geared towards the interorganisational network within which policy is made (Scharpf 1978, cited by Kickert et al 1997: 17).

The policy network approach proceeds from where the process approach leaves off. The analytical framework of the network approach focuses on the actors who interact to address a particular problem at the local operational level. This approach examines the problem solving strategies and interactions of a number of public and private actors within a specific policy area. The network approach is identical to the bottom-up model because it offers insight into how local actors use programmes designed by higher levels of government to fulfil their own purposes and thus emphasises the unforeseen effects of the implementation of policy programmes (Sabatier and Hanf 1985, cited by Kickert et al 1997: 18).

Inspired by the interorganisational theory, the network approach pays attention to the relations and communication networks between the different levels of government agencies, and the actors' strategic approaches and problem solving capacity (Wright 1983; Agranoff 1990a, cited in Kickert et al 1997: 18). "Governmental actors operated in complex settings where they were involved in more than one programme at the same time and where they found themselves involved in complex interaction networks" (Agranoff 1990a, cited in Kickert et al 1997: 18).

The network approach to policy implementation calls for concerted action by multiple actors, both within government, and outside, from civil society and the private sector. No single actor can manage the policy implementation effort (Brinkerhoff and Crosby 2002: 23). Networks are structures of interdependence that involve multiple organisations where one unit is not merely the formal subordinate of the others in some larger hierarchical arrangement (O'Toole, Jr. 1997: 45). In network settings, authority and responsibility are dispersed among

the actors, which means that traditional command-and-control management is rarely applicable (Brinkerhoff and Crosby 2002: 23). Most intra-organisationally inspired management approaches cannot be used in a network setting (Kickert et al 1997: 10).

Management in network settings is not based on central authority and cannot be guided by a single organisational goal as is the case in the classical management approach. In this situation, management is about managing flexible structures towards collective efficiency. Networks are social structures that facilitate interorganisational interactions of exchange, collaboration and joint production. Such arrangements can be formal or informal, intersectoral, intergovernmental, and functionally based on a specific policy or policy field. Network settings are not directed by a single actor's goal and cannot be guided by a central authority. The role of policy networks is to coordinate and facilitate the operations of other network actors (Agranoff and McGuire 1999: 19 – 21).

The concept of networks applies in the bottom-up theory and is very important in attempts to integrate the different approaches. "It is unlikely, if not impossible, that public policy of any significance could result from the choice process of any single unified actor. Policy formulation and policy implementation are inevitably the result of interactions among a plurality of separate interests, goals and strategies" (Scharpf 1978: 347). Scharpf stresses the importance of interactions between actors in which issues relating to the coordination and collaboration of separate actors with separate interests, goals and strategies are given central attention.

Kickert et al (1997: xvii) note that "until recently the concept 'policy network' had often been negatively evaluated. It was seen as one of the main reasons for policy failure: non-transparent and impenetrable forms of interest representations which prevented policy innovations and threaten the effectiveness, efficiency and democratic legitimacy of the public sector". They reject such criticism and decline to take sides in this argument. However, they note that networks are crucial to address the 'implementation deficit' identified by Pressman

and Wildavsky. Furthermore, effective implementation may depend on the development of collaborative networks (Hill and Hupe 2002: 60). "The British network literature has acknowledged that the network approach may be very crucial for successful policy formation and implementation and it suggests that governments have in fact sought to foster policy networks and policy communities". Drawing on the work of Jordan and Richardson (1987), Smith (1993) identifies four reasons for the significance of networks:

- They facilitate a consultative style of government

- They reduce policy conflict and make it possible to depoliticise issues

- They make policy making predictable

- They relate well to the departmental organisation of government

The implementation deficit caused by the separation of policy formation and policy implementation which is regarded as a problem by top-down theorists is largely eliminated through the continuity of the relationship between the government and its implementation partners (Hill and Hupe 2002: 61).

2.6   The Interorganisational theory of implementation

Interorganisational theory focuses on the relations between organisations, their interdependence and their strategies. It conceptualises the environment as a set of organisations that have a relationship with the focal organisation. Its analytical framework focuses on the relations between organisations, the exchange of resources and the organisational arrangements that are developed to secure coordination. These relationship patterns exist and develop as a result of interdependency (Kickert et al 1997: 19 – 20).

Interorganisational theory stresses the exchange processes between organisations whereby they acquire resources from one another. In this respect, the model views organisations as part of a network characterised by strong interactions in which resources are exchanged,

guided by the arrangements between organisations (Levine and White 1961, cited in Kickert et al 1997: 21). In this resource dependency environment, each organisation controls resources such as capital, human resources, knowledge, information and so on. Each organisation has to interact with the others in order to acquire the necessary resources for goal achievement and survival since no single organisation can generate all the necessary resources on its own. The resources an organisation requires depend on the goal it has set itself. These interdependencies produce networks of organisations which interact with one another (Benson 1978; Aldrich 1979, cited in Kickert et al 1997: 21).

Power is a central concept in the resource dependency model and is linked to possession of resources. In this regard, power depends on the need for resources (Aldrich 1979, cited in Kickert 1997: 21). Parsons (1995: 483) argues that the interaction of organisations is a product of power relationships in which some organisations can compel other less powerful and less dependent organisations to interact with them. In turn, organisations that are dependent on more resourceful ones have to work with more powerful organisations in order to secure their interests and maintain their relative autonomy.

It is clear that dependency and resource exchange are the central characteristics of relations between organisations and interorganisational theory. Levine and White (1961, cited by Parsons 1995: 483), argue that "the defining characteristic of exchange between organisations is that it is voluntary interaction which is undertaken for the realisation of goals and objectives of the participants. Whereas in the power-dependency model the organisational relations are based on dominance and dependence. Even though an agency may be dependent on central resources, it may also be the case that the centre is dependent on the local agency for implementing policy goals".

There is no central authority structure in interorganisational theory and no single actor with sufficient power to determine the other actors' strategic direction. Rather, there is a wide variety of actors with their own goals and strategies. Policy is the result of interaction between

a number of actors. Interorganisational theory stresses the fact that actors are dependent on one another because they need one another's resources to achieve their goals. In interorganisational analysis the characteristics of networks are strongly present (Kickert et al 1997: 31- 32).

Many government policies require the efforts of two or more agencies during implementation. Converting policy intentions into action requires that those mandated with implementation should cooperate towards the achievement of the policy's goals. There are many cooperation arrangements across the boundaries of organisations and levels of government, a phenomenon addressed by interorganisational theory. Such patterns of cooperation are the result of policies that require inter-agency cooperation, while other patterns may have developed for entirely different reasons such as shared professional interests (O'Toole, Jr. and Montjoy 1984: 491).

O'Toole and Montjoy (1984: 492) argue that "an important mechanism for achieving and sustaining cooperation over periods of time is the formal organisation. By selection and training, organisations acquire personnel who tend to share, or at least accept, common goals and world views". They add that organisations tend to develop routines in terms of which personnel interact in regular and predictable ways to solve regular and predictable problems. Promoting cooperation in certain directions may, however, limit personnel's ability to achieve cooperation in other directions. Hence, an organisation tends to be constrained by its own routines and goals which results in it being unable to respond to a new mandate or to cooperate with other organisations. Such limitations can be overcome if the new mandate coincides with the goals, world view and routines of the cooperating organisation.

Hjern and Porter (1981, cited in Parsons 1995: 484) maintain that, in a bottom-up model, "implementation should be analysed in the context of 'institutional structures' composed of 'clusters' of actors and organisations. Programmes may be conceived as being implemented in 'pools' of organisations. A programme will involve a multiplicity of organisations of various

kinds: national and local, public, private and voluntary, business and labour, and so on. Programmes are not implemented by single organisations, but through a matrix or set of organisational pools". Such arrangements give rise to a complex pattern of interactions which top-down models fail to address (Parsons 1995: 485).

Implementation usually requires action from two or more organisations. Multi-actor implementation offers a solution to this challenge. It takes place in multi-organisational settings characterised by inter-agency cooperation rather than through a sole, unassisted implementing unit. Multi-organisational implementation is required in complex policy spaces to address complicated, cross-cutting policy problems. It is also a requirement in political systems where power and authority are shared and decentralised (O'Toole, Jr. 1986: 182).

As noted elsewhere in this study, "there is no theory of implementation that commands general agreement, researchers continue to work from diverse theoretical perspectives and to employ different variables to make sense of their findings" (O'Toole, Jr. 1984).

2.7   Conclusion

This chapter presented the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study, namely, the policy networks approach, implementation theory, and the interorganisational theory of implementation. The theoretical framework was presented in the context of policy implementation which is the central focus of this study. The chapter focused on the policy network approach, its characteristics and the three models of policy networks. This approach guides the case study for this research project. The policy process was discussed in order to understand at what stage of the policy cycle implementation occurs. The stagist model was used to explore the policy process and the strengths and weaknesses of this model identified by different scholars were highlighted. Implementation was emphasised as an important stage in the policy process which is the focus of this study.

A discussion on the top-down/bottom-up models was presented as part of the analysis of implementation. Various sources were consulted to present different perspectives and debates on these models. The policy networks approach to implementation and the interorganisational theory of implementation were discussed in detail as these two perspectives are used as analytical frameworks for the case study which examines clusters as policy networks for policy coordination and implementation within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal.

Chapter 3:   Case Study

3.1   Introduction

The purpose of this study is to determine whether the Governance and Administration Cluster could be considered as a policy network within the provincial government configuration in KwaZulu-Natal. Hence, the study employs a policy networks approach and the interorganisational theory of implementation as analytical frameworks to analyse the effectiveness of the cluster system within provincial government. The study was undertaken in the Office of the Premier within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal where the cluster system is being implemented to coordinate implementation of public policy.

The South African government confronts challenges in improving coordination and implementation of public policy across the three spheres of government. Public policy implementation is characterised by a lack of cooperation between departments and spheres of government, and uncoordinated implementation efforts. This is despite the creation of a number of implementation forums across all spheres of government such as interdepartmental forums and clusters. Interdepartmental collaboration and cooperation is still weak when it comes to the implementation of cross-cutting sectoral policies (National Development Plan 2012).

The first part of this chapter outlines the role of the Office of the Premier where the study was located. It proceeds with an analysis of the cluster system and provides a rationale for examining the Governance and Administration Cluster within the Provincial Government. Furthermore, it provides an analysis of the cluster system at national level as implemented by The Presidency of the Republic of South Africa. The second part of the chapter focuses on the presentation of the policy network conceptual and theoretical framework underpinning the study in order to analyse the effectiveness of the cluster system as a mechanism to improve policy coordination and implementation.

The study employs a policy networks approach to implementation in order to understand the pattern of linkages and levels of collaboration among the actors involved in policy coordination and implementation within the KwaZulu-Natal provincial government. A policy network analysis and an analysis of implementation theory was undertaken in order to explain how policies are made and implemented in a network setting. The study also uses the interorganisational theory of implementation in order to understand and conceptualise the environment in which coordination and implementation take place. Using one of the units of the Cabinet Cluster system namely, Governance and Administration Cluster in the Office of the Premier as a case study, it investigates and demonstrates how the implementation environment comprising of various provincial departments and other actors interact and maintain relations with the centre of governance including inter-departmental cooperation, exchange of resources and mechanisms to sustain cooperation and coordination.

3.2   The Role of the Office of the Premier

Section 125 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 provides that the executive authority of a province is vested in the Premier of that province. The Premier exercises executive authority together with other Members of the Executive Council (MECs) by, *inter alia*:

(a) implementing provincial legislation in the province;

(b) implementing all national legislation within the functional areas listed in Schedules 4 and 5 except where the Constitution or an Act of Parliament provides otherwise;

(c) administering national legislation outside the functional areas listed in Schedules 4 and 5, the administration of which has been assigned to the Provincial Executive in terms of an Act of Parliament;

(d) developing and implementing provincial policy;

(e) coordinating the functions of the provincial administration and its departments;

(f) preparing and initiating provincial legislation; and performing any other function assigned to the provincial executive in terms of the Constitution or an Act of Parliament.

The Office of the Premier plays a central role in supporting the efficient operation of provincial government. Its main function is to provide strategic advice and support to government,

coordinate cross-cutting strategic government initiatives and ensure that this is done within the best good governance framework (Legislative Mandates: KwaZulu-Natal Executive Council, 2014: 36).

The Office of the Premier is the centre of government which is charged with coordinating policy formulation and implementation in the province. Provincial policies are processed by various interdepartmental technical clusters and Provincial Executive Council (Cabinet) clusters before adoption as formal policies by Provincial Cabinet or by the Provincial Legislature (if it is legislation). The implementation of provincial policies is facilitated through the cluster system.

3. 3   The Cluster System

The cluster system was introduced in the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal in 2004 to facilitate resourceful, cross-sectoral thinking on public policy issues and to promote an integrated approach to policy making and governance. This was in line with the approach adopted by The Presidency in 1999 which introduced a new integrated Cabinet Committee system to cluster Ministers in a rationally integrated manner. Policy issues are processed by each technical and political cluster before adoption by the Executive Council. This requires MECs and Heads of Departments (HODs) to involve relevant clusters when developing or initiating government policy and legislation in their respective areas (KwaZulu-Natal Cabinet Manual, 2011: 37). There are currently four technical and political clusters within provincial government, namely:

- Governance and Administration Cluster
- Economic Sectors and Infrastructure
- Social Protection, Community and Human Development
- Justice, Crime Prevention and Security

Table 1

Configuration of clusters within the KZN Provincial Government

Governance & Administration	Economic Sectors and Infrastructure	Social Protection, Community and Human Development	Justice, Crime Prevention and Security
• Office of the Premier • Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs • Provincial Treasury • Community Safety & Liaison	• Economic Development & Tourism • Transport • Public Works • Agriculture & Rural Development • Provincial Treasury	• Education • Health • Social Development • Sport & Recreation • Human Settlements • Arts & Culture • South African Social Security Agency	• Community Safety & Liaison • South African Police Service • Justice • National Prosecuting Authority • Home Affairs • Correctional Services • National Intelligence Agency • South African National Defence Force • Social Development

(KZN Cabinet Manual, 2011)

3. 3.1 Executive Council/Political Clusters

Executive Council or political clusters are at the apex of the cluster system due to the fact that they are mainly composed of politicians who serve on the Provincial Executive Council (Cabinet). They provide a platform for interaction, collaboration and consideration of issues before referral to the Executive Council for adoption. Matters for decision by the Executive Council should first be considered by one or more Executive Council clusters. These clusters derive their powers from the Executive Council and can only make recommendations to the Executive Council (KZN Cabinet Manual, 2011: 39).

3. 3.2 Technical Clusters

Technical clusters are made up of senior government officials and are chaired by HODs. They provide a forum where senior government officials can deal with the technical aspects of policies before they are referred to the Executive Council Clusters. Their main functions are to:

- coordinate programmes and projects within their particular cluster
- investigate and report on issues identified by the Executive Council Clusters
- process Executive Council issues pertaining to their respective clusters
- facilitate the implementation of provincial policies and executive decisions
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the decisions made

The main objective of the cluster system is that the provincial policy making process results from collaborative interactions among relevant sectors rather than the Executive Council driving policy making from the centre (KZN Cabinet Manual, 2011: 37). This is the essence of this case study which views clusters within provincial government as policy networks that facilitate policy formulation and implementation.

3.4   Cluster for Governance and Administration in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal

For the purpose of this study, the Governance and Administration Cluster (G&A Cluster) has been selected as a case study to be examined. The reasons for choosing the G&A Cluster are presented below:

- the political Governance and Administration Cluster is the biggest Cabinet Cluster and its chairperson is the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal.

- the technical Governance and Administration Cluster is chaired by the Director-General of the provincial government in KwaZulu-Natal.

- the Governance and Administration Cluster is the overall and overarching cluster that provides guidelines and the provincial programme of action to other sectoral clusters.

- it is tasked with developing provincially transversal policy and governance issues rather than sectoral policy matters.

The above points provide firm justification for the selection of the Governance and Administration Cluster of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government as a case study.

3.4.1   Composition of the Governance and Administration Cluster

At the political level, the Governance and Administration Cluster is constituted by the following Members of the Executive Council (MECs) who are in charge of departments that form the cluster:

- Premier – who chairs the cluster
- MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
- MEC for Finance
- MEC for Community Safety and Liaison
- MEC for Public Works

The Director-General of provincial government serves on the cluster as an ex-officio member in order to report on transversal policy matters affecting the whole province. At the technical level, membership of the Governance and Administration Cluster is made up of the Head of Departments of the following provincial departments:

- Director-General – Office of the Premier, who chairs the cluster

- Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

- Provincial Treasury

- Community Safety and Liaison

- Public Works

(Executive Council Manual: Province of KwaZulu-Natal, 2011 as amended)

3.4.2 Terms of Reference for the Governance and Administration Cluster

The Governance and Administration Cluster provides a forum for more detailed consideration and discussion of the following provincial issues before referral to the Executive Council for decision making. It considers the following issues:

- public administration

- human resource development

- international relations

The Governance and Administration Cluster is an overall and overarching cluster tasked with the responsibility of developing the programme of action for the provincial government. It also provides guidelines for the functioning of other sectoral clusters. It deals with provincially transversal policy and governance issues rather than sectoral policy matters. (Executive Council Manual: Province of KwaZulu-Natal, 2011 as amended)

3. 5 The Cluster System at National Level

The cluster system was established in 1999 to address the challenge of coordinating policy implementation. It was then cascaded down to provinces for customisation and implementation. The Presidency established six sectoral Cabinet Committees known as Clusters which were configured in a way that ensures optimal integration and coordinated policy development and policy implementation. Government departments are clustered according to key government priorities; this encourages integrated planning, effective decision-making, information-sharing and sound intergovernmental relations.

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Cabinet/Political Clusters are made up of Ministers while Directors-General Clusters or FOSAD are made up of Directors-General (DGs) who are the administrative heads of national departments.

3.5.1 Cabinet Clusters

There are six Cabinet Clusters at the national sphere of government which are configured as follows:

- Social Sector
- Economic Sector
- Investment and Employment
- International Relations, Peace and Security
- Justice, Crime Prevention and Security
- Governance and Administration

Clusters provide a platform for joint planning and collective implementation of government policies. Clustered Ministers are well-placed to ensure that concerted action is taken to ensure speedy and thorough policy implementation. The legal powers of Ministers remain intact but the clusters allow for intensive and focused debates on difficult policy choices and resolution of issues by the relevant Ministers before they are taken to the full Cabinet for decision-making (Democratic Governance: A Restructured Presidency at work 2000/2001: 15).

3.5.2 Directors-General Clusters

Directors-General are also clustered to ensure that the deliberations of Cabinet Clusters translate into the design, approval and implementation of practical policy and legislative measures. Directors-General clusters resemble the clusters of Ministers. Their primary role is to ensure that the utilisation of departmental resources is in line with the programme set by Cabinet Clusters in order to achieve coordinated implementation of public policy. The discussions of the Cabinet Clusters are informed by the discussions taking place in the DG Clusters. Enhanced coordination among DGs is the primary focus of the Presidency's new

cluster system. Where necessary, technical clusters are established with representatives from the public and private sectors to support the Cabinet Cluster system (Democratic Governance: A Restructured Presidency at work 2000/20001: 15).

3. 5.3 Policy Coordination and Advisory Services

The Policy Coordination and Advisory Services Unit (PCAS) advises the President, Deputy President and the Minister in the Presidency on all aspects of policy coordination, implementation and monitoring and assists with special cross-cutting projects and programmes. It ensures that The Presidency is well placed to perform its coordinating and integrating functions. The Unit provides administrative, analytical and policy support, to the DG Clusters and participates in meetings of Cabinet Committees to ensure coherence of policy discussions between Cabinet Clusters and DG Clusters. It keeps track of policy debates in different departments on issues ranging from poverty alleviation, to restructuring of state assets and rural development. Its core function is to facilitate an integrated approach to policy development and implementation (Democratic Governance: A Restructured Presidency at work: 2000/2001: 12).

3. 6 Horizontal and Vertical Policy Coordination and Implementation

In the early to mid-2000s a range of horizontal, vertical and cross-sectoral structures and processes were designed to facilitate policy implementation (Robertson 2004, cited by Booysen 2006: 737). At the horizontal level, the Cabinet and its structures such as Cabinet Clusters and DG Clusters, as well as the Policy Coordination and Advisory Services system, provided the mechanism to facilitate policy coordination and government integration. The processes included extended cluster committee meetings in the form of *Lekgotlas* (Cabinet meetings held in January and July each year where Cabinet Members are joined by the President's advisers and the DGs to discuss essential issues of governance and policy), the Integrated Planning Framework, the Medium-Term Strategic Framework, the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, and Medium-Term Expenditure Committee, as well as monitoring and evaluation processes driven by The Presidency (Booysen 2006: 737).

At the vertical level, policy coordination and implementation is facilitated by the President's Coordinating Council (PCC) made up of the President and Provincial Premiers, the Ministers and Members of Executive Council (MINMEC) consisting of line-function Ministers and their provincial counterparts (MECs), line-function DGs and their provincial counterparts (HODs), as well as Cabinet Clusters and the Treasury. Directors-General, provincial HODs and clusters back up the vertical process. Cross-sectoral implementation and integration is facilitated through the President's Advisory Council which comprises private sector role-players, special offices in the Presidency, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (Robertson 2004, cited by Booysen 2006). Much of the vertical integration of the implementation of public policy in South Africa relates to intergovernmental relations. Government has launched several initiatives aimed at improving provinces and local government structures' effectiveness in policy implementation (Booysen 2006: 737).

Booysen (2006: 735) asserts that "the South African government's desire for enhanced policy coordination and integration was also linked to its task to manage a complex and pressured network of government institutions, which were in turn linked to a diversity of mechanisms of implementation. The provincial-local nexus of policy implementation and coordination clearly contributes to the need for coordination and integration". To further illustrate the importance of coordination and implementation, Booysen (2006) cites Tansey (in Rhodes 1996: 244), who observes that "public policies are increasingly implemented in a pragmatic way through a network of organisations which must then be managed professionally". In this respect, "governance is about managing networks". This is the basis of a network approach that requires cooperation between public, civil society and private actors in the making and implementation of public policy, but has clear relevance for the public sector's institutional networks for the coordination of policy processes (Booysen 2006: 735). Policy coordination may provide a synthesis between the top-down and bottom-up debate in the study of implementation (Hill 1993b: 2-4).

3. 7   Interdepartmental Coordination

The National Development Plan (NDP): Vision 2030 acknowledges that the challenge of improving coordination runs through all sections of government (NDP 2012: 429). "Too often, departments pursue competing objectives, there are gaps where no department takes responsibility, or areas where departments could be more effective if they worked together and drew on each other's strengths. Coordination problems can be particularly acute where the coordination has to take place both between departments and across spheres" (NDP 2012: 429).

The NDP: Vision 2030 notes that there is a tendency to create new structures such as interdepartmental clusters and implementation forums to respond to coordination challenges. "While these structures have an important role to play, it is a mistake to assume that all coordination problems can be resolved through high-level coordination mechanisms" (NDP 2012: 429). It recommends that coordination mechanisms be used sparingly and strategically and proposes a two-pronged approach that distinguishes between routine and strategic coordination.

3. 7.1   Horizontal/Routine Coordination

The NDP: Vision 2030 notes that most coordination problems can be easily addressed if they are broken down into specific issues. "These can be dealt with through horizontal coordination between branches, chief directorates and directorates in different departments. This would make it easier to build constructive working relationships at the level where they are needed. Routine coordination is particularly relevant where the problems relate to implementation more than policy formulation" (NDP 2012: 429). Horizontal coordination calls for a move away from a top-down approach where it is expected that all coordination arrangements are managed from the centre; it requires responsibility to be delegated to officials at appropriate levels of implementation.

3. 7.2 Strategic Coordination

Some coordination problems result from disagreements between departments or gaps that no department is dealing with. This requires high-level coordination on strategic and policy issues. The cluster system was established to facilitate such coordination. However, it should not be applied to day-to-day, routine issues. It can also be used to promote routine horizontal coordination on issues that do not need to be debated at cluster level (NDP 2012: 430).

In interorganisational studies, the problem of cooperation and coordination as well as implementation have constituted important theoretical and empirical research issues; this is illustrated by the influence of interorganisational theory and intergovernmental relations within policy science (Klijn cited in Kickert et al 1997: 22). Klijn (1997: 22) further argues that "if the performance of an organisation and its survival is dependent on the way it is connected with other organisations, it would seem logical to carry out research into how the relations of an organisation affect its performance and how this performance can be improved". Several studies have been conducted on the way organisations cooperate with one another and the way they form arrangements to secure cooperation. Interorganisational theory has focused on the formal organisational arrangements which were designed to secure cooperation.

In line with the contingency approach, these studies focused on the relationship between the nature of dependency between organisations and the nature of coordination (Klijn cited in Kickert et al 1997: 22). Three types of coordination mechanisms are identified to secure cooperation between organisations. The first is pooled interdependency where each organisation makes its own contribution to the network. Coordination on the basis of standardisation applies in pooled interdependency situations. The second form of coordination is sequential interdependency where organisations' inputs are dependent on other actors' outputs. This type of coordination requires planning. The third form of coordination is mutual dependency where relationships exist between organisations. Each organisation's outputs constitute inputs for others. Coordination by mutual adjustment is the most suitable form of coordination (Thompson cited by Klijn 1997: 22).

Rodgers and Whetten (cited by Klijn 1997: 22) identify three other types of coordination based on the degree of autonomy of the separate organisations. The first is 'mutual adjustment' where organisations retain their autonomy. "Coordination is achieved by voluntary, more or less spontaneous interaction and is based on informal rules". The second type is an 'alliance' where no authority exists and coordination is achieved by negotiated rules. The third form of coordination is "corporate' when organisations develop a joint authority structure to which they hand over some of their autonomy. This type of coordination is suitable for the case study which investigates the role of clusters as a mechanism for policy coordination within the provincial government. Clusters may be considered joint authority structures to which various provincial departments hand over some of their autonomy.

3. 8   Methodology for the Case Study

This study was guided by a qualitative research methodology that used both primary and secondary sources of data. A qualitative study enables a researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the issues under investigation. This is an empirical study using primary and secondary data mainly gathered from the location of the study, the Office of the Premier where the cluster system was implemented between 2009 and 2014. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents. This enabled the researcher to identify respondents who were relevant to the study. The choice of respondents was directed by the judgement of the researcher as well as the purpose of the study (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 166).

The sample therefore included six respondents from the Office of the Premier who are primary sources of information. Open-ended interviews were conducted with officials working in the Cabinet Office where the cluster system is being implemented and others in the Policy Unit that supports this system. The interviews with selected officials aimed to gain in-depth understanding of the role and functioning of the clusters within the provincial government and how clusters as policy networks facilitate coordination and implementation of public policy. Secondary sources included official documents such as cluster reports,

minutes, agendas and memoranda. The data obtained from the interviews were analysed in order to draw conclusions that are presented at the end of the study.

3. 9. Data Presentation

As noted earlier, purposive sampling was used to identify the study respondents. The respondents who participated in the study work in the Office of the Premier where the cluster system is being implemented. Open-ended interviews were conducted with officials in the Cabinet Office and the Policy Unit in order to gain in-depth understanding of the functioning of the cluster system between 2009 and 2014. The data obtained from the interviews were recorded on the questionnaire and other officials were requested to complete the questionnaires themselves after meeting with them to explain the purpose of the study. These questionnaires were returned via e-mail. The respondents' identities are not revealed; the title of their positions is used instead.

3. 10. Data obtained from the interviews

Why was the cluster system introduced in the provincial government?

All respondents explained that the cluster system was introduced by national government in 1999 to facilitate coordination and integration of government policy and was cascaded down to provinces. The aim of the cluster system is to discourage the silo effect and to promote cooperation between departments. It also aims to enhance coordinated implementation of public policies. It was also established to facilitate resourceful, cross-sectoral thinking on public policy issues and to have an integrated approach to policy-making and governance in the province. The cluster system fosters integrated policy decision-making and collective responsibility of Members of the Executive Council for all decisions taken.

What is the role of clusters?

Most respondents agreed that clusters coordinate policy initiatives of sectoral departments. Their role is to improve policy coordination. Clusters assess policies and programmes initiated

by departments. They are a forum for interrogation and processing of all matters and memoranda before these are submitted to the Executive Council for approval. This approach requires MECs and Heads of Departments to adopt an approach that will involve the entire cluster when developing or initiating government policy or legislation from their respective sectors. One important outcome of the establishment of this system is that Executive Council memoranda will arise from the collaborative interactions among relevant sectors rather than departmental memoranda driving the Executive Council system, as was the case before. Clusters play a dual role of being a forum for integrated policy making as well as the role of being a tool for implementation of government policy.

One respondent pointed out that "clusters sift relevant areas from the State of the Province Address and allocate them to specific departments for implementation. They develop government programmes of action. They also make recommendations to the Executive Council on the appropriate implementation model to address the five priorities of provincial government. They also direct and advise sectoral departments on how to facilitate integrated service delivery".

How is the cluster system being implemented within provincial government?

All respondents indicated that the cluster system is made up of four Cabinet/Executive Council and Technical Clusters. In KZN, four technical and four Cabinet Clusters were created, namely, Governance and Administration; Economic Sectors and Infrastructure; Social Protection, Community and Human Development; and Justice, Crime Prevention and Security. Technical clusters are formed by senior government officials who first deliberate on matters before they are referred to clusters of MECs. Clusters of MECs/Cabinet Clusters then make recommendations for adoption by the Executive Council. The Cabinet Office provides logistical and secretarial support to all clusters. They meet once a week every Wednesday to transact their business. Agendas are decided on by chairpersons of clusters.

Who participates in the clusters?

It emerged from the interviews that participation in clusters is restricted to government departments and public entities. They are represented by Members of the Executive Council (MECs), Heads of Departments (HODS), Directors-General (DG), Regional Heads of National Departments, CEOs of Public Entities, Senior Managers, Special Advisors, Policy Unit, Inter-Governmental Relations Unit, and Cabinet Office.

How is the agenda of clusters being driven?

Most respondents viewed the agenda of the cluster system as being driven in both ways. Both the top-down and the bottom-up approaches are present in the cluster system. Certain matters emanate from the top which is the Executive Council and are referred to clusters while others emanate from the bottom in the form of line departments and are referred to relevant clusters. Matters that emanate from the Executive Council could be viewed as top-down, while matters that emanate from departments can be regarded as bottom-up. In this way the cluster system operates in both ways.

However, one respondent indicated that "the agenda setting of clusters, like all government programmes and policies, is informed by the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF), the five-year priorities of government as well as the National Development Plan priorities. The cluster agenda setting is a bottom-up approach since government priorities are determined by the manifesto of the political party that won the general elections".

Do clusters deal with strategic issues or routine issues?

All respondents were unanimous in that the clusters deal mainly with policy issues and strategic issues. Sometimes they deal with operational issues coming from departments as well as the coordination of government programmes at a strategic level.

How is collaboration and resource sharing accomplished between clusters?

Clusters facilitate collaboration and sharing of resources by departments through Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) where departments collaborate in the implementation of government programmes at local level. Operation Sukuma Sakhe, 2011 is a flagship programme of the KZN provincial government that facilitates and enhances collaboration and sharing of resources among departments. Collaboration and sharing of resources is achieved through the Committee of HODS (COHOD). The Provincial Work Group established to facilitate the implementation of the Provincial Growth and Development Plan ensures collaboration at implementation level. Clusters provide a platform for interdepartmental collaboration, information and resource sharing. Through the cluster system, departments are able to collaborate in the development and implementation of policies and programmes of government.

What are policy implementation challenges experienced by the Office of the Premier between 2009 and 2014?

Clusters do not have a common framework for planning their work. There is no policy and planning system that guides clusters on how they should conduct their work. There is a lack of technical and policy capacity needed to provide clusters with efficient support. One respondent pointed out the following challenges facing the cluster system in KwaZulu-Natal:

- Staff shortages in the Cabinet Office and Premier's Office
- Lack of budgets for clusters
- Lack of effective monitoring of cluster decisions
- Programmes abandoned quickly before realising their full impact because of changes in administration
- The time lapse between policy approval and implementation is sometimes very long
- Misinterpretation of Cabinet decisions by implementers

Monitoring of implementation of resolutions and programmes adopted by the Executive Council is also a challenge. Another respondent pointed out that there is a collapse of

cooperative governance which is caused by the dysfunctional Inter-Governmental Relations Unit in the Office of the Premier. This has resulted in the failure to hold meetings of other IGR forums such as the Premier's Coordinating Forum which facilitates cooperation between the spheres of government in the province.

What are coordination challenges?

Clusters should elevate the focus of the agenda to policy and strategic level rather than operational matters of departments. The Office of the Premier lacks coordination instruments such as a framework that informs coordination of activities. There is a lack of sufficient capacity to coordinate issues such as environmental matters and climate change and other transversal issues within the province. It also lacks institutional capacity for policy coordination especially on governance matters which relate to the establishment of partnerships with other stakeholders. There is a lack of cooperation from other provincial departments in the implementation of key provincial programmes such as HIV and AIDS. Resources are spread across departments. Some departments are unwilling to share resources.

Most respondents indicated that certain coordination mechanisms are weak. Some coordinating forums within the Office of the Premier have failed to meet for a long time. Other coordinating forums that were active and vibrant in the past have become dysfunctional. One respondent indicated that "the link with other spheres of government is weak. As a result, coordination between the spheres of government is a challenge".

Effectiveness of the cluster system in addressing coordination and implementation challenges.

Most respondents were unanimous in that the cluster system has been effective in facilitating interdepartmental collaboration in the implementation of provincial government policies and programmes. Through the cluster system, departments are able to interact and collaborate in the implementation of flagship programmes and service delivery. There is now less

duplication of resources. It has resulted in integrated planning and enhanced coordination between departments. The cluster system is the only effective tool that facilitates coordination. It ensures that all matters that are brought before the Executive Council have been thoroughly discussed by all departments and public entities making up a cluster.

The introduction and implementation of Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS), 2011 which is a product of the cluster system has been effective in addressing coordination and implementation challenges. OSS ensures collaboration among provincial departments and participation of civil society structures in the implementation of provincial service delivery programmes at local level. The cluster system has improved monitoring of the implementation of the Provincial Growth and Development Plan (PGDP) through the Action Work Groups that report to the clusters. One respondent pointed out that "the cluster system has been at the core when inputs are prepared for the State of the Province Address and the approval and implementation of the Provincial Growth and Development Plan".

3. 11. Conclusion

This chapter focused on the case study which investigated the implementation of the cluster system within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal in order to improve public policy coordination and implementation between 2009 and 2014. The first part of the chapter discussed the role of the Office of the Premier where the cluster system is being implemented. The analysis was conducted using official documents obtained from the Office of the Premier as well as the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

The second part of the chapter presented the cluster system as it is being implemented within provincial government. It analysed the cluster system at national government level where the system originated and the reasons for the system's introduction in 1999. The National Development Plan: Vision 2030 was used to analyse the implementation of the cluster system as a mechanism to resolve coordination challenges in government.

The final part of the case study presented the primary data collected from the study respondents. A qualitative research methodology was employed and open-ended interviews were conducted with a number of identified respondents who work in the Office of the Premier where the study was located. These interviews provided insight into the implementation of the cluster system as policy networks for policy coordination and implementation within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal. The majority of the respondents agreed that clusters serve as networks that coordinate policy-making and implementation in the province.

Chapter 4:   Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations of the Study

4.1   Introduction

This chapter concludes the study by analysing and presenting some key findings of the study. It will respond to the key questions of the study. It will then present a summary of the findings as well as the key theoretical arguments of the study. The preceding chapter presented the case study which included a section dealing with the data which was obtained from the primary sources of the study in the form of open interviews with selected respondents. The data obtained from the interviews assisted the study to gain an in-depth understanding about the implementation of the cluster system within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal. It has also enabled the study to respond to the key questions of the research. The data will be analysed in order to present the key findings of the study at the end of this chapter. The analysis will be guided by the theoretical framework of the study which was presented in chapter 2.

The literature which views clusters as policy networks of a special type will be presented. Scholars such as Rhodes (1988), Kickert et al. (1997), and Ripley and Franklin (cited in Rhodes 1997) view clusters as policy communities, sub-governments or subsystems consisting of clusters of individuals that make the most of the routine decisions in a specific area of public policy characterised by sustainable patterns of interaction within a horizontal structure, the continuity of closed membership and vertical interdependence based on shared service delivery responsibilities.

4.2   Analysis

Data analysis will be done using the key questions of the study. The data obtained from the primary sources of the study was presented in the last part of the case study. The data will be analysed in order to formulate the findings of the study which will be presented in the last part of this chapter.

4.2.1 The role of clusters

All respondents who participated in the study were in agreement that the role of clusters is to facilitate coordination and integration of policy development and implementation in the province. Clusters coordinate and integrate policy initiatives of provincial departments and enhance cooperation between departments. They facilitate cross-sectoral thinking on public policy issues and an integrated approach to policy making and implementation. They also facilitate coordinated implementation of provincial policies and programmes. Clusters also facilitate integrated decision-making by the Executive Council and the cooperative approach to governance.

4.2.2 Implementation of the cluster system

Data obtained from the interviews indicates that there are four political and four technical clusters through which the cluster system is being implemented in the provincial government. These corresponding sectoral clusters are the Governance and Administration; Economic Sectors and Infrastructure; Social Protection, Community and Human Development; Justice, Crime Prevention and Security. Members of the Executive Council, Heads of Departments, and senior government officials, CEOs of public entities and regional heads of national departments are members of the four clusters. Clusters meet once a week to transact on their business.

4.2.3 How is the agenda of clusters being driven?

Most respondents view the agenda of the clusters as being driven both ways, that is, top-down and bottom-up. They point out that some issues emanate from departments and brought to the clusters for discussion (bottom), while other issues come from Members of the Executive Council and referred to the clusters for consideration (top). Both approaches are present in the cluster system. Other respondents point out that the cluster agenda is driven at an Executive Council level as most issues are referred to the clusters by the MECs. There is only one respondent who differed with others arguing that all issues brought before the clusters emanate from the bottom which are provincial departments.

4.2.4   Collaboration and sharing of resources

There are structures and programmes created by the cluster system that facilitate collaboration and sharing of resources among cluster members. These structures and programmes include Operation Sukuma Sakhe and the Provincial Work Groups. Chairpersons of clusters also facilitate cooperation by bringing stakeholders together to share information on issues and share other resources.

4.2.5   Implementation challenges

There are a few implementation challenges that were pointed out by the respondents. The most common challenge relates to the shortage of resources needed to coordinate implementation. Both human and financial resources were identified as a challenge which hinders policy implementation. It was pointed out that there is a lack of technical and policy capacity needed to provide clusters with efficient support. The other challenge relates to budget limitations as clusters do not have their own operational budgets. There is a shortage of staff in the Office of the Premier to support the cluster system in areas such as monitoring of cluster decisions. Some programmes are abandoned quickly before they are fully implemented because of changes in administration.

4.2.6   Coordination challenges

The Office of the Premier lacks sufficient capacity to coordinate issues such as the environment and climate change and other transversal issues within the province. It also lacks institutional capacity for policy coordination on governance matters which relate to the establishment of networks. There is a lack of cooperative governance capacity in the Office of the Premier to coordinate inter-governmental relations between the province and local government. Most coordinating forums within the Office of the Premier have failed to meet for a long time. The link with other spheres of government is weak. As a result, coordination between the spheres of government is a challenge. There is also a lack of cooperation from other departments in the implementation of key provincial programmes.

4.2.7 Effectiveness of the cluster system in addressing coordination and implementation challenges

Most respondents agree that the cluster system has been effective in coordinating interdepartmental collaboration in policy development and implementation. Departments are able to interact and collaborate in the implementation of flagship programmes and service delivery. The cluster system has been the most effective tool that facilitates coordination of policies and programmes. The level of coordination has been cascaded down to the implementation level through programmes such as Operation Sukuma Sakhe. Clusters have enhanced integration, collaboration and resource sharing in policy initiatives and implementation.

4.3 Can Clusters be considered as Policy Networks?

It is argued that public administration increasingly takes place in network settings characterised by a lack of hierarchies and a single actor who steers the network alone. Networks are structures of interdependence involving multiple organisations and other actors where one unit is not merely the formal subordinate of the others in some larger hierarchical arrangement. Governments often seek to implement their policies through interagency collaboration structures (O'Toole 1997: 45 - 6).

O'Toole (1997: 46) asserts that "policies dealing with ambitious and complex issues are likely to require networked structures for execution, and complex issues will continue to be on the policy agenda". In South Africa, this is true with regard to the implementation of an ambitious policy like the NDP: Vision 2013 which will undoubtedly require a network approach involving multiple actors from public, civil society and private sector organisations.

Governance and public administration frequently take place in network-like settings. This is the case where sustainable patterns of interaction between actors have formed in a specific policy area and public problems are dealt with in highly interactive processes (Kickert and Koppenjan cited in Kickert et al 1997: 35). There is a rich literature on the relations between

governmental agencies, and private and semi-private organisations and the way these relations influence policy making. Scholars use different concepts to describe these relations, including policy communities, subsystems, sub-governments and policy networks. The concepts of subsystem and sub-government are used to indicate the pattern of interactions of participants or actors involved in making decisions in a special area of public policy (Freeman cited in Rhodes 1997: 33), while Ripley and Franklin (cited in Rhodes 1997: 33) view sub-governments as clusters of individuals that effectively make the most of the routine decisions in a given area of public policy. An example of a sub-government is a Cabinet Cluster dealing with economic development or social protection.

A subsystem or sub-government consisting of a cluster of individuals involved in routine decisions in a substantive policy area is characterised by stable patterns of interaction. These take place within a horizontal structure which consists of representatives of interest groups, civil servants from various departments, and specialised politicians. The subsystem also displays a vertical structure that is very significant for the implementation of policy programmes (Wamsley 1985, cited in Kickert et al 1997: 26). "Government programmes bind the programme professionals and their professional associates together through all layers of government into vertical functional autocracies" (Milward and Wamsley 1985, cited in Kickert et al 1997: 26). The concept of subsystem is linked to the concept of networks. A network refers to the relationship patterns between actors whereas a subsystem refers to the interaction patterns within the system as a whole (Klijn cited in Kickert et al 1997: 26).

Policy making increasingly takes place within closed communities of actors. The concept of policy communities was born out of this phenomenon. Most scholars emphasise the relatively closed nature of policy communities or subsystems (Kickert et al 1997: 27). In this respect, policy communities are a special type of policy network. "An important theme in the policy community literature concerns the degree to which the network is closed and opinions are shared within it". Rhodes (1988: 78) describes policy communities as "networks characterised by stability of relationships, continuity of a highly restrictive membership, vertical interdependence based on shared service delivery responsibility and insulation from other

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networks and invariably from the general public. They are highly integrated". Rhodes' description of a policy community or subsystem is in line with this study which views clusters as policy networks that facilitate policy coordination and implementation within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal. Like subsystems and policy communities, clusters are highly integrated and their interactions are restricted to their members. Clusters operate within a horizontal structure to facilitate coordination of their activities and they also operate within a vertical structure to coordinate the implementation of policies and programmes.

What emerges from interorganisational studies is that policy implementation is influenced by a "very complex web of relationships between the various actors at the different levels of government" and not by a clear cut pattern of hierarchical authority (Hanf 1978: 6). It is also argued that the interorganisational structure of implementation will involve participants from different decisions levels and from a variety of functionally specialised organisational units. "The ability of individual decision units to achieve their own objectives will depend not only on their own choices and actions but also on those of others, actions at any one level of decision making will be influenced by the relationships that exist between levels as well as across functional boundaries" (Hanf 1978: 2).

Interorganisational policy analysis advances the idea that it is through the networks that policy of any significance is made and implemented. Mayntz cited in Hanf and Scharpf (1978: 11) notes that "the implementation process constitutes a network of institutional actors who jointly deal with a specific task". In this respect, "the term 'network' represents the fact that policy making involves a large number and wide variety of public and private actors from different levels and functional areas of government and society. At this level the term 'network' asserts the fact that all organisations are involved in relations of one kind or another with other organisations in their environment" (Hanf 1978: 12).

4.4   Conclusions

Based on the thorough literature scoping and scanning of the relevant theoretical text on the policy network approach in contrast with the examination of the mandate, functions, roles and terms of reference of the Governance and Administration Cluster, as well as the interviews with the senior managers and officials responsible for managing the Cabinet Cluster system throughout the interview sessions, one could safely conclude that the Governance and Administration Cluster seem to have not met all characteristics that define the nature of the policy network. For instance, members of the Governance Cluster are representatives of provincial government departments and they do not have autonomy/independence to make policy decisions except to present recommendations to the Executive Council. Yet, in their nature and functioning, the policy networks have constituency membership with autonomous status to consult and make policy decisions. Hence, they are autonomous from government Executive Authority.

The study of the cluster system within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal has revealed that the Governance and Administration Cluster does not meet all characteristics of a policy network. It lacks most network features such as autonomy of actors, equal status and authority, collaboration and plurality, joint planning, programming and joint policy making. However, the Cluster for Governance and Administration does function as a coordination forum on transversal policy matters in the province.

The Cluster system resembles some of the features of a subsystem or policy community, for example, Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster allows the participation of non-state actors in its meetings like Community Policing Forums. Notwithstanding the above statement, the Social Cluster, Economic Cluster and Governance and Administration Cluster are not all inclusive of non-state actors.

As Kickert et al (1997) assert that policy communities are a special type of policy network characterised by the relative closed nature of membership, the extent to which the network

is closed and opinions shared within it. Rhodes (1988) refers to policy communities, subsystems or sub-governments as networks characterised by stable relationships, continuity of a highly restrictive membership and vertical interdependence based on shared service delivery responsibility. While Ripley and Franklin (cited in Rhodes 1997) view policy communities as made up of clusters of individuals that effectively make most of the routine decisions in a given policy area. All these characteristics of policy communities or subsystems and others as described by other scholars like Dowding (2008); Milward and Wamsley (1985) are present in the clusters that coordinate public policy implementation within the provincial government.

Agranoff and McGuire (1999: 20-21), describe networks as social structures that enable interorganisational interactions of exchange, concerted action and joint production. They argue that for the public manager, such network structures can be formal or informal. They are "intersectoral, intergovernmental and based functionally in a specific policy or policy area". In this respect, public sectors managers from government organisations and agencies at national, provincial and local government levels operate in structures of exchange and production with representatives from the private sector and civil society organisations. They operate in these structures through various forms of collaborative problem solving (Agranoff 1996; Radin et al 1996). However, managing in networks should not be confused with managing hierarchies because there is no central authority across the network. "Each representative brings and keeps his/her authority, managing together" (Agranoff and McGuire 1999: 21).

Many contemporary policy problems would be more effectively and legitimately dealt with through network coordination of resources, skills and strategies across public sector institutions, formal organisations, policy sectors and jurisdictions (Koppenjan and Klijn 2004). Some of the above network features are present in the cluster system. For example, cluster members are involved in collaborative problem solving and joint production of policies and programmes that seek to bring about service delivery in the province. They are also involved in intersectoral and intergovernmental structures of exchange and collaboration with

national and local levels of government through forums such as the Provincial Aids Council, Premier's Coordinating Council and Operation Sukuma Sakhe to mention but few.

All respondents were unanimous in that the clusters have been the most effective tool of coordinating collaboration in policy making and implementation within the provincial government. However, the cluster system does not facilitate collaboration with the private sector and civil society due to its closed nature and restrictive membership.

The study also revealed that the cluster system displays both a horizontal structure which consists of civil servants from various departments and politicians who are Members of the Executive Council where stable patterns of interaction take place, and a vertical structure based on traditional intergovernmental linkages which is very significant for the implementation of policy programmes across the spheres of government. Agranoff and McGuire (1999:23) note that public managers usually operate in several network settings. "Government officials operate in networks that involve officials from within the same government but representing another agency, business representatives and civil society organisations located within the jurisdiction. There are also representatives from organisations in all sectors located outside of the jurisdiction. The structure and content of these multiple networks – which can be vertical and based in more traditional intergovernmental linkages, or horizontal and based in collaboration to establish basic policy strategies and projects – varies depending on the policy area, the specific task to be accomplished, and the instruments utilised to achieve the policy goal" (Jennings and Krane 1994; Agranoff and McGuire 1998a; Mandell 1990 cited in Agranoff and McGuire 1999: 23).

In their analysis of network governance in South Africa and Uganda, Mubangizi, Nhlabathi and Namara (2013: 783) argue that the strength of network governance is in its ability to address complex issues in a decentralised administration. This is the case where 'administrative silos' are also segmented into vertical 'layers' of national, provincial and local government. They also argue that contrary to the ideal-type understanding of network governance, the network

model has to be a multi-directional relationship between the actors in both vertical 'silos' and horizontal 'layers'.

The strength of the policy network approach is that, it is the most effective mechanism of coordinating and facilitating policy making and implementation in a decentralised administration consisting of many departments and agencies which operate within a system of co-operative governance that requires collaboration with other spheres of government for successful policy implementation. However, the study has revealed that some coordinating structures in the Office of the Premier are weak and dysfunctional as they have failed to hold meetings for a long time.

The study also points out that the network approach to governance within the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal displays the cluster system as subsystems or policy communities consisting of clusters of individuals that make most of the routine decisions in a given area of public policy.

On examining the theoretical and conceptual frameworks on policy networks as well as data obtained from interviews with officials in the Office of the Premier, the study concludes that the Governance and Administration Cluster lacks most of the characteristics of a policy network. Therefore, it can be regarded as an intergovernmental forum that brings together government officials at different levels of provincial government, both political and technical, for policy making, coordination and implementation. It does not reflect some of the basic characteristics of a policy network such as interdependences of actors, voluntary participation, state and non-state interactions, co-governance, autonomy of actors, partnerships and intersectoral, equal status and authority, identifiable stakeholders , and interrelationships and interactions to mention but a few.

The Office of the Premier where the Governance and Administration Cluster is located operates as a centre of government in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. It reflects most of the

features of the central-rule model which places the government at the centre of public policy. It operates along the lines of a single actor model which emphasises hierarchy and a single command authority for coordination of policy making and implementation. On the other hand, the network model operates along the basis of interdependence of actors who keep their authority. Policy making within network settings is about cooperation between interdependent and equal parties with different and sometimes conflicting goals, interests and strategies (Kickert et al, 1997). The manner in which the Governance and Administration Cluster functions at present, cannot be regarded as a policy network.

The study has revealed that inadequate coordination of all stakeholders, both inside and outside of the cluster system, as well as lack of technical capacity for Governance and Administration Cluster, retard the pace at which integrated service delivery to communities is provided. Hence, the hypothetical statement in the first introductory chapter proved to be true.

4.5   Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested to improve the functioning of the Governance and Administration Cluster in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal as it is the overall and overarching cluster that provides the provincial programme of action to other sectoral clusters.

- There is a need to reconfigure the Cluster for Governance and Administration to include non-state actors as participants in its roles and functions. This implies extension of membership and composition to include business, labour and civil society with the view to consolidate the cluster system into a fully-fledged policy network. This will provide space and platform for interest representation by non-state actors which could enrich the policy making process.
- The policy making system and processes of the cluster system particularly the Cluster for Governance and Administration should be standardised and adopted by Cabinet.

The Governance Cluster should adopt a shared framework for planning, programming and reporting across the four clusters.

- The Governance Cluster seem to require strong technical capacity to exert effective policy and programme coordination across all four Clusters.

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