Enacting Leadership by Navigating Institutional Complexity: An Institutional Perspective on Public Sector Leadership in the Bangladesh Public Administration

Shibaab Rahman

Bachelor of Business and Commerce (Economics), Monash University

Master of Public Policy and Management, Monash University

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Department of Management

Monash Business School

Monash University

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Abstract

The field of public sector leadership has been informed by a growing number of theories on how to enact leadership to drive organisational performance, implement reforms, create public value and to solve public problems. Given the evidence of leadership impact, the effective exercise of public sector leadership can carry implications for how developing country governments deal with challenges of mal-governance, structural deficiencies and failing public services *inter alia*. However, public sector leadership research in developing countries is identified as an important area of research that has been neglected in the existing literature. This thesis addresses this neglect by drawing attention to the institutional environment that influences public organisational phenomena, including leadership. In the process, this thesis also reveals a theoretical challenge, in that leadership is commonly conceived of as an outcome of individual agency; theories of leadership privilege the agency of leaders whose personal qualities, abilities and power enable them to act as a force for good and whose efforts can potentially produce positive outcomes. However, what is given less priority by leadership scholars is a perspective that agency is inherently an institutional construction, implying that individual actions are circumscribed by the institutional context. This latter perspective draws attention to the notion that leadership enactment are influenced by organisational fields populated with multiple conflicting and competing institutional norms, values, thoughts and beliefs. The embeddedness of leadership within such institutionally complex environments has implications for how public managers negotiate and navigate multiple institutional pressures. This thesis draws on the institutional logics framework to investigate such embeddedness and is situated within a post-colonial developing country: Bangladesh. The organisational field of the Bangladesh public administration is an institutionally complex environment that has been shaped by multiple

factors, including enduring colonial and post-colonial traditions, unsuccessful administrative reforms, disparate state-society-market relations, and persisting indigenous influences. Using a qualitative research design, this thesis examines the interplay of these factors and their relative influence on the enactment of leadership by Deputy Commissioners (DCs) at the district level, including their decision making, leader-follower relations, public value creation and reform implementation. Findings from this study support four contributions made across the public sector leadership and institutional theory fields. First, contrary to existing conceptions, public sector leadership is found to be a 'protean' phenomenon that demands public managers to draw on various leadership approaches to fulfill their administrative responsibilities, including being an organisational leader, a collaborator, and a political operator. Second, contrary to the views of the proponents of institutional theory regarding the coercive power of formal rules, this study finds, in institutionally varied settings, informal rules often have greater coercive powers in constraining action and provide greater resources in enabling action. The third contribution relates to the role of public leaders as institutional actors who are able to resist certain institutional pressures to conform but still manage to retain their legitimacy within the institutional environment. Last, this thesis finds a new type of strategy for institutional change that show public leaders utilise their enterprising capabilities to use an existing logic as a 'conduit' to introduce a new logic as part of their public sector reform work.

Declaration

This thesis is an original work of my research and contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or equivalent institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Signature:

Name: Shibaab Rahman

Date: 05/11/2019

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

In the not too distant past, the late public administration scholar Larry Terry (1995) lamented the emaciated state of public sector leadership studies compared to mainstream leadership research. He offered two important reasons for this. First, he observed a conviction among public administration scholars that the leadership phenomenon did not exist to an appreciable level in government because of what he considered was a highly rule-bound and instrumentalist approach to public administration. Second, he also suspected the existence of a prevalent assumption that the bureaucratic apparatus was often guided by powerful forces (possibly political in nature) that were beyond the control of administrative leadership. Terry (1993) believed these reasons effectively delimited any significant role and contribution of public managers attempting to exercise any form of leadership, and thus dissuaded the uptake of considerable research in the field (Van Wart, 2003).

The narrative, however, on the subject matter is significantly different more than two decades on. Public sector leadership, referring mainly to leadership of civil servants, has emerged as a burgeoning subfield within public administration. Interest among scholars is demonstrated by numerous articles that appear in public management/public administration journals and the specialised streams that consistently feature in public administration conferences. Seminal PSL scholar Van Wart (2003) considers this growing interest to be mainly enabled by the systematic changes that were ushered in by public sector reforms such as New Public Management (NPM). The NPM suite of reforms, based on ideologies of markets and managerialism (Hood, 1991; Osborne & Gaebler, 1992), first appeared in mainly Anglo-phone countries. The reforms in theory afforded significant discretion and autonomy to public managers in managing public organisations (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2006; Kettl, 1997): they were otherwise previously constrained by rule-following principals of older public administration models that limited forms of discretion (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015). It could be argued that NPM provided the enabling conditions under which public administration scholars could ultimately conceive and explore how public managers could utilise their new-found authority and autonomy to exercise leadership.

Growing interest in PSL (Van Wart, 2003) has led to a plethora of contributions offering diverse and rich conceptions, theories and empirical studies that have documented how leadership is exercised in government (Chapman et al., 2016; Vogel & Masal, 2015). For example, some works of public administration scholars exhibit the effective borrowing of mainstream leadership theories such as transformational leadership (Jensen, Moynihan, & Salomonsen, 2018) and leader-member exchange theory (Hassan & Hatmaker, 2015) in the public sector, while others have worked on developing more public sector-centric models of leadership (Crosby & Bryson, 2018; Tummers & Knies, 2015), choosing to emphasise the "uniqueness" of the public sector (Ospina, 2017, p. 275). Such diversity of views is telling for the wide-ranging leadership perspectives that currently populate the field, and it is appreciated by public administration scholars who deem such heterogeneity necessary for the field's progression (Crosby & Bryson, 2018; Ospina, 2017).

Perhaps the most intriguing of feature of the PSL literature is the persuasive evidence that has been gathered about what leadership can achieve or how effective it can be in the public sector. For example, Andersen et al. (2016), using transformational leadership theory, show that effective use of leadership can significantly influence the motivation of followers to work towards achieving organisational outcomes, whereas Trottier, Van Wart, and Wang (2008), using the same leadership model, demonstrate important outcomes such as the satisfaction of followers, which is critical to the success of contemporary organisations (Judge et al., 2001). Leadership in government also goes beyond achieving follower outcomes. For example, contemporary governments are increasingly reliant on public sector innovation to address some of the most pressing public problems facing society and thus look to stimulate innovative behaviour among civil servants (Bason, 2018). Research from Miao et al. (2017) shows that entrepreneurial forms of leadership exercised by public managers can help achieve this by empowering followers to take risks and be creative, and also granting them powers to make decisions.

Another area of research that has captured significant attention and gained remarkable momentum over a good part of the last decade is the potential of public leaders to contribute to the achievement of *public value*[1]. More precisely, there are concerted efforts by PSL

[1] Public value is defined as "producing what is either valued by the public, is good for the public or both" (Bryson, Crosby, & Bloomberg, 2014, p. 448). A more extended discussion of public value is undertaken in Chapter 2.

scholars to explore how public managers can lead in contexts that go beyond traditional hierarchical organisational contexts and that require leadership to be exercised across organisational boundaries in collaborative and partnership settings for the creation and achievement of public value (Crosby & Bryson, 2005a; Getha-Taylor et al., 2011). For example, Morse (2010) developed the integrative leadership model to show how public managers facilitated collaboration across government agencies, schools, universities and non-governmental organisations to bring broadband access to 70 underprivileged schools across the state of North Carolina in the United States (US).

1.1 Research problem and justification

The PSL literature has certainly come a long way since the initial trepidation expressed by Terry (1995). New conceptions and theories of how to lead in the public sector continue to be added, partly due to the changing context of governance and the shifting priorities that have ensued for public organisations. For example, scholars point to new sets of post-NPM reforms that are driven by beliefs about partnerships, collaboration and networks (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Bryson, Crosby, & Stone, 2015; McGuire, 2006), which have called for a rethinking of leadership within an evolving public sector context (Armistead, Pettigrew, & Aves, 2007; Currie, Grubnic, & Hodges, 2011). Yet, despite the constellation of diverse leadership views that testify to the scholarly richness of the field, such variety in perspectives has attracted some criticism. Scholars have accused the PSL literature of being fragmented (Vogel & Masal, 2015), inconclusive (Van Slyke & Alexander, 2006), and rife with different definitions and conceptualisations (Orazi, Turrini, & Valotti, 2013). In the face of such criticism, however, what has remained unwavering is the well-founded conviction that "leadership matters" in government and this pervasive phenomenon is worthy of being explored through diverse lenses (Crosby & Bryson, 2018, p. 1278).

Diversity, however, is subjective that can often be used as a rhetorical device. If diversity is used to evoke a sense about the vast number of ways leadership can be understood in a variety of contexts (Chapman et al., 2016), then there is arguably a degree of impreciseness in how the term is used. This concern stems from the fact that the PSL literature has only explored public sector leadership within the context of Western capitalist countries (Van Wart, 2013a; Vogel & Masal, 2015), and thus offers limited insights about other diverse

countries that do not fit such a profile. Notably, non-Western developing countries have been neglected by scholars, who have shown little enthusiasm for exploring the phenomenon in such a setting. This is surprising, because, if leadership of public managers is integral in the effective functioning of government (Jensen et al., 2019; Taylor, 2016), then it is difficult to overlook the potential impact leadership can have for governments in developing countries that are faced with a myriad of challenges. Challenges such as underperforming public organisations, limited resources, corruption, mal-governance, social and development challenges, such as abject poverty, and threats of climate change make the task of government particularly complex and difficult (Grindle, 2004; McCourt & Gulrajani, 2010; Puppim de Oliveira, Jing, & Collins, 2015; UNDP, 2015a). Such settings give rise to the need for leadership to be better understood, and while this apparent neglect has received some muted calls (Orazi et al., 2013; Vogel & Masal, 2015), few scholars have attended to them. This thesis considers this lack of attention as more than just a gap in the literature. It is a serious empirical problem that requires studying for understanding effective leadership approaches as mechanism for addressing public sector challenges in developing countries. In the process, this thesis offers not just a diverse view of public sector leadership, but one that is contextually sensitive to public administration systems in developing countries.

Any pursuit of studying public sector leadership in a non-Western developing country context is, however, faced with a theoretical predicament. This relates to the problems that may arise from the transplantation of existing theories, which a few scholars have already chosen to do so (e.g., Abdulfattah, 2017; Jagannath, 2017). Their choice reflects the failure to account for the fact that existing leadership theories are entirely embedded within Western societies and reflect Western values and functions under conditions that are intrinsic to the West (Zhang et al., 2012). For example, public management systems in Western countries over the course of their historical development have become imbued with liberalist societal norms and are typified by elements such as bureaucracy, meritocracy, market principles, and claims to have relatively well-functioning institutions of government, such as rule of law and expected levels of accountability (Painter & Peters, 2010a; Polidano & Hulme, 1999). Structural elements like these are constantly cited by scholars as enablers for the enactment of entrepreneurial and transformational leadership in the public sector (Miao et al., 2017; Wright & Pandey, 2010). However, the same structural elements may not be present or function in the same way in developing countries. As Haque (1996) generalises, in Western

countries the political context of public management is characterised by stable political regimes that to a large extent maintain strict divisions between politics and administration, and this consequently allows elements of bureaucratic neutrality and accountability to be effectively maintained. This is in contrast to the less stable politics-administration relationship in developing countries, where politicisation of the bureaucracy has jeopardised the preservation of bureaucratic neutrality and accountability.

Conceivably, another noticeable difference has been the relative failure of public sector reforms in developing countries (Andrews, 2015; McCourt, 2008; Turner, 2013) – the same set of reforms (i.e., NPM) that are presumed to have encouraged the pursuit of PSL research. For example, Samaratunge, Alam, and Teicher (2008) provide evidence from South Asian developing countries (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka) of reform initiatives that failed to inculcate any type of NPM-inspired changes. They highlight that NPM precepts such as market forces have remained relatively weak and consequently have beset effective implementation of reforms. Turner (2013), generalising across South Asian bureaucracies, points to 'weak accountability' as a major inhibitor of reform in such developing countries. He suggests that lack of accountability resulted in poor enforcement of rule of law, fledging corruption, and, importantly, an absence of a performance culture which is essential for NPM-type reforms to be beneficial.

Evidence of the differences discussed above problematises the application of Westernised views of public sector leadership in a non-Western setting. This highlights the overarching research problem of this thesis – that of understanding manifestations of public sector leadership in a non-Western developing country that does not structurally conform to the bureaucratic characteristics of Western developed nations. Such a problem, however, has not gone unnoticed. PSL scholars do acknowledge that current conceptions of public sector leadership "may not be valid for all countries" (Orazi et al., 2013, p. 494) or that it is likely that the practices of public sector leadership are "culturally glossed by the administrative traditions […] of the political system in which it takes place" (Vogel & Masal, 2015, p. 1180). It then does become a responsibility for researchers interested in PSL in non-Western developing countries to prioritise the issue of context, and, more precisely, the administration context, because, as Getha-Taylor et al. (2011) astutely observe, the current conceptions of leadership are a reflection of the governance context in which they are practised.

Such a problem then elicits contemplation on how to theorise the administrative context in developing countries so that public sector leadership can be understood in diversified contexts. A few examples may be found in the mainstream leadership literature. One of the more prominent approaches to studying leadership in different countries has been to view context through the lens of national cultures as proposed by Hofstede (1993). Studies have used Hofstede's cultural variables, such as power distance, degree of individualism or collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance, *inter alia*, to show how leadership practice can vary across cultures (House et al., 2004). While this may align with the core premise of this study (i.e., prioritising context), it offers limited insights about sub-national contexts, especially those encapsulated in public administration systems. More precisely, a cultural approach may not necessarily capture the actual governance characteristics or administration traditions which have been made out to be important (Getha-Taylor et al., 2011; Vogel & Masal, 2015) in understanding public sector leadership in differing contexts.

1.2 Theoretical Lens

In order to propose a useful theoretical approach that is sensitive to the societal and cultural context of developing countries, this thesis adopts an institutional lens to examine the context of public administration systems in a non-Western developing country and how it might shape public sector leadership practices. This study embeds public managers exercising leadership within *institutional environments* [2] and examines the prevalent *institutional logics* (Friedland & Alford, 1991) within such environments that condition the behaviour of individuals. Institutional logics represent the rules, norms and practices and the wider belief system that influence social behaviour (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012b). They are the organising principles that structure human behaviour, which, in the process, defines the "interest, identities, values and assumptions of individuals and organisations" (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008, p. 103). Institutional logics prescribe certain types of practices that constitute legitimate behaviour and provide understanding of how and why members of an institutional

[2] Institutional environments encompass the shared formal and informal rules, beliefs, social norms, and ways of thinking that shape the way members of a particular domain or a particular sector of society think, interact and behave (Fligstein, 2001; Scott & Meyer, 1992). By domain or sector of society, this thesis refers to what institutional scholars refer to as *organisational fields* (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Organisational fields in this thesis are understood as demarcated areas of activity populated by individuals and organisations that have similar activities and interests and are conditioned by shared sets of formal rules, norms and values. Public administration systems in different countries are understood to be unique institutional environments or organisational fields within the context of this study.

environment behave in a certain way (Greenwood et al., 2010). For example, in the field of healthcare in the US, scholars have identified a *care logic* which prescribes how health practitioners behave in ways that prioritise compassionate and preventive care and which promotes the holistic treatment of patients in order to achieve better quality of life rather than just a treatment of the disease (Dunn & Jones, 2010). Similarly, public administration scholars have also utilised institutional logics to identify organising principles that exist in the public sector to influence behaviour of civil servants. For example, Ngoye, Sierra, and Ysa (2018) suggest that NPM-type reforms and the administrative practices that they entail are defined by a *managerialist logic* that prescribes the greater discretion of public managers, stricter accountability for performance, and more efficiency in the use of public resources.

This thesis argues that the institutional logic framework provides a valuable lens for understanding the different types of logics prevalent in administrative systems in non-Western developing countries and explores how they condition the enactment of public sector leadership (Vogel & Masal, 2015). Such an approach is also supported by mainstream leadership scholars who believe that leadership should be studied as embedded in the social structures in which it is found (Biggart & Hamilton, 1987). Of special significance is the work of Bess and Goldman (2001), who in their study on school leadership were unable to explain their findings by reference to existing leadership theories because these did not "adequately incorporate the larger external system pressures on leaders" (p. 419). This led the authors to urge "careful attention" to "the impact of external system influences on organisations and its leadership" (p. 420). Porter and McLaughlin (2006) also present a similar line of argument, suggesting that "our understanding of leadership could be improved by making a concerted effort to focus directly on the nature of the organisational context as a primary object of interest" (pp. 573–574).

In summary, the theoretical approach justified in this thesis is founded on two important reasons. First, the institutional logic approach can be useful in understanding public administration systems in developing countries as institutional environments comprising logics that condition human behaviour, and thus it plausibly influences how leadership is enacted by public managers. Second, scholarship on leadership can also benefit from viewing the phenomenon as being embedded in the social context in which it is found, and thus be more reflective of its environment.

The theoretical approach adopted further illuminates another research problem, that of the issue of individual agency and how it is inherently conditioned by the institutional context in which it is exercised. Agency features as a fundamental element in any predominant view of leadership (Hannah et al., 2008). Agency is understood as the capacity to take action (Tourish, 2014) and leadership is a function of individual agency (Gronn, 2000; Lord et al., 2013). Predominant theories of leadership, such as transformational or entrepreneurial leadership, privilege the agency of leaders whose personal qualities, abilities and power enable them to act as a force for good and whose efforts have a likelihood of producing positive outcomes (Peck et al., 2009; Spector, 2016; Tourish, 2014). This is indeed true for the public sector leadership literature as well, given that leadership conceptions both in the public sector and the mainstream literatures have fundamentally remained similar (Ospina, 2017; Van Slyke & Alexander, 2006; Vogel & Masal, 2015). It is interesting to point out that, in these areas of research, what is often underprioritised is the perspective of the institutional theorist, that agency is inherently an institutional construction, implying "actions[s] are circumscribed by the institutional context" (Peck et al., 2009, p. 29). This point reiterates and justifies the theoretical position adopted in this study, that the behaviour of individuals is conditioned by a shared set of rules, norms and values embedded within an institutional environment. As such, this study hopes to address an important theoretical lacuna in the leadership literature overlooked by mainstream scholars.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

This research has two main aims designed to address the research problems. The first is to document the leadership roles and responsibilities of public managers in a non-Western developing country, broadly addressing the gap of how public sector leadership manifests in the aforementioned setting. Given the possibly stark structural differences that exist between Western and non-Western developing countries, and the lack of empirical accounts as to what public mangers do as leaders in such settings, this thesis envisages capturing and qualitatively illustrating actual accounts of what leadership work entails. The second aim of this research is to examine how the institutional environment such as public administration systems conditions the enactment of leadership in the achievement of administrative ends. The underlying premise of this aim is to provide an institutional account of leadership

manifestation, and thus in the process to develop a more diverse and contextual view of public sector leadership.

1.4 Research Setting

The focus on a non-Western developing country have led to the choice of the Bangladesh public administration system as a suitable and interesting site for research. Bangladesh is representative of a group of countries within the public administration literature that are referred to as post-colonial developing countries[3] (Alavi, 1972; Painter & Peters, 2010b). This group of countries is distinct from other developing countries, such as Latin American or East Asian countries, in the sense that post-colonial developing countries have administrative systems that are the products of colonial rule but also have rich ancient traditions of indigenous administration (Painter & Peters, 2010b). This means that the Bangladesh public administration has a layering of both Western and indigenous influences, and thus possibly exhibits different organising principles or logics, making it a particularly interesting case for analysing the influence of institutional environments on public sector leadership enactment. For example, the Bangladesh public administration is claimed to be shaped by 'old' bureaucratic administrative principles inherited from the British colonial period (Alavi, 1972; Khan, 2013); there is also continued Western policy influences through international development agencies such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) that have prescribed the implementation of NPM-type reforms (Samaratunge et al., 2008); and it also exhibits existence of indigenous cultural elements that pervade the public sector, such as patronage politics whose roots can be found in feudalist traditions of the country (Hossain, 2000).

Choice of Bangladesh as a research site also rests on its status as a developing country. Since gaining its sovereignty in 1971, Bangladesh has traversed a tumultuous path, witnessing severe conditions of underdevelopment, persistent socio-economic problems, such as poverty and climate change, and less-than-functioning public institutions and organisations that have all made the task of establishing a prospering nation challenging. Under such circumstances, the Bangladesh public administration spearheads and contributes considerably towards

[3] Henceforth, this group of countries will be referred to as post-colonial developing countries. Any other countries referred to in this thesis outside of this group having a post-colonial history will be distinctly specified.

national development and welfare (Zafarullah & Huque, 2001). This thesis envisages that, under such conditions, public sector leadership exercised by public managers can have important bearing on the achievement of administrative ends that can potentially make direct and indirect contributions towards the development prosperity that Bangladesh hopes to achieve (Khan, 2015).

It is thus appropriate to suggest that, based on Bangladesh's administrative structure and its potential to benefit from the exercise of public sector leadership, it is an appropriate context for pursuing the research aims of this thesis. Bangladesh also serves as a prototypical country for other neighbouring South Asian nations, such as Sri Lanka and Pakistan. For example, in addition to sharing similar economic and societal landscapes, these countries share common unique traditions of a British colonial legacy and an enduring history of indigenous administrative arrangements (e.g., administrative arrangements of the Mughal Empire), both of which have impacted the current cultural and institutional make-up of such countries in a similar way (Painter & Peters, 2010a). Hence, it is possible this research can illuminate avenues of research into other South Asian countries that share similar administrative systems or structural environments.

1.5 Research Design

This study may be considered exploratory in nature based on the research aims and objectives stated earlier. Following Creswell (2014), a qualitative approach using a case study methodology was deemed suitable as way of exploring and understanding a topic in a context that has limited or no prior research. A qualitative research design was further adopted on the premise of prioritising context in this study and the importance of understanding how public managers experience and interpret the context within which they are embedded. This is the preferred approach for studying leadership in real-life settings (Bryman, 2004; Faris & Parry, 2011; Ospina, 2017), and also allows insights into "language, practices […] symbols and materials", which are the social practices and artefacts through which institutional logics are expressed (Reay & Jones, 2016, p. 442).

A single case study was conducted focused on the leadership of Deputy Commissioners (DCs) at the district level in the Bangladesh public administration. DCs are the executive

heads of government at the district level[4] and lead a large organisation known as the DC Office. Choice of DCs as the primary interest for this study was guided by the assumption that DCs function as public leaders who are situated at the intersection of policy making and implementation, and thus can exercise discretion while implementing policy but are also exposed to the politics of policy making. For example, DCs exercise a degree of discretion in the implementation of social policies such as welfare benefits at the district level, but also maintain administrative relationships with policy makers, including interfacing with cabinet ministers, which affords them opportunities to maintain close ties with policy circles. Beyond this, DCs command tax-collection powers, and magisterial powers to uphold the rule of law. This range of power and provision implies ample opportunities for the exercise of leadership in numerous fronts, and thus DCs are a justified choice as subjects in the inquiry of public sector leadership enactment.

Semi-structured interviews were the main data collection technique, along with observations and field notes, and these formed the primary data collection technique. Secondary data collection included the analysis of government documents, including policy documents, acts and government gazettes. A total of 32 interviews were conducted with 12 DCs across 12 different districts, 11 junior ranking officers, and nine experts[5]. Data were analysed following abductive reasoning, engaging in a cyclical process of moving between collecting data, analysing data, and engaging with theory to find theoretical relevance for the leadership enactment shared by participants as everyday accounts and activities (Blaikie & Priest, 2019).

Aligned with abductive reasoning, qualitative data were imported to *NVivo 12* and coded using a template approach to thematic analysis (King, 2012). The template approach allowed the researcher to enter the field with some *a priori* knowledge of leadership and institutional

[4] Bangladesh has a Westminster-type parliamentary democratic system comprising two tiers of government. The first tier is referred to as the 'central government' that encompasses The Executive, Cabinet, Ministries and other central government agencies such as Prime Minister Office (PMO). The second tier, also referred to as "field administration", comprises representative organisations of central government ministries and agencies operating in the geographically divided areas of Bangladesh. The geographical landscape is divided into eight divisions, which is further divided into 64 Districts, and districts are further divided into 490 subdistricts.
[5] Experts in this study included locally based academics, senior civil servants (in-service), and former secretaries (retired administrative heads of ministries).

logics which were *bracketed*[6] (Denzin, 2002), and subsequently allowed codes, categories, themes and patterns to emerge from the collected data. Following such an approach enabled the development of theoretical model of leadership enactment (Chapter 9) that is both theoretically informed and empirically grounded.

1.6 Contributions

This thesis makes at least five theoretical and practical contributions. First, it conceives public sector leadership to be a *protean phenomenon* that adapts to the demands of multiple roles that public managers in a developing country like Bangladesh must cope with. Second, contributions are made to institutional theory broadly that demonstrate that informal institutions can in fact take the form of coercive powers. This is contrary to popular understanding that coercive institutional pressures generally stem from formal rules. The third contribution relates to the role of public leaders as institutional actors who are able to resist certain institutional pressures to conform but still manage to retain their legitimacy within the institutional environment. The fourth contribution introduces a new type of institutional strategy in which public leaders can engage to initiate change in institutional logics. The fifth and final contribution provides practical considerations for policy makers concerned with capacity issues of civil servants in the Bangladesh public administration, including leadership. Greater understanding of contextual issues uncovered in this study can assist policy makers to reduce the gap between leadership training needs and the training delivered.

1.7 Structure of Thesis

This thesis is organised into 10 chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapters 2 and 3 form the literature review. Chapter 2 begins with the concept of public sector leadership before grounding its conception within the mainstream literature. This leads to a brief history of leadership to establish how conceptions of leadership have emerged, with particular focus on how context such as societal norms and values through different periods of time have

[6] Denzin (2002) describes *bracketing* as part of the data analysis process that involves *suspending* (putting aside) any preconceived notions the researcher may have developed through study of the literature and confronts the subject matter as much as possible on its own terms. In the case of this study, the researcher ensured that the participants guided the interviews as much as possible and thus the extent to which topics and issues relevant to the literature was discussed was limited.

influenced the theoretical development of the phenomenon. A similar chronological approach is followed to examine the public sector leadership literature, in which case context is defined by the norms and values imbued in public administration organising principles and how they have influenced public sector leadership theory through different periods. This leads to identifying the first research question. The chapter concludes by arguing that public sector leadership enactment and underlying theories are responses to the demands of the environment and thus require a theory that examines the influence of the environment on individual actions

Chapter 3 introduces the institutional logic framework as the chosen theory for this study. It provides a comprehensive review of various components of the theory, including identifying concepts of institutions, logics, legitimacy, structure, agency, nature of institutional complexity and actor responses. This chapter identifies the second and third research questions.

Chapter 4 provides the rationale for a qualitative case study of DCs at the district level in the Bangladesh public administration. It substantiates the methods and the research instrument choices. It further describes the data collection and analysis process.

Chapter 5 forms the context chapter, focused primarily on elaborating the nature of the institutional environment in the Bangladesh public administration.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 are the findings chapters that address the research questions of this thesis. The three chapters primarily report empirical data collected from interviews, but the presentation of data is theoretically informed as a result of the analytical process adopted.

Chapter 9 presents discussion of the main insights from the thesis. Implications of findings are discussed in light of the literature and primary knowledge claims – contributions – are made.

Chapter 10 is the concluding chapter which summarises the key contributions and also comments on limitations of this study and future direction for public sector leadership research in post-colonial developing country settings.

Chapter 2: Public Sector Leadership

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review on public sector leadership (PSL), one of the primary fields of research this study envisages as a contribution. It begins by examining conceptions of leadership as discussed in the mainstream literature before delving into the more niche area of PSL. A common theme that assisted in organising both the mainstream literature and PSL literature in this literature review is the importance of context and how it shapes the manifestation of leadership, an overarching theoretical proposition that is used to frame this research of PSL in a post-colonial developing country context. Thus context is prioritised in order to understand how organising principles within a given jurisdiction can shape theoretical conceptions of public sector leadership and in this way leads to the development of the first research question.

PSL has come to mean many things. It is described as a relational concept focusing on the influence of leaders on followers; it is studied as an individualistic phenomenon looking at behaviours and actions of individuals that lead to various public sector outcomes; and, more recently, PSL is studied as a collectivist and collaborative process that manifests across organisational boundaries, involving multiple individuals working towards achieving public value. These diverse perspectives demonstrate the scholarly richness fostered by the growing interest academics have shown to progress in the field of PSL (Van Wart, 2013a). Yet it is perhaps also indicative of the lack of coherence around what public sector leadership really is, prompting some to claim that the field suffers from fragmentation (Vogel & Masal, 2015) and that connections between "leadership theories, sectoral difference and the changing nature of democratic governance" are inconclusive (Van Slyke & Alexander, 2006). Criticisms have postulated that the field is "rife with different definitions and descriptions" (Orazi et al., 2013) and elusive conceptualisations (Dull, 2009; Vogel & Masal, 2015) and depict the PSL field as a contested space where debates on fundamental issues continue to be waged.

Indeed, sifting through the literature provides a glimpse of the number of debates being waged on several fronts. For example, there are scholars who advocate for the transplantation of mainstream leadership theories to the public sector, proclaiming dwindling differences

between the two domains (Moynihan, Pandey, & Wright, 2012; Ospina, 2017; Van Wart, 2013a). This dominant thesis is contested by another group of scholars who, instead, emphasise the uniqueness of the public sector and the difficulty of transplanting private-sector-fashioned leadership theories to government settings (Currie & Lockett, 2007; Spicker, 2009; Tummers & Knies, 2015). A recent review by seminal authors of the field, Crosby and Bryson (2018), has advanced a more integrated approach that attempts to reconcile arguments of both sides. They call for diversity of theories to be used but emphasise that the uniqueness of the public sector should be retained. Addressing such calls by Crosby and Bryson (2018) and others (e.g., Ospina, 2017; Vogel & Masal, 2015) may require some caution, as this can only perpetuate the existing lack of coherence or unity on what is desirable in public sector leadership. Yet it is equally sensible to avoid pursuing unity in understanding a phenomenon such as leadership that is inherently defined by the local context (Bryman, 2004; Bryman, Stephens, & a Campo, 1996; Faris & Parry, 2011; Parry et al., 2014), thus warranting diverse perspectives.

This study aligns with the diversity thesis and attempts to add to it. Indeed, if this study is to prioritise the public management context of a post-colonial developing country such as Bangladesh to explore public sector leadership, there is an obligation to understand the diverse public management arrangements that are found in such countries. Consequently, the main focus of this chapter is a literature review of public sector leadership as a phenomenon that is deeply embedded in the public management context and the organising principles that govern that context. It is, however, important to understand the fundamental underpinnings of leadership as a phenomenon before proceeding to unpack public management context and public sector leadership. Thus this chapter begins with an overview of general leadership research, theories and concepts that are often referred to as the mainstream literature (Van Wart, 2013a). This is done to show the evolution of the leadership concept and how it has come to be adopted in the relatively nascent field of public sector leadership. The chapter subsequently discusses the public sector leadership literature to highlight the underlying contextual themes and issues that shape public sector leadership enactment. A conclusion is reached following this that argues for a theoretically sound and robust means of exploring how public sector leadership may be studied in differing contexts such as those found in developing countries.

2.1 Leadership

The study of leadership boasts a rich scholarly tradition. Its foundation can be traced back to an era prior to its prominence in the management sciences, particularly in the works of Sun Tzu on military leadership, Aristotle and Plato's interest in political leadership, and Machiavelli's work how on leaders should govern through love and fear (Grint, 2011; Nice, 1998). These works underscored the important and significant role that leaders play in various levels in society. They collectively portrayed the leader as a warrior, a strategist, someone who can navigate political landscapes, and who can effectively govern society. Though diverse, underlying these different works was an individualistic notion of leadership, that is, they focused on individuals and their personal abilities that enabled them to lead. This individualistic notion of leadership remains enduring and has formed the cornerstone of the contemporary leadership literature that spans a number of disciplines, including psychology, management, political science and public management.

The progress of the modern leadership literature has witnessed both a departure and enhancement of such earlier individualistic concepts of leadership. Burgeoning interest from scholars from the middle of the 19th century has contributed to a rich and vibrant literature that is replete with diverse conceptualisations (Iszatt-White & Saunders, 2014). Theories and concepts have sought to explain leadership through innate traits of individuals (Carlyle, 1846; Mann, 1959; Stogdill, 1948), through behaviours of leaders (McGregor, 1960), examining how situations produce specific leadership (Hersey, Blanchard, & Natemeyer, 1979), and, more recently, researching charisma and ethical principles that can produce effective leadership (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Weber, 1947). Diversity of perspectives is a point much celebrated in the scholarly community (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2013; Day & Antonakis, 2012), but it has not restrained prominent leadership scholars such as Burns and Bennis from questioning such diversity and arguing that leadership is the "most observed and least understood phenomenon on earth" (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978, pp 1). Comments such as this continue to resonate with more recent scholarship that concedes leadership remains a difficult construct to define (Iszatt-White & Saunders, 2014), is devoid of apparent contours and boundaries (Nohria & Khurana, 2013), and suffers from a persistent confusion about what features, characteristics, style and function, *inter alia*, the word 'leadership' entails (Yukl, 2010).

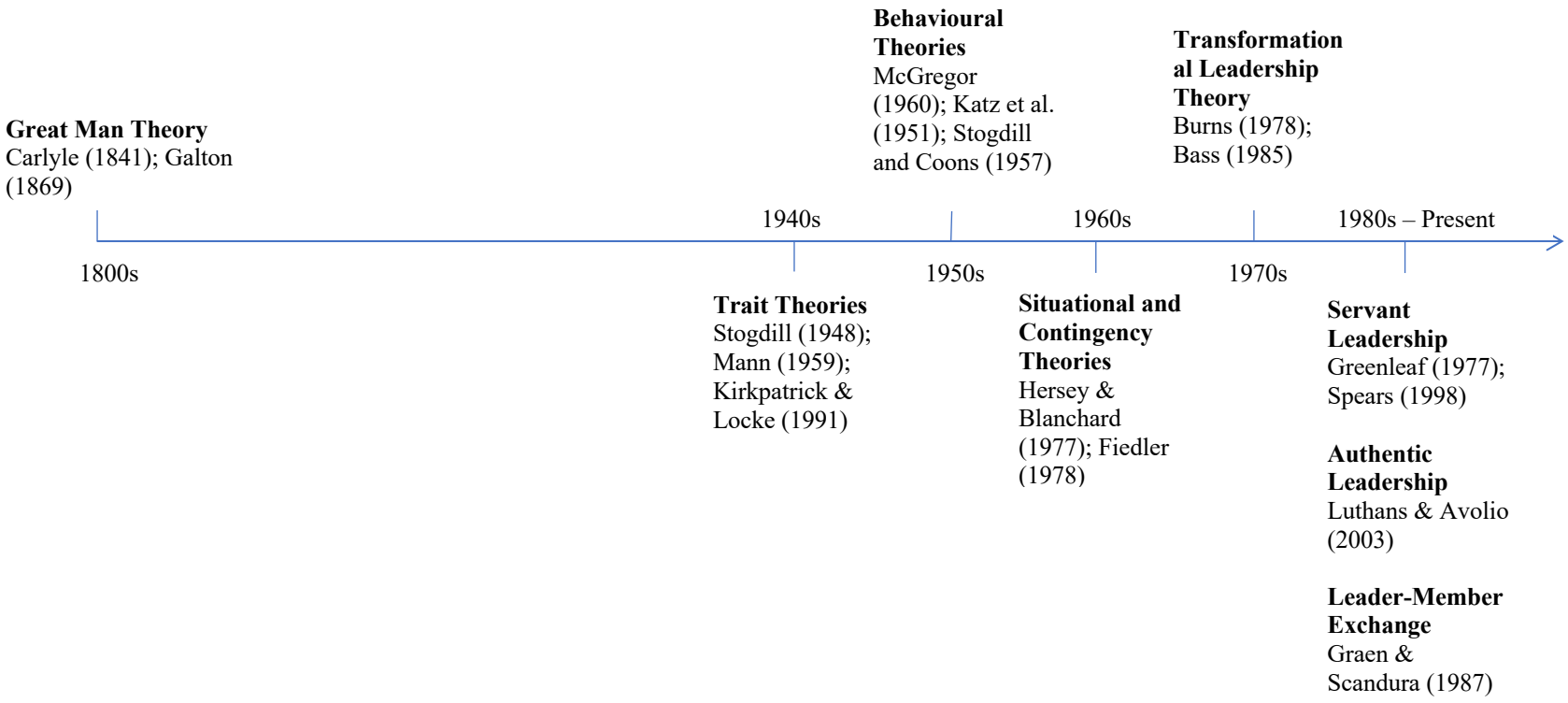
Scholars justify and attribute the apparent disorder in the descriptions and definitions of leadership to the individual perspectives of scholars and their interest in specific aspects of the leadership phenomenon (Stogdill, 1974; Yukl, 2010). This is true, given the academic backgrounds of seminal authors in a field that spreads across disciplines such as psychology, management and political science. Another plausible explanation is also to be found in the interpretation of Northouse (2015), who clarifies that the understanding and evolution of leadership is rather a reflection of the context of the era in which it is studied. In other words, there is an inherent societal influence in how leadership is conceptualised that is reflective of thoughts, demands and needs of society in a specific period of time. Thus, to understand leadership as a concept, it is important to understand the drivers that lead scholars to conceptualise leadership in a certain way. To do this, what follows provides a brief overview of evolution of leadership[7] through theories and concepts that have come to dominate the mainstream leadership literature.

A Brief History of Leadership Theories

It is generally agreed that the mainstream leadership has been dominated by different theoretical paradigms in different eras. Figure 2.1 provides a timeline of these dominant eras that have shaped leadership thought and research (Bass & Bass, 2009; Grint, 2011). The majority of scholars trace the roots of modern 'scientific' leadership to the work of Thomas Carlyle, who proposed the Great Man Theory in 19th century Britain (Carlyle, 1846). The Great Man Theory propounded that certain individuals had special traits that were gifts from God that gave them ability to shape the course of human history (Spector, 2016; Wren, 2013). Underpinning Carlyle's argument was the notion that such traits are innate – humans are born with them – and these make for successful leaders. He based his research on biographical case studies of famous individuals that examined facial features through physiognomic assessment, style of speaking and faith in God, *inter alia* (Carlyle, 1846). These famous individuals were considered worthy of hero status by Carlyle and he thus advocated a type of hero-worship, which he thought was much needed in a society he perceived to be breaking down (Carlyle, 1846). England at that time was witnessing significant transformation during the Industrial Revolution that brought changes to the forms and relations of production (Daunton, 1995); there was greater social mobility through rapid development of science and

[7] See also Wilson (2016) and Grint (2011) for historical accounts on the evolution of leadership and the influence of societal context in its conceptions.

Figure 2. 1: Dominant eras of leadership theory



technology and waning of the power of the church (More, 2002); and overall there was greater momentum of egalitarianism sweeping across England (Brock, 1973). Reflected in Carlyle's writing was a sense of unease about these developments, which he viewed not as progress but rather as a breakdown of social order. In response, Carlyle saw it as fitting to reinvigorate "admiration for individual boldness and respect for leaders" (Wilson, 2016, p. 103), which he discerned was being undermined by the rationalist and egalitarian spirit spreading across Britain (Carlyle, 1846). Interestingly, Wilson (2016) affirms the influence of context on leadership thought in that it was Carlyle's problematic view of society that shaped the earliest conception of leadership as an innate capability which only a few had the privilege of exercising.

Subsequent work by Galton (1869) furthered Carlyle's trait-based thesis of leadership and added to it the notion of eugenics. Galton's contribution to leadership was the "inheritance thesis", which he argued was the inherited traits of individuals that made them superior leaders. Most important of all was Galton's differentiated approach of using statistics in his analysis, which to the present day remains the bedrock of modern leadership research (Alvesson, 1996; Gardner et al., 2010). Galton's method of analysis attracted significant attention, especially at a time when the search of 'scientific truth' was gaining momentum in England and Carlyle's mostly biographical approach was failing the scientific rigour test (Gillham, 2001; Goldberg, 1993). It is thus understandable why Galton's then novel approach of using statistics to identify traits set the tone for leadership studies for several decades.

Despite the differences in Carlyle and Galton's approaches, the types of leadership that emerged from their work were similar. They both emphasised leaders as naturally occurring and biologically gifted "exceptional men" and promoted the "virtue of obedience to superior me"' underpinned by values of hierarchy and inequality between leaders and non-leaders (Wilson, 2016, p. 109). Their combined focus on innate traits and statistical analysis was formative in establishing leadership as a scientific discipline – so much so that it remained the major focus of leadership research well into the 20th century. This school of thought that understood leadership occurring as an outcome of 'nature' came to be labelled the trait school of leadership. Still believing that leadership was ultimately contingent on traits of individuals and which differentiated leaders from followers (Wren, 2013), trait theorists at the opening of the 20th century found themselves embedded within the scientific movement and found legitimacy for progressing leadership studies through using statistical analysis (Wilson,

2016). What ensued were concerted efforts by trait theorists to list innumerable numbers of traits that could be statistically proven as representative of what leadership should be like. Stogdill's review was seminal in this regard, asserting that good leaders could be confidently depicted as those superior to the average members of a small group in the following respects: intelligence; scholarship; dependability; activity and social participation; and socio-economic status (Stogdill, 1948). The trait school of leadership was dominant at the time, in that leadership theorists gained legitimacy by adopting and weaving scientific rigour and positivist methodology into their work, while still partially maintaining Carlyle and Galton's proposition. This paradigm was sustained for a significant period but faced problems in the late 1940s due to significant societal changes that occurred post-World War II (WWII).

Accounts of American society, where the trait school had flourished, experienced in the post-WWII period shifts towards a new era where national pride, industrial growth and attaining efficiency and effectiveness in the workplace were the dominant mantras (Hodgson, 2005). Understanding workplace management in this period gained particular prominence through a shift from strict adherence to Taylorist thinking on control towards the human-relations perspectives (Jacques, 1995; Mayo, 2004; Wren & Bedeian, 1994). Leadership scholars were also influenced by this movement, which eventually engendered the behavioural school of thought in leadership. The human-relations movement precipitated a shift away from traits to understanding the behaviour of leaders which came to dominate the literature for the next few decades.

The behavioural school focused on what leaders did and how they behaved in relation to influencing followers (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2013). Accounts by Fleishman (1973), Schriesheim and Bird (1979) and Shartle (1979) are particularly revealing about how leadership scholars became disenchanted with trait theories and were quick to adopt the agenda of improving workplace productivity in line with industrial and economic expansion witnessed in the US in the post WWII period. Scholars grew interested in how supervisory behaviour could now be conceptualised as leadership. In evaluating such works, the shift towards the behavioural school was indeed one of the single biggest turning points of leadership research. Arguably this shift signalled a departure from institutionalised beliefs in leadership as an innate quality to something that was now could be taught and learned suggesting that individuals could now emulate effective leadership behaviours to achieve positive outcomes (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Horner, 1997). The behavioural school also recognised followers as the primary group

affected by leadership behaviour. As a result, leadership research, continuing its reliance on statistical analysis, began looking at various effects of leaders on followers including the latter's job satisfaction and work performance (Likert, 1961; Morris & Seeman, 1950). For example, Wren (2013) points out one of the most comprehensive scales to measure leadership to emerge during this period was the Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) developed by the influential Ohio State University Studies and Michigan State University Studies[8].

While initial research by behavioural theorists was promising, the 1960s saw increasing inconsistencies revealed in the predictive ability of leadership behaviour for similar outcomes to those mentioned above (House, 1971; Yukl, 2010). Some scholars have presented this as the reason why behavioural theories fell out of vogue (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Gardner et al., 2010; Wren, 2013). However, to consider lack of statistical evidence as the sole reason the behavioural school of leadership became unpopular is to trivialise the underlying influence of changing societal circumstances. This is particularly true given the turbulent period the US underwent in the 1960s and 1970s, a period that witnessed the civil rights movements, anti-war protests in response to the US involvement in the Vietnam war , class-race relations that faced intense scrutiny, and overall a growing culture of rejecting traditional authority and valuing individual freedom of expression (Gitlin, 1993; Hodgson, 2005). Within this context, Wilson (2016) convincingly argues that leadership scholars faced challenges to sustaining the credibility of the field and that scholarship needed to adapt to changing social mores generally and also specifically to shifting views in management sciences about bureaucratic inflexibility and the influence of contextual dimension on business operations. The calculated response to these pressures was to develop a leadership model that was more aligned with the context in which it was exercised, thus allowing for tailoring to specific situations. This gave rise to the situational and contingency theories of leadership in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Works of situational and contingency theorists reveal their collective belief that there was no one best way to lead (Fiedler, 1967; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Vroom & Yetton, 1973).

[8] Ohio State University and Michigan State University studies spearheaded behavioural leadership studies in the 1950s and 1960s. Research from both universities led to identification of two broad categories of leadership behaviour: task-oriented and relations-oriented, which were subsequently tested for effects on various outcomes including, job satisfaction and performance (Wren, 2013).

Instead, they considered both leadership behaviour and situational factors as appropriate ways to better understand leadership. Fiedler's work was perhaps the driving force for this cause, proposing the first situational/contingency theory that argued that leaders should be matched to situations that suited their behavioural profile (Fiedler, 1967). This was followed by Vroom and Yetton (1973) and Hersey and Blanchard (1977) with their own contingency/situational theories, which posited leaders needed to adapt their leadership styles depending on the context and situations. Leaders also needed to tailor their approaches to respond to time availability, competency of followers, and accessibility to information (Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Nelson, 1993; Vroom & Jago, 2007).

The situational/contingency theories were important for the progress of the leadership research, in that they considered the leader as a dynamic and adept individual capable of adapting to changing circumstances, and not as an individual who only relied on one set of behavioural preferences. Leaders were now expected to be more skilled at diagnosing situations and were seen as having sufficient tactical capacity to shift their approaches (Blanchard et al., 1993; Graeff, 1997). This perspective was indeed an advance but unlikely to become a significant paradigm shift, given that the core tenet of viewing leadership through behaviours remained unchanged.

Situational/contingency theories have endured to produce useful research on effective leadership (Gardner et al., 2010), but they too eventually waned. Day and Antonakis (2012) suggest that interest of leadership scholars by the 1970s had shifted to broader contextual factors such as organisational characteristics and environmental elements. In particular, a number of crises occurring at a global level at the time impinged on management thought and consequently on leadership. Notably events such as the Watergate Scandal, the OPEC oil crisis, and the eroding industrial dominance of the US in the global economy had incited a sense of crisis in American society (Hodgson, 2005; Magaziner & Reich, 1983; Wilson, 2016). These issues questioned the viability of the status quo and incited a much-needed aspiration towards change in society in general. Wilson (2016) builds upon the notion that these factors were a vital force in convincing leadership scholars to radically re-conceptualise leadership as an agent that could produce dramatic and wide-spread change across American society.

Ushering in a 'new leadership' paradigm was the pioneering work of Burns (1978). Burns conceived a leader to be an "agent of morally uplifting change who has transformative effects on followers" (Wilson, 2016, p. 133). This conception came to be known as the transformational leadership style, described as an inspirational and charismatic form of leadership (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999) that motivated followers to think beyond self-interests and work for the sake of the goals of the team and organisation (Bellé, 2013). The transformational leader was positioned as someone who could overcome resistance to change, and bring incredible insights such that followers could rely on for guidance (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2013; Bass, 1985).

Some leadership scholars attribute the emergence of this new leadership to the changing needs of corporations at the time (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2013; Day & Antonakis, 2012). In particular, they point to significant restructuring corporations underwent to recalibrate themselves in line with shifting economic trends[9]. Yet there are perhaps deeper rationales to be found in the words of Wilson (2016), who attaches greater importance to the influence of society. In particular, Wilson comments that American society was largely enthralled by high-profile leaders such as John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King and thus was largely drawn to the notion of leadership being "dramatic, bold, and focused on the achievement of change" (p. 137). Coupled with the problems America was facing, it is easier to discern why the transformational leader became more than palatable and set the scene for new leadership thought.

Transformation leadership was indeed a radical shift in leadership thinking for its time, enduring and persisting to remain one of the most popular theories in leadership research today. Other theories have also ensued, such as servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 1996), authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) and leader-member exchange theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), but these offer only modest advances and draw on much of what was already established. The current literature is thus a concoction of the old and the new[10], a continuing dominance of established knowledge[11] and a space where only slight nuances

[9] Shifting economic trend refers to the oil price shock of 1973 that plunged the American and much of the world economy into a crisis.
[10] The recent mainstream literature has produced new theories such as Entrepreneurial Leadership theory, which is considered as a nuanced version of transformational leadership (Renko et al., 2015).
[11] Transformational leadership remains the most widely researched to date (Jensen et al., 2018; Sun & Henderson, 2017).

provide legitimacy to the idea of progress. Despite the evolution the field has undergone, consensus on an all-encompassing definition of leadership remains elusive. Instead scholars have adopted conceptions and definitions that suit the particular aspect of leadership they want to study (see for example Tummers & Knies, 2015).. However, this study adopts a broad conception of leadership as involving a) influencing individuals to contribute to group goals, and b) coordinating the pursuit of those goals (Bass, 1990; Van Vugt, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008; Yukl, 2010). This approach enables understanding of leadership as an enactment through individual attributes, behaviours and what leaders actually do, the interaction between leaders and followers, and what leadership achieves.

Before concluding this section, it is important to briefly note a parallel debate that holds implications for understanding leadership. This is in reference to the wider debate that attempts to draw distinctions between leadership and management. Indeed much has been written about it. For example, Bennis and Nanus (1985, p. 21) differentiating between the two stated, "Managers are people who do things right and leaders are the people who do the right thing". Similarly, Kotter (1982) asserted that management is primarily about coping with organisational complexity, including setting goals, staffing, organising and monitoring results, whereas leadership involves dealing with change, communicating vision and motivating employees, elements noted in detail earlier in chapter. More recent scholarship also acknowledges this distinction (e.g., Tummers and Knies, 2015), with scholars such as Korica, Nicolini and Johnson (2017) choosing to separate the two in their study. Yet increasingly however, contemporary scholars have chosen to follow the tradition of Mintzberg (1972), who argued against drawing distinctions and emphasized that leadership is in fact one of the many roles undertaken by managers. For example, Fernandez, Cho, & Perry, (2010) argued that in practice, the distinciton between leaderhip and management become blurred, as both focus on behaviour of individuals who enable others to achieve goals both at an indvidual and organisationl level. Perhaps more convincingly, this thesis is motivated to adopt Mintzberg's (1971) point of view influenced by recent trends among scholars arguing for the mundane and routine work of managers to be recognised as leadership. For example, Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003) empiricallly support the argument that mundane elements of litening, chatting, being cheerful, adminsitration and participation in meetings are indeed meaningful enactments of leadership that accomplish change in organisations overtime. Cox and Hassard (2019) are also of the similar view, suggesting leadership be considered as a type of mangerial work that is enacted through recursive

patterns and routine. Following in the tradition of Mintzberg (1971) is indeed beneficial within the amibit of this thesis, given it is undertaken in an underexplored context such Bangladesh, and thus adopting a wider conception that marries leadership and management provides broader lens for interpreting and understanding the manifestation of leadership.

In summary, the mainstream leadership literature is a space where scholars assume a highly optimistic stance of what leadership can achieve by finding credence in their scientific 'quantitative' methodologies that are often driven by strong assumptions. The literature is dominated by mostly quantitative studies that involve *testing* the effects of leadership models on various organisational and individual outcomes through increasingly sophisticated quantitative analysis. This thesis does not directly contest the correctness of these findings however, what is problematic is the generalised applications of leadership models in non-Western settings under the assumption that such a leadership style has universal appeal (Bass, 1997). This approach ignores the fact that non-Western workplace cultures are often structured around enduring indigenous values such as Confucianism in China (Zhang et al., 2012) or Islamic values in Middle Eastern countries (Faris & Parry, 2011), which may render transformative leaders ineffective. The question then arises as to how existing leadership theory can be applied to a context such as Bangladesh, where Western cultures, values and norms are far from being institutionalised.

Before proceeding to answer that question, the next section shifts focus to the PSL literature and applies a contextual lens to examine it. In particular, it focuses on the environmental factors within public management systems that have shaped conceptions of public sector leadership.

2.2 Public Sector Leadership

PSL does not share the same rich history as the mainstream literature. Its emergence as a differentiated field is recent and early forays were tentative, given that scholars did not emphasise the distinctive nature of public organisations in their studies of leadership (Bass, 1985; Bass & Yammarino, 1991). In hindsight, this was a weakness of the early PSL literature in light of the growing literature that is now dedicated to the understanding of differences between the public and private sectors (Hansen & Villadsen, 2010; Rainey, 1983; Rainey, 2014). It is important to acknowledge that there is indeed significant literature that

addresses the perennial public vs private debate, trying to resolve the debate whether private and public organisation are distinctive or similar. For example, Rainey (2014) argues that tasks undertaken by employees in both public and private organisation are similar. Whereas Buelens and Van Den Broeck (2007) suggests the work motivation of employees between the two sectors are starkly different. This thesis however avoids engaging that literature, partly because the focus of this thesis is not to draw distinction between the two sectors or nor to compare leadership between the two contexts. It is however important to acknowledge that the perennial public vs private is contentious, but for the purposes of ensuring focus, this thesis adopts the view put forwards by several scholars (e.g., Andersen, 2010; Hansen and Villadsen, 2010; and Hooijberg and Choi, 2001) that the public sector can be considered, including the manifestation of leadership within it. Indeed, such was the case by the 1990s, as public administration scholars began engaging with the leadership concept specifically in order to understand its manifestation within the structural conditions of government (Behn, 1998; Terry, 1998). For example, attention was given to the influences of political and administrative accountability, the precedence afforded to following rules, and the implications of creating publicly valued outcomes rather than shareholder values.

There is now general agreement among scholars that interest in public sector leadership was mainly sparked by structural changes precipitated by a wave of public sector reform measures, namely, the New Public Management (NPM) reforms, particularly in Western developed countries (Orazi et al., 2013; Van Wart, 2003). Discussed in detail in subsequent sections, the NPM reforms provided for greater autonomy and discretion to be exercised by public managers (Considine & Painter, 1997; Karlsson, 2018; O'Reilly & Reed, 2010). Seminal public sector leadership scholar Van Wart (2003) has made a case that it was this radical shift in the organising principles of the public sector that created an environment for leadership to be exercised by public managers, whose leadership was previously restrained under an 'old' order of public administration. In other words, it was changes in the values, norms and practices in the public administration that brought into existence an entirely new practice and field of research: that of public sector leadership.

The public sector leadership field is now considered burgeoning with theories (Crosby & Bryson, 2018; Ospina, 2017), though much of this thinking has been borrowed from the mainstream literature. A few scholars have categorically challenged this type of

transplantation, stressing that structural characteristics of the public sector are incongruent with mainstream leadership ideals (Spicker, 2012; Vogel & Masal, 2015). This, however, has not hindered the transplantation process, perhaps because the core issue of leadership as a mechanism of influence to achieve group goals fundamentally remains the same across domains. Following this line of inquiry, it does make sense for public administration scholars to not 'reinvent the wheel' and to borrow from the rich leadership literature. It may be argued that the transplantation occurs in a compelling way by weaving in public sector values and norms in their application of mainstream leadership models (see for examples, Currie et al., 2008; Denhardt & Campbell, 2006; Jacobsen, 2015). This signals a concerted effort by scholars to retain the uniqueness of the public sector while still advocating universal scientism (Ospina, 2017).

Theories derived specifically from the public sector context have also found place in wider PSL literature (see for example, Page, 2010; Tummers & Knies, 2015). Much of this research continues to utilise the positivist theory-testing traditions of the mainstream literature with the occasional theory-building approach (e.g., by adopting a constructivist or interpretivist research approaches) appearing in some journals. For example, Tummers and Knies (2015) employ quantitative analysis to propose a measure for "public sector leadership", while Morse (2010) uses a qualitative case study to construct an integrative leadership model for the public sector.

Embedded in this context-focused approach to studying public sector leadership is an acknowledgement of the public sector environment in which public managers are located and which legitimises the type of leadership that might be exercised by them. For example, some (e.g., Getha-Taylor & Morse, 2013; Kim, 2018; Wister et al., 2014) scholars have emphasised the importance of organising principles related to collaborative governance as an important precursor in order for elements of collaborative leadership to emerge. In another instance, Currie et al. (2008) show how organising principles related to NPM in the UK were vital for public managers to lead in entrepreneurial ways. Yet fundamental issues such as the nature of governance or organising principles in the public sector are often discussed in passing, restricted to the background sections of papers. Failing to give considered attention to the particularity of the public sector may be because of entrenched assumptions that public sector values and norms are constant across contexts in which much of public sector leadership

research is undertaken, which is primarily Western capitalist countries (Van Wart, 2013a; Vogel & Masal, 2015). However, such assumptions can become problematic when considering the public sector in non-Western contexts. Problems stem from the fact that, while post-colonial developing countries contain Western public sector values and norms, they exist in variant forms and also compete with indigenous values and norms to influence public sector practices (Brinkerhoff & Goldsmith, 2005; Farazmand & Balilaj, 2015; Haque, 1997; Riggs, 1964). This may also be an important reason because of which PSL studies within Bangladesh or other post-colonial developing countries are scant. For example, Khan and Islam (2014) attempted to sketch out the nature of public sector leadership development in Bangladesh. However, they confine their discussion mostly to issues of leadership development and training and primarily comment on the inefficacy of training programs that have failed to foster any leadership in government. As such, the study offers little in the way of understanding how leadership is enacted by civil servants. Studies from other post-colonial settings such as those in Africa can be considered to provide a more convincing nature of public sector leadership. Yet, they also adopt Western theories while neglecting indigenous organising principles of the respective research settings. For example, Ohemang, Amoake-Asiedo and Darko (2017) test for transformation and transactional leadership theory and employee performance in the Ghanaian civil service. While the authors claimed to find evidence of the aforementioned leadership style, they also concede the lack of attention to the cultural context in their study. Perhaps for such reasons, Haruna (2009, p. 948) discussing public sector leadership in Africa, concluded:

> "African nations have implemented the leader-follower leadership models without regard for their social and cultural conditions…[which are] disproportionately skewed towards Anglo-American managerialism. As a result, leadership theorising and practice has led to the imposition of theory that is disconnected from the environment."

Given such complexity and indeed a recognition from scholars commenting on public sector leadership in post-colonial developing countries, it becomes necessary to understand the public sector leadership literature through the lens of public sector norms and values so as to understand how public management contexts influence the enactment of public sector leadership. The following section provides an account of public sectors norms, values and

practices, the changes that have occurred, and the implications for public sector leadership enactment.

2.2.1 Public administration paradigms and leadership

This section examines the influence of the public sector context in shaping conceptions of leadership. The public sector context in particular is explored through the notion of public administration *paradigms* – a key theoretical concept used by public administration scholars to understand how ideas informed by the fields of economics, sociology and business management have shaped the organisation of the public sector throughout its modern history (Bryson et al., 2014; Christensen, 2012; Rhodes, 2016). Paradigms inform a key premise of this thesis of examining how the public sector context has shaped PSL conceptions and its enactment.

The work on paradigms is originally credited to American philosopher Thomas Kuhn (1970), who described them as the 'accepted examples' of scientific practice that can include law, theory, application and instrumentation of scientific research. According to Morgan (1980), paradigms represent 'world views' about the nature of science, society and the dimensions of change; old paradigms can be replaced by a new paradigm that brings about change in commonly held values, agendas and assumptions (Gow & Dufour, 2000; Gray & Jenkins, 1995). Barbour (1976) adds that paradigms are composed of models, which are "symbolic representation of selected aspects of the behaviour of a complex system for particular purpose" (p 11). Based on these classifications, Ugyel (2014) considers paradigms as 'exemplars' or 'ideal types' of organising within a particular domain.

In this sense, paradigms in public administration represent ideas or organising principles that have shaped the function of government (Henry, 1975; Hughes, 2012; Lovrich Jr, 1985). This is largely reflective of how the work of government and public administration has expanded and changed (Ugyel, 2014) due to the influence of various ideas and theories (Lynn Jr, 2006; Spicer, 2004). Some scholars have produced works that have attempted to explain the differing paradigms that exist within the public administration. For example, Henry (1975) proffers five paradigms: the politics/administration dichotomy, public administration as political science, the principles of administration, public administration as administrative science, and public administration as public administration. Frederickson (1976) also

proposes five paradigms: the classic bureaucratic model, the neo-bureaucratic model, institutional model, the human relations model, and public choice.

The divergences between these paradigms, however, has not impeded consensus on what is understood to be two dominant paradigms in public administration, that of Traditional Public Administration (TPA) and the New Public Management (Aucoin, 1990; Hughes, 2012). In more recent years, a third new paradigm has been argued to have emerged under labels such as public value governance (Stoker, 2006), network governance (Rhodes, 1996), and new public service (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2007). The underlying principles of the different models are similar and they are thus often referred to collectively as the post-NPM paradigm (Christensen, 2012; Lodge & Gill, 2011; Ugyel, 2014; Zafra-Gómez, Bolívar, & Muñoz, 2013). These paradigms are discussed in the following subsection to explain organising principles in the public sector and demonstrate how public sector leadership research can be traced onto these paradigms to show how context has influenced public sector leadership enactment. In doing so however, the section critiques the often held assumption that the aforementioned public administration paradigms existed singularly and that paradigms replaced one another to influence public administration systems. This thesis, however, concludes that paradigms in reality have rarely replaced one another. Instead, paradigms are found to be layered one over the other, resulting in the possibility of co-existing paradigms, which complicates the nature and conception of public sector leadership which are found to correspond to paradigms. Consequently, the following section critiques the applicability of public sector leadership theories and models, particularly if in reality, administrative systems do exhibit multiple co-existing paradigms.

2.2.1.1 Traditional public administration and leadership

The beginnings of the formal organisation of government can be traced back to the 17th century. The enactment of Peace of Westphalia[12] was key in introducing the notion of Westphalian sovereignty and absolutist states across Continental Europe, engendering professionalised and centralised organisation of the administration. The treaties marked the beginning of the TPA, which was indeed a much-needed change at the time, especially

[12] The Peace of Westphalia was a series of treaties signed by European countries in 1648 that ended years of war that mainly centred on religion. Scholars attribute the beginnings of the international system of sovereignty to the treaties.

because governments across Europe suffered from rampant politicisation of public officials, a degrading moral and ethical character of appointed officials, and severe inefficiencies across the government apparatus (Pollock, 1937). The TPA took shape over subsequent decades until two significant developments in the UK and the US during the 19th century concretised and established it as a dominant Western public administration paradigm. In the UK, the Northcote-Trevelyan Report recommended the establishment of a merit-based civil service and in the US the Pendleton Act introduced elements of scientific management into the administration, including competitive examinations and job definitions (Light, 2006; Theriault, 2003).

The legitimacy and effectiveness of a professionalised bureaucracy that the TPA promised only increased with the permeation of capitalism and the industrial revolution across much of Continental Europe, the UK and the US in the early 19thth century. Changes in modes of production and prominence of the state in all aspects of society meant there was increased dependency on the administration to provide expertise in technical, legal and administrative work (Lynn Jr, 2006). The greatest test perhaps faced by TPA as an effective organising form was the ability of Western governments to navigate through events such as World Wars I and II and the Great Depression (originating in the US) that increased faith of citizens in government as a force for good (Bryson et al., 2014). To organise government around TPA principles was indeed a sensible choice for its time and an appropriate response to the challenges nations faced in industrialisation, urbanisation, the rise of modern corporations, and fears over market failure.

The TPA is now variously referred to as the 'bureaucratic paradigm', 'the old orthodoxy' and also even as 'old-time religion'. According to Beetham (1996), four key principles underpinned its functioning as a paradigm. The first was the defined hierarchical division of labour that allowed responsibilities to be managed through their distribution up and down the chain of command and were completed through repetitive tasks. The second core element was the feature of the 'career civil service' which emphasised continuity and long-term career advancement. The third feature included the importance of following rules when carrying out administrative work, preferably by maintaining written records that decreased opportunities for any arbitrariness and favouritism. Last, officials were appointed on merit, received training and ideally became experts in their own domains. There is indeed consensus on this simplistic view of TPA (Bryson et al., 2014; Hughes, 2012; Stoker, 2006) which often

overshadows the complex development processes it underwent and the different schools of thought it credits for its theoretical foundation. In particular, Lynn Jr (2001) strongly argued case for the TPA as the bedrock of public administration whose criticism is often misinformed warrants a closer examination for its underlying theories.

TPA represents an amalgamation of ideas that were advanced over several decades (Barzelay, 1992). Starting with Northcote-Trevelyan Report and Pendleton Act, the development of TPA was primarily based on the work of Weber (1947), Wilson (1941), and Taylor (1914). Work by German sociologist Max Weber is perhaps regarded as the most influential in shaping the bureaucratic paradigm (Walton, 2005; Wong, 2013). Weber's idea of rational-legal authority formed the basis on which TPA was conceived (Hughes, 2012). It implied that an administrative system should be primarily guided by authority of and belief in a legitimate, rational-legal political order where the state retains the right to define and enforce the legal order (Beetham, 1996; Olsen, 2006). Through this type of authority, Weber (1947) argued, the bureaucracy functioned according to laws and administrative regulations and an established system of hierarchy where work was done by lower offices with supervision from higher ones. Frederick Taylor's work on scientific management was also important for the conception of TPA. Taylor's ideas mainly related to the standardisation of work by identifying the best way to complete a task and working to maintain that process (Ugyel, 2014). Finally, Woodrow Wilson contributed to the TPA by addressing concerns of overt and untoward politicisation of the administration. Wilson (1887) is credited with the politics-administration dichotomy that established a clear separation between politics and the administration. This clarified the relationship between accountability and responsibility in the public administration (Hughes, 2012). In terms of accountability, civil servants became accountable to elected officials, who in turn were accountable to citizens who elected them. With regard to responsibility, TPA assumed that government worked through two components: decision making (including policy design) was left to elected officials, whereas implementation of those decisions were the responsibility of civil servants (Waldo, 1948), which led to clearly identifying responsibilities for both parties. The underlying purpose of Wilson's work was to establish an apolitical public service that would serve the government impartially and without any bias. Few contemporary scholars, however, discuss the underlying purpose of these principles. In fact, some of the earliest work, from scholars such as Macmahon (1955), Herring (1936) and Hyneman (1945), suggest the overarching purpose of the administration was to ensure the public interest. Even later works, such as that of

Wamsley and Wolf (1995), argues that public interest as a moral perspective was fundamental in guiding administrative actions under the TPA. As such, along with the frequently cited principles of the TPA, it is reasonable to suggest that public interest was also fundamental guiding principle in the bureaucratic paradigm. These key characteristics of the bureaucratic paradigm are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2. 1: Public administration paradigms: bureaucratic paradigm

	Bureaucratic paradigm
Ideological Base	Bureaucratic
Dominant focus/guiding principles	Rules
Approach to Accountability	Hierarchical
Key Value	Impartiality; efficiency; public interest
Performance Objective	Managing inputs

Source: Adapted from Denhardt and Denhardt (2015); O'Flynn (2007)

Did Public sector leadership have a role under TPA?

Given the discussion thus far, one can be led to assume that there were indeed overlaps in the timeframe between the development of the TPA and the mainstream leadership literature. The two sets of literature paralleled each other through much of the 20th century, yet the public administration literature rarely makes any reference to the concept of leadership throughout that period. Terry (2002) was convinced there was no need for discussion on leadership at the time. He comments that public sector leadership enactment did not exist to an appreciable level so as to be considered truly leadership under the TPA. He blames the impositions of the TPA as a system that hardly required any agentic actions because everything was set out in the rules, procedures and regulations that prescribed courses of action and to which civil servants were expected to adhere. Terry (2002) also argues there were much larger forces (e.g., politics and laws) beyond the control of civil servants that shaped the work of the administration, thus rendering the impact of leadership of civil servants insignificant. Few have doubted these claims, particularly a cohort of administrative scholars who have long claimed TPA to be laden with bureaucratic rules and rigidities that curtailed autonomy and afforded limited discretion to public managers (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000; Dunleavy & Hood, 1994; Hughes, 2012; Pollitt, 1993).

Terry's (1998) and indeed others' dismissive view of public sector leadership appear to have had some influence demonstrated by the lack of research undertaken during the peak period of the TPA (Van Wart, 2003). Some of the earliest work conducted by Finer (1941) and Leys (1943) comes close to being considered studies of public sector leadership. Their underlying focus was the degree of discretion that should be used by civil servants and how much of that should be informed by ethical principles. While still important, these studies proved less illuminating regarding leadership – about how civil servants might use their discretion to influence and achieve goals – and instead commented more on mundane operational issues like carrying out administrative tasks.

The work of Guyot (1962) followed. Here, for the first time, a clear distinction is made between bureaucrats in government and managers in the private sector. The study offered novel insights about the underlying motivations of individuals in the two sectors. For example, civil servants were found to be motivated by a sense of achievement and gaining power, while private sector managers were more concerned with making profits and whether their actions are accepted by relevant actors within their domain. Guyot's work, while not particularly insightful about the details of leadership per se, nonetheless provided a sense of the underlying motivations of civil servants who were in a position to exercise leadership. Works of Altshuler (1965) and Lundstedt (1965), published subsequently, touched on topics such as how public leaders might use social power for influence. Studies such as these were a signal of the phenomenon of leadership being accepted within public administration, but it was being done with references to the style and approaches that were in vogue in the mainstream literature, for example, authoritarian or democratic leadership approaches that were widely discussed under the behavioural school of leadership (Bass & Bass, 2009).

Subsequent years witnessed a lull in public sector leadership studies. Despite the initial spike in interest from public administration scholars, it would seem that Terry's (2002) dismissive views about public sector leadership during the period in which the TPA paradigm dominated were pertinent. It must, however, be noted that Terry expressed his views using retrospective analysis during a time when general understanding of what leadership became well-embedded among social scientists. Indeed, leadership of civil servants under the TPA, when viewed through a contemporary lens, did not display transformative or entrepreneurial behaviour. This does not, however, imply that a different type leadership did not exist. Wright and Pandey (2010) assure us that public sector leadership under the TPA paradigm

was imbued with Weber's rational-legal authority. In other words, civil servants' use of formal authority, coupled with the requirement to draw on laws and regulations, allowed them to make decisions and, more importantly, to use them as mechanisms of influence.

The aim of such leadership was to ensure stability, predictability and equity, and to impose uniformity on employees who carried out administrative work (e.g., decisions, reports, negotiations, standard operating procedures). Furthermore, civil servants relied on organisational design features to guide follower behaviour and the urge for strict systematic discipline from followers and expected conformity to rules and regulations to achieve the work of government (Wright & Pandey, 2010). Perhaps most intriguing about this claim are similarities it shares with the leadership style widely known as transactional leadership (TCL). TCL focuses on promoting compliance and discipline among followers through both rewards and punishment (Bass, 1990). TCL, also referred to as the 'old management style', was articulated by Bass (1990) and has transactions between leaders and followers at its core (Podsakoff et al., 2006). The intention of such transactions is to provide incentives to followers for the pursuit of personal interest. TCL thus entails rewards and sanctions through which the leader may derive compliance to administrative laws, regulations and practices (Jensen et al., 2019). According to the mainstream leadership literature, TCL is enacted by informing followers of work expectations and of the rewards and recognition awarded for fulfilling them (*contingent reward)*, monitoring work of subordinates and taking corrective actions when deviance occurs *(active management)*, and waiting passively for subordinates to commit mistakes before calling on them to take corrective action. Empirical testing demonstrates transactional leadership remains a core type of leadership exercised by public managers (Oberfield, 2012; Taylor, 2016; Trottier et al., 2008). Its relevance today in government is interesting to note, particularly because of its links to TPA, whose relevance is not widely rejected even though it is, of course, argued to have faded. As the chapter unfolds further, it will be made apparent why TPA may exist today in some places and hence why transactional leadership is relevant in government.

In summary, public sector leadership under the TPA paradigm was found to have limited scope. Much of this is attributed to the organising principles enforced under the TPA that can limit the opportunities of civil servants to exercise a type of leadership that is popular with today's public administration scholars. What is perhaps deserving of but has attracted limited interest is the fact that a set of leadership practices did exist that emulated elements of

Weber's rational-legal authority supplemented by a transactional approach. The relevance of such a type of leadership in today's public sector is, however, questionable, given the replacement of TPA as a dominant paradigm as is claimed by prominent scholars (Dan & Pollitt, 2015; Denhardt & Denhardt, 2007; Dunleavy & Hood, 1994; Gray & Jenkins, 1995). TPA faced mounting criticism in the post-WW II period as an obsolete model that no longer was sufficient to meet the needs of nations. TPA was criticised for being overtly controlling, inward-looking and obsessed with focusing on *how* things were done, such as through rules and procedure, while ignoring the *results* (Barzelay, 1992; Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). Perhaps the most critical comments were from Denhardt and Denhardt (2000), who believe that TPA was hostile to discretion and to citizen involvement, uninvolved in policy, parochial and narrowly focused on efficiency. Criticisms were only a call and justification for change.

2.2.1.2 New public management and leadership

Changes in the dominant public management paradigm were the result of several interrelated factors. These included a growing disenchantment with the effectiveness of TPA, public attacks on the efficiency of the public sector, changes in economic theories and ideologies including globalisation, the growth of the private sector, and advances in technology (Hughes, 2012; Light, 2006; Ugyel, 2016). Each of these issues manifested over the course of several decades and resulted in the radical transformation of the public sector and its organising principles.

By the 1960s, there was heightened sentiment in various Western governments about the shortcomings of TPA. For example, in the UK the Fulton Report was critical of the existing arrangements in public administration. It queried the relevance and effectiveness of an outdated model of public administration and argued for increased management capacity of the civil service through better management training, hiring of specialists instead of generalist civil servants[13], and removing rigid hierarchical structures (Chapman, 1968). The US also witnessed similar developments under the Carter administration through the Civil Service Reform Act 1978 that introduced merit-based pay and gave public managers greater responsibility for results (Foster, 1979). Mirroring these views, the Australian government in

[13] Broadly speaking, generalists are those who know a good deal about a wide range of issues or subject matter, whereas specialists have a narrow but deep expertise. Under TPA, recruitment of generalists was common, with assumed value in a broad (often tertiary) education, which suited them to roles as managers (administrators), and specialists were recruited for nominated tasks whose subject matter lay outside generalist purview.

1983 raised doubts about the management capacity of the Australian public service (Hughes, 2012). It would appear that Western governments at that time were expressing an explicit inclination towards adopting the term *management* as their mantra, yet it was still unclear what the term actually meant. Keeling (1972) described it as having a business sense, in that government could be managed like an enterprise where resources were deployed in a well-calculated manner to achieve the best possible outcome. Keeling's interpretation implies an appreciation of practices in the private sector, which had undergone significant transformation in the late 1950s by abandoning rigid bureaucratic and Weberian principles. Instead, the private sector began focusing on results rather than on processes and ensured that someone took charge and was held responsible for those results. Culmination of all of this was the emergence of the practice of *managerialism* and elevation of the role of the manager. Reading of the reports from the US, the UK and Australian governments reveals frequent reference to such private sector practices and an inquisitiveness about whether the public sector should emulate them.

Concomitantly, attacks on the public sector, particularly in the UK and US, were increasing (Chapman, 1991; Hood, 1995; Lynn Jr, 2006). These attacks from various quarters of society, including citizens and interest groups, stemmed from a growing sense of unease about government and, in particular, the role of the bureaucracy. These concerns related to the size of the government in becoming too large and consuming too many resources, the government having a monopoly on too many activities and services, and the methods and processes used in the bureaucracy (e.g., 'red tape'), which were considered highly inefficient (Hughes, 2012). These issues reflected the anti-government sentiment that was being fostered in the UK and US, and, with the election of Ronald Reagan in the US and Margaret Thatcher in UK in 1980 and 1979, respectively, this sparked a wave of public sector reforms to assuage the unease of the masses in those countries (Farnham & Horton, 1993; Ranson & Stewart, 1994).

The election of politically conservative parties in the UK and US was indeed critical, but underlying the reforms was a complex web of thought and ideologies that were inherently driven by the field of economics. Under the wider banner of neo-liberalism, the field of economics underwent a transformation during this period that saw a desertion of the dominant Keynesian[14] economic thinking and a move towards neo-classical market-based

[14] Keynesian economic thought advocated government intervention in the market economy. Keynesian

approaches (Hughes, 2012). Conservative economists such as Friedman and Friedman (1990) argued that government interventions through the bureaucratic apparatus should be stopped and be replaced with reliance on markets that gave people 'freedom' and 'choice'. Theoretical foundations of the reform movement in the field of economics were also influenced by *public choice theories* and a view of rationality which stated that the 'rational economic man' was discouraged by penalties and attracted towards rewards (Stigler, 1975). This gave rise to the element of competition that would result in the private sector delivering many of the services that were hitherto a government responsibility, as will be discussed below (Boyne, 1998; Gruening, 2001). The economic theory of principal and agent[15] (as a 'problem' or 'dilemma') was also influential in shaping reforms, especially concerning accountability.

The culmination of these permeated administrative thinking and engendered the NPM suite of reforms. Pushed through various advocates, NPM reforms swept across Western developed countries and later into developing countries as a panacea for the inefficiencies and ineffectiveness that public sectors were experiencing across the globe, allegedly replacing TPA as the organising principle (Christensen, 2014; Dan & Pollitt, 2015; Dunleavy & Hood, 1994; Manning & McCourt, 2013). Guided by the logic of 'markets' and 'managerialism' (Box et al., 2001; Lynn Jr, 2006), Hood (1991) first penned the broad doctrine of NPM:

1) Hands-on professional management through active discretionary control for managers and accountability that requires clear assignment of responsibility for action;
2) Explicit standards and measures of performance that are clearly defined by goals and targets and expressed in quantitative terms;
3) Greater emphasis on output controls where resource allocation and rewards are linked to measured performance and the stress is on results rather than procedures;
4) Shift to disaggregation of units in the public sector due to the breakdown of formerly monolithic units dealing on an arms' length basis and the need to create manageable units with separate provision and production interest;
5) A shift to greater competition in the public sector by moving to term contracts and

economists believed that, while the economy was mainly driven by the private sector, government interventions were key to smoothing out imperfections.

[15] In summary, principal-agent theory sought to address an inferred problem where an agent was able to take decisions for or affecting another, the principal, but without the latter exercising effective control, even where the latter's interests were crucial. This 'dilemma' generated a substantial literature (and influence) of its own.

tendering procedures;

6) Stress on private-sector styles of management practice with greater flexibility in hiring and rewards and use of public relations (PR) techniques; and
7) Stress on greater discipline and parsimony in resource use through cost cutting and other measures.

NPM advocates believed that emulating private sector practices would result in reaping greater levels of efficiency and effectiveness in the public sector (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992; Pollitt, 1993). Privatising state-owned enterprises, promoting public-private partnerships, and introducing performance-based pay were some of the outcomes of such beliefs. Perhaps the most profound changes were the implications that they entailed for public administrators, now referred to as public managers. Public managers were viewed as less constrained by rules and procedures than previously but were legitimate 'managers' capable of exercising discretion and autonomy. NPM started with replacing the hierarchical command and control approach under the TPA with more market-based strategies, such as creating incentives for public managers and by introducing performance indicators to create competition, guided by the assumption that these measures would drive public managers to perform better and be more result-oriented (Aberbach & Christensen, 2005; Klijn, 2008). Under these arrangements, public managers were allowed to exercise high levels of discretionary power for day-to-day management and were free to make decisions within the legislative and policy frameworks set by politicians (Newman, 2005). NPM supporters felt an arrangement like this would exempt public managers from direct political interference and enable them to independently choose the means necessary to achieve results and outcomes set by politicians (Hood, 1991; Scott, Bushnell, & Sallee, 1990). Limits on discretion and autonomy were set by legislative frameworks and the controls and means through which managers could achieve their results were executed through a wide array of resources they had at their disposal, such as finances, human resources and other managerial tools (Considine & Painter, 1997; Ugyel, 2016). Table 2.2 summarises the key characteristics of the NPM paradigm.

Table 2. 2: Public administration paradigms: NPM paradigm

	NPM paradigm
Ideological Base	Market driven; competition
Dominant focus/guiding principles	Results
Approach to Accountability	Market driven, in which aggregated self-interests result in outcomes desired by broad groups of citizens as customers
Key Value	Professionalism; efficiency and effectiveness
Performance Objective	Managing inputs and outputs

Source: Adapted from Denhardt and Denhardt (2015); O'Flynn (2007)

Did NPM inspire contemporary public sector leadership to emerge?

Under the NPM paradigm, it was perceived as legitimate behaviour for public managers to exercise their enhanced sense of discretion and autonomy under this new order and to be 'innovative' and 'entrepreneurial' (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). Van Wart (2003) explains that it was likely that it was these radical changes that sparked an inquisitiveness among public administration scholars to begin exploring whether the concept of 'leadership' could finally be embraced in government in its entirety. In other words, could public managers emulate leadership practices such as those found in the mainstream literature? This new foray by public administration scholars appeared sensible, given that the exercise of leadership was fundamentally understood to be underpinned by discretionary and autonomous actions (Shamir & Eilam-Shamir, 2017; Zhu et al., 2018) which would have been likely circumscribed by the restrictive practices of TPA.

Thus it would seem that NPM in theory promised to create a public sector environment that would be more accepting of how leadership was practised in the private sector. It does not then come as a surprise that public administration scholars became more open to using mainstream leadership theories, substantiating their approach by often naively arguing that the NPM suite of reforms had made the public sector more like the private sector (Baarspul & Wilderom, 2011; Boyne, 2002; Hansen & Villadsen, 2010). As will be demonstrated in a latter section (Section 2.3), this was hardly the case, as the public sector continues to retain

many of its differentiated characteristics when compared with the private sector (Andersen, 2010; Hooijberg & Choi, 2001; Rainey, 2014). Nonetheless, the NPM paradigm unlocked a potential new area of research for public administration scholars to explore how leadership could be effectively enacted in government.

Understandably, this exploration of a public sector leadership type aligned closely with NPM organising principles, seeking to achieve objectives of change, performance, entrepreneurship and innovation in the public sector (O'Flynn, 2007; Wise, 2002). As discussed above, one prominent mainstream leadership theory, transformational leadership (TL) theory, also came to prominence within the PSL literature (Jensen et al., 2018; Van Wart, 2013a; Vogel & Masal, 2015). TL is generally regarded as an inspirational form of leadership (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999), a leadership style that motivates followers to think beyond self-interest and work for the sake of the goals of the team and organisation (Bellé, 2013). Leaders do this through four specific mechanism: 1) idealised influence, where certain behaviours of leaders that are admired by followers are based on values, beliefs or ideals; 2) inspirational motivation, or the ways in which leaders are able to inspire and appeal to followers through goal setting and convey optimism in goal attainment through effective communication; 3) intellectual stimulation, in the ability to challenge assumptions, take risks and encourage creativity; and 4) individualised consideration, or the ability to meet various needs of followers, including acting as a mentor and heeding concerns of followers (Bass, 1997; Crede & Harms, 2010; Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

PSL scholars follow similar quantitative approaches to mainstream leadership scholars (Banks et al., 2016; Ng, 2017) in determining the 'effects' that TL can have on a range of outcomes (Andersen et al., 2016), including organisational performance and innovation (Hansen & Pihl-Thingvad, 2018; Osborn & Marion, 2009; Sun & Henderson, 2017). And, beyond just achieving goals, objectives and performance, transformational leaders in the public sector were also perceived as change makers who could facilitate the paradigm shift and make NPM practices the new norm in government (Trottier et al., 2008). For example, Moynihan et al. (2012) show that TL was able to promote and ensure purposeful use of performance management techniques in the public sector. This speaks of the behavioural change in the public sector that NPM principles promoted (Moynihan & Pandey, 2010) and how TL was able to reframe institutionalised problems and provide the necessary support

structures and incentives for organisational members to break from routines and comfort zones (Bess & Goldman, 2001).

Despite the popularity of TL (Hansen & Pihl-Thingvad, 2018; Jensen et al., 2019; Jensen et al., 2018; Sun & Henderson, 2017), it has not escaped criticism of its applicability in the public sector (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Currie & Lockett, 2007; Pawar & Eastman, 1997). For example, scholars concede the fact that, despite reforms, government is inherently guided by a 'bureaucratic-logic' manifesting through centralisation, formalisation and hierarchical structure (Boyne, 2002; Pandey & Wright, 2006). These factors can limit the flexibility that underpins the effective functioning of transformational leaders who require less rigid organisational structures to exercise their managerial discretion (Wright & Pandey, 2010). Further, criticism directed by Denhardt and Campbell (2006) at the incongruity of public sector values and those promoted by TL is perhaps the most striking in questioning the model's applicability. The authors emphasise the fact that the inalienable values of democracy, citizenship and a commitment to serving the public interest are the 'normative foundation of public administration' (Denhardt & Campbell, 2006; Frederickson, 1996; Terry, 1993), which demand public managers to exercise model of stewardship (Fairholm, 2004), act as a conservator of public service values (Terry, 2002) and be committed to helping citizens facing problems (Heifetz, 1994). These enduring values of the public sector (Frederickson & Matkin, 2014; Rhodes, 2016; Van Wart, 2013a), however, can be undermined if the vision of the organisation is developed and articulated solely by the leader, as the theory suggests, for then in reality it is the interest of the leader that takes precedence over the normative values of the public sector (Burns, 1978).

In addition to TL, the entrepreneurial leadership (EL) model was also considered by scholars under the NPM paradigm. This was motivated by the underlying theme of entrepreneurship in NPM that viewed public managers as 'entrepreneurs' capable of radically changing and improving organisational capability and obtaining improbable results (Moore, 1995). This gave traction to the idea of EL (Behn, 1998; Boyett, 1996), defined as the capacity of leaders to capitalise on opportunities through willingness to take calculated risks in certain situations, be creative and innovative in finding solutions to public problems, and maintain proactivity by anticipating and preventing problems (Currie et al., 2008; Kim, 2010). Recent work by Renko et al. (2015) adds that these attributes are underpinned by two important factors: the ability to recognise opportunities and exploit the opportunities they are presented with.

Opportunity recognition is about perceptions and the process of identifying opportunities concerned with doing something new and innovative (Currie et al., 2008), whereas exploitation refers to actions and investments committed to gaining benefits and returns from the new opportunity (Renko et al., 2015). Scholars claim that EL is a type of leadership that primarily relies on acting as a role model to followers as the main mechanism of influence. In other words, ELs lead by example, which they expect followers to emulate (McGrath, Mac Grath, & MacMillan, 2000). This argument assumes that, by witnessing the entrepreneurial activities of the leader, followers will be encouraged and challenged to think in more entrepreneurial ways and thus be led to the possible outcomes of innovation and change (Thornberry, 2006).

Advocates of EL speculated that the market principles in government would incentivise and reward entrepreneurial behaviour that could lead to innovation, efficiency and responsiveness of public organisations (Borins, 2000; Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). Western governments saw little value in questioning such assumptions as countries such as the UK, Australia and New Zealand promoted the entrepreneurial spirit through their respective civil services when they embraced NPM (Ball, 1994; Currie et al., 2008; Goldfinch & Roberts, 2013).

Indeed, similar to TL, quantitative assessments of EL provide an encouraging view of its enactment by public managers that results in greater chances of innovation and innovative behaviour in government (Miao et al., 2017; Ricard et al., 2016). Yet it is difficult overlook arguments that make a case for a differentiated public sector environment, one that is not purely guided by NPM ideals. For example, Terry (1998) accuses entrepreneurial leaders as having "a penchant for rule-breaking and for manipulating public authority, [which threatens] democratic governance" (p. 197). If democracy and the accompanying normative foundations of public administration of participation and public interest are indeed unalienable (Denhardt & Campbell, 2006), then the effective exercise of EL does become more complicated than is acknowledged in the current literature.

In summary, the NPM reforms perhaps provided the most impetus in establishing public sector leadership as an academic field. Principles of markets and an increasing inclination to adopt private-sector managerial practices within government paved the way for transformational and entrepreneurial leadership to be the preferred forms of public sector leadership. These leadership types remain popular among public administration scholars, who

continue to produce research attesting to their relevance (Jensen et al., 2019; Lucas, 2018). However, it has been more than three decades since the advent of NPM, and the public sector has continued to evolve, shaped by a different set of challenges for which the NPM seemed to have few answers.

The success of NPM remains disputed. Criticism emerged after a gestation period within Western developed countries that exposed its weaknesses and consequent failures in delivering on its promises. Most prominently perhaps, NPM was criticised for being overtly focused on performance and cost-efficiency (Entwistle & Martin, 2005; O'Flynn, 2007), which compromised the focus on outcomes. NPM also undermined fundamental public service values by engendering conflict between individual demands and public interest and increased risk-taking and erosion of accountability and responsibility due to the fragmentation in service delivery, such as through contracting out to third parties (Lawton, 1998). Empirical evidence, for example as provided by Minogue (2001), shows practices driven by competition and markets in the UK public sector rarely led to efficiency gains. Other examples show unfavourable evidence relating to performance-related pay (Nõmm & Randma-Liiv, 2012) and also contracting out (Nemec, Merickova, & Vitek, 2005). It is not then surprising that former advocates of NPM have admitted that major initiatives under NPM have led to policy disasters (Dunleavy et al., 2006) and an acknowledgement that the "bulk of evidence would point to [its] failure" (Dan & Pollitt, 2015, p. 1312).

The disenchantment with the narrow utilitarian underpinnings of NPM (Stoker, 2006) provided the impetus for the search for new solutions. Solutions are required for public problems that spill over well beyond the jurisdictions of any one government agency and even beyond the overall government apparatus (Bryson et al., 2015). These problems often termed 'wicked problems' (Brookes & Grint, 2010), such as poverty, climate change, health epidemics such as AIDS, terrorism, nuclear proliferation and traffic congestion *inter* alia, which require concerted effort from a range of stakeholders and have resulted in an interdependence of state and non-state actors and institutions in meeting contemporary administrative challenges and, more importantly, in delivering effective public policy and services (Sullivan, Williams, & Jeffares, 2012). NPM practices in the face of such problems were deemed inadequate. Instead, Stoker (2006) reasons that, in such situations, there was growing proclivity within public administration to resort to working with a wide range of stakeholders and to resolve issues through collective decision making. There was indeed a

shift underway in how the public sector operated, recognised by scholars and explained with terms such as co-production, partnership, networks and empowering citizens to be more engaged in the governance process (Bogason & Musso, 2006; Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000). Underpinning this shift was the recognition that the managerialist- and economic theory-driven principles had become inadequate and there was a need to look beyond them, particularly towards ideas of democratic participation and inclusivity of wide-ranging stakeholders in ensuring the achievement of substantive outcomes

2.2.1.3 Post- NPM and the changing views on leadership

It is difficult to trace when dissatisfaction with NPM emerged and the search for new guiding principles commenced. Partly, this is because there is yet to be found any resounding consensus in the literature about whether NPM has been entirely abandoned, which further raises the question whether it was at all replaced. Some works published recently show how administrative practices continue to be inspired by NPM in many developed and emerging economies (Dan & Pollitt, 2015; Miao et al., 2017; Wynen & Verhoest, 2015), not to mention its predominance as a somewhat unsustained reform driver in developing countries (McCourt, 2018). Thus, it becomes challenging to definitively suggest the end of NPM and its displacement by other organising principles, giving credence to the view co-existing paradigms. However, a concentration of works clustered around the late 1990s and early 2000s began appearing to challenge the effectiveness of NPM (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000; Dunleavy et al., 2006; Greve & Jespersen, 1999; Osborne, 2006). Concurrently, scholars also began proposing alternatives to NPM (Considine & Lewis, 2003; Newman, 2004; Rhodes, 1996), trying to propose the need for a new paradigm.

The search for a new paradigm is yet to achieve fruition. This is arguably because scholars have proposed numerous models in trying to explain what governments actually do in the post-NPM era. These models are known by various labels, including network governance (Rhodes, 1996), new public governance (Osborne, 2006), collaborative governance (Ansell & Gash, 2008), public value governance (Stoker, 2006) and the new public service (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2007), as observed above. Whether these emerging models have achieved the status of a paradigm remains in question. Ugyel (2016) considers a justified use of the term ‘quasi-paradigm’ (Margetts & Dunleavy, 2013) to reason that these different models, although they have a macro-theory about public management, “have not been properly tested

and have an unclear criterion of plausibility" (p. 41).[16] Thus, unlike TPA and NPM, post-NPM models are less definitive with their contours subject to question.

Common elements, however, do exist between these models. More specifically, two important streams of work appear to collectively define post-NPM approaches. First, the term 'governance' is used by scholars as a guiding principle in post-NPM models to differentiate them from the narrow management and utilitarian philosophy promoted by its predecessor. Governance, indeed, has various meanings (Rhodes, 1996), but in such cases it implies cooperation, partnership and collective decision making among a wide variety of stakeholders. For example, Kim et al. (2005) describe governance as the "process of policy making through active and cohesive discussion among policy makers who are interconnected through a broad range of networks" and as a "multiple stakeholder process" (p. 647). Beyond just policy making, Stoker (2004, p. 3, cited in Ansell & Gash, 2008, p. 545) argues:

> As a baseline definition it can be taken that governance refers to the rules and forms that guide collective decision making. That the focus is on decision making in the collective implies that governance is not about the individual making a decision but rather about groups of individuals and organisations or systems of organisations making decisions.

This definition resonates with scholars who have proposed the different post-NPM models. Rhodes (1996), for example, argues that the work of government is underpinned by networks of organisation that bring together a wide variety of stakeholders. This is often labelled 'network governance', with Rhodes (1996) stating definitively that "governance is about managing networks" (p. 658). Closely related to and superimposed on the idea of networks is the process of collaboration. Ansell and Gash (2008) first used the term 'collaborative governance' to imply governing arrangements where public agencies engage with non-state stakeholders "in a collective decision-making process that is formal, consensus-oriented, and deliberative and that aims to make or implement public policy or manage public programs" (p. 545). Both collaborative and network governance imply partnerships among states, the private sector, civil society and community (Emerson, Nabatchi, & Balogh, 2012), who are

[16] Kuhn (1970), in conceptualising paradigms, makes clear that for ideas or knowledge to be considered a paradigm they must adhere to a logical coherence criterion for credibility and must be subject to rigorous testing in evidence-based ways.

arranged horizontally and employ networks in the delivery of public services (Hill & Lynn, 2005). Notions of network and collaborative governance have also given rise to offshoot ideas such whole-of-government (Christensen & Lægreid, 2007) and joined-up-government (Hood, 2005), which seek to abolish the hierarchal relationship between government departments and agencies and tries to promote collaboration.

The second stream of work that defines post-NPM approaches is the idea of 'public value'. Coined by Moore (1995), it represents the culmination of public sector work that results in the achievement of an outcome. Alford and O'Flynn (2009) flag that public value is often used interchangeably with terms such as 'public good', 'public interest' or 'public benefit'. What is important to understand is that public value encompasses all of these terms, which Alford and O'Flynn (2009) clarify, and suggest that public value focuses on 1) a wider range of values than just public goods, 2) it is more than just outputs, but also includes outcomes, and 3) it signifies what has meaning for people, rather than what public sector decision makers deem is best for them. There are indeed numerous conceptions of public value, but, following advice from Hartley et al. (2017) to be explicit about a specific approach in order to avoid confusion, this thesis adopts the definition provided by Bryson et al. (2014): "producing what is either valued by the public, is good for the public, or both" (p. 448). Moore (1995), drawing on both normative and empirical theory, argues that what public managers actually do is create public value. Thus public value as the main element of outcomes in post-NPM approaches also became the main goal of public managers. Public value creation became a major pillar in the study of public sector leadership subsequently, with emerging leadership theories considering creation of public values as one of primary goals of public leaders.

Table 2.3 summarises the emerging post-NPM approaches as a 'quasi-paradigm'. In summary, emerging post-NPM approaches are underpinned by ideas of cooperation across myriad stakeholders working across boundaries towards the achievement of publicly valued outcomes or public value. Unlike NPM, which had a more defined theoretical base for its development, it is unclear which theory or theories shaped the post-NPM quasi-paradigm. Ugyel (2016) points to democratic principles of governance as the main theoretical base. This is, however, difficult to accept, as the wider literature offers a more contested view. For example, prominent post-NPM models offered draw on network theory (Agranoff, 2007; Provan & Kenis, 2008), organisation and strategic management theory (Ansell & Gash, 2008;

Bryson, Crosby, & Stone, 2006) and also communication theory (Koschmann, Kuhn, & Pfarrer, 2012). The theoretical base is indeed diverse, yet the common themes of cooperation and achievement of results or outcomes bridge the competing ideas battling to be considered a paradigm.

Table 2. 3: Public administration paradigms: post-NPM

Post-NPM quasi-paradigm	
Ideological Base	Collaboration; network
Dominant focus/guiding principles	Results; public value
Approach to Accountability	Multifaceted, as civil servants must attend to law, community values, political norms, professional standards, and citizens and stakeholder interest
Key Value	Responsiveness, efficiency, effectiveness, and full range of democratic and constitutional values
Performance Objective	Multiple objectives including service, outputs, satisfaction, and outcomes

Source: Adapted from Denhardt and Denhardt (2015); O'Flynn (2007)

Changing conceptions of Public sector leadership under a quasi-paradigm

Post-NPM organising principles challenged the "traditional" theories of leadership and public sector leadership discussed earlier. In particular, scholars have highlighted the implications for leaders who increasingly find themselves in contexts where traditional authorities, hierarchical organisational structures, and traditional leader-follower relationships are absent (Ospina & Foldy, 2010; Silvia & McGuire, 2010). Instead, working at an inter-organisational level and across sectoral boundaries with organisations and individuals over whom authority or hierarchy is unlikely to be exercised has engendered calls for different approaches with a focus on establishing partnerships and working through collaboration (Crosby, 2010; Huxham & Vangen, 2000). The literature also highlights other problems in exercising traditional leadership approaches in this new environment, which Bryson and Crosby (1992) consider as a shared-power world. For example, Huxham and Vangen (2000) argue that,

within organisations, setting organisational goals can be generally influenced by the leader who enjoys a degree of authority and legitimacy in influencing other organisational members towards goal accomplishment. However, in multiple stakeholder settings where partners may have different goals, it is challenging for a leader to advocate a single goal that is all-inclusive (Huxham & Vangen, 2000; Sun & Anderson, 2012). There are also issues of accountability that further complicate the traditional leadership process. Multiple stakeholder involvement implies that public managers need to go beyond ensuring vertical accountability (i.e., administrative and political accountability) to also consider horizontal accountability responsibilities towards their collaborative partners (Fernandez et al., 2010; Ospina & Foldy, 2015; Van Wart, 2013a).

For these reasons, a rethinking or re-conceptualisation of public sector leadership is underway in the literature. Several theories have been proposed to effectively operate in a post-NPM era. These include integrative public sector leadership (Crosby & Bryson, 2018; Morse, 2010), collaborative leadership (Kim, 2018; Silvia & McGuire, 2010), network leadership (Chapman et al., 2016), collective leadership (Ospina, 2017) and distributed leadership (Currie, Lockett, & Suhomlinova, 2009a). Nuances exist between what each theory prescribes, but fundamentally they are differentiated from traditional theories in that they embody the collaborative and public value spirit. The theories do this in several ways; for example, they emphasise actions and competencies of leaders in collaborating with different partners, including teamwork, interpersonal understanding, cooperation, importance of credibility and trust, framing issues, negotiation, resolving conflict, and empowering and motivating partners (Crosby & Bryson, 2005b; Getha-Taylor, 2008; Huxham & Vangen, 2000; Morse, 2008). Hartley et al. (2013, p. 24) further adds to the list by suggesting that, because of the need to deal with a variety of stakeholders, leaders need to be politically astute by "deploying political skills in situations involving diverse and sometime competing interests and stakeholders, in order to achieve sufficient alignment of interest and/or consent in order to achieve outcomes". The creation of public value provides overarching guidance for such collaborative leadership: for example, in improving learning opportunities for local school students (Morse, 2010), addressing needs in African-American communities in the US (Crosby & Bryson, 2005b), and the accomplishment of a Green cities initiative (Quick, 2015).

While these two aspects have developed as important pillars of emerging public sector leadership models, there is an underlying cross-cutting narrative of 'values' as a guiding principle within this literature. More specifically, the notion of 'public values' is often invoked to provide a sense of public sector leadership being instilled with a set of 'values' and the leader being conscious of them when exercising leadership. 'Public values' is different to 'public value' in that public values broadly refer to a value base or values[17] that characterise the public sector (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007; Jørgensen & Rutgers, 2015). The literature points to large number values specific to the public administration, including the common good, public interest, democracy, citizen involvement, professionalism and moral standards (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007). Scholars like Getha-Taylor et al. (2011) and Crosby and Bryson (2018) have suggested that public values lie at the heart of public sector leadership in the post-NPM era. Getha-Taylor et al. (2011) further contend that public leaders should be "serving the public interest, respecting the constitution/law, demonstrating personal integrity, promoting ethical organisations, and striving for professional excellence [which] are at the heart of values-based leadership for the public manager" (p. 84).

This values-based public sector leadership does not seem incongruent with the post-NPM approach. Rather, it embraces the renewed interest in such public values that Bryson et al. (2014) consider to be at the heart of the emerging post-NPM approaches. Other scholars (e.g., Crosby & Bryson, 2018; Ospina, 2017; Tummers & Knies, 2015; Vogel & Masal, 2015) agree with this and have leveraged it to make a case for pursuing leadership theories that capture the uniqueness of the public sector, and advocating for public sector leadership theories to encapsulate the collaborative nature of governance and the creation of public value, all the while being guided by a unique set of public values. For example, Ospina (2017) provides a relatively uncomplicated yet powerful justification for considering the unique context of the public sector and, together with Crosby and Bryson (2018), urges scholars to be cognisant of *publicness*[18] in advancing public sector leadership theory. This is perhaps more of a renewed focus – the notion of incorporating publicness into public sector leadership theories – because these calls have been sounded before (Denhardt & Campbell, 2006; Van Wart, 2003). Yet this time it appears to have garnered greater attention, perhaps because of the rekindling of commitments to all things 'public'. Little time has passed since

[17] According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, values is defined as "relative worth, utility or importance" and "principles or standards of behaviour".
[18] Publicness here is defined as the "attachment to public sector values" (Antonsen & Jorgensen, 1997, p. 339).

the calls for publicness in public sector leadership theory has been made, but the work of Tummers and Knies (2015) possibly indicates a move to embrace publicness among public sector leadership scholars. Tummers and Knies (2015) develop a quantitative scale to measure distinct public sector leadership roles, based on a unique set of public sector leadership values, including accountability, rule-following, political loyalty, and collaborating with stakeholders. The authors also go on to positively relate these roles to desirable organisational outcomes.

Public sector leadership research post-NPM has gained significant impetus, propelled by the possibilities of shifting organising principles and the new set of goals, objectives and purposes it has engendered for public managers. As demonstrated by examples of the recent emergence of collaborative and network leadership theories inspired by these changes (e.g., Getha-Taylor et al., 2011; Ospina, 2017; Crosby 2017) that are recognised as suitable responses to changing governance context, however, are at an early stage of their development. Their infancy is perhaps best explained by the lack of research to quantitatively test these models. Instead, most studies of post-NPM leadership approaches are grounded on qualitative and exploratory research design aimed at understanding the manifestation of public sector leadership in what is a fairly uncharted territory. While this approach has meant answers to questions of effectiveness are yet to crystallise, it is indicative of the emerging tendency among scholars to detach from transplantation strategies (i.e., the transplantation of mainstream leadership theories to the public sector) and espouse the unique context of the public sector.

In summary, this section provided an overview of the different theories of public sector leadership that have emerged, in line with changing organising principles in public administration systems. Their relevance to the research setting of this thesis, Bangladesh however remain questionable, particularly for the role of Deputy Commissioners, who are the focal leaders of this thesis. Not only are such organising principles unlikely to be found in Bangladesh (discussed further in Chapter 6) because of lack of reform both from NPM and post-NPM perspective, the aforementioned theories are also likely unable to take into account the impinging administrative culture in Bangladesh that influences civil servants. For example, some research has shown that civil servants in Bangladesh demonstrate excessive preoccupation with rules and regulations that inhibit the exercise of discretion (Zafarullah, 2013) and as such, transformational leadership theory that emphasises high degrees of

discretion is unlikely to be appropriately applied to that setting. Similarly, civil servants in the Bangladesh public administration have also been known to harbour deep social divisions among each other, caused partly by existing administrative structures discussed in Chapter 6, which has prevented cohesion, integration and cooperation within the administration (Islam, 2005). For these reasons, collaborative leadership models under post-NPM which requires leaders to lead across organisational boundaries promoting teamwork, cooperation and trust building, also may also fail to consider the complex nature of relationships among civil servants within the Bangladesh public administration. It is based on such understandings of leadership theories and their questionable applicability to developing countries, that this section sought provide a more contextual understanding of public sector leadership through paradigms, elements of which may or may not exist within developing countries such as Bangladesh.

2.3 Public sector leadership implications for co-existing paradigms

This chapter has thus far shown how the public sector leadership research has evolved in line with the changing context of public administration. This has meant ideas of how public sector leadership should be enacted have also changed from being fairly transactional to transformational/entrepreneurial to leading across organisations and working collaboratively with various stakeholders. This has also meant leadership roles and responsibilities have also changed, from focussing on intra-organisational matters to prioritising inter-organisational responsibilities with primary set on creating public value. There is, however, an inherent problem that underlies this siloed or compartmentalised view of public sector leadership, that is, public sector leadership enactment should correspond to the demands of the paradigm of the day. This view is more subtly woven within public sector leadership research, in that scholars justify their use of leadership theories by drawing on the different paradigms to argue for the prevailing public administration environment in which they wish to situate their research. For example, prevailing NPM-type reforms are used to rationalise entrepreneurial leadership research (Miao et al., 2017), whereas post-NPM changes justify the use of network leadership models (Wister et al., 2014). The problem lies in the somewhat naive assumption that the paradigms have replaced one another. This is hardly the case, as stressed by a few prominent scholars (Dunleavy et al., 2006; Stoker, 2006). Instead, reforms are understood to be implemented one on top of the other in a way that results in the continuation of the

preceding paradigm without it being completely replaced (Stoker, 2006). Table 2.4 presents the contrasting nature of the paradigms.

Table 2. 4: The contrasting nature of public administration paradigms

	Bureaucratic paradigm	NPM paradigm	Post-NPM paradigm
Ideological Base	Bureaucratic	Market driven; competition	Collaboration; network
Dominant focus/guiding principles	Rules	Results	Results; public value
Approach to Accountability	Hierarchical	Market driven, in which aggregated self-interests result in outcomes desired by broad groups of citizens as customers	Multifaceted, as civil servants must attend to law, community values, political norms, professional standards, and citizens and stakeholder interest
Key Value	Impartiality; efficiency; public interest	Professionalism; efficiency and effectiveness	Responsiveness, efficiency, effectiveness, and full range of democratic and constitutional values
Performance Objective	Managing inputs	Managing inputs and outputs	Multiple objectives including service, outputs, satisfaction, and outcomes

The idea of the possible co-existence of different paradigms can perhaps be better understood through the notion of 'ideal types'. The 'ideal types' concept was developed by Weber (1947) to explain what a perfect paradigm is like conceptually, but it is not steeped in reality. Under this view, it can be argued that public management paradigms represent such 'ideal types' and thus exist as abstractions and do not mirror the actualities of how such paradigms manifest in practice. The reality of public management is more complex, because paradigms have not followed a logic of replacement, but instead they have been overlaid one upon the other (Bryson et al., 2014), resulting in the co-existence of elements from different paradigms or organising principles. The implications for enacting public sector leadership thus becomes complicated, because, public managers can find themselves managing competing roles and responsibilities as might be imposed by the existence of different paradigms. Little of the research on public sector leadership has considered this proposition. Accordingly, this thesis proposes the following research question:

RQ1. What is the nature of public sector leadership that is enacted by public managers in settings populated by multiple organising principles, and what roles and responsibilities does this form of leadership entail?

The reality of the co-existence of multiple organising principles in public administration systems is increasingly the focus of research (Denis, Ferlie, & Van Gestel, 2015; Fossestøl et al., 2015; Lægreid & Rykkja, 2015; Skelcher & Smith, 2015; Ugyel, 2014). The gravity of operating in this complex environment is perhaps best captured by Stoker (2006), who underscores that paradigms are imbued with "different understandings of human nature and different values attached to the achievement of various outcomes" and that the differences between the paradigms are about "differences around the fundamental understanding of human motivation" (p. 43). This is certainly revealing and has primed further consideration of how public sector leadership enactment responds to fulfilling their roles and responsibility in such complex settings. This has led this thesis to theorise the public administration environment as using institutional logics.

The following chapter draws on the institutional logic framework to theoretically examine the complexity that is found in public administration as a result of multiple organising principles, the implications this has for public managers, and how they can respond to such a situation through the enactment of public sector leadership.

2.4 Summary of Chapter

This chapter began by presenting the concept of leadership as a precursor to discussions on PSL. It included discussion on the development of leadership theories such as the Great Man theory, behavioural theories, trait theories, and more recent developments such as the transformational leadership theory. Critique of the literature highlighted that such leadership theories were shaped by the social context of the era in which they took birth. This approach reemphasised the importance of context in understanding leadership – a lens that was utilized subsequently in reviewing the PSL literature. Using public administration paradigms in understanding the public sector context showed that leadership conceptions in government were also products of their environment. This included examining the Traditional Public Administration, New Public Management, and post-New Public Management paradigms and situating different leadership theories within them, which demonstrated how public sector

leadership theories and their emergence can indeed be traced back to organising principles and the associated priorities public administration paradigms imposed. For example, analysis revealed as the public sector under NPM put greater emphasis on the exercise of discretion, increased use of performance management, and entrepreneurialism, there was a greater appetite among administration scholars to utilize entrepreneurial leadership theories in their studies. Similarly, the emergence of collaborative and network leadership theories in the public sector were also shown to have been linked to changing priorities ushered in collaborative governance under post-NPM. However, a closer scrutiny of the literature revealed that public administration environments are often populated by multiple paradigms, raising questions about extant leadership conceptions that presume public administration contexts to be mainly dominated by a single paradigm. This problem led to the formulation of the first research question: What is the nature of public sector leadership enacted by public managers in settings populated by multiple organising principles, and what roles and responsibilities does this form of leadership entail? The following chapter presents the institutional logic framework as a suitable theory to explain the plurality of paradigms in public administration systems and the implications it may have for public managers exercising leadership.

Chapter 3: Institutional Logics Framework

3.0 Introduction

Chapter 2 introduced Public Sector Leadership (PSL) as a burgeoning topic in the public administration field. PSL was discussed as a construct that has attracted diverse conceptualisations but remains elusive in terms of having any single all-encompassing definition. It was proposed that such diversity is ultimately a result of the changing administrative context in which PSL is studied. The chapter outlined public administration paradigms that define the public sector context and consequently the organising principles that influence administration practices, norms and motive of civil servants, including the type of public sector leadership exercised. A chronological account of shifting paradigms showed the different types of leadership that emerged, with scholars treating each type as the most effective form, depending on the paradigms considered to be prevalent during any particular period.

This thesis, however, argues that 'paradigm-specific-leadership' approach is problematic because of the enduring nature of paradigms. Paradigms, while are intended to replace one another, in reality may co-exist. The plurality of public administration systems thus suggests that the efficacy of contemporary leadership models that do not account for the potential effects of multiple paradigms ought to be questioned. The enactment of public sector leadership must be understood from a perspective that affords precedence to the context of public administration systems as imposing competing demands on public managers, which in turn may shape the type of leadership that is enacted.

Chapter 3 provides the theoretical lens and justification for taking the proposed context-specific approach to understanding public sector leadership. The *institutional logics framework* (Friedland & Alford, 1991) is adopted as the main theoretical lens to explain the public sector context, and, importantly, plurality in public administration systems. Institutional logics allow for the exploration of multiple organising principles (referred to as a type of *institutional plurality*[19]) and the norms and values that emanate from them to shape the actions of individuals (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012b). In other words, this

[19] Institutional plurality refers to existence of multiple organising principles that are in play concomitantly (Mair, Mayer, & Lutz, 2015).

thesis uses institutional logics to examine how multiple paradigms (i.e., institutions or logics) influence the enactment of public sector leadership. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to examine the public sector context through institutions, institutional logics and institutional plurality as a theorisation of multiple organising principles, and to explore their influence on individual actions, including public sector leadership. In doing so, this chapter proposes two further research questions concerning the enactment of public sector leadership.

This chapter begins with a discussion of what institutions and institutional theory are, both of which underpin the conceptualisation of institutional logics. Key issues and debates in the institutional theory literature are discussed, followed by a review of the institutional logics literature, as the main theoretical framework. The final section of this chapter justifies the use of institutional logics in understanding public sector leadership, particularly within a post-colonial developing country setting like Bangladesh.

3.1 Institution: what is it and how does it function?

In order to understand institutional logics and the application of this theory to the research problems identified, a discussion of what an institution is, is warranted, as it forms the foundation of the theory used in this study.

An institution may be regarded as having multiple meanings (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Ostrom, 1986; Scott, 2014). Explanations found in the literature suggest that institutions are intangible (North, 1991), that their meaning can vary, depending on the disciplinary predispositions of scholars (Scott, 2014)[20] and that other phenomena can claim to be institutions when in reality they are not (Jepperson, 1991). Some scholars have complained that the term 'institution' has become a "vapid umbrella term" that means everything and nothing (Haveman & David, 2008), while DiMaggio and Powell (1983) concede that it is easier to find general agreement on what an institution is not rather than what it is. There is indeed a degree of fragmentation (Alvesson & Spicer, 2018) in the literature that has emerged in establishing what institutions are, but this is not to say that general agreement cannot be found. The following paragraphs provide a distillation of the nature of institutions and how they function.

[20] The term institution is variously used by scholars in different fields, including political science (March & Olsen, 1983), in economics (North, 1990), in sociology (Selznick, 1957), and in psychology (Farr, 1998).

Imbued in most definitions of institutions is the notion of "rules" (Greif & Kingston, 2011; Hindriks & Guala, 2015), which features as a central component. In one of the earliest conceptions of institutions, Davis (1949, cited in Scott, 2014, p. 11) identified institutions as a "set of […] folkways, mores and laws" that act as constraints on human behaviour and interactions. Definitions from other scholars also reflect this constraining element of rules, despite scholars not sharing similar disciplinary backgrounds. For example, Hodgson (2006; p. 2), an advocate of institutional economics, considers institutions as "social rules that structure social interaction". Similarly, public choice theorists such as Ostrom (1986; p. 5), who was conscious of the disciplinary sensitivity of the use of the term institutions, chose to focus on rules, especially as a "referent for the term institutions". Others, including organisational theorists such as Barley and Tolbert (1997) and Scott (2014), whose work is grounded in the sociological tradition, also espouse rules as the guiding element that prescribes appropriate human actions. Encapsulating these conceptions is the widely cited phrase from North (1990; p. 3), who famously conceived an institution as the "rules of the game".

The incontrovertible centrality of rules in understanding institutions warrants an examination of the term, especially since institutionalists appear to attach variant meanings and values to rules, and in turn this has engendered disagreements and uncertainty about the definition of institutions (Alvesson & Spicer, 2018; Ostrom, 1986). For example, institutional economists tend to view institutions primarily as formal rules that manifest in the form of government laws and regulations (e.g., Hindriks & Guala, 2015; Hodgson, 2015), whereas organisational theorists, who claim to be influenced by multiple disciplines, including economics, political science, and sociology, consider rules to also take the form of social norms, values and practices (e.g., Abdelnour, Hasselbladh, & Kallinikos, 2017; Scott, 2014). This thesis is situated within organisational theory traditions that conceive rules to be made up of multiple elements, for example, the conception put forward by Scott (2014), who discusses institutions as taking the form of regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive rules (discussed below). The following paragraphs compare and contrast the different conceptions of rules that have shaped this multifaceted view of institutions within organisational theory.

The seminal work of Ostrom (1986, p. 5), which continues to influence contemporary institutional literature (e.g., Hodgson, 2015; Scott, 2014), is particularly insightful in establishing what rules are:

> Potentially linguistic entities […] that refer to prescriptions commonly known and used by set of participants to order repetitive, interdependent relationships

Ostrom's definition highlights the key prescriptive characteristic of rules that account for the constraining nature of institutions. She argues that there is a particular "prescriptive force" of rules that compels individuals to act in certain ways and that this compulsion is largely driven by a sense of being held to account by others if the rule is broken. Ostrom (1986) sees rules as being imposed primarily exogenously, because, for her, for rules to be observed and acted on, monitoring by an external entity is required, one that is responsible for holding actors to account. Such a conception implies that rules can take the form of formal laws, a view that continues to be supported in use (e.g., Greif & Kingston, 2011; Hodgson, 2015). Ostrom (1986) acknowledged this, but she also argued that all formal laws are not rules, because some laws may not be followed due to lack of enforcement. She asserted that rules necessarily require enforcement, and that people can make and follow their own rules so long as there is an element of enforcement. Ostrom (1986) falls short of conceiving institutions as beyond just externally imposed rules, probably because of the predisposition of the public-choice field to mostly focus on how both formal (i.e., laws and constitutions) and informal (i.e., codes of conduct or norms of behaviour; North, 1990) 'rules' can influence behaviour, especially concerning decisions in the allocation of public resources.

The more sociologically informed work of Hodgson (2006) contrasts with Ostrom (1986) in that he offers a more multifaceted view of rules. For Hodgson (2006), the enactment of rules is culturally specific and becomes "settled habits of thought", which over a period of time become internalised within society's members and thus develop as social norms. According to Hodgson (2006, p. 3), rules from this perspective are followed "without much thought" and thus may be considered as norms of behaviour or social conventions that emerge as patterns from the actions that are repeated frequently (see also Berger & Luckmann, 1991). These issues highlight an endogenous view of rules, in that for Hodgson (2006) rules manifest as normative internal prescriptions or habits that drive a certain "regularity of the conduct of individuals" (citing Hayek 1967, p. 67).

The combination of conceptions put forward by Ostrom (1986) and Hodgson (2006) that continue to influence contemporary literatere on institutions (e.g., Greif & Kingston, 2011; Hindriks & Guala, 2015), provides a holistic view of rules that underpins the notion of

institutions. Rules can take formal forms, such as laws and constitutions (North, 1990), but may also take the form of socially prescribed, culturally specific informal norms that drive a certain type of 'regularity in behaviour', which some scholars recognise as institutions (Schotter, 1981). Whichever view is subscribed to, rules that establish regularity in behaviour are considered as giving institutions a type of "relative permanence" (Zucker, 1977; p. 726), because they prescribe "programmed actions", or establish "patterns of conduct" (Berger & Luckmann, 1991; p. 75), or "common responses to situations" (Mead [1934] 1972, cited in Jepperson, 1991; 147) that become "predefined" (Berger & Luckmann, 1991; p. 75) over time. These descriptions that remain enduring in contemporary literature (e.g., Haveman & Wetts, in press) highlight institutions as "enduring features of social life" (Giddens, 1984, p. 24; Whittington, 2015) that structure and channel human behaviour toward what might be considered appropriate behaviour.

Along with the notion of rules that are said to afford stability to social life (Giddens, 1984), the concept of *legitimacy* is considered fundamental in institutionalism (Deephouse et al., 2017). More precisely, some of the earliest work by Meyer and Rowan (1977) suggests that legitimacy is key in ensuring human behaviour conforms to those rules prescribed by institutions. A widely cited definition of legitimacy is provided by Suchman (1995; p. 574), who suggests that legitimacy

> is a generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions.

The concept of legitimacy suggests that actors within a social system are endogenously influenced and shaped by institutions, because of the need to show and demonstrate that their actions adhere to the accepted and appropriate ways of doing things. Suchman (1995) elaborates on this tendency to conform through a multidimensional view of legitimacy, which holds that actors demonstrate adherence to accepted ways of thinking ("cognitive legitimacy"), societal norms and values ("moral legitimacy"), and established ways of pursuing their interests ("pragmatic legitimacy"). Fundamentally, then, legitimacy implies that institutions exert their force endogenously, as well as exogenously, since individuals experience a need to satisfy the expectations of a social system. This assertion of the 'need to satisfy expectation' raises the obvious question about why the attainment of legitimacy is so

important. Institutionalists have claimed that actors require more than just material resources and information to survive in their social environment, but immanently require "social acceptability and credibility" (Scott et al., 2000; p. 237). In short, legitimacy thus becomes a mechanism for ensuring or enhancing survival prospects in social systems. Organisational theorists have long used the notion of legitimacy to explain how organisations survive and thrive in their environments. For example, the survival rate of non-profits has been found to be enhanced by endorsement and working relationships with other organisations (Baum & Oliver, 1991), and hospitals have been found to have attained legitimacy and thereby secured their survival by ensuring managerial and technical standards were consistent with those set by industry regulators (Ruef & Scott, 1998).

These examples imply that certain external entities provide legitimacy, which draws attention to the question of "who confers legitimacy"? (Deephouse et al., 2017; p. 36). Institutional scholars commonly use terms such as 'sources', 'audiences' and 'evaluators' to describe entities that confer legitimacy on those seeking it. Legitimacy sources, usually an external entity, make legitimacy judgements and evaluations (both consciously or unconsciously) by comparing the behaviours of the legitimacy seeker to particular criteria or standard practices (Deephouse et al., 2017). In other words, the appropriateness of a behaviour may be compared to the rules, norms, practices or cultural belief that define an institution, which forms the basis of a legitimacy judgement. Commonly studied sources of legitimacy include states, regulatory agencies, the judiciary, licensing boards, and the media (Bitektine & Haack, 2015; Meyer & Scott, 1983; Ruef & Scott, 1998). For example, some of the earliest work by Dowling and Pfeffer (1975) examines how the American Institute of Foreign Affairs sought legitimacy from government officials. Studies like this are perhaps reflective of conceptions of institutions that are more formalised such as laws and regulations. The work of Selznick (1957) adopts a more cultural view of institutions and sheds light on how social values and norms can also be sources of legitimacy. More precisely, Selznick (1957) looks at how matters of public opinion that are a reflection of social values precipitate changes in organisations, in terms of their goals and processes.

The attainment of legitimacy is, however, much more complicated than just acting in accordance with a rule or a norm and receiving endorsement from a legitimacy-conferring authority. In fact, actors are often situated in social environments that are populated with

multiple legitimating authorities, which suggests that conforming to one may result in undermining another (Scott, 2014). As Meyer and Scott (1983; p. 202) stipulate:

> The legitimacy of a given organisation [or actor] is negatively affected by the number of different authorities sovereign over it and by the diversity or inconsistency of their accounts of how it is to function

The explanation above highlights the conflict and difficulty that actors may undergo in trying to evaluate which assessment of legitimacy and by whom should be prioritised, given the arrangement in which actors find themselves. Stinchecombe (1965, cited in Scott, 2014) provides an explanation of how different legitimacy demands operate by asserting that the values of those that may be considered more legitimate are determined by the social power of that authority. Thus, who wields power and how much becomes an important point of analysis in determining which legitimacy demands should be fulfilled, and, ultimately, which institution should be adhered to in shaping behaviour.

In view of this discussion, this thesis considers institutions to be taken-for-granted rules, norms and beliefs within a social system that influence human behaviour and bring order and stability within that system. These rules can include both formal and informal rules that structure human behaviour into particular patterns, and the violation of such rules invariably results in sanctions. Consequently this thesis adopts a multifaceted view of institutions that embraces the different disciplinary foundations that have been used to understand institutions. This multifaceted view is warranted because of diverse conceptions of institutions that are found in the literature. For example, some scholars concentrate on institutions as formal laws and regulations (North, 1991), while others emphasise the cultural and cognitive components (Meyer & Jepperson, 2000). The work of Scott (2014) sets a precedent for embracing a catholic view of institutions (Abdelnour et al., 2017), despite the author being considered a cultural-cognitive institutional scholar. According to Scott (2014; p. 56), institutions comprise:

> Regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life.

In relation to what are commonly referred to as the 'three pillars' of institution, Scott (2014) argues that institutions manifest through regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive means to structure human behaviour. The functioning of the three pillars "depend[s] on different bases of compliance, employs varying mechanisms, evoke different logics of action, are signalled by different indicators, and offer multiple lenses for determining legitimacy" (Scott, 2008; 222). The regulative pillar stresses "rule-setting, monitoring and sanctioning activities, both formal and informal" (Scott, 2008; p. 222). This pillar highlights the 'coercive' element of institutions, which imposes pressures on actors to abide by established rules because of the capacity of an authority to monitor conformity to these rules, with the actor either facing the prospects of sanctions or being provided with material rewards accordingly. Scott (2014) suggests that the logic underlying the regulative pillar is an instrumental one, in that individuals choose to attend to the pressures of regulative institutions because they seek to benefit from the rewards they might potentially achieve, or avoid sanctions. In other words, actors are influenced by the pursuit of self-interest. The normative pillar, on the other hand, "introduces a prescriptive, evaluative and obligatory dimension into social life" (Scott, 2008; p. 222) that emphasises the importance of appropriate behaviour. In other words, human action explained by the normative pillar is driven by rules of appropriate or exemplary behaviour (March & Olsen, 2013), which is defined by the situation and the actor's role within it (Scott, 2008). Lastly, the cultural-cognitive pillar "emphasises the centrality of symbolic systems: the use of common schemas, frames, and other shared symbolic representations that guide behaviour" (Scott, 2008; p. 222). Cultural-cognitive theorists (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977) uphold the importance of cognitive processes that lead to shared meanings and beliefs, and sense-making and the construction of mental models that constitute the social reality that is inhabited by actors. The cultural-cognitive conception of institutions suggests that rules are sometimes followed subconsciously and without question, because of the assumptions that actors hold about social reality. According to Scott (2014), compliance via cultural-cognitive institutional mechanisms is underpinned by a logic of orthodoxy; that is, compliance is achieved via "the perceived correctness and the soundness of the idea underlying action". For example, routines and regular practices are followed because they have become taken-for-granted as "this is how things are done" (Scott, 2014; 148).

Just as the definition of 'institution' has caused consternation among institutional scholars, so too has the issue of how to define the bounds within which institutional activity takes place

(Wooten & Hoffman, 2017). The fundamental basis on which institutional theory operates is the examination of how social behaviour of humans is shaped, mediated and channelled by the institution that inhabits a particular environment or more simply the *institutional environment*. Such an environment represents the central unit of analysis in institutional theory and has been variously referred to as an institutional sphere (Fligstein, 2001), institutional field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977), societal sector (Scott & Meyer, 1992) and institutional environment. Earlier work in institutional theory tended to focus on institutions at the macro societal level, for example, how institutions operated at the nation-state level (Meyer et al., 1997). An increasing amount of work, however, has drawn attention to a lower level of analysis, the *organisational field*. Originally credited to DiMaggio and Powell (1983), conceptions of 'field' in institutional theory sought to situate the analysis of organisational activity within the broader domain in which organisations are embedded (Wooten & Hoffman, 2017). This domain was argued to consist of entities or organisations that produce similar services, products, and resources, and regulatory agencies (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The purpose of this conception was to understand how a community of organisations behaves, given they are exposed to the same set of institutions and share a common meaning and belief system. As such, an organisational field, within the context of this study, is understood as a demarcated area of activity populated by organisations that have similar activities and interests, and that are conditioned by shared sets of institutional rules, norms and values. This thesis considers administrative systems in post-colonial developing countries as comprising a shared set of institutional norms, values and beliefs, and as imposing pressures on actors inhabiting the environment in a similar way. Actors may include individuals such as civil servants, and also organisational entities such as public sector organisations, including ministries or other public agencies.

3.2 Structure, agency and the emergence of institutional logics

The meaning of institutions and their functionality, especially within the analytical jurisdiction of organisational fields, provides the foundation for understanding how the fundamentals of institutional theory operate. The fundamental underpinnings are only, however, a drop in what may be considered an ocean – an ocean that depicts a rich literature steeped in tradition, debates and various offshoot discussions, as observed by Alvesson and Spicer (2019). One of these debates remain a central question within institutional theory and beyond (in the wider discourse of sociology): the structure versus agency debate (Abdelnour

et al., 2017; Harmon, Haack, & Roulet, 2019; Hays, 1994; Lok & Willmott, 2018; Sewell, 1992). Many mainstream leadership scholars also acknowledge this as an underlying theme in leadership (Gronn, 2000; Ospina, 2017), but interestingly, they do not feature it prominently in their works. Some have critiqued this line of action, accusing leadership scholars of prioritising agency over other matters (Peck et al., 2009; Tourish, 2014). Regardless, structure and agency are arguably important both within institutionalism and leadership.

Before unpacking this debate further, it is useful to reflect on how the institutional epistemic community understands and uses the term structure and agency. Structure, or 'social structure' as it is often referred to, is one of the most ubiquitous terms within institutional theory. Hays (1994) claims that, like other terms such as institutions, the meaning of structure among institutionalists remains contested and that consensus among scholars concerning the meaning of the term has been elusive. However, a scan of more recent literature points to a more settled notion of what structure is, with scholars generally avoiding any lengthy dialogue on the "contested" nature of the matter. The work of Sewell (1992) is cited frequently to explain structure, denoting it as resilient or enduring patterns that order social life. The seminal work of Giddens (1984) also follows a similar conception, providing the example of 'rules' as the structuring properties of social systems, "in which structures are [the] relatively enduring and general principles" that order a social system (Whittington, 2015; p. 145). Following this view is the more recent work of Cardinale (2018; p. 137) who defines structures as the "recurrent patterns of interaction or the mechanism that cause them". Such patterns and mechanism can include social positions and relations (Bourdieu, 1990), and perhaps most commonly rules, as suggested earlier (Giddens, 1984; Searle, 2010). The last interpretation of structure (i.e., rules) likely provided the motivation to consider institutions as also forms of structure (Jepperson, 1991; Scott, 2014), in that institutions are the regular patterns of social action or mechanisms that produce regular behaviour (Greenwood et al., 2017) that breathe stability and order into social systems (Scott, 2014). Hence it is understandable why institutional theory has often been referred to as "structural theory" (Ocasio, Thornton, & Lounsbury, 2017; p. 524), as will be elaborated later in the chapter.

If structure implies constraint on social action and thus conformity to social systems, then agency depicts the more "un-structured component of social life" (Hays, 1994; p. 59).

Agency is generally understood as the capacity to take action (Tourish, 2014) or what actors do (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). It has also been described as the 'freedom' (Hays, 1994) actors enjoy in being able to make 'individual choices' (Becker & Becker, 1981; Elster, 2015) in determining action. Institutional theorists, on the other hand, have adopted a more nuanced version of agency. For them, tensions arise when considering agency as an 'unstructured' social manifestation which undermines the cardinal power of structuration institutions are thought to wield over social actions. Thus institutionalists consider agency to exist in habitual and taken-for-granted behaviours that are prescribed by institutions, or as Cardinale (2018; p. 137) puts it, agency is the "actors' engagement with structure", which displays "choice" when actors choose to follow one set of rules and reject another (Giddens, 1984).

Conceptions of structure and agency discussed above reveal the crux of the issues at the heart of the debate: that is, should the constraining or conditioning nature of institutions be afforded precedence over the purposive actions of actors or *vice versa*? This predicament has been a significant driver in shaping and evolving the field of institutional theory, as attested by several scholars (Battilana, 2006; Cardinale, 2018; Mutch, 2018). The work of Selznick (1949) is considered perhaps the beginnings of institutional theory, in incorporating elements of action (i.e., agency) within a theoretical framework that made prominent the power of institutions. For Selznick (1949), institutions arguably played an overpowering role because he believed structural pressures "effectively limited" (p. 255) the ability of actors to freely adjust their behaviour because any actor in society is "committed to using forms of …[action] consistent with going social structure and cultural patterns" (p. 257). This is not to suggest, however, that Selznick (1949) categorically rejected any form of agency, because he viewed actors as being "strategic" in deciding how to act, and thus they evaluate and choose means in view of ends, but that choice remains confined between the options that are provided by the social structure. Despite what might appear to be a constrained view of agency, Selznick (1949) was criticised for over-emphasising agency as being primarily driven by instrumental calculation and not sufficiently recognising the influence of institutions on human behaviour (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). This shortcoming became the basis of an emerging form of institutionalism, known popularly as neo-institutional theory.

Neo-institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Scott & Meyer, 1992; Zucker, 1977), which first gained prominence among organisational theorists,

emphasised the constraining nature of structure, in that institutions were argued to influence structures, processes and practices of organisations to the extent that this created convergence among actors within the same institutional environment (Battilana, 2006). The seminal work of DiMaggio and Powell (1983) proposed isomorphism in organisations as a desired state to ensure the organisation attained legitimacy within its institutional environment. According to DiMaggio and Powell (1983), isomorphism in organisations manifested either because of coercive powers (coercive pressures) exercised over organisations such as through government laws and regulation, or through mimicking (mimetic pressures) practices of other organisations that have had proven success within the same institutional environment, or it was "normatively ordained" (normative pressures) by the standards that emerge when a field becomes professionalised. Such notions of isomorphism inherently discounted agency, and instead accentuated the power of social structure in determining behaviour. In other words, neo-institutional theory and the studies that followed (Elsbach & Sutton, 1992; Townley, 1997) found credibility in portraying institutional perspectives as the "theory of conformity and stability" (Micelotta, Lounsbury, & Greenwood, 2017; p. 1886) and advocated for the durability of social structures. Early neo-institutional work implied that actors within an institutional environment generally complied, at least in appearance (Battilana & D'aunno, 2009), with institutional pressures and assumed the limited exercise of agency under these conditions.

This view of institutions is often referred to as the 'structuralist view'[21], which did not sit comfortably with agency theoreticians. Agency scholars believe structural pressures do not completely constrain or promote conformity in actor behaviour, but instead structures themselves can be sources of deviance and change (Hoffman, 1999; Washington & Ventresca, 2004). In essence, agency scholars prefer to consider social structures as enabling in that structures provide the resources and rules that guide actions of individuals (Whittington, 2015). Social structures thus open up the possibilities of actors acting in certain ways, and even orient them towards settling on specific paths of actions rather than others (Cardinale, 2018). For example, as Selznick (1949) pointed out, within an institutional environment "a particular orientation becomes so firmly a part of group life that it *colours* and *directs* a wide variety of attitudes, decision, and forms of organisation" (pp. 138-139;

[21] Referring to the group of scholars who emphasise predominance of structure in determining human behaviour (Thornton et al., 2012b).

emphasis added). This enabling continues to be upheld by contemporary institutionalists such as Scott (2014; p. 58), who argues that institutions as social structures provide "stimulus, guidelines and resources for acting". This enabling feature of social structures has been leveraged by agency theorists as an "enabling platform" that is used by actors as "jumping boards for autonomous, agentic behaviours" (Giddens, 1984; Heugens & Lander, 2009; p. 63). This emerging view did not face strong resistance among structure-leaning institutionalists such as DiMaggio (1988), who suggested that isomorphic pressures can often give rise to resistance by actors who may organise themselves to go against upholding social norms. Perhaps the most illuminating moment that seriously questioned structuralist views of institutions was the issue of institutional change. Institutional scholars were faced with a predicament in being unable to effectively deal with the institutional change thesis. For example, institutional scholars were determined to explain how destabilisation of existing norms may occur during social upheaval or how technological disruptions or regulatory changes may completely alter the organising principles with an organisational field (Dacin, Goodstein, & Scott, 2002). Initial attempts explained such changes through the role of "exogenous shocks" or, to use the words of Meyer (1982), "jolts". The underlying argument of this approach pointed to the importance of understanding how exogenous events or "jolts" at the societal or field level changed the environment within which actors operated. This led scholars to consider macro-environmental factors at the societal level that could incite change at the field level. For example, numerous macro-environmental changes have been examined including the effects of political regime changes is transitioning countries such as the Czech Republic (Clark & Soulsby, 1995) and Hungary (Whitley & Czabán, 1998), socio-political upheaval (wars, revolutions) that have influenced survival strategies of organisations (Allmendinger & Hackman, 1996) and also how issues around resource scarcity can fundamentally change the rules of competition in established industries (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999).

The macro perspective for understanding institutional change gradually waned in currency in the 1990s, but especially amid growing voices within the institutional epistemic community who stipulated the role of agency in institutional change, following calls from DiMaggio (1988). This led to the development of strands of literature that included 'institutional entrepreneurship' (Maguire, Hardy, & Lawrence, 2004) and 'institutional work' (Lawrence,

Suddaby, & Leca, 2009)[22] that prioritised agency within institutional theory. Institutional entrepreneurship stressed the importance of social positions and social skills of particular actors to be able to instigate change (DiMaggio, 1988; Fligstein, 1997), whereas institutional work emphasised how rules and taken-for-granted practices are changed through conscious activity by actors (Lawrence et al., 2009). The emergence of these perspectives was branded as the "agentic turn" (Micelotta et al., 2017; p. 1892) within the field, galvanising interest among institutional scholars to embrace agency. For example, institutional scholars have drawn on the agency-centred institutional constructions mentioned to examine the creation of new hybrid-type social organisations that disrupted the charity sector in the UK (Tracey, Phillips, & Jarvis, 2011), forest harvesting practices in Canada (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010), and even how the game of cricket evolved as the result of institutional entrepreneurs seeking to maintain the legitimacy of the game that was increasingly being threatened under changing market conditions (Wright & Zammuto, 2013a). Perhaps the most relevant example for this thesis is the work of Cloutier et al. (2016) that explains how institutional work carried out by public managers facilitated the public sector reform process in the health sector in Quebec, resulting in major structural changes in the organising principles of the field.

The 'agentic turn' within institutional theory is perhaps one of the more ambitious and profound shifts to occur that has intensified the tensions between structure and agency. Most noticeably, because scholars continue to stress the primacy of agency as a problem, positing agency conceptions within institutional theory almost paints actors as "superheroes" (Abdelnour et al., 2017; p. 1777), who are able defy institutional pressures and can "create, alter and destroy institutions" at will (Bitektine & Haack, 2015; p. 50). This is indeed a credible stance supported by Mutch (2018; p. 244), who uncomplicatedly points to the naivety in thinking institutions do not have the power in "not only provid[ing] the resources for selection but also shap[ing] the categories of agency available to actors". Thus the agentic turn, with its focus on institutional change and role of actors in enabling that change, conferred uncompromising importance on the autonomy of agents to select institutions from a "menu" (Quirke, 2013; p. 1678) and not enough on the enduring and conditioning power of structural forces.

[22] Details regarding how institutional change occurs and the different strategies that may be used will be discussed in a later section.

This fundamental tension continues to manifest in conversations within institutional theory and perhaps is best encapsulated and popularised by the phrase "paradox of embedded agency" (Holm, 1995; Seo & Creed, 2002). The 'paradox' stems from the fact that, if we are to assume institutions inherently constrain individual action, and that humans exercise very limited agency, the question that arises is, "How can actors change institutions if their actions, intentions, and rationality are all conditioned by the very institution they wish to change" (Holm, 1995, p. 398). Beyond just the question of change, agency must also be considered as a *reflective* processes in which actors exercise practical consciousness to engage with the structure to choose means in view of ends (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998), similar to what Selznick (1949) had proposed decades earlier. The importance of practical consciousness is perhaps better understood in light of the assertions made by DiMaggio and Powell, who argued that habitual actions as result of institutional pressures "must not be seen as a purely passive element of behaviour, but rather as a means by which attention is directed to selected aspects of a situation" (1991, p. 19).

The prioritization of agency that questions the hegemony of institutions (Munir, in press) remains a strong critique of institutional theory (Alvesson and Spicer, 2019). Relatedly, this critique further exposes the element of 'power', which institutional scholars have been accused of neglecting in recent articles (Munir, in press; Willmott, 2015). The critique does not claim complete negligence of power within institutional theory, certainly institutions are all about power as "they exist to the extent that they are powerful – the extent to which they affect the behaviours, beliefs, and opportunities of individuals, groups, organisations, and societies" (Lawrence and Buchanan, 2017; cited in Munir, in press). Instead, concerns are raised about the powers that fuel agentic pursuits, raising questions about who has power over whom, and what they can and cannot make their subjects do. For example, Munir (in press, p. 4) discussing power, human agency and change, argues that actor-centric conceptions of power imbued in the 'agentic turn' in institutional theory discredits the power of social structures which have been "normalised over long spans of time".

Critics claimed the paradox of embedded agency (Battilana & D'aunno, 2009) or elements of power (Munir, in press) are weaknesses that are yet to be adequately realised, yet there is a strand of the institutional theory that organisational theorists such as Thornton et al. (2012b), Mutch (2018) and Greve and Zhang (2017) believe can assuage some of the concerns of the critics. This proposed strand of literature alludes to the institutional logic perspective that has

emerged as one the most popular institutional lenses in management and organisational studies and is the primary lens through which this thesis examines leadership enactment of public managers within the institutional environment of the Bangladesh public administration. It is important to acknowledge that the use of institutional logic literature in this thesis does not aim to resolve the all weaknesses of institutional theory, certainly not those that have been noted by Alvesson and Spicer (2010) that accuse the wider field of being replete with tautologies (referring to the different conceptions of institutions) or even claiming the field to make only pseudo-progress. It does however, in the words of its strongest critics (e.g., Alvesson, Hallett & Spicer, 2019; Willmott, 2015) consider it a 'robust' theory of social embeddedness and human action where other theories have been claimed to be insufficient in doing so. Willmott (2015, p. 105), in particular, conceded that few theories are able to explain "how actors' beliefs and actions are conditioned within and by institutions; how institutions are created and transformed; and how forms of institutionalisation can meet with resistance". It is indeed in this light that institutional logic literature has been chosen as the theoretical framework for this thesis that encapsulates the aforementioned qualities and beyond, including providing an avenue for resolving the structure and agency "quarrel" (Heugens and Lander, 2009, p. 61) that lay at the heart of leadership (Ospina, 2017). The following section presents a detailed overview of the institutional logics perspective and provides a rationale for its use in examining public sector leadership.

3.3 The Institutional Logics Perspective

The institutional logics perspective (Friedland & Alford, 1991) is not entirely novel as it is governed by the same principles as mainstream institutional theory (Alvesson & Spicer, 2019). What institutional logics adds is a nuanced view of the levels at which institutions exist. While this thesis thus far has argued that institutions and institutional analysis can operate at multiple levels, for example, at the field level with a focus on organisations, the institutional logics contribute to institutionalism by developing a complex view of institutional analysis operating at the societal level. This is conceptualised as an "inter-institutional system" that "encompasses multiple value spheres each associated with their distinct institutional logic" (Scott, 2014; p. 90). If neo-institutional theory was concerned with isomorphism and convergence due to institutional pressures at the field level, then the institutional logic perspective emphasises differentiation and pluralism in institutional

pressures that stem from the societal level. It is this sense of plurality that that provides scope for the role of agency within institutionalism, as will be discussed later in this section.

Friedland and Alford (1991; p. 248) originally defined institutional logics as a "set of material practices and symbolic constructions which constitutes its organising principles and which is available for organisations to elaborate". The work of Thornton et al. (2012b) popularised this comparatively new analytical approach to institutional analysis and elaborated this definition to suggest institutional logics as:

> […] the socially constructed, historical pattern of cultural symbols and material practices, assumption, values and beliefs by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organise time and space, and provide meaning to their daily life. (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999; p. 804)

In other words, institutional logics refer to the organising principles (i.e., rules, norms, practices and wider belief systems) that structure human behaviour, which in the process defines "interests, identities, values and assumptions of individuals and organisations" (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008; p. 103). Examples of societal level institutions, which are often referred to as 'institutional orders' (Thornton et al., 2012b), include religion, state, democracy and the market. These institutional orders are defined by their own logic and thus embody unique organising principles and practices that influence behaviour. For example, the capitalist market logic that is found to be dominant in most Western capitalist economies establishes the operating principles that guide and condition market-oriented behaviours of firms and individuals (Ocasio et al., 2017), such as competitive practices or the establishment of principal-agent relationships between managers of firms and their shareholders, or, fundamentally, the pursuit of profit or share prices.

While institutional logics do share the similar operational protocols as institutions, there are assumptions that differentiate them. The first of these assumptions is the view that institutional logics are both symbolic and material (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Thornton et al., 2012b). This implies that logics can be simultaneously observed in symbolic representations such as a language and also through material practices and artefacts[23] that can

[23] This thesis adopts the definition of artefact suggested by Suchman (2003, p. 98), which defines artefacts as "a

include books, documents and complex technologies embodied in hardware and software. As a result, institutional logics are able to be concretely experienced (Thornton et al., 2012b).

Related to the first assumption, the second assumption often made by scholars is ontological in nature and argues that institutional logics are a real phenomenon that exist independent of researchers trying to define them as analytical constructs (Ocasio et al., 2017). It then becomes reasonable to assume logics are empirically valid and do not just exist as theories (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). However, logics as empirical phenomena do not prevent the analytical representation of an institutional logic to be defined; for example, a researcher may be able to identify various elements, including values, norms, or guiding principles within a particular logic. This relates to the third important assumption concerning logics, that they can also be understood as 'ideal types' (Thornton, 2004; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012b) and thus are able to be conceptualised by researchers as having *ideal* forms. This is closely related to Weber's (1947) notion of ideal types discussed at the end of Chapter 2 in describing paradigms. Similar to how paradigms operate, institutional logics as ideal types may only be considered as a "method of measuring logics", in that ideal-typical representation of institutional logics can be derived from canonical texts (Ocasio et al., 2017), but how they operate in reality may be different.

The fourth assumption found in the literature relates to the issue of change or how logics emerge; that is, there can be a shift from one dominant logic to another and logics can evolve over time (Ocasio, Mauskapf, & Steele, 2016). What is more of interest within the confines of this thesis is the well-accepted view that logics are historically contingent (Greenwood et al., 2011; Micelotta et al., 2017), meaning that logics come into being through historical processes and events that define the contents of an institutional logic. For example, Ocasio et al. (2016) conducted a historical analysis of the emergence of the corporate logics that emerged in the United States between 1860 and 1920. Through a series of historical analysis of key events, including the Civil War that saw the rise of the first corporations as suppliers to the armies, and later events such as the World's Fair in the late 1800s that allowed exposition of products by corporations such as General Electric and Kraft Foods, Ocasio et al. (2016) make a case for how such events had created narratives through collective memory

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discrete material object, consciously produced or transformed by human activity, under the influence of the physical and/or cultural environment".

celebrating corporate activities and gradually cementing the corporate logic in the US. It is indeed conceivable, then to suggest that both the bureaucratic paradigm or NPM paradigm as institutional logics are also historically contingent, meaning that through the historical actions of various actors such as states and certain individuals (e.g., the Northcote-Trevelyan Report or the declarations of UK, US and Australian governments concerning managerialism [Foster, 1979; Hughes, 2012; Keeling, 1972]) both paradigms have been sedimented over time to become established and, apparently, replaced as institutional logics in public administration systems.

Last, and perhaps pivotal to the rationale for using institutional logics in this study, is the assumption that logics exist at multiple levels, including the organisational field level (Ocasio et al., 2016).[24] The literature indicates that institutional logics can exist at the world system level influencing global governance issues on climate change (Ansari, Wijen, & Gray, 2013), at the societal level (Friedland & Alford, 1991), at the field-level such as in drug-court system (McPherson & Sauder, 2013), and even in the organisational level that can influence the operational activities, goals and objectives of an organisation (Spicer & Sewell, 2010). It is, however, important to account for the assertion made by some scholars of institutional logics (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Thornton et al., 2012b) concerning inter-connectivity of logics across different levels, rather than being considered as self-contained and self-governing logics at different levels, as is often the case (Reay & Hinings, 2005; Zajac & Westphal, 2004). The inter-connectivity thesis specifies the "nested" (Greenwood et al., 2011; p. 322) nature of institutional logics: that is, institutional logics at the field level are inherently embedded within societal level logics. For example, Thornton (2004) historically analysed shifts in logics within the higher education industry from an editorial logics to a market logic. The editorial logic is a variation of the professional logic, whereas the market logic is a direct representation of the societal level logic itself. This point draws attention to the detail that, if public management systems are to be studied as organisational fields, as was indicated earlier, it will have to be done with knowledge and consciousness of the institutional logics at the societal level.

[24] The primary site for analysis for this thesis, the Bangladesh public administration, is conceived as an organisational-field as discussed earlier in the chapter. As such, the Bangladesh public administration field consists of institutional logics that guide behaviour of actors such as individuals and organisations, as will be made apparent in subsequent chapters.

3.3.1 Public management and institutional logics

The theory underpinning institutional logics have become relatively settled thoughts[25], with most research focusing on examining the manifestation of logics and their operation on the ground (Zilber, 2016). The use of institutional logic in this thesis rests on these assumptions and adequately considers them as a foundation for understanding public administration paradigms. As such, this section proposes public administration paradigms as institutional logics that operate at the field level in conditioning behaviour of actors within public administration systems.

A number of public administration scholars have engaged with the institutional logic literature to explain public sector organisation. These studies provide a sense of the ideal-typical field-level institutional logics that can be found within public administration systems. For example, studies based in advanced Western capitalist countries have reported the existence of a *bureaucratic logic* within their public administration systems (Meyer et al., 2014; Meyer & Hammerschmid, 2006). The identified rationalities underpinning the bureaucratic logic are legalistic, rule-following and professional, and promote values such as legality, political neutrality, objectivity and impartiality (Meyer et al., 2014). These vocabularies of practice[26] align with elements of the TPA paradigm discussed in Chapter 2, which can be posited to be nested within the societal-level logic of professions. Similarly, existence of a *managerialist logic* related to NPM reforms is also reported (Meyer & Hammerschmid, 2006; Skelcher & Smith, 2015), which arguably draws on the organising principles set by the market logic at the societal level. Fossestøl et al. (2015) also goes as far to claim a *post-NPM logic* (similar to the post-NPM paradigm discussed in Chapter 2) that could be argued to mimic elements of the community logic at the societal level that promotes

[25] The critique by Alvesson and Spicer (2019) is an exception, although their overall critique is primarily directed towards institutionalism as a whole and how its use and treatment require a narrower focus and streamlining, rather than the "splintered" and fragmented view that pervades the institutional theory literature (p. 200).

[26] The term 'vocabularies of practice' is used by institutional scholars who link semantic representations and practices which manifest within an institutional field (Loewenstein, Ocasio, & Jones, 2012). It is defined as the "system of labelled categories used by members of social collective to make sense of and construct organising principles" (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012a, "Vocabularies of Practice and the Emergence…", para 2). For example, vocabularies such as "share price", "auditing" and "accountability" are labelled categories that relate to the vocabulary of corporate logic in the US (Ocasio & Joseph, 2005). Thus, following the same principles that logics depend on distinctive set of vocabularies to operate (Friedland, 2012), the bureaucratic logic may also consist of vocabularies such as "rules" "impartiality" or "hierarchy" as labeled categories that guide appropriate behaviour, decision making, and even provide a sense of collective identity to actors within an institutional environment (Thornton et al., 2012a).

values of group and inter-organisational cooperation for a collective benefit (Thornton et al., 2012a). Table 3.1 summarises the ideal-type public administration logics identified from the literature.

Table 3. 1: Public administration logics

	Bureaucratic logic	Managerialist logic	Post-NPM logic
Ideological Base	Bureaucratic	Market driven; competition	Collaboration; network
Dominant focus/guiding principles	Rules	Results	Results; public value
Approach to Accountability	Hierarchical	Market driven, in which aggregated self-interests result in outcomes desired by broad groups of citizens as customers	Multifaceted, as civil servants must attend to law, community values, political norms, professional standards, and citizens and stakeholder interest
Key Value	Impartiality; efficiency; public interest	Professionalism; efficiency and effectiveness	Responsiveness, efficiency, effectiveness, and full range of democratic and constitutional values
Performance Objective	Managing inputs	Managing inputs and outputs	Multiple objectives including service, outputs, satisfaction, and outcomes

The nested argument, however, should be attended to cautiously, especially the obvious links that can be drawn between field-level logics and societal-level logics considered above. Research (Reay & Hinings, 2005; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005) has shown that institutional logics are not entirely monolithic in character, in that they do not always promote a singular identity or value, and can instead accommodate other elements that are not necessarily native to a particular logic. For example, Meyer et al. (2014) state that the type of bureaucratic logic that manifested itself across continental European countries not only provides a sense of professionalism but also contains democratic values, which could be related to the state logic at the societal level (Thornton et al., 2012a). It then makes sense to suggest that the field-level logics discussed are thus themselves a *constellation* of logics (Goodrick & Reay, 2011), with each of its constitutive parts drawn from a number of societal-level logics. This argument indeed rationalises the view that field-level logics that operate in public administration systems can take altered forms and do not have to correspond to their 'signature' (Rao, Monin, & Durand, 2003) elements that can be derived from narratives and standard vocabularies discussed in the public administration literature. Thus institutional

logic that may be found in developing countries can be different to the ideal-typical models, mediated by the influence of other societal-level logics. For example, Wang et al. (2019) demonstrate that, while many administrative practices related to NPM have been implemented in China, such as performance appraisal systems, their operation remains significantly mediated by Confucian values, so much so that performance evaluation can be impacted by deference to authority and not only actual performance.

Public administration paradigms as field-level logics provide a more flexible approach to understanding public management systems, particularly those in developing countries. This assertion stems from Kuhn's (1970) own admission that any body of knowledge that falls outside the frameworks of dominant paradigms is "incommensurate" and can be "ignored". This indeed is concerning, because it presents a somewhat rigid view about the organising principles of the public sector, which through a Kuhnian view would suggest that public sector organisation found in developing countries that do not necessarily fit the models proposed by dominant paradigms can be disregarded. This is problematic, in that a rigid paradigmatic view of public administration can arguably stifle any meaningful research in public administration in developing countries. It is this problematisation that presents an opportunity to utilise institutional logics to account for the variations, and often atypical or peculiar manifestations, within public administration within developing countries (Andrews, 2015; Cooke, 2004; Luke, 1986).

3.3.2 Institutional complexity and a return to structure vs agency

If it does become reasonable to theorise public management paradigms as institutional logics, the onus then must be shouldered to also account for the co-existence of multiple organising principles discussed at the end of Chapter 2. The proposed existence of multiple paradigms, or, in the case of this thesis, institutional plurality is recognizably at the heart of institutional logics literature.

It begins with the notion that there are multiple institutional orders at the societal level that enable institutional pluralism, and consequently contestation and coexistence between logics (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Seo & Creed, 2002). This pluralism at the societal level has also translated to pluralism at the field level, with a significant body of research examining the nature and implications of logic multiplicity for institutional actors (Greenwood et al., 2011;

Ocasio et al., 2017). For example, Dunn and Jones (2010) find that the American medical field is constituted by multiple logics, *care logic* and *scientific logic*, each of which are sustained by different groups of field actors and their interests in preferring one logic over another in shaping medical practice. This creates a sense of competitive tension between logics (Battilana & Dorado, 2010) that vies to impose institutional pressures in shaping the behaviour of actors. In a similar way, research in public administration also attests to pluralism. For example, multiple field-level logics have been found to stem from the Weberian bureaucratic logic as well as the NPM-inspired managerialist logic, both of which influence administrative practices, including decision making and innovative practices (Denis et al., 2015; van den Broek, Boselie, & Paauwe, 2014). The implication of such institutional pluralism is that actors are "confronted with a variety of institutional logics that may be more or less complementary, enabling cooperation or competition" (Ocasio et al., 2017; p. 514). Perhaps a relevant line of inquiry for this thesis that is concerned with actors exercising leadership in an institutional environment is to consider how might actors 'cope' with the such pressure in exercising leadership.

Answers may be found in the works that have been popularised under the label of institutional complexity. Institutional complexity arises when logics are found to be competing or conflicting, which complicates the pressures that bear on actors, and therefore their responses. Administrative systems, in fact, are classically imbued with institutional complexity. For example, Meyer et al. (2014) found both a bureaucratic and managerial logic to exist within the Austrian administrative system, which influenced and created conflict in the motivation of pubic managers. Institutional complexity demands actors within such pluralist institutional environments 'cope' with and 'respond' to conflicting demands associated with different logics (Greenwood et al., 2011). This notion of 'responding to institutional pressures' warrants a return to the discussion of structure and agency, and in particular elucidates how the institutional logics perspective highlights the "integration between structure and agency" (Zilber, 2016; p. 138), which has persuaded some scholars to claim institutional logics as the "theory of agency" (Ocasio et al., 2017; p. 514).

Institutional logic scholars attempt to reconcile structure and agency within a single theoretical framework by embracing the notion of embedded agency, suggesting that they acknowledge the structuralist line of argument posited by neo-institutional theorists but are also inclined towards the capacity of human agency advocated in the institutional

entrepreneurship or work literature. Friedland and Alford (1991), the architects of the institutional logics framework, rested their view of embedded agency on the assumption that institutional logics as social structures (Suddaby, 2010) both enabled and constrained human action, and humans exercise agency in the formation, reproduction and transformation of these logics. In other words, structures not only impose rules of appropriate behaviour but also provide the resources that make action possible. For example, public managers may not only be constrained by a bureaucratic logic, but they may also be considered powerful agents by virtue of their command over the bureaucratic rules by which to apply them effectively, such as while making decisions or undertaking administrative procedures (Whittington, 2010). Thus the actions of public managers are both enhanced and inhibited by the norms of appropriate conduct set by the bureaucratic logic, and it is the multiplicity of logics available to actors that becomes the source of agency (Pache & Santos, 2013). Thornton et al. (2012b), as proponents of the institutional logics framework, elaborate on the idea of embedded agency suggesting actors have "partial autonomy" that enables choice, albeit conditioned by the range of logics that are available within an institutional field.

In summary, the institutional logics framework has the potential for providing a distinct perspective on an institutionally conditioned view of public sector leadership in a post-colonial developing country context such as Bangladesh. This theoretical approach generally presents an institutional perspective on leadership, which has been explored previously to a limited extent. For example, Biggart and Hamilton (1987; p. 430) first proposed such an approach suggesting that leadership is a social influence process "[was] related to the social structures in which it [was] found", and that more effort should be made at studying the "normative principles in which those structures rest". Similar calls have been made by others including Porter and McLaughlin (2006), who drew attention to the organisational context in which leadership is found, and Bess and Goldman (2001), who called for an examination of the impact of external systematic influences on leadership. Currie, Lockett, and Suhomlinova (2009b) are perhaps the only scholars to draw on neo-institutional theory to examine elements of leadership. Their study primarily focused on how changes in the wider institutional environment influenced the adoption of a new leadership approach by field actors but offered limited insights into what institutional complexity and the integration of structure and agency might imply for public sector leadership. Coupled with the fact that most studies utilising the institutional logic framework have looked at forms of embedded agency only at the organisational level, and not offered much in terms of how macro-level

phenomenon might manifest in micro-level thinking (Harmon et al., 2019), where agency fundamentally exists (Battilana, 2006), this thesis advances the second research question:

RQ2. How do public managers experiencing institutional complexity in post-colonial developing countries enact their public sector leadership roles?

3.3.3 Responding to institutional complexity

How actors respond to institutional complexity occupies a significant portion of the institutional theory literature. It is premised on the notion of examining how actors within pluralist environments ensure survival and legitimacy while dealing with "incompatible structural elements" (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; p. 356). Since institutional logics are said to be constitutive of actor 'identities' (Kodeih & Greenwood, 2014; Thornton et al., 2012b), then managing multiple institutionally conditioned identities is a useful way of understanding how field actors deal with pluralism. Within the confines of this thesis, it is relevant to think about how public managers within a public administration system might consider managing a bureaucratic identity and a managerialist identity in enacting leadership in a legitimate way.

A key term that is used by institutional scholars to describe responses to such institutional complexity is "strategy" or "strategic response" (Greenwood et al., 2011; Oliver, 1991). Strategy may be considered a manifestation of agency that represents the extent to which field actors are able accommodate prescriptions that are imposed by field constituents or referents[27] who represent a particular logic, and are then able to explain how preferences related to the choice and prioritisation of a logic is determined (Greenwood et al., 2011). Such strategic preferences implies that no single group of field constituent or referent associated with a field logic is likely to be fully satisfied, and thus "political tensions are likely to be endemic" (Kraatz & Block, 2008; p. 4). For example, Purdy and Gray (2009) illustrate how US state offices for dispute resolution dealt with tension involving their organisational goal. The study showed that these offices drew support from two different

[27] By field constituent or referent, this thesis refers to actors or institutional members who may act as representative of field-level logics and are able to impose, advocate and enforce their logics on other field-level actors. For example, Dunn and Jones (2010) found in the American medical profession that regulatory authorities acted as constituents who supported the *scientific logic*, pressing for research- and innovation-focused medical practice. Regulatory authorities, however, faced competition from medical professionals who were supporters of the *care logic* and thus endorsed medical practices that were more focused towards serving communities and developing clinical skills.

institutional constituents - public policy advocates who promoted democratic participation of disputants in resolving disputes and judicial advocates who emphasised bureaucratic efficiency in resolving as many disputes as possible. These pressures created inherent tension within these offices, in that democratic participation undermined bureaucratic objective of dealing with as many cases as possible.

There is, however, reasonable evidence to suggest that such competing institutional demands can be managed and that institutionally adept actors can simultaneously cater to the demands and expectations imposed by multiple field-level logics (Misangyi, 2016; Ramus, Vaccaro, & Brusoni, 2017; Smith & Tracey, 2016; van den Broek et al., 2014). Table 3.2 summarises well-known and established strategic responses that actors use in dealing with competing institutional pressures. *Acquiescence*, *avoidance* and *compromise* belong to a "repertoire" (Pache & Santos, 2010, p. 462) of responses by actors who are embedded in pluralist institutional environments. These strategic responses serve various ends. Acquiescence, for example, relates to passively accepting and acting in accordance with the demands of institutional constituents involving several tactics, one of them being *habit*. For example, actors commonly reproduce various institutionalised practice within the roles they inhabit such as students and teachers, managers and staff, and, relevant for this study, civil servants, who carry out role functions on the conventional definitions of these roles (Scott, 1987). Compromise is another strategic response that is less passive and requires more active consideration by actors who may choose to negotiate with institutional constituents to partially conform to their demands using several tactics, one of them being *pacifying*. For example, Scott (1983, p. 106) reported that public health care organisations that received government funding were cautious about "[biting] the hand that feeds", especially when protesting interference of government authorities. As a result, healthcare organisations were found to adhere to the minimum standards of care and financial control established by the government.

Table 3. 2: Established strategic responses to institutional complexity

Strategic Responses	Description/Definition	Tactics
Acquiescence	A passive response that entails the general adoption of prescriptions or arrangements imposed on individuals by institutional constituents	*Habit* relates to unconsciously abiding to taken-for-granted rules and norms *Imitation* involves conscious and or unconscious mimicking of elements of an institutional logic *Compliance*, a more active type of response, that involves consciously choosing to comply to institutional pressures for self-serving benefits. This is also understood as tight-coupling
Avoidance	A type of institutional resistance that allows actors to preclude the necessity of conformity to institutional pressures	*Concealing* involves disguising nonconformity behind a 'façade of acquiescence' by ceremonially or symbolically showing adherence to institutional pressures *Buffering* involves measures that reduce possibilities of being externally scrutinised by decoupling actual activities or actions from expectations promoted by an institutional logic *Escape* refers to exiting the institutional environment completely
Compromise	Relates to the ability to able to balance multiple institutional pressures. This is achieved through partially conforming to the pressures of each logic by meeting the minimum required standards of each logic. This creates an acceptable balance between different competing institutional pressures	*Balancing* involves achieving parity through a negotiation of compromise. *Pacifying* entails efforts to placate or appease specific institutional constituents *Bargaining* relates to the ability to negotiate with institutional constituents so that the latter alter their demands

Sources: Oliver (1991); Pache and Santos (2010); Boxenbaum and Jonsson (2017); Kraatz and Block (2008)

Not included in Table 3.2 is another lesser-known strategic response, that of *combining*. It emerged from works that suggest that competing logics can often create opportunities for actors to achieve various ends (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Binder, 2007; Greenwood et al., 2011; Reay & Hinings, 2009). Pache and Santos (2013) drew inferences from these works to suggest that it is possible for actors to achieve compatibility between disparate institutional demands by combining synergistic elements of multiple logics to guide practice and ensure endorsement from multiple referents. Evidence from a study by Tracey et al. (2011) makes claims about how a social enterprise was able to combine a non-profit logic and commercial

logic to tackle homelessness, whereas Battilana and Dorado (2010) show how a micro-finance organisation in Bolivia combined development and banking logics to fight poverty. Despite such evidence, combining as a more established strategy remains in doubt, primarily because, unlike the other strategies, little is known about how logics are in fact combined or what are the specific tactics used by actors.

Strategic responses discussed in this section present a set of possibilities that are indeed available to public leaders to navigate the institutional complexity they may experience. Yet it is important to be cognisant of the fact that the strategies discussed have been primarily explored at the organisational level and little is known about whether individual actors deploy the same strategies. This issue illuminates a wider gap in the field about how institutional logics translate at the individual level (Glaser et al.; McPherson & Sauder, 2013). Furthermore, the literature on responses to institutional complexity can create the impression that strategic responses are deployed by actors in institutional environments that are assuredly static, or, in other words, that a set of institutional logics does not change within an institutional environment. But institutions do in fact change over time (Meyer, 1982), and, as argued in this thesis, public administration systems can experience additions of new logics (e.g., addition of NPM and post-NPM principles) or even perhaps the erosion of an older logic (e.g., claims of the demise of traditional bureaucracy and NPM). As a result, public leaders may also find themselves in circumstances undergoing change while experiencing institutional complexity: for example, when confronted with public sector reform. In such cases, the literature on institutional work (Lawrence et al., 2009) discussed in the next section can provide relevant insights.

3.3.4 Shifts in institutional logics: Considering the literature on institutional work

There are a number of perspectives that suggest processes of institutional change with varying emphasis on agency and structure, and even different levels of analysis (e.g., organisations, fields and practices). For example, Zilber (2002) examines institutional change at the organisational level, where new entrants in a rape crisis centre with different backgrounds to existing members introduced new practices and behavioural expectations that gradually diminished adherence to existing taken-for-granted practices. Wright and Zammuto (2013b), on the other hand, present evidence of field-level institutional change in the English

county cricket system, claiming institutional change can also occur due to societal-level changes that demand changes at the field level.

If indeed institutions can change, then organisational fields are also subject to change or shifts in logic, or replacement of one dominant logic by another (Greenwood et al., 2010; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). For example, Thornton, Jones, and Kury (2005), through historical analysis, show how the field of accounting transformed from being dominated by a *fiduciary logic* that promoted the protection of public interest from market opportunism in the 1800s, to being dominated by a *corporate logic* that emphasised profit maximisation at the advent of the Industrial Revolution. What this example also illustrates is the pace of institutional change. Thornton et al. (2012a), in relation to this, propose that shifts in logics may be categorised as *transformational* and *developmental* change. Transformational changes allude to radical changes that occur through displacement or replacement of logics, which trickle down to significantly alter practices within a given field (Glynn & Lounsbury, 2005). Developmental changes, on the contrary, describe the gradual and subtle changes that occur in the field, for example, by incorporating external dimensions to an existing logic.

Institutional change and how it manifests offers an interesting theoretical perspective for public administration scholars. More specifically, it has the potential to provide a theoretical understanding of how public sector reform occurs and the role public sector leadership can play in the process, both of which are intertwined, as demonstrated in Chapter 2. For example, reform within the context of this thesis implies institutional change or shifts in logics. This is because institutional logics represent the "rules guiding behaviour of field level actors" (Reay & Hinings, 2009p. 629) and they "refer to the belief system and related practices that predominate an organisational field" (Scott, 2014; p. 139). To the extent that public sector reforms attempts to change the rules, belief systems and related practice within administrative systems (Cloutier et al., 2016; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011), reform can be seen as deliberate institutional change or change in logics.

Consequently, public sector reform as institutional change raises important implications for public leaders and the strategies they deploy in facilitating change. Mainstream leadership literature offers some organisational behavioural perspectives about how public managers can inspire followers towards accepting reforms and facilitate the adoption of new practices, as discussed in the previous chapter. But these perspectives are incongruent with the

institutional approach of this thesis and provide limited insights into how public managers deal with institutional pressures and, in the context public sector reform, successfully change institutions.

Proponents of the institutional logic literature have proposed that the institutional work (Lawrence et al., 2009) literature can offer useful insights about how the role of actors can facilitate shifts in logics (Lok, 2010; Ocasio et al., 2017). More specifically, limited research (Lok, 2010) has shown that an embedded view of agency espoused by institutional logics, married with institutional work[28] that proffers pathways to institutional change (Battilana & D'aunno, 2009), can explain multiple logics and can indeed create opportunities for individuals to exercise agency and facilitate shifts in logics. In other words, institutional work that can explain the purposive actions of field members, whose interests are defined by prevailing logics, can indeed facilitate the creation, maintenance and disruption of institutions (Lawrence et al., 2009). In this sense, public managers enacting public sector leadership can be considered institutional workers who do not merely execute or implement policies, but, through their actions, also contribute to shaping them (Cloutier et al., 2016).

Several studies have shown that institutional workers have facilitated the replacement of one dominant logic with another (Hensmans, 2003; Hoffman, 1999). For example, institutional work can include avoiding challenging existing logics openly and instead working 'behind the scenes' or 'under the radar' to drive more incremental developmental changes over time, resulting in new field-level logics (Maguire et al., 2004; Reay & Hinings, 2009). This is referred to as "creating institutions" (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006, p. 221). Hargadon and Douglas (2001) for example, through a rich historical analysis of Thomas Edison's efforts to institutionalise electric light, showed how the inventor used a strategy of *mimicry* as institutional work. They argue that "by designing the incandescent light around many of the concrete features of the already-familiar gas system, Edison drew on the public's pre-existing understanding of the technology, its value, and its uses" which led to making electric light indistinguishable from the existing system, and led to "lessening rather than emphasising the gaps between the old institutions and his new innovation" (Haragadon and Douglas, 2001, p. 479, 489). Conversely, institutional work can also entail "maintaining" (Lawrence and

[28] As discussed in earlier sections, institutional work is a direct upshot of the agentic turn within institutional theory. In other words, it is the result of prioritising agency of actors, which was initially overwhelmed by the conditioning nature of institutions stressed by scholars (Mutch, 2018).

Suddaby, 2006, p. 229) the status quo, that is, field members may engage in purposive work that can ensure continuity of existing logics and resist the introduction of a new one (Gill & Burrow, 2018). For example, Currie et al. (2012) show that a leader within the field of healthcare resisted a new logic by *demonising* it and reemphasised the importance of the incumbent logic as an important part of the daily routine that would be difficult to change. Lastly, Lawrence and Suddaby (2006,) suggest that agents can also disrupt existing logics, an area of institutional work that remains relatively under-researched. Lawrence and Suddaby (2006, p. 271) suggest disruption occurs when agents who see their interests as not being served by the existing institutional arrangements, can work to 'tear down' or 'render' institutions in effectual. An example of a strategy used to disrupt institutions is *undermining assumptions and beliefs*. Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) draw on the work of Wick (2001) and refer to the Westray coalmining disaster as an example whereby the disaster occurred despite adherence to rules and regulation. The existing rules, considered the institutions, were being undermined because the rules did not accomplish their prescribed health and safety objectives.

The problem with existing studies on institutional work, however, is that they fail to consider the implications of institutional pluralism or how such conditions constrain and enable action of actors. This is indeed true for public managers who are embedded within pluralist institutional environments. Given that actions of public managers are guided by the prevailing set of logics within their institutional environment, this raises questions about how abilities and strategies escape such embeddedness to promote new practices while unshackling themselves from routines and 'comfort zones'. The latter, in particular, is a serious claim by leadership scholars (Bess & Goldman, 2001; Moynihan et al., 2012), who profess that public leaders are skilled in inspiring breakaways from existing routines and promoting change within organisation. Given this existing gap in the literature, this thesis proposes a third and final research question:

RQ3. How do public managers experiencing institutional complexity in post-colonial developing countries enact leadership in the implementation of public sector reform?

3.4 Summary

This chapter presented the institutional logics framework as the main theoretical approach to examining public sector leadership. The chapter situated the institutional logic framework within the broader realm of institutional theory and thus began examining fundamental issues within institutionalism, including exploring questions of what institutions are and how they function to determine the behaviour of humans. Subsequently, institutional logics were discussed and their existence at both the societal level and the organisational field level, the field level being the primary focus of this thesis. Importantly, discussion proceeded to introduce the notion of institutional complexity, which formed the basis of the second research question: How do public managers experiencing institutional complexity in post-colonial developing countries enact their public sector leadership roles?

After exploring the implications of institutional complexity, and how actors might respond to such an institutional environment, issues of institutional change were discussed as the basis for understanding public sector reform and the possible role of public sector leadership within the change process. This formed the basis of the third and final research question of this thesis: How do public managers experiencing institutional complexity in post-colonial developing countries enact leadership in the implementation of public sector reform?

At the end of the two literature review chapters, public sector leadership and institutional logics framework, it is useful to briefly reemphasize their relevance and applicability to the research context of this thesis, Bangladesh. As discussed earlier, there is indeed limited public sector leadership research in developing countries such as Bangladesh, and perhaps rightly so. This is because analysis in Chapter 2 showed that much of the leadership theories have been derived from contexts that exhibit administrative characteristics that are different to those found in Bangladesh. For example, entrepreneurial leadership relies inherently on an administrative setting that permits the exercise of high levels of discretion and risk taking, which are supported overall by a performance driven culture. For reasons that will be discussed in Chapter 6, such conditions have not permeated the Bangladesh public administration that could confidently allow the application of a leadership theory such as entrepreneurial leadership. This thesis considers this as an important gap, and in response, proposed the institutional logic framework as a suitable theory to explore a more context specific understanding of leadership. To put simply, the institutional logics framework is a

theory for understanding how social conditions influence human behaviour. While much research using the institutional logic framework is undertaken in western countries, it is not constrained by elements of context that might inhibit its application to other countries such as Bangladesh. In fact, as a way theoretically explaining context and how it might influence phenomenon, the institutional logic framework is robust enough to be applied to the Bangladesh setting, allowing it to capture the administrative characteristics and features required to understand the manifestation of public sector leadership.

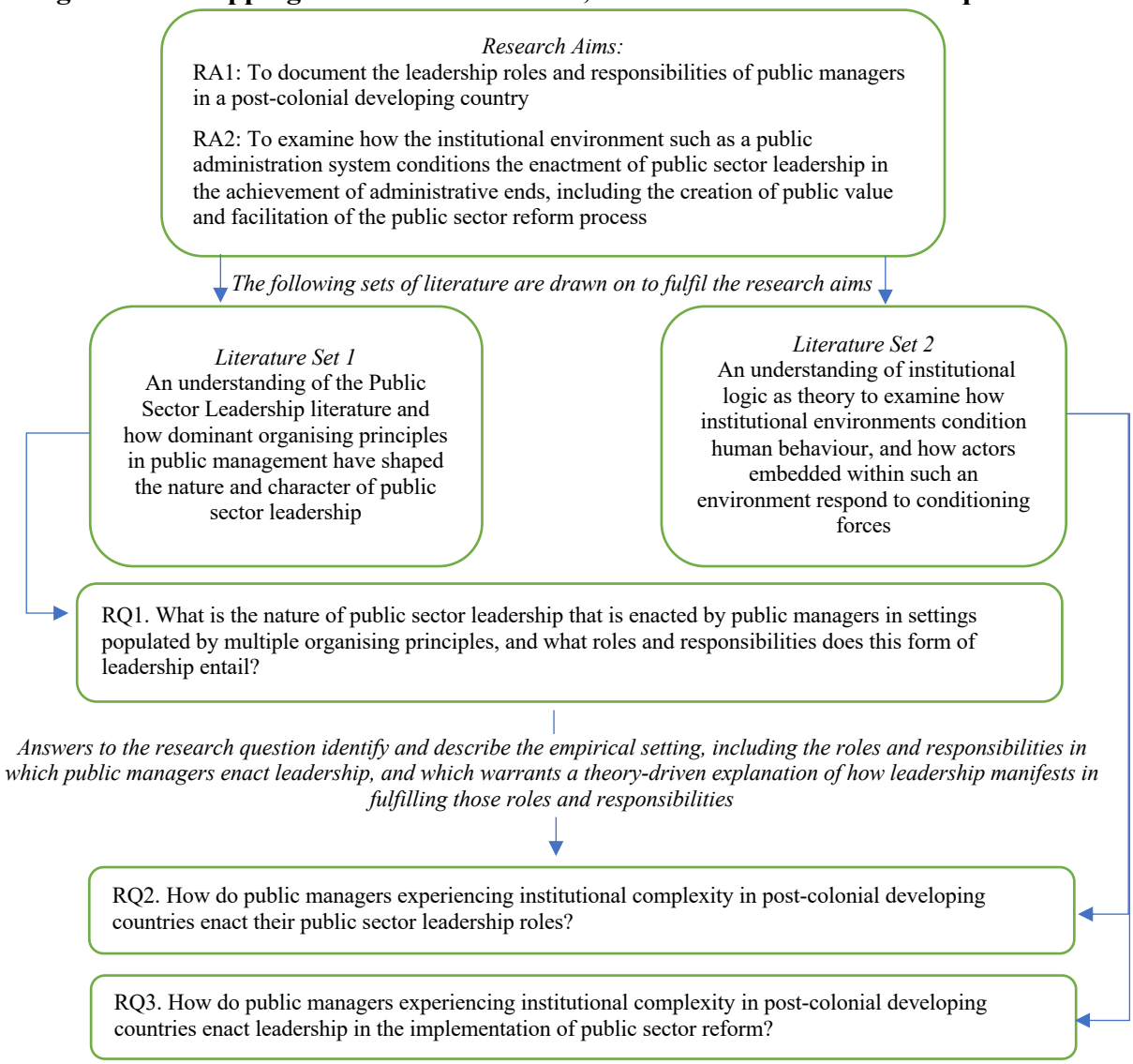
The following chapter presents the research design of this thesis. It details the methodological underpinnings, data collection protocols, data analysis strategies and other methodological considerations. Importantly, it provides details on the research site which involved selecting Bangladesh as a post-colonial developing country and its public administration system as the institutional environment in which public sector leadership is enacted.

Chapter 4 - Research Design

4.0 Introduction

The preceding chapters have provided the rationale and justification for undertaking this research. Figure 4.1 maps out and aligns the research aims, literature sets, and the research questions which this thesis addresses. The main aim of this thesis is to explore the nature of public sector leadership in a post-colonial developing country such as Bangladesh and understand how the public administration system within the chosen country, theoretically conceptualised as an institutional environment, impacts on the enactment of leadership by public managers in achieving administrative ends. This chapter provides details on the research design adopted in order to successfully achieve the research aims.

Figure 4. 1: Mapping out the research aims, literature sets and research questions



This chapter commences with a discussion of the ontological and epistemological assumptions that have guided the framing of the research problem. The main purpose of doing so is to clarify the philosophical underpinnings of this research in relation to the nature of reality and the communication of it (Blaikie & Priest, 2019). This is to establish the rationale for the research strategy and explain why it was chosen as an appropriate approach for undertaking the study. The methodology used to investigate the nature of reality relating to leadership and institutional logics is then discussed (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Research methods, instruments and protocols that aided the collection of empirical data are discussed. The analytical process is discussed, before concluding with issues of quality, validity and limitations encountered in the implementation of the research design.

4.1 An overview of ontological and epistemological assumptions of the thesis

The philosophical underpinnings of the research strategy adopted have been paramount in providing overall guidance in the study's conception, how the research was undertaken, and the implications of the findings discussed in later chapters. As such, discussion of the research design is best preceded by clarifying the researcher's worldview (Martela, 2015), that is, how the nature of reality is conceived and how the researcher comes to know and understand that reality (Blaikie & Priest, 2019). Ontological assumptions reveal a researcher's claims about the nature of reality, a stance which orients the researcher towards particular approaches in undertaking a scientific inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Several ontologies exist on a spectrum in the field of social sciences, ranging from reality being treated as separate and external to the individual to reality as a product of individual consciousness (Burrel & Morgan, 1979). For example, a *positivist* worldview is grounded on *realism* and assumes an objective view of reality which can only be known from what can be observed (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This is contrasted with the position adopted by *interpretivists*, which is subjectivist in orientation and considers reality to exist through the meanings that are constructed by individuals through their lived experiences (Brand, 2009). Thus reality is subjective and multiple through an interpretivist lens (Creswell, 2013).

This study adopts a *social constructivist* view of the world, in that social reality is suggested to be 'relative' (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This 'idealist' (Blaikie, 2010, p. 93) ontology considers reality to "consist of representations that are creations of the human mind". In this sense, no reality is constructed to be 'true' or 'untrue' as positivists might assert, but rather

reality is the product of its "time and place and of the people who 'hold' the construction" (Brand, 2009, p. 433; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In the process of framing this research, this study began by acknowledging the fact that, while existing public sector leadership research has been traditionally dominated by positivist views that conceptualise leadership as a mind-independent observable phenomenon (Alvesson, 1996), leadership is also a phenomenon embedded in the functioning of the real world that it is exercised by individuals, experienced by followers, and understood from various theoretical perspectives (Avolio & Bass, 2002). This gives the impression that there are indeed multiple realities with which to understand leadership and is consistent with the ontological views promoted by social constructivists – that multiple realities exist, since they are contingent on human construction of realities. Accordingly, leadership scholars have accepted the fact that it is possible for leadership to be "differently constructed in different […] historical/cultural settings (Dachler & Hosking, 1995, p. 4) arising out of the "social construction process by which certain understandings of leadership come about" (Uhl-Bien, 2006, p. 655). For example, Bligh, Kohles, and Pillai (2011) show that societal beliefs about leadership in the media help construct realities about what appropriate leadership characteristics should be. Following this line, it may be observed that the American media often portray leaders as being individualistic and charismatic, whereas in non-Western countries such as China leaders are portrayed as being authoritative and paternalistic. This example in essence shows that reality of leadership perceived in a given context can be very different and is contingent on the *collective construction* individuals might hold.

The latter issue of collective construction reinforces the social constructivist ontology as also a consistent approach to the study of institutions (Munir, 2005; Reay & Jones, 2016), with several authors claiming it as a founding principle of institutional research (Suddaby, 2010; Zajac & Westphal, 2004). This is perhaps most appropriately demonstrated by early institutionalists Berger and Luckmann (1991), who argue that individuals construct and interpret reality as they interact with their environment. As a result, realities are constructed around 'institutionalised norms' for thinking, feeling and behaving (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). This emphasises the social constructivist acknowledgement of the effect environment has on the construction of reality, and thus on the "collective generation of meaning" (Schwandt, 2000, p. 127) mediated by 'the hold that culture has on us" (Crotty, 1998, p. 58). Much of this understanding is imbued in the literature on institutionalism discussed in earlier chapters. For example, the bureaucratic logic and the principle of following rules help

individuals construct reality of how government organisations should operate by strictly adhering to rules that are specified in laws and policies.

It is, however, important to point out that the social constructivist perspective adopted in this study does not wholly reject the existence of the 'real world' that is external to the human mind. Instead, this 'idealist' view (Blaikie, 2010) reconciles both *realism* or mind-independent realities and relativism (Cassell, Cunliffe, & Grandy, 2017; Delanty, 2005). This is exhibited in premise of this thesis that there are multiple realities concerning leadership, and it follows that institutional logics exist as ideal types that are independent of the human mind as objective truths that represent cultural, social and historical context through which realities are constructed. For example, the bureaucratic rule of record keeping is real and an objective fact, in the sense that public managers, when they become aware of operating principles of accountability and transparency, record keeping becomes an objective fact. But record keeping is also an 'institutional fact' (Searle, 2010). That the bureaucratic rule of record keeping is not a matter of opinion "relative to the observer" (Searle, 2010) but a 'fact' that is brought into being through words written in laws, statutes and guidelines. What is relative, however, is the meaning that people assign to the practice of record keeping, which can vary from society to society, depending on normative and cognitive elements associated with the practice. As such, in one society bureaucratic record keeping might connote the highest form of accountability and transparency that ensures that the different arms of government such as the parliament or judiciary can hold the public administration responsible for its work. This is an institutional fact that has been sedimented in such a setting and has become ingrained in the society's stock of social knowledge (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). However, in a society where unethical or corrupt practice may be rampant and have become the norm, bureaucratic record keeping may only be a formality, since principles of accountability and transparency receive little priority. This stands as an example of the reconciliation of realism and relativism, illuminating what might be considered to be core concerns of social constructivists (Berger & Luckmann, 1991; Holstein & Gubrium, 2007) – that of epistemology.

Epistemological assumptions are 'grounds of knowledge' through which humans understand the world and how this knowledge is communicated (Burrel & Morgan, 1979). It involves understanding the relationship between the 'knower' and what can be known (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Epistemologically, social constructivists elevate the subjective experience of

individuals in the construction of knowledge, but, as suggested, they are also equally conscious about not sacrificing the objectivity of knowledge (Schwandt, 2000). This is further elaborated by Crotty (1998), who argues that reality or truth cannot be entirely "subjective" because individuals do not create realities, they only construct it. This based on his understanding that "we have something to work with […] What we have to work with is the world, and the objects in this world" (Crotty, 1998, p. 43-4). This constructive view is reflected in the discussions thus far on public sector leadership and embedding this phenomenon within an institutional environment that conditions its enactment. Consequently, this thesis does not propose to construct a reality of public sector leadership within post-colonial Bangladesh in the abstract. Instead, it relies on ideal types to provide guidance to understand the cultural, social and historical context in which individuals, particularly public managers, interact and construct their reality of leadership. However, in saying that, this thesis acknowledges the fact that ideal types "do not represent social reality" (Reay, 2016, p. 447), but are merely "used as tool[s] to interpret cultural meaning" and "help the researcher avoid getting bogged down in […] reproducing the often-confusing empirical situation" (Thornton et al., 2012b, p. 52). It is indeed challenging, as Thornton et al. (2012b) argue, to "quantify the distance" between the ideal type and the empirical situation. This thesis then draws on canonical texts to examine the 'objective reality' of institutional logics that might be prevalent. It involves an empirical examination of the perception of participants and their lived experiences in enacting public sector leadership and witnessing its enactment, which allows the researcher to co-construct (Cassell et al., 2017) the knowledge on public sector leadership in the Bangladesh public administration by interpreting what is shared by research participants. The interpretation of public sector leadership is however undertaken within the broad parameter set up by the working definition adopted in this thesis (see Chapter 2) which involves a) influencing individuals to contribute to group goals, and b) coordinating the pursuit of those goals.

In summary, this thesis is underpinned by a 'social constructivist' epistemology that assumes that reality and knowledge are subjective and are constructed by individuals through their interaction with their environment (Berger & Luckmann, 1991; Cassell et al., 2017). This approach relies on what some authors might refer to as 'interpretivist' ontology (Crotty, 1998) that assumes reality and its meaning are contextual and thus imply multiplicity.

4.2 Methodological considerations

Several scholars commenting on the philosophical underpinnings of social research (Burrel & Morgan, 1979; Crotty, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1994) have argued for an inherent need to ensure consistency between ontological and epistemological assumptions of the researcher and the methodology adopted in undertaking research. Methodological questions elicit reflection on how researchers "go about finding whatever he or she believes can be known" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108), and thus scholars have prescribed several methodological approaches based on ontological and epistemological predispositions. For example, researchers oriented towards positivism are inclined towards exploring objective truths and correspondingly use survey research, they rely on research instruments to measure constructs, and conduct statistical analysis to adhere to the positivist tenet of falsification (Crotty, 1998; Delanty, 2005). Social constructivists, however, follow a starkly different approach. Their subjective orientation (Brand, 2009) leads them to prioritise interaction "between and among" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111) the researcher and research subjects, engaging in dialectical interchange. This approach produces opportunities for the researcher to interpret constructions of the research participants and ultimately to develop and distil "consensus construction" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111) that provides a comprehensive explanation of the phenomenon under investigation.

Following both leadership (Meindl, 1995; Parry et al., 2014; Stentz, Plano Clark, & Matkin, 2012) and institutional logic scholars (Micelotta et al., 2017; Reay & Jones, 2016), this study adopted a qualitative case study methodology. The nature of the research questions, which are exploratory in nature, also warranted a qualitative methodology (Ashworth, McDermott, & Currie, 2018; Ospina, Esteve, & Lee, 2018). There is, however, a particular need to make a case for a qualitative approach to the investigation of the leadership phenomenon, since the field is primarily dominated by quantitative studies. Cummings (1981) and Miner (1975), in their initial evaluation of contemporary leadership literature, concluded that qualitative research was virtually non-existent in the field. This was indeed the case as Bryman (2004) reported: one of the earliest qualitative research papers on leadership to appear in the pages of leadership journals was in 1979. This narrative, however, has shifted somewhat, brought about by the increased acceptance of qualitative approaches in the leadership field (Parry et al., 2014). Though perhaps still not as popular as quantitative approaches, qualitative research arguably make valuable contributions in studying leadership (Bryman, 2004; Parry et al.,

2014). The most significant and relevant to this thesis is sensitivity to context that qualitative research can afford. Qualitative researchers are able to give greater attention to the responsiveness of leaders to particular circumstances by capturing the context-specific forces that elicit very different types of leadership behaviour and styles across context (Bryman, 2004; Parry et al., 2014). For example, Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003) find in their case study of knowledge-intensive industries that more progressive notions of leadership are preferred (e.g., emphasis on visionary leaders). However, they also find that managers prefer engaging in micro-management (a less revered leadership quality: Bryman, 2004), which is reasonably inconsistent with the visionary images of leaders that followers portrayed. This is, however, contrasted with a qualitative case study of police leadership where Bryman (1996) finds that micromanagement is in fact a preferred leadership approach which police officers perceived as receiving support from their supervisors.

The contrasting qualitative examples above demonstrate that the context in which leadership is exercised indeed has a distinctive influence in determining which leadership style and approach might be perceived as effective, and qualitative researchers are well-positioned to explore this 'black box', which quantitative researchers often try to capture more abstractly (e.g., 'task structure' or 'position power': Parry et al., 2014). In addition, in line with the primary aim of this research, which is to 'understand' leadership enactment within an institutionally varied setting, Conger's (1998) enduring words are instructive, suggesting quantitative research, while can be helpful in examining impact of leadership or examine the micro-level factors that influence leader behaviour, alone is not sufficient in understanding leadership in all its complexity, including the influence of wider macro-level issues such as social context. Similarly Parry et al. (2014, p. 133) emphasises that "leadership involves multiple levels of phenomenon, possesses a dynamic character and has a symbolic component, elements better addressed with qualitative methodologies".

Making a case for capturing institutional logics qualitatively, however, is more straightforward than leadership. This is foremost facilitated by the social constructivist roots of institutional analysis (Munir, 2005) that favour qualitative approaches. Jones, Boxenbaum, and Anthony (2013) make a strong case in this regard, arguing that institutions or institutional logic are contextual and are translated by individuals in specific times and spaces. They manifest in the language, practices, symbols and materials institutional members engage with, and which Reay and Jones (2016) assert are "naturally suited" for qualitative research.

There is indeed credence to these claims: evidence presented by Jones and Less (2015; cited in Reay & Jones, 2016) shows that of 601 studies published between 1991 and 2014, 66% employ qualitative approaches. As will be discussed in subsequent sections, qualitative methods that can include quotes, observations, or document analysis indeed provide the most suitable forms of data in which researchers can immerse themselves to interpret how institutional logics can condition the construction of reality of research participants.

4.2.1 Case study methodology

Creswell (2013), one of the foremost scholars in research methods, points to at least five prominent qualitative research methodologies: narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnographies and case studies. In considering a number of factors that relate to the research aims of this study, use of theory and the nature of the phenomenon being investigated, this thesis adopted the case study as the most appropriate approach to effectively answer the research questions. This section provides justification for that choice.

The general area of case study research has been strongly influenced by two scholars, Robert Stake (1995) and Robert Yin (Yin, 2014). It is of ontological significance that both scholars base their approach to case study research on social constructivist views, suggesting that case studies are able to accommodate both realist and relativist perceptions of reality. This is confirmed by other notable commentators in the field such as Creswell (2014) and George and Bennett (2005), who hold that case study research can be effectively used by positivists to test theory, but is also robust in allowing theory development generally pursued by qualitatively inclined non-positivists. It is then a matter of importance that the case study approach is well within the bounds of the philosophical underpinnings of this thesis.

Yin (2014) provides the most widely cited definition of case study research: “empirical inquiry that investigates contemporary phenomenon in depth and within a real-world context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context may not be clearly evident” (p. 16). This definition then assumes that a case study is most appropriate in investigating a phenomenon that manifests in real-world settings and whose understanding is likely to be guided by the contextual conditions that are specific to the case. This interpretation partly justifies the methodological choice of this thesis, given that the enactment of public sector leadership is indeed a real-world practice, and that the selection of

the research site is a theoretically interesting jurisdiction whose contextual environment is likely to condition leadership practices. Beyond this however, other notable scholars in the field such as Creswell (2013), have emphasised the bounded system of case, implying the possibility of demarcating and hence drawing boundaries around a specific case to be studied. Traditional case study research have generally considered spatial boundaries, for example, organisational boundaries. Empirical examples can include the examination of public sector leadership within a local government council (Aagaard, 2016). Elger (2012) however points to a type of theoretical bounding of the case, that is, the possibility of a more theoretical conceptualisation of the case under investigation, informed by the analytical themes and research question that are to be explored. The research questions of this thesis are generally centred on theoretical concepts of public sector leadership and institutional complexity and as such, have guided the boundary of the case of this thesis. For this reason, this thesis may be considered to be a case study of enacting public sector leadership within institutional complexity.

It is, however, important to explore beyond such broader-level justifications and ground the approach of this thesis on one of the more specific types of case study that scholars have suggested. Both Yin (2014) and Stake (1995) have proposed several types, selection of which is guided by a study's overall purpose. The present study seeks to explore how public sector leadership manifests in a post-colonial developing country like Bangladesh and in the process aims to build new theory about public sector leadership enactment through the use of institutional logics. Its exploratory nature may provide reasons for this thesis to be considered an *exploratory* case study (Yin, 2014). The primary purpose of an exploratory case study is to investigate a phenomenon in a context that lacks any detailed preliminary research (Yin, 2014), such as public sector leadership in a post-colonial developing country. Yet this study is also approached with certain assumptions, guided by a degree of theoretical certainty and expectations about how institutional logics are likely to condition the enactment of public sector leadership. The use of an established theory also warrants this research being considered an *instrumental* case study. According to Stake (1995), instrumental case studies go beyond exploring and understanding a particular situation. They provide insights into general theory. As mentioned earlier, the theoretical significance of conceiving the agency of leaders as an institutional construction raises the possibility of making knowledge arising out of this study potentially "transferrable" (Guba, 1981, cited in Gobo, 2004) to other post-colonial developing countries. This is because the research site identified plays a supportive

role in facilitating understanding of something else (Stake, 1995): that is, institutional construction of public sector leadership enactment. Based on these arguments, this study adopts a blended case study type, embracing the exploratory nature in understanding public sector leadership in an under-investigated setting, but principally espousing an instrumental case study design with a view to using the case of the Bangladesh public administration to explicate an institutional view of public sector leadership.

A *holistic single case study design* (Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2009) was deemed most appropriate for this study. This is justified by the possibility of uncovering 'unusual' (Yin, 2014) public sector leadership enactments that might be witnessed in the Bangladesh public administration, a setting which deviates in terms of institutional make-up compared to Western public management settings from which much public sector leadership knowledge is derived. Yin (2014) and others (e.g., Mills et al., 2009) advise that single case studies examining unusual or unique cases offer alternative explanations to existing theoretical understandings. This case study of public sector leadership in the Bangladesh public administration can potentially offer a unique institutional lens compared to the leader-centric theories (Quick, 2015; Tourish, 2014) that dominate the leadership field. Furthermore, the emphasis on 'holistic' suggests that the unit of analysis, which is at the individual level (examination of leadership enactment by individual public managers), is able to be examined closely embedded in the environment in its entirety (Mills et al., 2009). This holistic approach is also complemented by the study's theoretical approach (i.e., institutional logics) that prioritises embeddedness of the phenomenon from which it emerges.

There is, however, a salient limitation in the use of the single case study design. Scholars have 'typically' criticised single case studies for lacking external validity, which is presumed to limit them from making any meaningful conclusions or credible generalisations (Tellis, 1997). Yet Yin (2014) clarifies that qualitative case studies are not intended to follow a positivist's tenet of 'replication logic', that is, for the study to be replicated by another investigator in a different context to achieve objectives of generalisation. Rather, the purpose is to generalise results to a broader set of theories (Yin, 2014). This argument is aptly developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), who insist on using the term 'transferability' instead of 'generalisability'. Transferability indicates 'similarity' between two contexts or 'fittingness', which defines the degree of congruency between two different contexts. If Context A and Context B are 'sufficiently congruent', then the research findings from

Context A will be applicable to Context B (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Hence, the single case study is not motivated by purposes of generalisability but rather is a design that encapsulates a research setting that may be considered 'typical' or broadly representative (Stake, 1995) of a post-colonial developing country, particularly within the South Asian region, and thus the findings of this case study may be transferable to other similar South Asian countries. It is further worth mentioning that, while this thesis recognises the need to justify the choice of a 'typical' jurisdiction, institutional scholars such as Scott (2014) have suggested that institutional approaches recognise that social contexts always vary and findings emerging from analysis do need to be "conditionalised" (p. 262) to ensure that the findings represent their embeddedness in their environment. For these reasons, this study was restricted to a single jurisdiction of the Bangladesh public administration.

4.3 The case setting

The Bangladesh public administration represents the broader context of a post-colonial developing country within which leadership of public managers is examined as conditioned by prevailing institutional logics. The nature of such a case study demands that the case be constructed in a research site and on a population that is 'theoretically sampled'. In other words, selection of the case was finalised here "in terms of [the] theory" that underpinned this research (Silverman, 2013, p. 144). The choice of the Bangladesh public administration presented a good fit between theoretical understandings of complex institutional environments derived from the literature and the existence of multiple logics that likely exist on the ground in Bangladesh. The latter was primarily established through readings of canonical texts on the Bangladesh public administration which included journal articles, books, policies, acts and government publications. Chapter 5 provides a detailed and in-depth examination of the research site as the study's institutional context, which includes a discussion of the institutional logics currently prevalent within the Bangladesh public administration derived from secondary analysis of relevant literature.

The focus on public sector leadership also necessitated the selection of public managers as a target population to be 'theoretically sampled'. To ensure congruency between theory and research participants, the selection process was chiefly guided by the dimensions of public sector leadership uncovered in the literature review. These dimensions included formal or hierarchical authority (Shamir & Eilam-Shamir, 2017), capacity to exercise discretion and

autonomy (Zhu et al., 2018), potential to be organisational leaders (Van Wart, 2013a), to have followers (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2013), to engage and lead at an inter-organisational setting without formal authority (Currie et al., 2011), role in implementation of policy (Van Wart, 2013a), management of routine operations (Vogel & Masal, 2015), and contribution to the creation and achievement of public outcomes (Morse, 2010).

Seeking to ensure alignment between these theoretical dimensions and choice of public managers led to several considerations. The Bangladesh system of government (see Chapter 5) encompasses two administrative levels. The first is the Ministerial or Secretariat level, in charge of administrative matters at a national level. It includes organisations such as ministries and national level governmental agencies. The second is generally referred to as 'field administration'. This encompasses types of government organisations that exist at lower-level jurisdictions such as districts and sub-districts. In choosing between the two administrative levels, field administration and, in particular, Deputy Commissioners (DCs) at the district level were considered the most theoretically aligned. This is because alternative options such as Secretaries or other middle-ranking managers at the Ministerial level are often considered political or politicised leadership positions, particularly when ministries function under the strict guidance of government Ministers, which could likely curtail or constrain opportunities to pursue discretionary leadership enactment (Alam & Teicher, 2012; Jahan & Shahan, 2012). On the other hand, DCs as focal leaders for this study operate at a distance from politicians such as Ministers and thus are likely to be less constrained in their day-to-day administrative activities. DCs are situated at the heart of policy implementation where multiple logics collide. DCs are the executive heads of government at the district level. They are representative of the central government, with each DC leading a large organisation (the DC office;), managing between 100 – 150 staff, present in all 64 districts.

The modern-day position of the DC was initially conceived as the 'Collector' during the colonial period in the 17th Century with a view to establishing an administrative presence across districts in the British-Indian empire. The Collector's primary responsibility was the collection of revenues and taxes on behalf of the British Imperial government. Between 1772 and 1859, this role evolved under the British with the post of Collector empowered with magisterial, judicial and law enforcement powers. These powers were rescinded and re-granted throughout this period in response to changing demands of colonial powers, including reorganisation of priorities between resource accumulation, and administering law

and order and social welfare programs. The title of the position was also amended, as a result, from Collector to 'District Magistrate and Collector'.

Significant changes also ensued during the post-colonial Pakistan period[29], most prominent of which was the change to the current title of Deputy Commissioner in 1959. This change entailed introduction of a more expansive portfolio that included coordination of the work conducted by all government offices at the districts, especially coordinating development programs. The latest Charter of Duties for DCs lists 55 areas of responsibilities, including law and order, tax collection, development work, environmental concerns, public health, administering all statutes, and implementing government policies. Drawing on such information, it is reasonable to suggest that DCs represent a theoretically appropriate population who enjoy a leadership positions and can be predisposed to enacting leadership in the achievement of administrative ends.

4.4 Data gathering

Data sources

The primary data gathered in undertaking this study were qualitative in nature. Interviews were the principal method used in qualitatively capturing the lived experiences of research participants in enacting leadership, while also gleaning how multiple institutional logics conditioned leadership enactment. Case study scholars (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014) have indicated that holistically representing the leadership of DCs (in this instance) as focal leaders and ensuring reliability in the construction of the case requires utilisation of multiple sources of evidence. This was achieved by creating three categories of participants that could provide a holistic or 360-degree view of how public sector leadership of DCs manifests at the district level:

1. DCs who provided insights into their own leadership enactment;
2. Followers, comprising subordinate officers that include Assistant Deputy Commissioner and Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNO)[30]. Follower perspectives on

[29] At the end of the British colonial rule in 1947, the Indian subcontinent was divided into two sovereign states, India and Pakistan. Pakistan was geographically divided into East and West Pakistan, but the former claimed its independence from Pakistan to form the sovereign state of Bangladesh in 1971.
[30] Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNO) is translated in English as Chief Executive Officers

leadership are considered paramount in the social construction of leadership (Meindl, 1995), underpinned by the premise that followers are essential in legitimising and enabling leaders (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2005); and

3. Experts, comprising public administration academics and retired senior public managers, including former DCs, Secretaries and political appointees under previous governments.

The majority of the data were gathered through in-depth, semi-structured interviews (Crabtree & Miller, 1992) conducted between June 2017 and January 2018 in Bangladesh. Fieldwork was undertaken during two trips to Bangladesh from Melbourne, Australia, with each trip lasting one month. Interviews were conducted in 12 of 64 districts, ensuring there was sufficient sample of evidence collected from districts that were varied in nature, including by demographics, economic development and topography. The length of the interviews varied considerably. While interviews with the expert group of participants lasted between one to two hours, interviews with DCs and follower groups of participants often lasted entire days. Several reasons contributed to this. First, DCs were found to be exceptionally busy with their days filled with meetings, impromptu visits from local citizens, local elites and politicians[31], field visits, and other organisational and administrative matters that demanded immediate attention. Second, the districts visited for the purposes of interviews were often located in remote areas requiring the researcher to undertake overnight trips. In most cases, the DC courteously agreed to host the researcher for these visits, arranging food and accommodation. For these reasons, DCs did not treat the interviews as needing to be conducted within a specific timeframe. Rather, the interviewer asked questions of the DCs whenever an opportunity arose, whether during regular office hours when the researcher was allowed to remain in the DC's office throughout the day, or when the researcher and the DCs shared a meal at lunch or dinner. Such was also the case for the follower group of participants, but in some cases interviews with this group lasted the conventional one to hours, since the demand on their time was not as severe as for DCs. A total of 32 interviews were conducted (Table 4.1).

[31] Most of the DCs visited maintained an 'open door' policy according to government guidelines that instruct DCs to arrange a specific time and day of the week to allow local citizens to come meet the DC for any reason or purpose that citizens may deem necessary (Talukdar, 2013).

Table 4. 1: Categories of Participants

Categories of Participants	No. of interviews conducted
Deputy Commissioner (DC)	12
Followers (ADCs and UNOs)[32]	11
Experts	9
Total no. of participants	32

Semi-structured interviews provided the means to directly access the experiences of research participants and presented the most natural way to 'get inside the heads' of interviewee groups and get them to share lived experiences of exercising and experiencing leadership enactment from 'their point of view' (Silverman, 2013). The interview protocol developed (see Appendix 1) was primarily guided by themes discovered in the literature. This approach ensured an alignment between the research questions and interview questions so as to ensure overall research aims were attended to (Seidman, 2006). The thematic areas explored were through open-ended questions designed to elicit responses from participants that provided insights into their 'common-sense' and everyday understandings and experiences of leadership enactment (Crabtree & Miller, 1992; Creed, DeJordy, & Lok, 2010). In particular, examples shared by participants were sought so as to ensure that the data were rich with "anecdotes" (Van Manen, 1990, pp. 119-124). Interviews with DCs explored themes such as everyday work activities, prioritisation of administrative responsibilities, policy implementation, management of different lines of accountability, relationships with junior colleagues, interaction with politicians, views on reforms such as innovation and e-government, successes, failures, and overall challenges and opportunities. Similar lines of inquiries were pursued with the follower groups; however, the emphasis was more on how they experienced and witnessed DCs in dealing with and encountering the issues mentioned. Interviews with experts provided opportunities to triangulate responses shared by DCs and followers and to develop a better understanding of broader-level issues in the Bangladesh public administration. This included discussing overall culture, norms and practices in DC offices and field administration, the impact of politics on the administrative work undertaken

[32] The followers groups comprises of 6 followers who were direct subordinates of DCs interviewed and 5 from other geographical locations who assumed the same position in other DCs officers to be considered followers. The followers groups generally had 10 – 15 years work experience and worked under a DC for 3-10 years.

by DCs, and the impact of public sector reforms in the districts. No data however was gathered in relation to the actual size of the DCs organisations. Some information of the profiles of the DC can be found in Appendix 5, which include gender length of service and district profile.

Once the interview protocol was finalised and interview questions had been checked for clarity, simplicity and answerability (Castillo-Montoya, 2016), the researcher pilot-tested the instrument with a group of participants who shared similar characteristics as the target sample. The pilot group mainly mimicked the follower categories of participants and consisted of three civil servants from the Bangladesh public administration, who at the time were enrolled at Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, undertaking post-graduate degrees. They were invited to be part of the piloting process through personal networks of the researcher. The overall purpose of piloting the interview protocol was to determine whether the ordering of the questions was appropriate, assess the length of the interview, and in particular ascertain whether the interview questions posed any difficulties or made the participants uncomfortable in any way (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). The piloting process did not result in any significant revision of the interview protocol.

Scholars have advocated that all types of interviews be tape-recorded, citing benefits such as accurately capturing what is said during interviews, improving reliability, and allowing the researcher to pay attention to the respondent without becoming preoccupied with taking notes (Dodge, Ospina, & Foldy, 2005; Harvey, 2011; Tharenou, Donohue, & Cooper, 2007). While tape-recording is beneficial, in the course of the fieldwork undertaken in this research it was decided not to tape-record the interviews, especially those conducted with DCs and the followers' group. This decision was reached following requests by the first two DCs interviewed not to be tape-recorded. Eschewing tape-recording of interviews is a commonly discussed research strategy in the case of 'elite' interviews (Harvey, 2011; Richards, 1996). The definition of elites varies: for example, Zuckerman (1972) uses the term 'ultra-elite' to identify individuals who hold significant power within a group, whereas McDowell (1998) refers to a broader group of 'professional elites' who work in specific fields such as merchant or investment banking. Perhaps more relevant to this study is a more nuanced understanding that views elites as highly influential individuals who hold strategic position within social structures (Harvey, 2011). Following Van der Wal (2013), Bangladeshi civil servants were categorised as a type of "bureaucratic elite" who have traditionally enjoyed an elite status in

Bangladeshi society because of their access to power and resources (Huque, 2010, p. 59). Elites are often found to be excessively conscious about being interviewed due to feelings of being under scrutiny or an inability to discuss their work due to legal implications. Under such circumstances, Huggins (2014) reasons that elites are likely to be uncomfortable particularly when asked to critically reflect on their on their work and organisation. This certainly emerged in this study, as both DCs and followers were much more at ease when they were informed a tape-recorder was not being used. This approach confirmed findings by Peabody et al. (1990), who encountered in their own research respondents being more likely talk 'off the record'. Uncovering 'off the record' information was particularly important in this research so as to develop an accurate reflection and construction of public sector leadership in a context where little empirical work has been undertaken.

The primary strategy for recording qualitative data in interviews was thus to type responses as research participants spoke. There were some disadvantages in adopting this method; for example, not paying enough attention to what the respondents said or the fact there was some data loss, since it was not always possible to type verbatim. These problems, however, were overcome to a great extent because of lengthy periods of time spent interviewing DCs and followers. It allowed the researcher sufficient time to reflect in between questions and ensure responses were captured accurately while also seeking clarification from the respondent on what they said. In retrospect, while the absence of a recording device was challenging and costs were incurred in terms of some data loss, they do not outweigh the benefits of gathering detailed 'off the record' information. This cautious approach to tape-recording, however, was not required in interviewing most experts, except in the case of two recently retired public servants.

A second source of information was detailed field notes the researcher gathered during field visits to the 12 districts with consent of the respondents. Field notes took the form of "thick descriptions" (Denzin, 2002) that describe circumstances including physical settings such as the DC offices, and interpretation of meanings, intentions and motivations of respondents. These notes were gathered while waiting between interview questions, during informal conversations while accompanying DCs on field visits, and during meetings between DCs, organisational members and external stakeholders such as local politicians, members of civil society and members of the general public. These instances provided unique opportunities to the researcher to employ 'shadowing' techniques (Quinlan, 2008). Shadowing is a form of

observation that allows the researcher to follow a research subject throughout a period of time and capture their behaviour, while at the same time making sense of the behaviour within the context in which the actions manifest (McDonald, 2005). Shadowing provided a unique opportunity to observe the leadership role of the DCs and, more importantly, their behaviours in dealing with followers.

Data from interviews and field notes were supplemented with secondary analysis of publicly available documents, including policy documents and parliamentary acts. It is important to mention that these documents were not used as sources of evidence, but only to support the better understanding of the context of the Bangladesh public administration

Recruitment of Participants

The case study setting provided a clear idea of the primary target respondents of this research, the DCs. The initial sampling strategy thus entailed adopting a 'purposive' sampling technique (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2008) to ensure that respondents met the characteristics of presently occupying the position of DC in one of the districts. Support in recruiting DCs was initially sought from the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC), which is the 'apex public sector training institute' of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB). Courses and training provided by BPATC are attended by all civil servants, including DCs, who attend the institute to undertake courses related to their position. BPATC was requested to send invitations to all 64 DCs requesting participation in this study, which included the explanatory statement (see Appendix 2). This approach, however, proved unsuccessful with no voluntary responses.

This problem was eventually overcome with the adoption of a 'snowballing' technique (Patton, 1990). Snowballing enabled maintenance of sample boundaries (i.e., DCs and followers) and facilitated the researcher in contacting participants from suggestions made by an initial set of interviewees who were contacted through personal and professional networks of the supervisors. Snowball sampling proved successful in gaining access to this elite group of participants who generally reject any approaches from the general public (Goldstein, 2002; Richards, 1996). Despite access, the process of recruitment and eventual interviewing of DCs and followers was a complex, delicate task. It was crucial during fieldwork for the researcher to build rapport with participants and develop trust, and thus considerable time was invested in building relationships with participants. Snowballing was also used for the expert group of

participants, ensuring only participants who had expert knowledge of field administration and the Bangladesh public administration in general were recruited. It is however important to acknowledge that while snowball sampling presented itself as the most effective way to collect data for this thesis, a significant downside to this method of data collection is that it is difficult to generalise the beyond the sample, given some scholars have suggested that there is no way to guarantee that the sample is representative (Tharenou, Donohue, & Cooper, 2007).

Maintaining anonymity of the participants was important. The explanatory statement was shared with participants beforehand with reassurances provided at the beginning of interviews about maintaining anonymity and that the interview was not being tape-recorded. Measures taken to de-identify respondents include the use of codenames for respondents (i.e., DC1, DC2…), changing gender, using pseudonyms for districts, and altering work context (e.g., changing 'e-filing project' to 'innovation project'). These measures ensured that identities were not compromised, especially in light of administratively 'sensitive' issues revealed during the course of this research.

4.5 Analysis of data

All forms of qualitative data, including interview transcripts, field notes, and publicly available documents were imported to a qualitative data analysis software, *QSR NVivo 12*, for analysis. In order to answer the research questions, 'thematic analysis' (Creswell, 2013) was adopted as an overarching analytical technique. Thematic analysis refers to a general method of qualitative data analysis for "identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). The qualitative data gathered were subjected to thematic analysis that required the researcher to identify common threads that extended beyond a single interview or a single document to multiple interviews or documents (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). This enabled the identification of common patterns or discovery of unusual occurrences contrary to common patterns, both of which culminated in the establishment of themes across the data. However, as Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest, thematic analysis as a strategy remains vague without further clarification as to how it is applied and the process followed in arriving at the themes. To provide clarity on such matters, this section provides details on the common data analysis strategy utilised to answer all three research questions.

All data analysis was undertaken by following the Schutzian tradition, that is, answers to all questions were grounded on the everyday language used by participants in expressing concepts and their subjective understandings of enacting leadership within the Bangladesh public administration. Based on the sociological and phenomenological work of Alfred Schutz (1962), this approach to data analysis advocates the prioritisation of the everyday accounts of participants, ensuring that the researcher remains respectful of experiences of the social actors, their knowledge of the 'world' they inhabit, and faithfully represents their account of the phenomenon being investigated (Blaikie & Priest, 2019). This approach assumes that the regularity in behaviour that institutions promote is best understood through social actors' "common-sense knowledge of the world" (Schutz, 1962, p. 7), and how this knowledge conditions the interest, motives and ultimately the behaviour of social actors. Imbued in this approach is the prioritisation of the "insider" perspective, rather than the researcher's "outsider" perspective (Blaikie & Priest, 2019). However, this is not to say that abstractions or theoretical assumptions cannot be derived about the empirical phenomenon being investigated. A theoretical insight is necessary if findings from this study are to be made transferrable to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), but the Schutzian approach does maintain that insights from the research should resonate with participants' understanding of the phenomenon. This presented a tension that impacted the decisions made regarding the data analysis of this study.

In efforts to minimise the tension between prioritising participant voices and aiming to produce theoretical insights, an abductive approach to data analysis was deemed appropriate. According to Van de Ven (2007), abductive reasoning is a cyclical process that draws concepts, motive, activities, intentions and meanings constructed and conveyed by research participants to predict their behaviours and produce an account of actors' social lives. This approach is grounded on everyday activities and language, which are analysed and organised into categories and themes that can lead to theories that explain the phenomenon being investigated (Van de Ven, 2007). As such, an abductive strategy is a "bottom-up" approach to analysis, meaning that real-life accounts and lay descriptions of social actors are prioritised to uncover "first order" codes as the Schutzian approach advocates, but this subsequently moves to "technical description of social life" as "second order" constructs by considering theory as an explanation of the phenomenon (Blaikie, 2007, p. 91). Following an abductive strategy, analysis entailed reading and coding the qualitative data first and subsequently examining the

literature for theoretical explanations. Instead of being a linear approach, the analytical process was cyclical, constantly moving between the data, the theoretical literature, and the first and second order constructs to generate themes. An abductive approach thus allowed the tensions between participant voice and theory generation to be resolved to some extent. It is also worth mentioning that abductive reasoning is congruent with social constructivist ontological traditions, in that it echoes the interpretive process that is drawn on to understand the social reality constructed by actors.

The paucity of theory and empirical accounts of public sector leadership within a post-colonial developing country meant that a bottom-up, abductive approach was largely suitable to answer all three research questions. The bottom-up approach does not, however, imply that fieldwork was entered into without any *a priori* knowledge, as a purely inductive analysis might suggest. Instead, the consideration of the different institutional logics presumed to exist in the Bangladesh public administration (further discussed in Chapter 5) and the knowledge of extant public sector leadership literature guided the topics, themes and issues that were discussed during interviews. However, these *a priori* assumptions were "bracketed" (Denzin, 2002) prior to deriving first-order constructions, that is, knowledge from extant literature was left suspended and the empirical accounts of participants were confronted as much as possible on their own terms. Theoretical literature was reconsidered in light of the empirical findings to develop second-order constructions and seek explanations of leadership enactment. This approach is demonstrative of the utilisation of both deductive (informing initial interview questions) and inductive (confronting the data without presumptions) reasoning the abductive approach facilitated (Ashworth et al., 2018) in analysing data in this study.

The data analysis was conducted in several phases, moving back and forth between data and the literature to arrive at second-order constructs. The first phase entailed an open coding plan. This involved examining the content of the interviews, documents, and field notes and allocating 'coded labels' (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) that represented aspects of the phenomenon. A large number of codes were labelled *in vivo* (verbatim) to maintain the voice of participants and avoid diluting the distinctness of participant experiences. This ensured that the common sense experience of participants was maintained while moving-up to more theoretically and conceptually informed themes relating to the phenomenon. In addition to *in vivo* coding, researcher generated codes were also applied to the data that were based on

interpretations made by the researcher rather than attempting to capture the meanings conveyed by participants. This multifaceted approach to coding and analysis is common practice in qualitative data analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

An important issue to be cautious about during the analysis of the qualitative data was the issue of differentiating discourse from behaviour. While distinction between the two is advocated by some (e.g., Wooffitt, 2005), it should be noted that such strict distinction were avoided in the course of data analysis in this thesis. This is because, in the institutionalist tradition, discourse defines behaviour of individuals (Maguire and Hardy, 2009) and represents a way of examining the meanings institutionalised practices (Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2004). Discourses provide "language for talking about a topic and…a particular kind of knowledge about a topic" (du Gay., 1996, p. 43) as well as acceptable ways to think, talk and act (Hall, 2001). Rather than representing an eternal truth, discourses thus shape "the strategies and rules by which we can speak about and act on a domain…in such a way that certain possibilities and outcomes are realized" (Reed, 1998). They are therefore constitutive rather than descriptive of reality "through the way they make sense of the world for its inhabitants, giving it meanings that generate particular experiences and practices". Discourse thus represent logics and vice versa. Similarly, discourses influence logics (Hallett, 2010) and logics also influence discourse (Glynn and Lounsbury, 2005). For these reasons, a judgement was made to avoid distinguishing discourse from behaviour.

Following the open-coding phase, the second phase of data analysis progressed to thematic analysis that related to identifying connections between codes and categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and identifying patterns that led to emergence of themes. This phase involved returning to the public sector leadership and institutional logics literature to draw on relevant theory and infuse the empirical themes with theoretical and conceptual meaning. This was a cyclical process that involved reviewing codes, themes and literature repeatedly before settling on the final set of themes that answered each of the research questions, summarised in the following sections.

4.5.1 Summary of themes related to RQ1 that examined the roles and responsibilities of Deputy Commissioners (Chapter 6)

Theme 1: Functional roles and responsibilities of the Deputy Commissioner

The main purpose of Theme 1 was to capture the different types of activities that DCs engage in that could reflect their routine administrative roles and responsibilities. Identifying this was particularly important because the extant literature provides limited insights, in that few empirical accounts exist about the types of work DCs undertake on a day-to-day basis. Participants discussed the numerous responsibilities of the DCs, the importance of each of those responsibilities, the specific activities that are undertaken to fulfil responsibilities, and which ones are prioritised. These issues emerged from first-order codes such as law and order, land administration, and ministerial protocol (Table 4.2). Theme 1 addresses the first research aim.

Theme 2: The DC as the Leader

Theme 2 was focused on examining how the DC exercised leadership in fulfilling the roles and responsibilities identified in Theme 1. Under this theme, both interviews and observations recorded through field notes provided a sense of the leadership activities of DCs. Observations in particular uncovered the interactions between DCs and subordinates that led to assigning codes to the data such as 'task orientation', 'instructing subordinates', and DCs being 'supportive towards subordinates'. Interviews, on the other hand, provided insights into how DCs worked in collaborative partnership with various stakeholders and what their leadership efforts ultimately contributed to, which was coded as 'creating public value'.

Table 4. 2: Themes and codes relating to RQ1

Themes	Brief Description	Examples of codes	Research Aim
Theme 1: Functional roles and responsibilities of the Deputy Commissioner (DC)	Explains what the administrative/functional areas of work/activity that DCs engage in on day-to-day basis are. This includes daily activities, areas of responsibility, and priorities.	• Public service delivery • Law and order • Land administration • Development • Innovation • Ministerial Protocol	RA1
Theme 2: DC as the Leader	Provides explanation of how DCs exercises leadership in fulfilling administrative roles and responsibilities identified in Theme 1.	• Task oriented • Instructing subordinates • Supportive towards subordinates • Coordinating and collaborating with external parties • Creating public value	RA1

4.5.2 Summary of themes related to RQ2 that examined the enactment of leadership within institutional complexity (Chapter 7)

In answering RQ2, the data analysis process resulted in two broad themes, each of which contained three sub-themes listed in Table 4.3.

Theme 4: The influence of structure on the leadership of DCs

The abductive analytical process resulted in the application of important institutional constructs as a way of theoretically explaining how the institutional environment conditions the enactment of public sector leadership in the Bangladesh public administration. This broad theme reflects a collection of three sub-themes that explores how social structures shape the leadership enactment of DCs in fulfilling their administrative responsibilities.

Sub-theme 1: The ideals of exercising leadership

This sub-theme examined participant perspectives on how leadership *should* be ideally exercised in the Bangladesh public administration. Perceptions related to this were primarily gathered through interviews that revealed what participants expressed were beliefs around the appropriate way DCs should exercise leadership. For example, codes that indicate ideal forms of leadership include 'authoritative leadership', 'command and control', 'following rules' and 'hierarchy'. In short, these codes and the overall theme represent the structural forces that both constrain and enable ideal forms of leadership in the Bangladesh public administration.

Table 4. 3: Themes and codes relating to RQ2

Theme 4: The influence of structure on the leadership of DCs

Sub-themes	Brief description	Examples of codes	Research aim
Sub-theme 1: The ideals of exercising leadership	Explores what participants believe as to how leadership should be enacted in the Bangladesh public administration, based on their sense of ideals.	• Authoritative leadership • Command and control • Following rules • Hierarchy • Transactional • Paternalistic behaviour	RA2
Sub-theme 2: The inconsistent nature of leadership	Presents evidence of leadership practice that directly contradicts the ideals of leadership enactment mentioned by participants in sub-theme 1.	• Power relations between different stakeholders • Pecking order • Subordinate subservience • Bureaucratic schizophrenia • Informal rules	RA2

		• Political influence/pressure • Fear of political repercussions	
Sub-theme 3: Finding orthodoxy in contradictory leadership practices	Explains how certain leadership practices, despite contravening senses of ideals, have become generally accepted as normative behaviours.	• Influence through informal mechanisms • Loyalty • Whims and superficial level satisfaction • Obligation • Submissive	RA2
Theme 5: Enacting leadership by reclaiming agency			
Sub-theme 4: The possibilities and realities of exercising discretion	Presents evidence on how DCs exercise their leadership discretion to achieve various publicly valued outcomes.	• Discretion • Engaging the community • Creating public value • Taking risks • Protection from patron	RA2
Sub-theme 5: Leveraging institutional logics for achieving administrative ends	This theme draws on evidence that demonstrates the agentic process through which DCs utilise institutional logics available to pursue the achievement of public value.	• Challenging norms • Ensuring survival • Accountability directly to patron • Garnering support from institutional members • Discrepancy • Compromising	RA2
Sub-theme 6: Exploitative leadership strategies in complex environments	Contrary to previous themes, this theme reveals evidence of circumstances when agency can be used for personal ends, rather than achieving administrative outcomes.	• Decoupling • Tight-coupling • Favoured appointments • Discrepancy (self-interest)	RA2

Sub-theme 2: The inconsistent nature of leadership

Continuing the theme of the conditioning nature of structure on leadership enactment, this theme represents evidence that shows that leadership practices of DC can directly contradict the set of ideals shared by participants. In particular, the issue and implications of multiple logics in the Bangladesh public administrations surface as a result of the contradictions found in the narratives of the participants. These contradictions are captured by developing codes such as ‘pecking order’, ‘informal rules’, and ‘political influence/pressures’.

Sub-theme 3: Findings orthodoxy in contradictory leadership practices

The final sub-theme elaborating on structural pressures considers evidence that shows contradictory leadership behaviour has assumed a degree of regularity, in that such behaviour manifests because 'this is how things are done' in the Bangladesh public administration. This issue is brought to life through codes such as 'influence through informal mechanisms', 'loyalty' and 'submissiveness', which represent elements of leadership practices that are difficult to associate with ideal views of leadership, but nonetheless exist concomitantly in the leadership repertoire of DCs.

Theme 5: Enacting leadership by reclaiming agency

Theme 5 represents the second broad theme that answers RQ2. Similar to Theme 4, Theme 5 was also developed by drawing on the literature that helped explain leadership enactment of DCs. The institutional construction of agency in particular is used to explain the conscious and agentic engagements of DCs with prevailing institutional logics to enact leadership and achieve various administrative ends.

Sub-theme 4: The possibilities and realities of exercising discretion

Explored in this sub-theme was the key leadership element of discretion and how DCs exercise it. Evidence showed that, despite structural forces emanating from certain institutional logics ultimately constraining discretionary enactment, DCs utilise agency by drawing on available logics from the institutional environment that enables discretionary pursuits. This is reflected in codes that included, taking risks, and protection from patron *inter alia*.

Sub-theme 5: Leveraging institutional logics for achieving administrative ends

Analysis revealed that the role of agency also featured prominently in the leadership strategies executed by DCs in the achievement of public value, an important outcome of public sector leadership. This theme highlights how DCs can utilise a specific strategy of leveraging support from institutional members by using an institutional logic that acts as an enabler. Examples of codes that captured this leadership enactment included 'challenging norms', 'accountability directly to patron' and 'garnering support from institutional members'.

Sub-theme 6: Exploitative leadership strategies in complex environments

The final sub-theme highlighting the role of agency presents evidence of leadership strategies that can be described as being exploitative. These strategies executed by DCs contrast those discussed previously, in that these strategies can be directed towards the achievement of personal ends instead of administrative outcomes. For example, in some cases, DCs engaged in transgressions of rules for the pursuit of personal interest. Examples of codes capturing this type of leadership enactment included 'decoupling', 'favoured appointments' and 'discrepancy (self-interest)'.

4.5.3 Summary of themes related to RQ3 that examined leadership enactment in the implementation of reform (Chapter 8)

Analysis engendered two themes that assisted in answering RQ3.

Theme 6: Gaining legitimacy from the status quo

Theme 6 examines leadership factors that have contributed to reasons of failure of reform in the Bangladesh public administration. Examined and analysed through the literature on institutional work, this theme provides empirical evidence of forms of institutional work as leadership enactment that has generally resulted in the maintenance of the status quo. Codes such as 'aversion to change', 'discouraging reform uptake among subordinates' and 'avoiding disruption' are examples that are representative of such issues.

Theme 7: Change: Existing logic as enablers

Evidence gathered from fieldwork shows that there are pockets of change underway in the Bangladesh public administration. But these are neither widespread nor sustained. However, analysis revealed that, where reform is being implemented effectively, DCs through leadership enactment are playing an important role. DCs in particular are found to channel their 'enterprising' nature in utilising the existing logic and creating avenues for the introduction of a new logic through reform implementation. These issues are captured using codes such as 'patron endorsement', 'ICT' and 'innovation'.

Table 4. 4: Themes and codes relating to RQ3

Themes	Brief Description	Examples of codes	Research Aim
Theme 6: Gaining legitimacy from the status quo	This theme examines leadership enactment by DCs that contribute to the resistance of reforms as being both constrained and enabled by prevailing logics	• Aversion to change • Conformity • Predictability • Avoiding disruption • Discouraging reform uptake among subordinates	RA2
Theme 7: Institutional change – Utilising the enabling power of existing logics	Considers evidence that shows pockets of change (introducing a new logic) occurring in the Bangladesh public administration, as a result of agentic actions of DCs in utilising existing institutional logics	• patron endorsement • ICT • Innovation	RA 2

4.7 Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present an appropriate research design that guided the undertaking of empirical work required to answer the research questions and address the research aims. The chapter provided details on the social constructivist ontological and epistemological assumptions of the researcher that led to the design of a single qualitative case study focusing on the public sector leadership of DCs at the district level in the Bangladesh public administration. Interviews, secondary documentary analysis and field notes were the methods of choice by which qualitative data were gathered. Analysis of the data engendered seven major themes discussed across three chapters (Chapters 6, 7 and 8). Before discussing the empirical findings, the following chapter presents a detailed analysis of the study context and elaborates on its nature as an institutional environment.

Chapter 5: Bangladesh public administration: Institutional complexities in a post-colonial administrative setting

5.0 Introduction

The previous chapter provided details of the research design for this project and established the Bangladesh public administration as the choice of research setting. Given the overarching premise of a context-contingent view of public sector leadership, this chapter provides a comprehensive overview of Bangladesh as a post-colonial developing country and its bureaucratic apparatus as the context in which leadership is exercised. The purpose is to establish the characteristics of the public administration as an organisational field in which DCs are embedded. Focus is on the multiple institutional logics that currently prevail within the public administration to condition administrative arrangements, behaviour and practice. This will enable the framing of the findings in subsequent chapters, providing explanation for the type of leadership enactment exhibited by DCs as embedded actors. The design and method followed in developing this chapter draws on the advice from institutional scholars (Mutch, 2018; Occasio, Manuskapf & Steele, 2016) who suggested conducting historical analysis to understand the creation and establishment of institutional logics in an organisational field. As such, this chapter may be considered a theoretically informed literature review that attempts examine historical patterns that shaped the current institutional environment of the Bangladesh public administration.

The chapter begins by briefly discussing the emergence of Bangladesh as a nation state and by providing general information about its history, geography and demography. The current system of government is presented next for the purposes of situating the DC in the existing administrative structure. This is followed by a brief overview of the challenges and prospects faced by Bangladesh as a post-colonial developing country and the implications this spells for the Bangladesh public administration. From there the chapter applies a historical lens to analyse the development of the Bangladesh public administration in order to trace the institutional logics that currently operate in the organisational field. This is done through four distinct phases of the of nation's history: pre-colonial administration (2000 BCE–1765 CE); colonial and postcolonial legacies (1765–1971); post-independence and military regimes (1971–1991); and the quasi-democratic phase (1991–present). The chapter concludes by

briefly restating the institutional reality of the Bangladesh public administration considered to have implications for leadership enactment of DCs.

5.1 History, geography and demographics

Bangladesh has recently become[33] a lower middle-income country (The World Bank, 2019a) located in South Asia (also referred to as the Indian sub-continent). It gained its sovereignty as a nation state in 1971 after declaring independence from Pakistan. Its history is intricately intertwined with pre-partition India (pre-1947) which comprised the now sovereign states of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. As a result, Bangladesh has a rich history being part of several empires that have existed in the region, including the Mauryan dynasty (2000 BCE – 1200 CE) and the Mughal empire (1526–1857). More recently, the British Colonial Empire (1858-1947) dominated the region and has left an indelible mark in the state and administrative architecture of its former colonies.

Geographically, Bangladesh makes up much of what was historically referred to as Bengal under British India in the north-eastern part of the Indian sub-continent. It is located in the delta of two major river systems in South Asia, the Ganges and Brahmaputra, making it one of the most riverine countries in the region. It is also a low-lying country, consequently exposing its population to frequent floods. In recent years, Bangladesh's geography has drawn considerable attention from climate scientists as one of the developing countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change (IPCC, 2013). Sea level rise and increases in number and intensity of cyclones and floods induced by climate change have serious implications for the people of Bangladesh (Karim & Mimura, 2008).

The effects of climate change are worsened by the fact that Bangladesh has one the highest population densities in the world at 1,239 per square kilometre (The World Bank, 2019a). Its growing population, which currently stands at more than 158 million (BBS, 2017), has amplified the negative consequences brought on by climate change including population displacement, food security issues due to mass dependency on agriculture, threats to livelihoods, and health-related issues due to regularly occurring natural disasters (Ayers &

[33] In 2018, Bangladesh fulfilled all eligibility criteria to graduate from the status of Least Developing Country (LDC) to Lower Middle-Income Country (LMIC), as determined by the United Nations (UN) (UNDESA, 2019).

Huq, 2009; Rai, Huq, & Huq, 2014). Perhaps an all-encapsulating term that implies the difficulty faced by the government in sufficiently responding to the impact of climate change is 'underdevelopment' (Ayers et al., 2014).

Before discussing the nature of that underdevelopment, it is important to take note of the often-critiqued meaning of the term. Scholars have long criticised the term 'underdevelopment' for being imbued with a Western view of the world that holds capitalism as the primary world order (Berberoglu, 1978; Petras, 1981; Sandbrook & Barker, 1985). This view regards Western societies as ideal types that have historically experienced greater levels of economic and social development, epitomised by high levels of industrialisation and urbanisation, mechanisation of agriculture, rapid growth of material production and living standards, and adoption of modern education and cultural values (Arturo, 1995; Berberoglu, 1978). It is against such notions of 'development' that non-Western societies are held for comparison, and, for better or worse, it remains the *modus operandi* for determining the development status of nation states. Such 'developed' conditions arguably remain missing in many societies. Instead, these 'underdeveloped' societies are likely to exhibit problems such as abject poverty, hunger, political instability and overall backwardness, prompting scholars to label them as 'underdeveloped countries', 'developing countries' or 'third-world countries' (Subramaniam, 1990).

Bangladesh certainly fits the 'third world country' profile. At the time of independence, the country was considered one of the poorest in the world, facing myriad developmental challenges, including widespread poverty, famine, lack of infrastructure and private sector activities, and a fragile democracy (Khan, 2015). While significant progress has been made since then (discussed in later sections), remnants of past developmental problems remain widespread in the post-colonial state (The World Bank, 2018; UNDP, 2011).

There are contending views of how a country such as Bangladesh arrived at its state of underdevelopment. For example, explanations drawn from the work of Frank (1966), Baran (1957) and Leys (1975) attribute underdevelopment to the colonial history of developing countries. Their main thesis states that colonial activities such as resource extraction, extortion and exploitation through capitalist ventures, wealth transfers, lack of investment in the domestic economy, and general plundering contributed to the perpetuation of underdevelopment. Bauer (1969, 1981), however, argues that internal problems within

underdeveloped societies, such as inappropriate attitudes, lack of skilled manpower, unavailability of local capital, scare natural resources, over-population, and mismanagement of public resources, are the primary culprits. Bauer (1981) argues that the spread of capitalism has in fact enabled underdeveloped societies to grow, citing evidence of increasing exports and imports in African and South East Asian countries. However, this narrative overlooks the fact that, unlike capitalism in the West, which was underpinned by principles of competition and wider control of resources by the local population, colonial powers through coercion established a monopoly over the use of capital and resources which resulted in limited distribution of the wealth that was generated (Leys, 1976). The effects of such capitalism were concentrated and only benefited colonial powers rather than contributing to the wider prosperity of society. Underdevelopment in Bangladesh can indeed be attributed to its colonial history, particularly in light of accounts of a rich and vibrant Bengal by scholars (e.g., Chatterjee, 1975; Tharoor, 2018) who speak of its salience in the region's trading routes and as a centre for textile manufacturing catering to the demands of elites in European cities. Its claims to be a prosperous society were arguably arrested following British colonial rule that brought Bengal under direct control (Trocki, 1999).

While colonial plundering has indeed contributed to the region's underdevelopment, Bangladesh in recent years has achieved impressive economic and social development. This is demonstrated by acknowledgement by international bodies that have classified Bangladesh as one of the world's fastest growing economies (The World Bank, 2019a; UN, 2019). Burgeoning private sector activities, rising exports, foreign investments and dwindling levels of poverty have provided much impetus to economic growth (ADB, 2016). Social indicators reported by UNDP (2015b) also highlight the social transformation underway in the developing nation that has traditionally and historically conformed to agrarian and feudal structures (Abdullah, 1976; Sobhan, 2004; Waheduzzaman & Mphande, 2014). For example, issues such as women's empowerment, gender equity, immunisation, child mortality, and education have also witnessed significant improvements.

In summary, Bangladesh as a post-colonial developing country has exhibited promising signs of growth and progress that continue to address its historically determined nature of underdevelopment. Alam and Teicher (2012) aptly use the term 'transitional economy' to describe Bangladesh – capturing both the enduring nature of underdevelopment and the embrace of modernity as one of the fastest growing countries in the world. Within this

transitional context, the subsequent sections elaborate on the role of the state and its bureaucratic apparatus as a dominant actor in Bangladeshi society.

5.2 System of government in Bangladesh

The governmental and administrative system in Bangladesh has been moulded by British influences, given the lengthy presence of British imperial forces (1858–1947) in the Indian sub-continent (Khan, 2013). While fundamentally things have remained the same, the Bangladesh system of government underwent several alterations, including being under military rule, experimented with a presidential system, and finally espoused a model of a parliamentary democracy. This section provides information on the system of government that currently operates there.

Bangladesh initially adopted a variant of the Westminster-type parliamentary democratic system with a unicameral legislative chamber in 1971 after independence. This was replaced with a one-party presidential system in 1975 that lasted until 1991. The country made a return to parliamentary democracy in 1991 and this remains the system of government. Under this system, the Cabinet is formed by ministers who are elected Members of Parliament (MPs) and is constitutionally headed by the Prime Minister, making up the Executive arm of government. The Executive represents the political party with a majority in the unicameral legislature, exercising control over the governmental machinery and responsible for its actions to the legislature. The legislature, also known as Parliament, is the legally supreme arm of government and is the legislative body consisting of elected MPs representing multiple political parties. Parliament has deliberative authority to make and pass laws. An independent judiciary forms the third arm of government to safeguard the supremacy of the Constitution and preserve the fundamental rights of citizens. It is the system of courts that interprets and applies laws in the name of the state. Separation of powers divided between the legislature, the executive and the judiciary is designed to provide checks and balances in governing the country.

The Executive comprising the Prime Minister and Cabinet is the core of the political power structure and deliberates on issues concerning public policies, initiates legislation, oversees defence and national security, engages in economic management and public sector operations, and directs external relations. Administratively, these areas of engagement are

allocated between 38 ministries headed by a Minister (usually an MP) and are all located within the same geographic vicinity known as the Secretariat. The Secretariat, along with the Executive, represents the central government that deals with governance and administrative issues primarily at the national level.

Bangladesh also has a second tier of government. This comprises representative organisations of the central government ministries and agencies operating in geographically divided areas. Bangladesh is divided into eight divisions, further divided into 64 districts, and these further divided into 490 sub-districts. The second tier is generally referred to as district administration or field administration. Representative organisations of the central government operating at the division, district and sub-district level are responsible for discharge of general administration, service delivery and the implementation of development projects at the respective level of government.

The Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) forms the formal institutional body civil servants are recruited into for service in the Bangladesh public administration. Civil servants fill positions in the different levels of administration discussed above. The BCS has structurally remained unchanged from the colonial administration created by the British albeit with some changes in terms of how civil servants are categorised and ranked. The BCS categorises civil servants into four classes of officers. Class I and some Class II officers are categorised as "gazetted officers". There are also Class III and Class IV officers referred to as "non-gazetted officers" who serve functions such as that of office clerks and drivers. Within the ambit of this study, only Class I officers (gazetted officers) are considered; they number approximately 40,000 currently in service.

Class I officers are further categorised horizontally into 29 different cadres[34]. Officers from the different cadres work within ministries, departments and field administration. For example, the Secretary is the most senior civil servant who is the administrative head of a ministry and is only subordinate to the Minister. Ministries are also staffed with lower-ranked

[34] Reforms recommended by the Pay and Services Commission in 1977 led to the establishment of the 'cadre' system in the Bangladesh public administration, which refers to the grouping of civil servants based on their training and academic background and on the functions performed in administrative roles (Sarker, 2004). Examples of cadres include the administration (generalists), taxation, foreign affairs, and economics. Currently, there are 29 cadres in the Bangladesh public administration based on functions performed. The establishment of the cadre system was intended to ensure greater clarity of role and functions for public servants.

officers such as Additional Secretary, Joint Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Assistant Secretary. Similarly, civil servants working in field administration occupy posts such as divisional commissioners being the administrative heads at the divisional level; DCs as heads at the district level; and Upazila Nirabhi Officers (UNOs, sub-district executive officers) as heads at sub-district level. Field administration also includes other Class I officers serving functional roles such as being responsible for finances, development, land, education, etc. This study focuses on the leadership enactments of the DCs as Class 1 officers, but other Class 1 civil servants and their views of DCs' leadership are also considered as a part of the investigation.

The next section presents a brief overview of the current state of affairs in government and the Bangladesh public administration. The purpose of this is to situate the public administration within the wider societal context in Bangladesh, especially in light of the literature that indicates the public administration to be unmistakeably entangled with societal issues, including governance, politics, and the overall development of the country.

5.3 Governance and administrative realities in Bangladesh

The chapter thus far has characterised Bangladesh as a post-colonial developing country showing promise of growth and development but also yet to fully escape the pertinacious legacy of underdevelopment. Embedded within this transitioning context is a system of government that has evolved to become a parliamentary democracy but is supported by an inherited bureaucratic apparatus, which scholars have suggested has structurally remained unchanged with only a few cosmetic changes since independence (Sarker, 2004; Suk Kim & Monem, 2009). This section explores how such governance and administrative arrangements function by drawing on the literature on governance and public administration in Bangladesh.

The relevant literature exposed a consistent theme of challenges and problems that have defined state and administrative issues in Bangladesh. Some refer to public administration in Bangladesh as having a 'chequered' history (Alam & Teicher, 2012; Huque, 2001), citing the turbulent process of independence, regime changes and socio-political issues that have had a significant impact in the formation and function on the bureaucracy. Others have used such evidence to draw conclusions and describe the state and bureaucracy as being dysfunctional (Alam & Teicher, 2012; Waheduzzaman & Alam, 2014), impaired (Zafarullah & Rahman,

2008) and corruption-ridden (Haque & Mohammad, 2013). The following sub-sections highlight some of the recurring and most cited problems that have implications for public administration as an organisational field and its embedded actors, including the focal leaders of this thesis, DCs.

Political Instability

Problems stemming from politics in Bangladesh form one of the most widely cited concerns that have engendered the use of the term 'mal-governance' to describe the state of governance (Sobhan, 2004). More specifically, a type of 'political instability' is identified as central to the overall poor governance that has permeated Bangladeshi society (Shahan & Jahan, 2014; World Bank, 1996)[35]. At the centre of this instability is a two-party political system that includes the Bangladesh Awami League (BAL) and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) as the two main parties contesting elections following the re-establishment of democracy in 1991. The 1991 national election was a landmark event in making a return to democracy, given that a civilianised-military rule[36] had preceded it (1975–1990), and thus was considered a positive course of action in what was considered then a fragile democracy (Alam, 1993; Khan, 1994; Khan & Zafarullah, 1991). Yet what has followed since is an abrasion of democratic norms and values (Sobhan, 2004), with scholars describing the political arena as being rampant with confrontational and partisan politics, with both parties demonstrating a strong violent opposition towards the incumbent government (Alam & Teicher, 2012). For example, Rahaman (2007) notes that opposition parties often engage in strikes, parliamentary boycotts and political violence that have contributed to the overall destabilisation of the political environment. This is illustrated by the 1996 election, when the BAL won by a small margin which provided the pretext for the BNP to engage in violent street agitation and 'walk outs' during parliamentary sessions. More recently, the 2014 election witnessed a boycott of the electoral process by the BNP following violent street demonstrations and agitation. Several international news outlets, along with international

[35] The World Governance Indicators (WGI) rate the overall governance of countries based on six indicators: voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence/terrorism, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption. According to The World Bank (2019b), political stability and absence of violence and terrorism measures the perception of likelihood of politically induced or motivated violence in a country. Examples of variables used to construct this measure include violent demonstrations, social unrest, government stability, internal conflict, and protests and riots. Bangladesh was ranked in the 10th percentile of all countries in 2017, signalling significantly low levels of political stability. By comparison, other countries such as Australia, Singapore and India ranked in the 78th, 99th and 17th percentiles, respectively.

[36]

organisations, raised concerns about the democratic credibility of the elections (Anonymous, 2014; Barry, 2014). A report from Human Rights Watch (2014), an international NGO, made claims about widespread violence and government abuses of power that led to the re-election of BAL. The nature of political instability is also acknowledged by international organisations. For example, the World Bank (2002) concluded that confrontational politics, defined by a culture of mistrust, vengeance and an intolerance of political differences among parties, has failed to foster democratic norms and values in the political arena. It is worth noting that the intensity of confrontational politics in Bangladesh is largely moderated by election cycles; but it has created general instability that has dissuaded business activity, promulgated partisanship within state institutions and hindered growth and development (Alam & Teicher, 2012; Kochanek, 2000).

Lack of Accountability

Lack of accountability is a major deficiency in the governance and administration arena in Bangladesh (Haque, 2007; Sarker, 2009; Waheduzzaman & Mphande, 2014). Accountability is the bedrock of governance that ensures government and its institutions are held to account for their actions through checks and balances and separation of powers (Behn, 2001; Moore, 2013; Mulgan, 2000; Romzek & Dubnick, 1987). However, such principles are regularly undermined in Bangladesh. For example, theoretically the function of Parliament within the present system of government is to maintain oversight of the Executive through mechanisms such as parliamentary committees, debates and question/answers session during a sitting. However, several studies suggest that these parliamentary processes are deficient. For example, Jahan (2015) finds that undemocratic practices, such as frequent boycotts of parliamentary sessions by the Oppositions, have meant that actions of the Executive often go without being held to account.

Moniruzzaman (2009) reports that questions of accountability are raised in parliament, but government members have a proclivity to "avoidance of responsibility […] by simply refusing to accept the facts presented by the opposition" or "ministers may often shift responsibility of failure to the opposition" or "[ruling party MPs may resort to] 'conspiracy theories' to avoid responsibilities" (p. 121). Beyond such measures that seriously ignore accountability responsibilities, Huque (2011a) observes that partisanship within parties can limit members of ruling parties in asking questions of the Executive, given that this might embarrass the ruling party itself or jeopardise members' position in the party. Such

infractions have drawn the ire of public administration scholars, who have labelled parliament as a 'dysfunctional institution' (Sobhan, 2004) that has surrendered its capacity to vigorously scrutinise the actions of the Executive (IGS, 2008; World Bank, 2002).

Perhaps even more concerning in terms of accountability are claims of a compromised judiciary. According to the Bangladesh Constitution, the judiciary is separated from the control of the Executive and exercises autonomy in the discharge of its duties as the legal arm of government. Yet claims of an erosion of the independence of the judiciary (Mollah, 2012) through political appointments contravene the formal arrangements (Ahmed, 2006). As a report from the IGS (2008) says:

> judicial independence has been principally undermined in recent years through the appointment of poor quality party loyalists to the bench [of Supreme and High court judges]. They [i.e., judges] are beholden to those who appoint them, are more open to improper influence and corruption, leading to a long-term decline in both quality and integrity. This has an obvious effect on the quality of justice and on the fairness and impartiality of decision. (IGS, 2008, p XIX)

Such assessments that judicial independence is seriously compromised entail that there is little expectation of effective oversight of the Executive. Even more concerning is that the rule of law is not consistently applied by the judiciary For example, judges who lack political independence may be compromised and replace decision making based on precedent and rigorous legal reasoning with that which is informed by biases and political inclinations. This interpretation largely resonates with a wide spectrum of commentators including lawyers, academics and international agencies who identify rule of law[37] as a major deficiency in Bangladesh (IGS, 2015; World Bank, 2002; Zafarullah, 2014).

Corruption

It is also conceivable that, where governing principles such as rule of law or accountability are weak, various forms of corruption can take root. For example, Zafarullah and Alam

[37] Rule of law is one of the indicators in the WGI. It comprises variables that include enforceability of contracts, speediness of judicial process, reliability of police services, judicial independence and private property protection. In 2017, Bangladesh ranked in the 28th percentile in the rule of law indicator, indicating significant deficiency.

(2001) identify *tadbir* (lobbying, persuasion) as one of the most common forms of corruption. This can manifest itself through citizens paying 'kickbacks' to obtain public services from government authorities, such as when obtaining birth or death certificates, passports, filing complaints with the police, obtaining a driver's license, registering a vehicle or even admitting patients in public hospitals (Jamil & Haque, 2005). Pilferage and larceny are also prevalent as consequences of deliberate dereliction of official duty and misappropriation of public funds (Zafarullah & Siddiquee, 2001). For example, Jamil & Ahmad (2019) observed that service seekers often collude with service providers to attain public services for free, such as in the case of electricity provision. Consumers consume electricity without paying charges by bribing officials from the electricity department (Jamil & Ahmad, 2019; Smith, 2004). Such forms of bribery are rampant in the public sector, as evidenced by the work of Knox (2009), whose survey of 5000 households across Bangladesh revealed that 42% of the sample paid bribes for public services. More revealing from that study is that law enforcement agencies were the most frequent group to be beneficiaries of corrupt practices, further underlining the flawed nature of the rule of law. The Corruption Perception Index (CPI)[38] developed by Transparency International (2019) gives Bangladesh a score of 26 out of 100 and ranked it globally at 149 out of 180 countries in 2018. Similar ratings can be found under the WGI[39]. Such measures compound the evidence and narratives of studies discussed earlier, and indeed emit a sense that corrupt practice has achieved a type of regularity in the public sector.

Implications for the Bangladesh public administration

The Bangladesh public administration is embedded within the wider public sector and is thus susceptible to the effects of these problems. Indeed politics, a dysfunctional sense of justice and corruption have percolated through to become determining factors within the bureaucracy. Stemming from such problems is the prominent issue of politicisation of the civil service (Huque, 2011b; Islam, 2016; Jahan & Shahan, 2008c; Osman, 2010). It is important to note that politicisation of the civil service is often discussed in the public administration literature in terms of the Executive exercising political control over the bureaucracy (Hughes, 2012; Peters & Pierre, 2004). It carries with it the rationale that the

[38] The CPI is a composite indicator that measures the perception of corruption in the public sector in different countries. The indicator is composed of variables that include bribery, diversion of public funds, use of public office for private gain, and nepotism in the civil service (Transparency International, 2019).
[39] Bangladesh was ranked in the 19th percentile according to the WGI (The World Bank, 2019b).

bureaucracy needs to be responsive to its 'political masters' to ensure the political agenda of the government of day is served effectively (Doherty, Lewis, & Limbocker, 2018; Meyer-Sahling & Mikkelsen, 2016). For example, in Western nations, it is common practice and in interest of the Executive to appoint party loyalists to leading positions in government ministries, agencies and departments to ensure control of key decisions (DahlstrÖM & Niklasson, 2013). In the context of a developing country like Bangladesh, politicisation carries a starkly different meaning. More often than not, it refers to 'political interference' (Waheduzzaman & Alam, 2014) in administrative matters. For example, there is a consensus among scholars that politicisation imbues administrative practice in Bangladesh routinely influencing appointments, recruitment, promotion and transfer to different positions (Huque, 2010; Jahan & Shahan, 2008c; Sarker, 2008; Zafarullah, 2013). A major reason for this is the issue of political partisanship discussed earlier. It is widely acknowledged that civil servants often display political partisanship as a demonstration of their loyalty to political parties in exchange of promotions and lucrative transfers (Sarker, 2008; Shahan & Jahan, 2014; Zafarullah, 2013). It is easily understood that such practices again undermine the formal rules[40] of the Bangladesh civil service that embody principles such as merit, performance and integrity as organising principles. Instead, it is apparent that nepotism and favouritism can be considered dominant features influencing administrative practice (Alam & Teicher, 2012).

Accountability within the Bangladesh public administration stands out as another problematic issue that warrants scrutiny in relation to this study's investigation of public sector leadership. According to government rules, the public administration is subject to both external and internal forms of accountability (Osman, 2010). External forms refer to parliamentary oversight of the bureaucracy. Such forms of political and legal accountability (Romzek & Dubnick, 1987) should hold the administration responsible for effectively implementing and fulfilling policy mandates and for upholding principles of the public interest and the welfare of citizens. It can be concluded from the literature that these ideals remain unfulfilled to a significant extent in the Bangladesh public administration. For example, Osman (2010) finds that the Bangladeshi bureaucracy has escaped the pressures of political accountability due to the overwhelming influence of politicisation. He argues that politicised civil servants are likely to prioritise fulfilling duties of loyalty and allegiance

[40] Relevant BCS rules regarding promotions, recruitment and promotions include the Bangladesh Civil Service Recruitment Rules 1981, Bangladesh Civil Service (Examination for Promotion) Rules 1986, and The Government Servants (Conduct) Rules, 1979.

towards political parties which provide them with preference in their appointments, in the process trivialising their constitutional responsibilities. Parliament as the account-seeking body is reluctant to demand accountability from the bureaucracy, given the civil servants from whom accountability is sought are considered 'party men' (Osman, 2010). Few scholars have refuted such claims. Instead, ample studies point to such practices as being administrative norms of politicisation (Jamil, Askvik, & Hossain, 2013; Zafarullah & Rahman, 2008).

Issues of accountability and politicisation in the Bangladesh public administration are only a reflection of broader issues that currently condition the administrative system to a large extent. There are indeed other problems that have been highlighted in the literature, such as lack of reform (further discussed below), public sector pay issues, recruitment of quality personnel, and overall management of the public sector (Siddiquee, 2003; World Bank, 2002). Yet fundamental issues such as accountability and politicisation subsume many of these issues and, importantly, they begin to provide a sense of the organising principles or institutional logics prevalent within the Bangladesh public administration.

As indicated in Chapter 3, institutional logics within an organisational field are historically contingent, that is, institutional logics are conditioned by historical events – significant episodes at the societal level that become a part of collective memory and narratives that stabilise over time to impose order in the present (Ocasio et al., 2016). The following section presents a historical analysis of events relevant to the Bangladesh public administration to uncover the institutional logics prevalent within the organisational field. The purpose of this is to explain the underlying institutional logics that can explain the administrative or institutional reality, ultimately providing the institutional vocabulary specific to the Bangladesh public administration to explain the findings of this study.

5.4 Formation of institutional logics prevalent in the Bangladesh public administration

Institutional logics in the Bangladesh public administration can be argued to have formed through a series of historical events that are closely tied to societal developments. For example, societal-level issues such as the effects of colonialism or elements of patronage that have long existed in the region since pre-colonial era (Khan, 2013) are reflected in the institutional logics that govern administrative thought and practice. This section examines

four distinct historical phases through which the institutional environment of Bangladesh public administration took shape. The first phase, the pre-colonial era (2000 BCE – 1765 CE), briefly examines systems of government that were introduced through several dynasties. Importantly, this phase is identified as the period in which a *patronage logic* took root in the region and has endured and persisted as an institutional logic in the Bangladesh public administration. The second phase, the colonial and post-colonial era (1765-1971), is identified as the period in which much of the pre-colonial administrative structures were dismantled and replaced with Western colonial administrative practices. This phase, in particular, is recognised as the beginning of Western hegemony influencing administrative thought and practice in Bangladesh and establishing a *bureaucratic logic* which has since remained a central organising principle. It is important to mention that thesis adopts Young's (2001) definition of colonialism who explains it as administrative territories that are established without significant settlement for the purpose of economic exploitation. For this reason, the colonialism time period is considered to have begun with the British colonial empire and labelled establishments prior to such a period as a pre-colonial era. The third phase, post-independence and military regimes (1971–1990), is discussed to highlight the endurance of the patronage and bureaucratic logic and in particular discuss certain historical events that have reaffirmed the aforementioned logics and added newer elements to theme. The final phase, the democratic phase (1991–present), discusses the establishment of democracy, a continuing dominance of the patronage and bureaucratic logic, and the potential introduction of a new *managerialist* logic through recent government reform efforts. The section concludes by providing an overview of the institutional complexity in the Bangladesh public administration where DCs find themselves in enacting their public sector leadership.

5.4.1 Pre-colonial administration (2000 BCE – 1765 CE)

Pre-colonial administration is connected to much of the history of civilisation in the Indian subcontinent. It can be divided into two major periods, the ancient period (2000 BCE – 1200 CE) and the medieval period (CE 1200 – 1765). The ancient period consists of the Vedic age and Mauryan dynasty. The Vedic age witnessed the first forms of civilisation in the region and did not have any formal types or permanent bureaucratic administration. Instead, this period was entrenched in the power and sovereignty of kings (Singh, 2008), who controlled and decided on all matters of the state, including defence and general well-being of subjects (Majumdar, 1977).

Following the Vedic age, however, the Indian sub-continent witnessed the establishment of several formal and complex administrative structures that mimicked much of modern bureaucracy. For example, under the Mauryan Empire (320–185 BCE), Kangle (1988) points out that India had developed an efficient administration system supporting the region's first welfare state. The administration is claimed to have overseen and prioritised the development of roads, operated warehouses for goods, facilitate irrigation, and ensured public hygiene (Kangle, 1988). The complexity of the bureaucratic structure is gathered from the elaborate decentralised and paid administration that operated during that period (Altekar, 2002). The system was hierarchically structured and included separate administrative units for collecting revenue, dispensing justice and maintaining law and order. According to Khan (2013), record keeping and documentation of policies and procedures were a defining feature of the administration under the Mauryan dynasty.

A complex bureaucratic apparatus remained a defining feature of statecraft in the Indian subcontinent since the Mauryan dynasty. Turkish Muslim invaders and the Mughal empire in the medieval period (CE 1200 – 1765) also followed Mauryan traditions of governing India through a centralised bureaucracy. For example, the Sultan's government during the rule of the Turkish deployed a sizeable civil administration supported through a hierarchy of officers which included the chief minister (*Wazir)*, the deputy chief minister (*Naib-Wazir),* accountant general (*Mushrif-I-Mumalik*) and auditor general (*Mustauf-I-Mumalik)* (Qureshi, 1971). The Mughals also deployed an elaborate bureaucracy, allowing them to run one of the longest-running empires in India. According to scholars, the Mughals, perhaps of all the empires, established the most centralised bureaucracy, where every administrative decision had to be endorsed by the Monarch (Edwardes & Garrett, 1995). This centralised system of governance overseen by the monarchy is characteristic of the organising principle of pre-colonial administration and which, some argue, has been imprinted on the societal fabric of the Indian subcontinent (Piliavsky, 2014).

Scholars refer to such an organising principle using various labels based on their disciplinary orientations. Anthropologists refer to it as *patrimonialism* (Sorauf, 1956); political scientists use *clientelism* or *patron-client relationship* (Scott, 1972); and public administration scholars prefer using *patronage* (Kaufman, 1956). Weber (1947) was one of the first to recognise this system of administration as a traditional form of governance, particularly in societies he

considered to be dominated by patrimonialism. Patrimonial societies were denoted by the dominance of a kingly ruler who directly handled matters of the bureaucracy and appointed personnel to the administration. Administrative appointments were determined by loyalty to the ruler, and through such loyalty appointees could also receive favours. In short, under a patrimonial administration, everything depended on the ruler.

Yet patrimonialism or patronage, as it has evolved and imbued much of the Indian subcontinent (Piliavsky, 2014), goes well beyond just the ruler and the loyalty afforded by subjects. Historians (Peabody, 2003; Stein, 1980) of the region study patronage as practised by kings, where the king's duty was to provide for (and protect) his subjects. This was a type of *giving* that linked rulers to their subjects, and their subjects in turn to their subjects, creating chains of giving and receipt. Piliavsky (2014) argues that this was more than just an economic transaction but comprised "socially and politically constitutive acts which authorised kingly rule" (p. 9). Such explanations indeed make it reasonable to presume patronage was a legitimate system of governing in the pre-colonial era (Fukuyama, 2014). Its relevance today in a post-colonial developing country such as Bangladesh, however, has remained enduring (Grindle, 2012). Scholars drawing on evidence from the Bangladeshi context (Kochanek, 2000; Lewis & Hossain, 2019), indicate the evolution of patronage to represent status and power, intimate relationships, friendships, and, importantly, a political tool for governance (Bearfield, 2009; Powell, 1970).

Given its prominence in the Indian subcontinent, it could be presumed that discussion of patronage in the literature would be popular and easy to situate in public administration studies of the region. This is not the case. Patronage has "had its day" (Piliavsky, 2014, p. 4), featuring in many public administration journals in the 1960s and in thick volumes (Gellner & Waterbury, 1977; Kaufman, 1956; Sorauf, 1960; Weingrod, 1968). It has, however, now become a term difficult to locate among the topics of governance, state, democracy and management that dominate the public administration literature. Part of the reason may be because the initial study of patronage was conceived as being 'dull', failing to engender much interest and as a fairly descriptive area of study that yielded few comparative works (Eisenstadt & Roniger, 1980). But it is more compelling to think of its gradual waning as result of the belief that patronage is generally "a bad thing" (Piliavsky, 2014, p. 5). It is disapproved of because it can be seen to go against modern principles of public administration such as merit, bureaucratic rules, and performance (discussed in Chapter 2) as

more effective forms of running the administration and, importantly, because patronage practices have been shown to lead to corrupt practices (Schuster, 2016; Turner, 2013).

Despite the negative connotation of patronage it is arguably a part of the institutional reality in the Bangladesh public administration. It begs the question, then: what is patronage exactly and how can it be conceptualised as an organising principle or as an institutional logic (i.e., *patronage* logic) in modern public administration settings?

Some of the earliest writers on patronage (e.g., Moynihan & Wilson, 1964; Sorauf, 1956) developed a unique political science perspective, describing it as an "incentive system – a political currency with which to purchase political activity and political responses" (Sorauf, 1960, p. 28). Several works emerged subsequently describing its functions as mechanisms for maximising votes (Wilson, 1961), maintaining and consolidating power (Moynihan & Wilson, 1964), a party-building tool (Gump, 1971), and a votes-for-jobs exchange (Johnston, 1979). Drawing on these perspectives, Weingrod (1968) succinctly defines patronage as the "ways in which party politicians distribute public jobs or special favours in exchange for electoral support" (p. 379). More contemporary writers such as Grindle (2012) and Fukuyama (2014) have continued this line of argument, writing about patronage as a political tool.

Anthropologists, on the other hand, provide a broader sense of patronage. Weingrod (1968) suggests patronage viewed through an anthropological lens lends itself to dyadic relationships between "persons of unequal authority, yet linked through ties of interest and friendship, manipulate their relationships to attain their ends" (p. 379). This definition brings attention to patron-client relationships or *clientelism*. Boissevain (1966), explaining the relationship, writes, "[…] by patron, I mean a person who uses his influence to assist and protect some other person, who then becomes his 'client', and in return provides certain services to this patron. The relationship is asymmetrical, for the nature of services exchanged may differ considerably" (p. 18). Scholars have noted patron-client relationships are strongly guided by notions of mutual benefits or a "supportive exchange dyad", where the patron offers different types of inducements or rewards to clients, and the client reciprocates through varying degrees of loyalty (Grindle, 2012; Schuster, 2016; Ugyel, 2014). Summarising the underlying principle or value of patronage, Clapham (1982) argues that clientelist behaviour follows

from a "logic of personal relations" (p. 3), stressing that there indeed must be close interpersonal relations between the patron and client for the purposes of patronage's ends.

The question that arises is how the 'logic of personal relations' translates as an institutional logic in public administration. Drawing on extant literature, this section further adopts a typology of a *patronage logic* (Table 5.1). The ideological base of patronage logic is closely related to the ancient practice of appointing loyal supporters by kings, now commonly conceived as the spoils system (Ugyel, 2014). It is based on the concept that where "it is axiomatic that […] to the winner goes the spoils" (Gardner, 1987). In public administration, Kaufman (1956) argues, the spoils system is the most effective way the Executive can maintain and assert its power in matters of the state. The dominant guiding principle underpinning the patronage logic is loyalty and reciprocity (Blunt, Turner, & Lindroth, 2012; Ugyel, 2016). This is core to sustaining the relationship between patron and client, which seeks to ensure that both parties mutually benefit from the relationship. If the patron can solicit loyalty from the client by distributing benefits, the patron ensures the expansion of the patron-client network and thus their power and influence. This loyalty is operationalised through a sense of obligation the client feels towards the patron for having received benefits and also because the patron may exercise their position of authority to impose sanctions, that is, withdraw benefits or threaten to punish if loyalty is not offered (Scott, 1972). From the client's perspective, however, loyalty reciprocated ensures the client can continue to receive benefits from the patron that might further their prosperity.

Table 5. 1: Conceptualising patronage logic in public administration

	Patronage logic
Ideological Base	Spoils system
Dominant focus/guiding principles	Loyalty, reciprocity
Approach to Accountability	Hierarchical to ruler
Key Value	Personal relationships
Performance Objective	Satisfying needs of the ruler

Sources: Ugyel (2014)

Both the ideological base and guiding principle undeniably privileges the patron who is more powerful, politically more potent, controls what others want, and makes clients dependent (Piliavsky, 2014). This precedence afforded to the patron holds implications particularly for

performance objectives and accountability in public administration (Table 5.1). Ugyel (2016) points out that, under a patronage logic, performance is determined by the patron (i.e., a leader or individuals in positions of authority) based on their whims and superficial levels of satisfaction. For example, Blunt et al. (2012) and Korm (2011), commenting on Indonesia's and Cambodia's patronage-ridden bureaucracies, respectively, reveal that performance is adjudged based on the personal relations that a subordinate shares (i.e., client) with the leader (i.e., patron). In the case of accountability, it is directed towards the leader (patron) who arbitrarily may decide what to hold the subordinate (client) accountable for (Ugyel, 2016). Patronage accountability is highly hierarchical, since the patron wields significant power over the client; and it is informal because of reliance on trust and loyalty rather than formal and impersonal rules (Ferri & Zan, 2019). For example, Ugyel (2014), discussing the Bhutanese public administration, points out that junior civil servants owed accountability to the head of the organisation under the absence of any formal or procedural accountability mechanisms[41] that are found in Western bureaucracies.

Pre-colonial administration is arguably a period that witnessed the institutionalisation of the patronage logic in the region and consequently in the Bangladesh public administration. Few publications in public administration on Bangladesh are complete without vocabularies relating to patronage or patron-client relationships (Islam, 2016; Jahan, 2015; Lewis & Hossain, 2019). It indeed can be claimed to have created itself as a normative base in the institutional environment of Bangladesh public administration (Jamil, 2002; Waheduzzaman & Alam, 2014; Zafarullah, 2013), acting as a powerful logic to influence administrative thought and practice. For example, a World Bank survey (Mukherjee, Gokcekus, Manning, & Landell-Mills, 2001) of civil servants in the Bangladesh public administration found significant support for patronage practices in recruitment, decision making, and the awarding of various types of government contract. Yet it is important to remind ourselves that the patronage logic is not recognised as a formal organising principle in the Bangladesh public administration, but instead it is through a base of informality that it continues to be a dominant institutional logic.

[41] The literature on accountability in the public sector lists a number of formal and procedural forms of accountability. These include bureaucratic or hierarchical accountability that emphasises the adherence to rules, standards and procedures; legal accountability which refers to external oversight that is enforced by legislative bodies such as the parliament; professional accountability which refers to a sense of responsibility and 'deference to expertise' benchmarked against professional norms and practice of a field of expertise; and political accountability which underscores the responsiveness to the expectation of key stakeholders, for example, ministers.

5.4.2 Colonial and post-colonial era (1765-1971)

The Indian sub-continent first experienced Western forms of formal public sector organisation under colonial rule. Public administration scholars identify this particular period as the beginning of Western hegemony or the influence of 'exogenous forces' that has shaped much of the modern bureaucratic environment in the region (Coclanis & Doshi, 2000; Common, 1998; Farazmand, 2013; Haque, 2013). The arrival of and eventual takeover by the British in 1765 began with a repudiation of pre-colonial government and administrative structures. Under the British, India was setup as a colonial state ruled with a combination of direct and indirect rule[42]. The nature and functions of the state under colonial rule were multifaceted. It served different objectives that colonial powers assumed throughout their occupation. For example, the British sought to plunder – grabbing land, riches and resources through coercion while enslaving the locals; they sought to develop links between colonial states through commerce by developing unequal trading relationships and establishing profitable businesses that only served the British export market; and they sought to expand their hegemony through the introduction of capitalism and by creating social classes from within indigenous polity that would serve capitalist and imperial interests. The underpinning premise of these measures was to subjugate the locals and ensure that benefits were reaped only for the colonial state, altogether neglecting the social and economic needs of the indigenous population.

The administrative apparatus was key in enabling colonisers to achieve these ends. According to Haque (2013), the administrative architecture in colonial states mostly reflected that adopted in the home country of colonisers. India was thus subjected to Weberian rule-based principles or a bureaucratic logic as was in force in Britain at the time (Harris, 1990). As discussed in Chapter 2, the bureaucratic logic centred on Weberian notions of rational-legal principle, hierarchy, specialisation, technical qualifications and impersonal rules. It remains a defining feature of the institutional environment in many post-colonial developing countries, including Bangladesh (Huque, 2010; Painter & Peters, 2010a). It is evident in the structure of

[42] Direct rule referred to the establishment of a centralised foreign authority that excluded any native involvement in governing (Mamdani, 1996). Indirect rule, on the other hand, was a composition of government structure that put colonial powers at the top of the state apparatus but also included co-opting native elites who were subordinated to meet the demands and expectations of colonial powers (Cooke, 2003). Indirect rule relied on existing power structures and institutions of the colonisned state to govern which ensured a degree of administrative discretion for the native elites (Crowder, 1964). However, overall control was retained by colonial powers, who directly interfered in state matters when deemed necessary.

the bureaucracy, in the behaviour of civil servants, in the decision-making process and in the centralised control of the administration (Khan, 2013). For example, the British first introduced merit-based competitive recruitment, systematic training and codes of conduct for civil servants as part of their administration (Misra, 1977). These bureaucratic elements remain a core feature of the Bangladesh public administration, manifesting in elaborate rules and regulations for the management of civil services, such as Civil Service Rule (Conduct) 1979 (Siddiquee, 2003). Another element pertaining to a bureaucratic logic inherited from the British is the Annual Confidential Report (ACR), which is the mechanism for assessing performance of civil servants by their supervisors. Perhaps what clearly indicates the prevalence of a bureaucratic logic in the Bangladesh public administration is the manifestation of its guiding principle: strict adherence to rules and regulation. For example, Zafarullah (2013) asserts that civil servants in carrying out daily administrative work consistently demonstrate a preoccupation with and desire to strictly follow rules, procedures and guidelines. The author further claims that this type of 'formalism' (strict adherence to rules and regulations) in the Bangladesh public administration has cultivated a sense of "rigidity, red tape, and denial of special needs of certain clients even under extraordinary circumstances" (p. 934). Such reported features corroborate the embeddedness of the bureaucratic logic as understood in the public administration literature (Lynn Jr, 2001).

Huque (2010) aptly summarises the influence of the British, suggesting that, while there are evident changes in the Bangladesh public administration post-independence, central features of a bureaucratic logic, including hierarchical structures, authority and control, have remained unchanged. However, it is difficult to overlook the fact that the operation of the bureaucratic logic in Bangladesh is paradoxical, especially in light of discrepancies that arise when compared to its ideal type discussed in Chapter 2. For example, there are numerous documented instances showing that despite recruitment in the Bangladesh public administration being designed to be guided by principles of merit, in reality loyalty, favouritism, and nepotism have a strong presence in influencing recruitment decisions (Askvik & Jamil, 2013; Islam, 2016; Zafarullah, 2013). Similarly, evidence also exists that contradicts values of impersonalism related to the bureaucratic logic. For example, scholars have underscored that the relationship between supervisor and subordinate is not based on formal impersonal rules; rather these relationships are highly personalised with distinction between personal and official life becoming blurred (Jamil, 2002; Lewis & Hossain, 2019; Siddiqui, 2012).

Haque (1997) explains such inherent inconsistencies between the ideal type of bureaucratic-development and its practice in Bangladesh as the result of the incongruencies that exist between the underpinning values of a bureaucratic logic and cultural factors prevalent in developing societies. For example, he argues that values such as impersonality and merit are likely to be overridden by cultural factors such as religion, family and personal relations. Such findings are indeed consistent with theories of institutional complexity adopted in this study. That is, within the organisational field of the Bangladesh public administration, the bureaucratic logic is found to co-exist with the sedimented patronage logic (Micelotta et al., 2017), competing to influence administrative practices. The nature of such institutional complexity raises important implications for the leadership enactment of DCs, who likely have to negotiate the demands of the two competing logics.

After de-colonisation in 1947 (i.e., partition between India and Pakistan) and until 1971, Bangladesh, then known as East Pakistan, was part of what is currently the sovereign state of Pakistan. Colonially inherited bureaucratic logic remained the formal order in the newly formed state. Yet, as an institutional environment, there were modifications occurring on the administrative front, particularly a notable strengthening of the patronage logic in the Bangladesh public administration. This was facilitated by the dominant role the state had assumed in society, especially in the absence of a strong indigenous capitalist class, lack of industrialisation, and low levels of technology, all of which could potentially add impetus to much-needed economic growth. Under such unpropitious circumstances, the newly formed state assumed a mammoth task of spearheading economic and industrial growth through effective allocation of resources, controlling capital, and engaging in state-sponsored capitalist endeavors (Alavi, 1972; Chapman, 1966; Dwivedi & Nef, 1982; Riggs, 1970). This state-led growth strategy positioned the bureaucracy as an important state actor, affording it significant power as a decider, appropriator and controller of capital (Leys, 1976; Sainz, 1980). In fact, historical accounts suggest the bureaucracy also participated and commanded strong influence in the political process (Khan, 2013; Petras, 1977). For example, Zafarullah and Huque (1998) recount how, under the Pakistan rule of Bangladesh, civil servants "took to politics and significantly influenced constitution making, formation of governments, the policy process and administrative reorganisation" (p. 1477).

An outcome of this emboldening process for the bureaucracy was the development of their political capacity, access to power and state resources, and ability to control the functioning of the government apparatus (Alavi, 1972; Moore, 1980; Petras, 1977). From a Third-world perspective, Luke (1986, p. 76) theorises that the emboldening of bureaucracy during this period gave civil servants access to resources for the "distribution of spoils" in an effort to consolidate their power as important state actors. For example, Alavi (1972) illustrates that, in post-colonial Bangladesh, business opportunities were open only to those who maintained close personal relations with the bureaucracy. The patronage logic indeed was alive and thriving, with many scholars labeling the bureaucracy as 'elitist' in nature (Alam, 1993; Islam, 2005; Khan, 1989; Siddiquee, 1999), mimicking the power bases of traditional patrons.

The organisational field of Bangladesh public administration was indeed being re-shaped by internal developments that saw strengthening of the patronage logic. It was, however, also not immune to foreign 'exogenous forces' that added further layers of complexity in the institutional environment. That is, the *developmental state-model* was aggressively promoted by Western powers under the guise of foreign aid at the end of the post-colonial period (Brinkerhoff, 2008; Régnier, 2011). It was imbued with the notion that the state would be a beneficent instrument in expanding the economy and increasingly a just society (Gant, 1979; Riggs, 1997; Siffin, 1976; Subramaniam, 1990). This type of support being extended by Western countries through international organisations such as the World Bank, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the IMF was done with a view to 'modernise' (Rondinelli, 1987) Third-world countries such as Bangladesh. Targets of such modernisation efforts included the public administration, envisaged again to play a key role in leading development efforts. The public administration was to be modernised through the Western-imposed *development administration* model. It was a revised version of the Weberian bureaucratic logic but with a strong emphasis on development (Dwivedi, 1994; McCourt & Gulrajani, 2010) In theory, this meant that, whatever aspects of the bureaucratic logic were inherited in Bangladesh, they were amalgamated with development priorities such as decentralisation, innovation and participation (Dlamini, 2008). Functionally, this widened the administration's scope from just maintaining law and order (which was prioritised by the bureaucratic logic), to also include designing, planning and implementing development programs and projects. Development remains an important priority for the Bangladesh public administration today, highlighted in

several recent government reports (GED, 2011, 2016) that emphasise civil servants' motivation to be galvanised towards the development priorities of the country.

The colonial and post-colonial era was vital in shaping the institutional environment of the Bangladesh public administration. It witnessed the strengthening of the patronage logic, attributed to emboldening of the bureaucracy through the newly adopted state-led growth model. It was also a period when a revised bureaucratic-development was introduced – a *bureaucratic-development logic* that retained much of Weberian rational-legal principles but refashioned with development as a priority. Following independence in 1971, there was continuance of many of these trends in Bangladesh. Arguably, the patronage logic experienced continued strengthening in an institutional environment that was mired in political instability, especially under military rule. The following section examines the relative influence of such factors that further shaped the institutional complexity in the Bangladesh public administration.

5.4.3 Post-independence and military regimes (1971 – 1991)

Independence in 1971 marked a nine-month struggle for freedom from Pakistan. This was followed by almost two decades of political instability, beginning with initial attempts to establish a fragile democracy, a subsequent withdrawal from democratic principles, and eventually establishment of military rule. The Bangladesh public administration, formally established after Independence, was not impervious to such wider socio-political developments, given their centrality in the organisational field under previous regimes. In the years up to 1991, what unfolded was a series of socio-political events that reinforced the patronage logic and consequently stymied attempts to reform the Bangladesh public administration.

Perhaps one of the most significant events to have further institutionalised the patronage logic were efforts to exercise political control over the Bangladesh public administration in the immediate post-independence period. The then-government, following democratic elections in 1973, attempted to the bring the bureaucracy under political control stemming from suspicions that it might venture into overreaching political engagement as it had during Pakistani rule (Jahan & Shahan, 2008a, 2008c). This resulted in a conscious decision by politicians to interfere in the management of the civil service (Ali, 2004). For example, the

government interfered in the recruitment process by hiring party loyalists, showing complete disregard for formal recruitment processes that included tests and interviews (Khan, 1987, 1989; Khan & Zafarullah, 1991). As Shahan and Jahan (2014) recount, 350 candidates were recruited without formal tests or interviews in 1973, indicating the government had "handpicked its own men to constitute the commission in charge of holding recruitment examinations" (p. 163).

The institutionalisation of politicisation has arguably sparked regularity in practices motivated by political inclinations among civil servants in the Bangladesh public administration. For example, several scholars identify practices such as awarding spoils to party supporters, and recruitment and promotion of bureaucrats who demonstrate party loyalty, as norms in the organisational field (Huque, 2010; Jacobs, 2009; Zafarullah & Rahman, 2008). Alam and Teicher (2012) account for several cases of political interference, for example, the promotion of 498 civil servants due to their political loyalty in 2006 by the BNP government, and the 434 civil servants who were made Officers on Special Duty (OSD) by the AL government in 2008.

Another notable series of events that shaped the institutional environment in this period were the military regimes following a *coup d'état* in 1975. It was during this period that the bureaucracy had regained much of its elitist character, which had receded somewhat during the brief period of democracy (Alam & Teicher, 2012; Sarker, 2004). The resurgence of elitism is attributed to the military-bureaucracy partnership that emerged because of military leaders' dependence on the administration to carry out government functions (Alam, 1993; Kochanek, 2000). It manifested as a *quid pro quo* relationship with the military authority requiring the support of the bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy strengthening its position in return for supporting the military (Shahan & Jahan, 2014). What is unusual about this re-establishment of the elitist character is the level of the autonomy that was acquired by the bureaucracy allowing it to thwart any reform measurers put forward. Since independence, 22 reform commissions have been established with the task of recommending reforms to modernise the Bangladesh public administration. Ten of these were not implemented and five were partially implemented. The remaining seven that were implemented primarily entailed revisions of pay scales. In addition, multilateral agencies such as USAID, UNDP and the World Bank published eight reports making reform recommendations for the Bangladesh public administration but none have been implemented (Mollah, 2014).

Resistance to reform has indeed become an institutionally supported response in the Bangladesh public administration (Huque, 1996, 2010; Khan, 1989, 1991). On the available evidence it appears that civil servants resisted reforms through outright rejection because of the power and authority they enjoyed or delayed reforms through non-cooperation and not seriously implementing recommendations (Shahan & Jahan, 2014). There is overall consensus among scholars that such aversion to change is the outcomes of civil servants' desire to maintain the status quo that allows them to preserve their power and privilege under the existing institutional arrangements (Aminuzzaman, 1992; Sarker & Zafarullah, 2019; Zafarullah & Huque, 2001). Indeed, if reforms could be considered as introductions of new logics, as was the case in the Public Adminstration Reform Commission (2000) report that recommended practices related to a managerialist model be introduced, then the patronage logic certainly provided resources to civil servants that allowed them to maintain their interest of power and privilege and thus prevent intrusion of a new logic that might have destabilised the current order.

The Bangladesh public administration institutional environment in the post-independence and military regime periods was shaped by two major developments. First, it engendered politicisation as an institutional norm, and second, an aversion to comprehensive reforms of the civil service has become an institutionally supported response to any shifts in logic in the organisational field. Both of these only fortified the dominance of the patronage logic. The quasi-democratic phase (1991 – present) did not fare much differently, with the Bangladesh public administration subjected to continued politicisation. However, developments over the past decade indicate possible shifts in logic are currently underway.

5.4.4 The quasi-democratic phase (1991 – present)

The end of military rule in 1990 was followed by a transition back to democracy after more than 15 years of authoritarian rule. Elections were contested in 1991 between the two dominant political parties, BNP and AL. Since then, Bangladesh has closely adhered[43] to a five-year cycle of democratic elections mainly contested by these two parties. While the

[43] Bangladesh has intermittently experienced disruptions to national electoral cycles due to general political unrest fuelled by confrontation between the two major political parties, BNP and AL. For example, after the end of tenure of a BNP-led government in 2005, Bangladesh was governed by a 'care-taker government' which saw suspension of parliamentary activity until 2008 when general elections were held again (Momen, 2009).

validity and fairness of elections have been the subject of debate both on domestic and international fronts (Hagerty, 2008; Momen, 2009), a veneer of democratic principles is said to give legitimacy to the electoral process, which has been alleged to be 'rigged' and replete with inconsistencies (Hagerty, 2008; Riaz, 2010). The instability of the wider socio-political domain provides the backdrop for understanding the behaviour of governments in the quasi-democratic phase and the impact this has had on the organisational field of the Bangladesh public administration.

Some scholars have converged on the view that Bangladeshi politics in the quasi-democratic phase have transformed into a 'winner-takes-all' political system (Osman, 2010; Shahan & Jahan, 2014). In other words, political practices are guided by the belief that the winner of elections assumes complete control of public resources with the ability to utilise and even distribute rewards to party loyalists unimpeded, indicated a further embrace of a spoils system. The bureaucracy under such circumstances was found to succumb to the pressures of political control, compromising its elitist character previously enjoyed and instead becoming completely subordinated to the Executive. Shahan and Jahan (2014) claim this type of submission to the power of political elites is the result of abuse of power by the incumbent government through punishing and rewarding public servants. This account is supported by actions such as the Executive using the Retirement Act 1974 to forcibly retire 51 civil servants between 1991 and 1996, and at the same time promoted 654 public officials.

The continuation of such practices is claimed to have intensified more recently. Several works accounting for the present state in the socio-political domain argue that the current incumbent government has 'fixated' itself on quelling any pressures from the Opposition with force and has consistently suppressed political rivals to the point where these politicians have been "pushed […] underground" (Hassan & Nazneen, 2017; Sarker & Zafarullah, 2019, p. 13). The Bangladesh public administration, embedded in this socio-political environment that can be considered less than democratically ideal, has responded with a 'survival' strategy (Shahan & Jahan, 2014), arguably by demonstrating allegiance and loyalty to the incumbent government. Sarker and Zafarullah (2019) draw the reasonable conclusion about the Bangladesh public administration at this juncture, affirming that the bureaucracy over the last decade has "become [even more] deeply politicised and transformed into a stronghold of partisan loyalist" (p. 13).

Events in the quasi-democratic phase make it difficult to overlook that patronage logic overshadows much of the bureaucratic-development logic – supposedly around which much of Bangladesh public administration is structured and designed. Decades of reform effort can be argued to have fallen short in making significant alternations to the institutional reality discussed thus far. However, accepting these arguments without acknowledging the recent push for reform that has begun showing promising results would be premature. Many of the reforms, including establishment of a citizen charter (Kundo, 2018), annual performance agreements (Islam, 2018), digital government (Siddiquee & Gofran, 2013) and an aggressive agenda to inculcate innovation and innovative behaviour among civil servants (Zaman, 2015), are indeed indicative of an NPM-inspired managerialist logic (Hood & Peters, 2004; Pollitt, 1993) being introduced in the institutional environment. Establishment of organisational units within the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), such as the Access to Information (A2I) programme and Governance Innovation Unit (GIU), and the work spearheaded by these pseudo-agencies, are telling for the seriousness of reform work being undertaken by the current government. For example, under the leadership of A2I, civil servants have facilitated reforms by implementing digital government priorities such as delivery of public services through online portals, implementing internet-based file processes in public offices, and even regularly submitting their own innovation-related project proposals for funds from the A2I (Access to Information, 2019).

5.5 Institutional complexity in the Bangladesh public administration

Table 5.2 summarises the ideal type institutional logics that likely exist in the Bangladesh public administration. Analysis of the literature reveals that the patronage logic in Bangladesh public administration has featured consistently throughout the different historical periods to condition administrative thought and practice extensively. Its institutionalisation as an informal yet powerful logic raises important questions about the enactment of leadership by DCs who are likely conditioned by it as embedded actors. They also, however, must deal with the pressures of an inherited bureaucratic-development logic which remains a formal organising principle in the Bangladesh public administration. Given the clear contradictions between patronage and bureaucratic-development logic, it is likely that there are competing pressures that DCs must negotiate in the process of enacting leadership. Further complicating the circumstance for DCs is a possible intrusion of a third logic, the managerialist logic introduced through recent reforms. The nature of institutional complexity in the Bangladesh

public administration indeed imposes competing demands on DCs, who must navigate them to achieve administrative ends. Subsequent chapters draw on empirical data collected in the course of undertaking this project to examine how they do so.

Table 5. 2: Institutional logics in the Bangladesh public administration

	Patronage Logic	Bureaucratic-development logic	Managerialist logic
Ideological Base	Spoils system	Rational-legal	Market driven; competition; managerialism
Dominant focus/guiding principles	Loyalty, reciprocity	Rules	Results
Approach to accountability	Hierarchical to ruler	Hierarchical, in which administration accountable elected government	Market driven, in which aggregated self-interests result in outcomes desired by broad groups of citizens as customers
Key Value	Personal Relationships	Impartiality; efficiency	Professionalism; efficiency and effectiveness
Performance Objective	Satisfying needs of the ruler	Managing inputs	Managing inputs and outputs

5.5 Summary

This chapter provided an overview of Bangladesh and its administrative system as the context in which this study was undertaken. Bangladesh was presented as a post-colonial developing country that boasts a rapidly growing economy but faces multidimensional constraints in the form of development challenges, a fragile democracy, and weak governmental institutional structures. The public administration also poses problems including, politicisation, corruption and lack of accountability as pervasive patterns that limit the effectiveness of the bureaucratic arm of government. In examining the administrative system as an institutional environment that consists of multiple institutional logics, the chapter presented a historical analysis of the Bangladesh public administration which traced the development and sedimentation of the logics currently prevalent in the field. The historical analysis revealed the nature of institutional complexity comprising patronage, bureaucratic-development and managerial logics to condition the behaviour of civil servants and wider administrative practice. The purpose of identifying multiple institutional logics in the Bangladesh public administration is

to embed DCs as focal leaders of this thesis within such an institutional complex setting and examine their leadership. This is done in the following sections.

Chapter 6: The nature of Deputy Commissioners' leadership

6.0 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the background of the Bangladesh public administration as context in which Deputy Commissioners enact their public sector leadership. It delineated the structure of government, the role DCs assume within that structure, and defined the institutional environment, including the prevalent institutional logics, within which DCs are embedded as actors.

This chapter is the first of three empirical chapters that answer the research questions posed in Chapters 2 and 3 investigating public sector leadership in the Bangladesh public administration. Each of the chapters has been structured to answer one of the three research questions. This chapter answers the first research question:

What is the nature of public sector leadership that is enacted by public managers in settings populated by multiple organising principles, and what roles and responsibilities does this form of leadership entail?

In answering this question, this chapter provides insights into the leadership roles and responsibilities of DCs: what DCs formally do as leaders, the activities they engage in, and the areas of responsibility that require the exercise of leadership. The chapter begins by providing a sense of the formal roles and responsibilities of the DC, drawing on participants' perspectives and formal policy documents. This section draws on Theme 1 (Table 4.2, Chapter 4) and is developed through first order codes that include *public service delivery, law and order*, *land administration, development, innovation,* and *ministerial protocol*. This is followed by an empirically guided narrative of what DCs do as leaders in fulfilling such roles and responsibilities. This section draws on Theme 2 (Table 4.2, Chapter 4) and derived from first order codes which include *task oriented, instructing subordinates, supportive towards subordinates, coordinating and collaborating with external parties,* and *creating public value.*

6.1 Functional roles and responsibilities of the Deputy Commissioner

Chapter 4 provided a brief history of the position of the DC, portraying it as an integral position that acts as the representative of the central government at the district level. The DC is empowered with a range of powers, including power to collect tax, exercises magisterial power to deal with minor offences such as petty theft and small crimes, administers law and order in the district, and assumes the role of coordinating social and economic development work of the government. The powers give the impression that the position of the DC enjoys expansive powers at the district level. This is largely confirmed by participants who believed DCs were critical in dispensing administrative matters:

> *I would say in our system of administration, the DC and central government are the two most important offices that ensure the functioning of the government.* Expert 4

> *There isn't a single area that the DC does not play a role.* Expert 3

Others likened the DC to having an imperial status:

> *To speak the truth, the DC is essentially the king of the district.* Expert 2

The validity of these statements is evidenced by several sources. First, the DC's Charter of Duties lists 55 areas of responsibilities that range from maintaining law and order to addressing public health issues. Second, there is consensus among participants claiming the ubiquity and 'boundless' nature of the DCs responsibilities and the impact they can have at the districts:

> *The position I am in right now* [as a DC] *has no limits. I'm not really restricted by anything. You know there is so much work to be done in so many different areas. As you saw today, so many different people came to me with so many different requests, and everybody thinks that if anyone can help them, it is the DC's office which people consider their last resort.* DC 5

Experts have concluded that the cumulative effect of various enactments is to concentrate an unusually large range of decision-making power. There is indeed credence to this claim. For

example, documentary analysis showed that acts such as the Railways Act 1890 authorise the DC to play a role in determining compensation for damages caused by railway operations and also be responsible for ensuring smooth operation of railways services by assisting operators with the removal of any physical obstructions. In further explaining the extent of the DC role, especially acting as the chair of committees at the district level, one DC quipped:

> *There is even a sub-committee called the 'salt committee'. The DC heads this committee to ensure that there is never a shortage of salt in the district.* DC 1

DCs, however, revealed that there are indeed more important areas of concern which they considered as priorities across districts:

> *If you are talking about district administration, there are three primary areas of work that we engage in. The first is revenue collection, which also entails all type of work related to land management*[44]*. Then there is the work of coordinating development activities, which includes preventive measures of mitigating the effects of disasters and climate change alongside work relating to infrastructure and social development. And lastly there is the work of ensuring law and order in the district. These priorities are set by the state and we are held accountable for these things.* DC 1

While these priority areas have been long associated with the traditional functions of DCs, there is an emerging priority to which DCs direct much of their attention. Improvement of service delivery through innovative means has gained traction as a priority among a large portion of the DC fraternity:

> *There are lots of innovative public service delivery work that we were doing in j-town* [pseudonym for district]. *A lot of emphasis on innovation at the district level was mostly coming from the central government.* ADC 2

Examples included digitisation of land records into archives, issuing of gun and driver's licenses through online portals, and generally simplifying access to public services for the

[44] Land management within the administration generally entails collection of land taxes, and leasing and acquisition of land.

general public, who otherwise find it difficult to navigate complex and cumbersome bureaucratic processes[45]. Participants indicated this emerging focus was motivated by the incumbent government's vision of making public service delivery more efficient, effective and accessible.

As well as such priorities, a further responsibility that intermittently draws sustained attention of DCs is 'ministerial protocol'. Participants referred to this as the protocol services that are offered to VIPs, including ministers and senior government officials, when they are visiting districts. Its importance is derived from views of experts who believe DCs spend a significant amount of time planning and ensuring such visits go smoothly and without any problems:

> [...] *their task is to arrange a reception for the minister* [during district visits], *to ensure that there is no violence during the meetings of the minister, and that everyone in the minster's entourage is looked after.* Expert 1

Indeed, questions about how DCs can manage ministerial protocol are commonly asked of all candidates considered for the DC position:

> *A common question they also ask you about are things such as protocol. For example, they will ask if three ministers are visiting your district, 'how are you going to handle that protocol?' Sometimes they will tell you that 'one of the ministers is the senior most in terms of protocol; however, the second is very powerful, so what will you do in that case?'* [...] *In that case you will send your ADC to the other ministers, while you go to the most powerful. But you must ensure you communicate this to the other ministers and explain to them the circumstances and the reasons for you not being able to attend. But you always stay updated about what is going on with all the ministers.* DC 3

In summary, as the representative of the central government, the functional roles and responsibilities of the DC are wide-ranging and cut across almost all areas of administrative concern. Their position affords DCs significant power to carry out administrative work within

[45] Examples of simplifying access to government services include setting up 'one stop shops' for citizens to request government services from a single contact point.

their expansive portfolio and they are considered 'kingpins'[46] at the district level; they are capable of taking discretionary decisions concerning administrative issues and concerns, and these can also often include very trivial matters. Despite having wide-ranging formal responsibility, interviews revealed that there are a small number of priority areas that draw much of a DC's attention: being entrusted by the central government with special importance including law and order, tax collection and development. This explicit prioritisation is also supplemented with responsibilities of innovation in service delivery as an emerging priority, and a less discussed but highly important responsibility of managing ministerial protocol. Overall, the information above provides a preliminary appreciation of how important DC positions are in the functioning of government at the district level, especially in terms of the critical leadership role they play in achieving administrative ends.

6.2 Deputy Commissioner as the Leader

This section examines how incumbents ensure the fulfilment of the formal roles and responsibilities discussed above. The purpose of this is to provide an understanding what DCs do as leaders and the nature of their leadership.

The DC, as the functional and operational head of the DC office, is in charge of the effective and efficient running of the office. This entails overseeing resourcing, staffing and maintenance of the overall office environment. Much of this work is ensured through the assistance of junior members of the organisation who are functionally subordinate and receive orders and instructions from the DC on what to do. Most of the evidence in relation to this was gathered through observations conducted during day-long visits to DC offices. As witnessed during one such visit:

> *Upon exchanging salutations with the DC, I was kindly asked to sit down and wait a few minutes before beginning the interview. It was an exceptionally busy day with the DC's room flooded with people who were members of the office and outsiders either sitting down or standing due to lack of chairs. People were standing despite being*

[46] The use of the word 'kingpin' appeared a total five times and the word 'king' appeared 15 times across all interviews. Both words were used in describing the central leadership role the DC assumed in district administration; the power the position wields; the authority the position exercises; how the general public sees the DC as the last resort to solve their problems; the influence the DC can have on social, economic, and political matters at the district level; and one DC claimed to be the 'king' during his tenure.

room for at least 20 to 25 people to be seated in the room. This gives the impression of the large number people that were there. While everyone vied for the DC's attention, most people were talking among themselves, discussing what seemed like official matters. Others, on the other hand, were in direct conversation with the DC at the time of my entrance, and from what is recalled were conversing about arranging an official visit for a government minister to a program. I was later told by the DC that day was one of the less busy days. The morning stocktake meeting had just commenced, which explained the large number people in the room. These meetings are a traditional practice across all districts. Within this particular meeting, the DC instructed a subordinate to prepare for an upcoming audit of the LR fund[47], follow-up on a recent MoU [memorandum of understanding] signed between local industry representatives, and ensuring public service requests delegated yesterday are processed within specified times. Field Notes with DC 8

This account represented an emphasis on task completion, which DCs as administrators take seriously, as was observed during visits to different DC offices. However, some DCs also find it important to cultivate and foster the capacity of junior ranked members of their organisations, going beyond just task completion. As demonstrated by DC 8 in the afternoon, when it was quieter, he took time to extend support to one of the subordinates in dealing with a complex problem:

During the one-on-one interview, a junior-ranked staff had walked into the DC's office to update him on an issue concerning 'ministerial protocol' that entailed mismanagement of the minister's security detail involving the police in the previous week. The junior staff stated that he faced difficulties in resolving the matter with his police counterpart and that the actions he took to rectify the situation were not appreciated by a senior-ranking officer of the police department. The junior staff appeared anxious, expressing mild trepidation about any sort of repercussion he might experience as a result of his action. However, the DC was quick to reassure the junior

[47] Also known as Local Resource (LR) fund, these self-managed funds are used at the discretion of the DC. These do not receive any government allocation, but instead DCs are encouraged to raise their owns funds locally, whether it be from donations from business or elites from society. These funds may be used at the discretion of the DC on whatever the DC deems appropriate. Examples shared by participants included financing various programs such as Independence Day celebrations or even small-scale infrastructure development or improvement projects such as re-paving roads or doing small charity work for the poor population of the district.

staff that what he did was the right thing. The DC went on speak to the staff in a patriarchal way, almost grooming and explaining to him: "When you will become the DC one day, you will be faced with dilemmas like this and you will understand why it is important to assume the position that we have". The DC went on to converse about how junior staff should react in certain circumstances, why it is important to behave like that and how it can be beneficial for their work. Field notes

Interviews with DCs revealed that one of the primary ways they fulfil their roles and responsibilities is through effective coordination. A participant commented that DCs chair over 70 different types of committees that include representatives of other government agencies, such as agricultural and public health departments, law enforcement agencies, local elected representatives, senior community members and governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Examples of such committees include the law and order committee through which the DC, in coordination with law enforcement agencies and the local courts, is tasked by the central government to ensure that appropriate law and order are maintained. This includes addressing petty crime, violent demonstrations, and political confrontations along with maintaining a safe community for the citizens of the district. There is also a climate change and disaster-related committee that has responsibilities of overseeing disaster risk reduction as well focusing efforts on mitigating risk during natural calamities. Participants stated that such a committee can comprise government agencies, first responders, community responders, and NGOs, and that the DC plays an important role in coordinating the work of all these stakeholders. One DC shared his experience of coordination during an emergency:

During cyclones Ayla and Sidr, I was the DC in one of the districts in the coastal belt. While most of the district was severely affected by the cyclones, there was one area that was the most affected and all external stakeholders such as NGOs and relief organisations wanted to direct all their effort towards that area. This would've meant that other affected regions would've been completely ignored. What was required during that time was coordination of all these NGOs and relief organisations. This is the really important role of the DC in terms of managing and coordinating all this relief work. It involves making decisions on the amount of relief to be distributed, how it is to be distributed and to which specific areas. If I had not taken on that coordinating

responsibilities, it was most likely the law and order situation would have significantly deteriorated. DC 1

The role of coordination appears cardinal for DCs to function effectively, as several DCs claimed it to be their primary responsibility. It requires working across a diverse portfolio of engagements with a range of stakeholders to achieve substantive public outcomes. Participants acknowledged these responsibilities as remnants of the colonial and post-colonial era that have undergone little transformation but remain critical. Apart from fulfilling these responsibilities, a number of participants indicated that in recent times there were increasing opportunities for DCs to go beyond coordination. A recently appointed DC suggested:

I engage in various different types of work. For example, I recently took on a rebranding initiative of the district especially in promoting the weaving [loom] industry which the district is known for. For this I have to consider a number of things such as the production of looms, the workers engaged in the industry, and the marketing as well. We also have Char Areas [areas surrounded by bodies of water] *in the districts where I have to address sanitation issues, which is a very difficult thing to do. I have to do all these things to keep up with the government targets as well make sure these efforts are in line with the SDGs* [Sustainable Development Goals]. DC 5

Similarly, another DC spoke about his commitment to improving the state of education and enhancing primary school facilities as some of the more important achievements. One expert suggested that exemplifying such a commitment was the Total Literacy Movement (TLM) the GoB scaled-up as a national program to improve literacy of the masses, which was the initial work of a DC targeting just his district.

Such initiatives attest to the potential value-creating role of the DC. Also interesting is the fact that these actions are within the limits articulated in the Charter of Duties and are permitted by rules and regulations of the government. Yet most DCs interviewed implied an inclination towards the more 'typical' priorities discussed earlier. The essence of this was well captured by one DC:

The possibilities can be endless for the DC. They can do a lot if they wanted to. DC 4

6.3 Summary

Under the current administrative circumstances, the role of the DC remains imperative as a representative of the central government at district level. The DC's expansive portfolio demands leadership be exercised in various forms. This can include ensuring effective functioning of the DC office as its head and managing administrative responsibilities. The data collected reveal that DCs prioritise not only the completion of administrative tasks, but also exercise leadership in influencing subordinates, whether it be motivating them about their work, or simply holding them to account for delegated tasks. The DC, however, appears equally responsible for coordinating at the district level. This requires the DC to assume an intra-organisational role, dealing with multiple stakeholders across organisations and sectors to fulfil their formal roles and responsibilities. Given the DCs' position at the district level, they play significant leadership in the achievement of substantive public outcomes through their coordinating role.

The next chapter deals with the question of how DCs enact their leadership as an important actor within the organisational field of the Bangladesh public administration, moderated by the multiple institutional logics prevalent within such an institutional environment discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 7 – Leadership of Deputy Commissioners as institutionally embedded practice

7.0 Introduction

The previous chapter explored roles and responsibilities of the DCs and provided an understanding of the remit within which DCs exercise leadership. This included a description of the different areas of engagement that DCs are concerned with, including traditional priority areas and also emerging administrative responsibilities that demand significant attention. This chapter examines participants' perspectives on how DCs fulfil these responsibilities through their leadership enactment. This chapter specifically addresses the second research question:

How do public managers experiencing institutional complexity in post-colonial developing countries enact their public sector leadership roles?

The underlying aim of this chapter is to examine how the nature of institutional complexity, defined by the existence of multiple logics (discussed in Chapter 5), in the Bangladesh public administration conditions leadership enactment of DCs in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities. With this in mind, the following sections present thematically informed findings that are divided into two major parts. The first section draws on Theme 4 (Table 4.3, Chapter 5) and focuses on the exploration of the institutional environment of the Bangladesh public administration as a form of social structure and how it enables and constrains leadership enactment. It draws on sub-theme 1 (Table 4.3, Chapter 4) and builds on first order codes such as *authoritative leadership, command and control,* and *following rules*; sub-them 2 (Table 4.3, Chapter 4) which include the first order codes such as *power relations between different stakeholders, pecking order,* and *subordinate;* and sub-theme 3 (Table 4.3, Chapter 4) that include first order codes such as *influence through informal mechanisms,* and *loyalty.* In the second section, findings are reported as to how DCs as institutional actors utilise agency to draw on the prevalent logics in the Bangladesh public administration to legitimately enact leadership for the purposes of achieving administrative ends. This section is founded on sub-theme 4 (Table 4.3, Chapter 4) and related first order codes such as *discretion, creating public value,* and *taking risks*; sub-theme 5 (Table 4.3, Chapter 4) and first order codes such as *challenging norms, discrepancy,* and *challenging norms*; and sub-

theme 6 (Table 4.3, Chapter 4) and first order codes such as *decoupling, tight-coupling,* and *favoured appointments.* The chapter concludes by summarising the findings and relating them to the second research question.

7.1 The influence of structure on the leadership of Deputy Commissioners

Structural forces represent the conditioning nature of institutional logics and how logics shape actor behaviour. This section highlights how institutional logics in the Bangladesh public administration both constrain and enable leadership enactment of DCs. The analysis shows that DCs often face incompatible and conflicting pleasure from the multiple logics that condition a variety of leadership enactment and consequently result in contradictory leadership behaviour. Such behaviours takes the form of a set of *ideals* that participants believe should be the only legitimate way leadership is enacted; the available evidence, however, reveals leadership behaviour can be *inconsistent* with the set of ideals, and leadership enactment also shows inconsistent behaviour can take the form of *conventions*, which implies an inherent contradiction in public sector leadership practices that are conditioned by prevailing institutional logics. The following sub-section lays out evidence of the three structurally conditioned types of leadership behaviour cited above.

7.1.1 The ideals of exercising leadership

The ideals of leadership represent what participants believe are appropriate ways in which leadership should be enacted. An underpinning characteristic of this view is equating leadership to a certain position of authority. It explains a predilection among participants in believing that, to enact any type of leadership that is accepted by followers or other stakeholders who are directly impacted by it, public managers need some type of authority. Illustrating with an example, a DC explained:

> *If you don't have authority, no one will listen to you. For example, if a government agency instructs everyone that Shibaab* [the interviewer] *will coordinate everything from now on, but the agency does not give any formal instructions and I don't know anything about your authority, why should I bother listening to you?* DC 1

Formal authority featured as a defining characteristic of leadership exercised within the Bangladesh public administration. DCs indeed believe that the authority afforded to them by their position is a chief enabler of enacting leadership:

> *What you must understand is that the most defining and powerful characteristic of the DC is their authority through which they are able to mobilise different types of resources for the intentions to carry out administrative work.* DC 2

The notion of formal authority legitimises enactment of leadership, whether it entails giving orders to junior staff members within the DC office or in coordinating at the district level across government agencies.

While formal authority over subordinates remains characteristic of any bureaucratic system, exercising authority in dealing with coordination activities at an inter-organisational level appeared more complicated. Indicative of this were participants' views on the gradual implementation of a decentralisation policy and the devolution of authority to line agencies at the district level, which resulted in the DCs enjoying more limited authority than previously, especially during the colonial and the immediate post-Independence periods. One expert explained this development in responding to the question whether DCs can effectively coordinate, given this erosion of authority that is felt by DCs:

> *Not effectively. They can't do it. This is because when this role was visualised during the British period, there was no cadre system. It was the Indian Civil Service (ICS), which was a far more superior civil service. The DCs that were appointed from the ICS, they were very powerful and no one would dare to say anything against them. Now in the Bangladesh public administration, you have all different types of cadres working at the field level, and none of them formally are superior to the other. The doctor is a cadre, police is a cadre. This is the first reason why there will be coordination problems for the DC. Secondly, people from the 'administration' cadre, they are still mentally stuck in the British period, they consider themselves superior because they see themselves as part of an elite cadre. I did some research on this earlier and we found that no one listens to the DC at the district level. We ran it for four years, and we heard things such as 'Why will I listen to the DC? He is not superior to us'.* Expert 3

Formal authority as an ideal precondition of leadership appears paramount. It is, however, found to function effectively when supported by a system of hierarchy such as that existing in the Bangladesh public administration. Hierarchy was encountered in the interviews as a guiding principle that enables the maintenance of order and rank within the administration and is definitive in how leadership is enacted fundamentally. Formally, it manifests as positions and ranks of public managers, which also translates to the hierarchical organisational structure of the DC office where the DC as the head supervises various junior-staff members. Hierarchy also manifests in the structuring of relationships between organisational members. Insights pertaining to this were gleaned from several sources. For example, labels such "seniors", "subordinates", and "juniors" were frequently used to identify various members of the organisation. These labels were used in contexts of being accountable to supervisors, taking orders or giving instructions, and also while describing relationships with politicians:

> […] *the MP is much higher in rank compared to the DC in terms of power and authority according to the warrant of precedence.* Expert 2

These labels may be considered typical administrative vocabulary. They were hard to avoid during interviews, indicating their permanence in the Bangladesh public administration. Adding to this sense of hierarchy was another layer of labels, the actual ranks or designations of administrative officers, such as DC, ADC, UNO, AC, and ADM, which became identities of the people occupying these positions. Observations during field visits were particularly insightful in understanding official designations and ranks as identities:

> *After answering a few interview questions, the DC was interrupted by a junior staff who remained in the room while I conducted the interview, sitting and conversing at a distance. This appeared to be typical scenario as in other DC offices – several staff members seated either interacting with the DC directly or waiting to get the DC's attention. The staff member reminded the DC about recent media coverage concerning the DC office's engagement with the local NGOs, seeking clarification on how to respond to media inquiries and whether to put out a statement. The DC responded with an authoritative tone, almost in a scolding manner, ordering the junior staff what to do. In speech, the DC referred to the junior staff only by their designation, never by their name, almost as if reminding them of their position in the chain of command: "NDC*

[designation], *bring me a draft of the statement and tell the ADC-General* [designation] *to come to the room so that we can finalise this, and also get the NGO representative in the room".* Field Notes

Perhaps further indicative of hierarchy in the Bangladesh public administration was the use of the word "sir". Junior staff, especially, used it habitually with their senior colleagues. An expert argued that these were remnants of the colonial legacy, reflecting the immutable hierarchical administration the British established:

This [relationship between DC and subordinates] *is a strictly hierarchical relationship. There is no question about it. Because the rules governing the civil service have remained, since* [the colonial period] *there have not been any effective reforms related to this.* Expert 3

For DCs, hierarchy is an important enabler through which leadership is exercised to influence staff members. The nature of such influence takes various forms. For example, DCs exhibited an emphasis on a strict 'command type' approach through specific task delegation and control over how those tasks are completed. This became apparent during observations, as DCs provided specific instructions to staff members in dealing with administrative matters, such as how to address public service issues of welfare claims and the specific steps that should be taken in regard to those claims. An ADC argued that such an approach can amount to feeling overtly controlled and is counterproductive to administrative work:

In my case, for example, the DC double-checks every decision that has been put in the file by me. One of my colleagues expressed that what this does is slow down the file processing. The workflow is hampered, and it loses momentum. ADC4

Participants indicated that closely monitoring the work of staff members was a key leadership practice DCs utilised to ensure administrative tasks were completed. This was confirmed by experts who suggested that DCs are trained to be "good at giving orders and able to monitor that work to an extent" (Expert 7). DCs corroborated this observation that giving orders was the most effective way to motivate subordinates if also followed by some type of reward or punishment mechanism. One example provided related to the adoption of a new online file processing system in the office. To ensure successful uptake of the new system among staff

members, the DC monitored and tracked the file processing activities of all staff members online. The DC claimed that this approach ensured that everyone was held accountable and performed. The extent of such monitoring was revealed by an ADC, seemingly in favour of it:

> […] *and you know he* [the DC] *would monitor our work and he also installed CCTV cameras to monitor us. These things weren't there before* [under the previous DC]. ADC 4

Elements such as hierarchy, authority and the monitoring of work are arguably indicative of the bureaucratic-development logic, enabling what participants consider as appropriate ways leadership should be enacted. Further cementing the bureaucratic-development logic as a structural force is the strong belief among participants that suggests that following administrative rules and regulations is a fundamental principle guiding leadership enactment. Participants emphasised that adhering to rules spelt out in government policies, acts and gazettes[48] was "programmed into the DNA of the civil servants" (Expert 3). This was confirmed by the admission of a current DC, who proudly stated that "civil servants do not want to work without rules and regulations" (DC 1). This penchant for following rules was evidenced in contexts such as overseeing development projects, making decisions in distribution of relief during emergencies, and when dealing with politicians. Problems are said to frequently arise with the last group, as following rules becomes challenging with the meddling of "political thugs"[49], explained one DC:

> *During relief distribution, the DC should ensure distribution occurs in accordance with government rules and regulations, and when it does, that's when it gets very difficult to maintain their* [i.e., political thugs'] *requests.* DC 6

Despite such problems, rule-following indeed is a cardinal principle that respondents believe guides appropriate leadership behaviour:

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[48] The Bangladesh Government Gazette provides official notification of decisions taken in relation to any area of administration. This may include introduction of new rules, regulations and procedures that government employees have to abide by.

[49] The term "political thugs" was used to refer to politically affiliated individuals who may be engaged in criminal-type activities that involve intimidation, harassment and even threats of physical harm in order to acquire benefits.

The other main thing is knowing the rules and regulations. You should have knowledge of rules and regulations and know how to use them and abide by them, then you can usually learn to navigate any problem and manage any situation within the rules and regulations. UNO 1

Findings thus far show that structural forces stemming from the bureaucratic-development logic play an important role in conditioning the leadership behaviour of DCs, enabling them to act in ways that participants deemed to be appropriate in the current administrative environment. Contrary to such Weberian-guided beliefs, a paternalistic form of leadership also appeared to be attached by participants to the list of appropriate leadership behaviours. This paternalistic leadership[50] was observed during the interview with DC 8. It entailed maintaining a hierarchy but there were generous offers of advice and guidance to junior staff for personal development. During interaction with junior staff, DC 8 went beyond just giving orders as most DCs did, he also spent time advising and educating staff on dealing with administrative challenges as future leaders. When asked about his approach, DC 8 explained:

> […] *you have to be a role model for the staff. If the head of the organisation is sound and is an exemplar for his staff, then they will also be able to fulfil their administrative duties effectively* […] *In practice, I rely on my staff for 60 percent of the time to solve problems we face on a daily basis. But in other cases, I have to be personally involved.* [But in the times I rely on my staff] *I will tell them the specific outcome I want, but not how to achieve it. You should try to use soft words with them, almost trying to make them understand the work they are doing.* DC 8

Paternalistic behaviour, though rarely observed in the course of this research, was endorsed by other DCs, who disclosed that they try to groom and develop junior staff as good administrators in a similar paternalistic way. However, some participants challenged this notion, asserting DCs are more likely to feel comfortable fulfilling administrative duties by relying on their own expertise and have subordinates simply complete orders and tasks assigned to them. This element of paternalistic behaivour, incongruent with the bureaucratic-

[50] Paternalistic behaviour within the context of this study "indicates that managers take a personal interest in the workers' [on the job] and off-the-job lives and attempt to promote workers' personal welfare (Pellegrini and Scandura, 2008, p. 568).

development logic, provides the first indication that there is indeed another possible logic in the organisational field, enabling the appropriate leadership behaviour of DCs.

The discussion above provides a sense of the institutional complexity experienced by DCs. This is premised on findings that show that participants constructed an appropriate leadership approach of DCs that appears to be enabled by authority, hierarchy and rule-following that relate to the bureaucratic-development logic, but DCs also show preferences for paternalistic approaches, which is indicative of another possible logic conditioning actor behaviour. Irrespective of this, the discussed list of behaviours is arguably representative of structural forces that enable an *idealised* sense of leadership that should be enacted. The emphasis on an idealised sense is particularly important, because, as the following section discusses, the accounts above are contradicted by findings showing that the ideal perception of leadership in reality can become diluted, as DCs deal with other pressures emanating from the institutional environment.

7.1.2 The inconsistent nature of leadership

Structural pressures emanating from the institutional environment appear also to enable DCs to enact leadership that is inconsistent with the aforementioned approaches. In particular, findings expose elements of hierarchy and rule-following can become tempered under what might be described as pressures stemming from the patronage logic resulting in contradictory leadership enactment. This section thus reports evidence related to that, and further attests to the nature of institutional complexity in the Bangladesh public administration.

While hierarchical leadership by DCs is legitimised by the official rules in the Bangladeshi bureaucracy, it becomes complicated when such power elicits responses from staff members presenting as ‘subjects’ and displaying utmost subservience and loyalty to the leader. Such actions arguably go against elements of professionalism or impersonal values that are otherwise promoted by the bureaucratic-development logic. These practices are likely to derive from the patronage logic, which also promotes hierarchy, but it is of a more personal and informal nature (see Chapter 5). For example, staff members often appeared to feel compelled to provide regular reassurances to the DC about their position in the “chain of command” and this translated into avoiding questioning the DC’s decisions and intentionally not appearing to be more adept in administrative work than the DC.

Observations provided an understanding of the nature of such practices. In all instances, staff members appeared to be readily prepared take any orders from the DC whenever called on. They also passively acknowledged decisions taken by the DC, rarely challenging or interjecting. Instead, decisions and opinions of the DC were followed by praise or flattery, with staff members proclaiming the DC to be "very knowledgeable", "decisive" and "skilful" at what they do. Further findings from multiple perspectives explained the rationale of subservience and passive roles that subordinates assume:

> *I'm not really barred from voicing my opinion in an official capacity, but I would say the majority of junior officers don't get the opportunity to voice their opinions or concerns. There might be situations where the staff might feel that their opinion might not be welcomed, or it might be harmful to their career because the DC does not like junior officers offering their advice. In most cases, the DC does not make effective use of their junior staff for two reasons. First, they feel that by asking assistance from junior colleagues they are giving up their power, which might make the staff feel equal to the DC hierarchically, and another reason is good officers don't participate in a very proactive way.* ADC 4

> *Within the wider context and the norms of the Bangladesh public administration, people with ideas are not necessarily encouraged. Senior bureaucrats are often dismissive about ideas, and they would be dismissive of younger officers with fresh ideas by saying 'you know too much'.* Expert 6

It is difficult to overlook the conditioning nature of the patronage logic in such cases, enabling DCs to exert rule and authority that demands loyalty and praise from staff members who were vulnerable to the power of the DC.

Accounts shared by participants further demonstrated the powerlessness of staff members who were often discouraged from exercising discretion in carrying out administrative work because of the dismissive attitude and adverse reactions from their DC. For example, Box 1 presents an account from ADC 3 describing the problems he faced for failing to meet his DC's expectations.

Box 7. 1: Fear of Repercussions – A Story of ADC 3

While working in a district near the coastal region of Bangladesh, ADC 3 faced an unfolding crisis brought on by annual floods that threatened the health and safety of the local community. The ADC described the situation as a pressing concern that required rapid and coordinated response from different government line agencies, including local and international NGOs working in the district. At one point, the ADC reached out to an international NGO, offering logistical support to the NGO in the form of a working space from where the NGO could coordinate its efforts. The ADC suggested his actions of offering logistical support was a direct violation of the DC's 'order' earlier instructing that NGOs should respond to the situation in their own capacity and not receive any administrative support. This soon became a problem for the ADC:

> *I have to say that I did it without the knowledge of the DC, but you know what, at the time I didn't feel scared, because it was the right thing to do during that situation, given the problems we were facing. And my actions were supported by other stakeholders, such as local politicians and citizens, who appreciated our coordinated response with local NGOs. However, when the DC came the next day and found what I had done, he was very angry. He told me that I don't listen to any of his words, and the fact I offered support to the NGO was insubordination. He kept telling me that I have to follow every single one of his orders and not go outside of the instructions he provides whatsoever.*

ADC 3's experience demonstrates that administrative hierarchy can also translate as intolerance towards the discretionary work of staff members, irrespective whether the staff's actions create value. Moreover as one of the DCs explained, junior staff voicing opinions during decision making is perceived as overstepping hierarchical boundaries, which indeed is violation of cultural beliefs:

> *No one likes it* [i.e., junior staff voicing opinions]. *We don't like these things in our own home. In our culture, when the junior people are found to be more knowledgeable, if the junior has a better command and better leadership, but is not supported by someone senior to them, then no one will listen to them or take a liking to them.* DC 1

Enforcement of hierarchy also becomes complicated when DCs undertake their coordination roles and responsibilities at an inter-organisational level, that is, when working in partnership with multiple government agencies, departments and ministries at the district level (see Chapter 5). Participant responses indicated that difficulties often arise because of the lack of ability by DCs to enforce hierarchy and authority and 'departmentalisation'[51] as the primary

[51] "Departmentalisation" relates to the cadre system introduced in the Bangladesh as a measure to bring about greater clarity in role and function of civil servants. Over the years, however, the relationships between the different cadres took the form of an inter-cadre rivalry (Sarker, 2004), creating social divisions between members of each cadre fighting for promotions, placements and training abroad (Khan, 1987). Such rivalry is often claimed to have engendered disharmony and disunity among public servants, which is both referred to in the literature and among civil servants as departmentalisation (Islam, 2005; Zafarullah, 1987). Central to the issue of the departmentalisation, is the presumed "superior" or "elitist" position adopted by civil servants in the administrative cadre, to which DCs belong. The administrative cadre is a group of generalist civil servants who occupy key positions in the governmental architecture and are claimed to wield significant power and authority

cause of this. The structural, and indeed social, divisions spurred by departmentalisation meant that DCs, belonging to the administrative cadre, often deal with power relations between themselves and other civil servants from different cadres representing various government departments at the district level. Multiple sources explained that rivalry and social division precipitated hindrances at the district level – for example:

> [*The*] *DC has authority to do everything at the district level, but he is not getting that support. You know the DC is supposed to be steering the wheel of the district, but he does not have any wheels to steer, and this is making his role very ineffective. The DC is gradually losing his coordinating powers. This is mostly because of departmentalisation that has occurred and because of this their coordinating and supervising authority is being eroded.* Expert 7

> *What is important is that the DC requires some sort of authority over other departments in terms of coordination at the district level. What is happening is that the power is everyday being taken away from the DC. The least that needs to be done is that, if the DC raises any reservations in terms of the work done by individuals in other departments, then government should carry out some sort of investigation. If this was there, it would've been helpful. And if the DC wants to withdraw anyone for any specific work, that should be given importance as well. Hence if this type of hierarchy and authority over the other departments are not there, then the coordination becomes very difficult.* DC 3

Responses reveal a feeling among participants of an erosion of authority and hierarchy of DCs. This feeling of losing power was captured by DC 1 (Box 2), who noted that a sense of hubris and elitism had crept into the mindset of DCs, when comparing themselves with other civil servants from different cadres.

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in the work of the administration. Their presumed elitism has supposedly inculcated rivalry with other functional cadres over establishing superiority and authority, giving rise to tension in the interaction between different cadres (Zafarullah, 2007).

Box 7. 2: Historical roots of Elitism and Hubris among DCs – A Story from DC 1

Findings revealed that participants believe a number of historical events contributed to the current power relations between different cadres, and, in particular, a sense of elitism and hubris among administrative cadre officers, including DCs, has been inculcated. One DC (DC 1) narrated the historical roots of this, explaining how a number of complicated factors, including military rule, recruitment issues, and reforms, are believed to have led to the current power dynamics between DCs and civil servants from different cadres:

> *There is another problem that needs to be acknowledged and that's the power dialogue between different stakeholders. For example, the SP* [Superintendent of Police] *thinks that he is the man who is charge for the law and order of the district, and thinks why does there need to be the DC overlooking this. In the rules, the SP used to be accountable to the DC, but this changed significantly. The historical background to this is, when Zia* [Ziaur Rahman was the President between 1977–1981 under military rule] *came to power in 1976, he made retired majors of the army into SPs as well* [...] *There is a problem right there* [...] *When they became the SP, they became civil servants. But because they were trained and became institutionalised in a very different domain, they found it a very difficult to amalgamate the civil bureaucracy and military cultures. It is at this time [that] these SPs, driven by a sense of hubris and superiority, questioned why they had to be accountable to someone like the DC* [...] *when Zia came to power, lobbied by these group of army officers, this policy ended. That is the root of the problem* [...] *The other thing is that we did not have career planning at that time. And because of such an absence, we used to have bulk recruitment. So, for example, a batch of civil servants during 1983, 650 civil servants, were recruited. In 1984 that number was 450 and in 1985 it was 550* [...] *Such recruitment processes meant that undeserving people or people with no calibre were being recruited into the civil service. Recognising this, some quarters of the administration started considering themselves as more superior. Naturally if you notice that I'm not as bright or intelligent as you, you will not have the same level of respect. When you have different officers considering themselves as more superior, they start losing respect towards the other officers. Hence it is because of these factors the chain of command has really broken down in the Bangladesh public administration. This really weakened the civil service.*

This element of hubris and elitism among administrative cadre officers was also acknowledged by Expert 2:

> *One thing you have to understand, out of all the cadres* […] *there are still a few cadres, such as the administrative cadre, which is still considered to be more valuable or more desired because of the social power it entails.* Expert 2

Responses from participants led to consideration of the possibility of hubris, elitism and an erosion of authority, complicating coordination issues for the DC. For example, DCs in this study often cited problems in working with the police at the district level. Participants considered the police vital stakeholders, given their powers of law enforcement and thus DCs maintain a close working relationship with the Superintendent (SP)[52]. However, participants explained that the relationship between the DC and the police has become strained due to reform measures that terminated the requirement for the police to report developments to the

[52] The Superintendent is the head of the police department at the district level.

DC. This is believed by participants to have engendered a tense relationship between the DC and the SP. For example, SPs are blamed for "not giving enough importance to the DC" (DC 3) or do not "attend meetings that are called by the DC and instead sends the second in command" (Expert 5). Such claims express a degree of reservation that DCs harbour for not being considered hierarchically important or having authority over the police:

> [...] *in the rules, the DC still has a supervising power. The police do send a report to the DC updating on the law and order situation. That sort of a relationship does exist officially. But it is true that you can't really always demonstrate your authority over the SP and hope to get work done.* DC1

Findings point to a yearning by DCs to still be able to exercise authority and hierarchy over others, even where bureaucratic rules do not allow for it. One expert, a retired secretary and a former DC himself, believed that authority was needed, because it was a "controlling mechanism" (Expert 2) and enabled DCs to influence others easily without objection. Authority in such cases appears to be enabled by the patronage logic, in that authority is more than a matter of law (as the bureaucratic-development logic might suggest), but rather it is about DCs as patrons controlling other clients (police) and making them dependent, so as to consolidate their power and authority over administrative matters in the district. This sense of dominance by DCs as a 'ruler of types' in the districts is perhaps best encapsulated in a quote by DC 3:

> *I believe this is how the administration should run* […] *It is about respecting the DC, and it is up to the DC to decide how the police should be used because it is the role of DC to ensure the law and order situation of the district* [...] *the police should operate under the command of the DC* [...] *where the SP is accountable to the DC.* DC 3

These findings show the inconsistencies of leadership in that it can both be legitimated by rules (discussed in the previous section), but it also appears wielding utmost control and authority even where the rules might not provide for that, is a preferred leadership practice. These issues attest to the conditioning nature of competing logics in the Bangladesh public administration, in that leadership authority can be enabled by both the bureaucratic-development and the patronage logic.

Findings showed further inconsistencies in leadership, particularly those that challenge the rule-following doctrine. This is exemplified by evidence that leadership enactment often produces discrepancies between bureaucratic rules and actual administrative practices. For example, participants belonging to the 'followers' category stated that "while [there are] laws for everything, [administrative] practices are very different which are unavoidable" (UNO 1) or that "[public servants] say something [*sic*], and do something completely different" (ADC 1). Instances when such discrepancies arise included when the DC is "pressured by local politicians to distribute governments funds to party men" (UNO 1) instead of spending it on development work in the district. These were claimed to be clear violations of government rules and regulations. Perhaps more revealing was the acknowledgement from DC 5 who stated such practices had indeed become part of regular work:

> […] *a lot of the time working as the DC of this district, I have to go through a lot of conflict* […] *From time to time, I receive requests from politicians which are outside the rules and regulations, but I have to manage these things. You have to manage through these things and you have to give that politician that type of support.* DC 5

Discrepancy between rule and practice has attained a degree of regularity in the Bangladesh public administration. As reflected on by ADC 3, "transgression" of rules is something every civil servant can practice to an extent and it is something that has become acceptable within the wider public administration. The regularity of transgression of rules is an action that is arguably done consciously by DCs and, it is revealing of the way the patronage logic can constrain leadership enactment, in that demands from powerful institutional members (i.e., demands from powerful patrons) promote a degree of conformity in DCs to behave in a manner that leads to violating the rule-following principle. Respondents recognised this as the "reality" civil servants have to live with.

This reality referred to by participants primarily relates to the patronage logic and the influence politicians can often wield over administrative matters or their demands that civil servants act in certain ways. Influence can occur when DCs interact with government ministers, Members of Parliament and district-level party representatives. Political influence (i.e., the influence of patrons) can also occur through the administrative apparatus, where respondents argued that party affiliation among civil servants can lead to reward and also

punishment. Issues like these point to the ubiquity of practices that are inherently conditioned by the patronage logic.

Claims from participants questioned the independence of DCs, that is, "whether the DC fulfils his function on his own, or whether he does it under someone else's prodding" (Expert 1) and how control and discretion are really able to be exercised if politicians indeed "influence a lot of the major decisions" (UNO 1). Examples of decisions being influenced included the building of bridges, roads and schools, and also in the recruitment process where "party loyalists" may be deemed more favoured. Practices like these are considered problematic, but yet they have taken on an institutional identity as unspoken administrative rules:

> *An important informal institution is at work here. Formally, the politician is only considered as an advisor at the district level, but it is implied and generally understood that the DC office will prioritise and adhere to the decision recommended and preferred by the politician.* ADC 4

> […] *how* [DCs] *takes decisions is important to understand because most decisions they take are influenced by vested interests.* Expert 6

Examples stating how such processes of influence transpire included written requests, regular receipt of "gifts" that act as persuasions, or blunt threats of being removed from office. ADC 2 argued that "capitulation" is the most common response to such tactic of influence:

> *For example, there was recruitment going on, and the MP sent his own list of names which suggested that these were the names of the 10 people he wanted to see get recruited. The list clearly highlighted that five of the names were recommended by the district party representative and other five was supported by the MP himself. These sorts of things trump official recruitment processes* [...] *and as a public leader, the DC has to capitulate to these types of requests from the politicians.* ADC2

Interviews revealed that capitulation from DCs stems from the fear of repercussions. Insights gleaned from participants suggest that very few DCs choose to oppose and resist political pressures because of threats to their careers. DCs who have the "courage" to "speak up" and

"voice opposition" run the risk of being made OSD, face transfers, and generally not being considered for promotions, or, as in the case of DC 1, facing circumstances that make undertaking administrative work challenging. Box 3 presents the account of DC 1 and the consequences he faced for opposing political persuasion.

Box 7. 3: Consequences of opposing political persuasion – Story of DC 1

You know it is quite obvious that if it's a very powerful political leader, you just can't say things to their face and deny them their requests or any type influence they try to exert. If you do something like this, it is unlikely that you will be able to continue working there. In those situations, you have to manage through such circumstances. For example, a very close acquaintance of a very powerful minister sent some very expensive gifts to my house once, but I had no knowledge of who the gifts were from at the time. I only later found out that it was sent by this person, who was the local politician. Either way, I later sent back those gifts, and he did not like it one bit. Believe me, I was there for three years and that person created all sorts of trouble for me throughout that period. He was always trying to get me into trouble. It was challenging period and I was only able to get through with the help of my colleagues.

Consequences faced by DC 1 provide a rationale for why they may choose to capitulate to political pressures. Participants stated that it triggers a survival mechanism to avoid risking their careers.

The inconsistent nature of leadership enactment discussed above are an indication of the institutional complexity the DCs experience, with each logic conditioning behaviour of actors that are contradictory. In the instances highlighted, contradictory leadership practices manifest partly due to a distorted view of institutional norms that result in problematic use of hierarchy, but it is also partly a practical response to the realities of the organisational field, such as the influence of politics. However, findings in the subsequent section show contradictory leadership enactment can also achieve regularity as part of social convention in the Bangladesh public administration. In other words, practices incongruent with ideals of leadership largely promoted by the bureaucratic-development logic have become standard means for DCs to enact leadership.

7.1.3 Finding orthodoxy in contradictory leadership practices

As conceptualised in Chapter 2, influencing followers is a fundamental way leadership is exercised. Interviews and observations undertaken in this study brought to light a number of ways the DCs influence followers towards the achievement of administrative ends. While hierarchy and authority enable DCs to influence followers through what might be considered

formal ways, findings showed that principles of performance and accountability, considered formal administrative mechanisms, often condition and enable DCs to influence followers in an informal way. In other words, performance and accountability as represented under a patronage logic become enablers of leadership influence.

The element of performance in the Bangladesh public administration primarily takes the form of a performance appraisal system known as the ACR. In principle, this is a mechanism through which supervisors rate subordinates on their performance. Information provided in the ACR is quantified to calculate an overall score that forms the primary basis for promotions and career advancement in the Bangladesh public administration. It is considered a confidential[53] document, in that only the rater (supervisor) is able to see and provide information to complete the ACR. The individual rated only provides general information such as name, designation details and types of training received. More critical information related to the actual appraisal of performance is provided by the supervisor. Analysis of an ACR form revealed the diversity of information collected. The supervisor assesses the subordinate under two broad categories – personality and overall performance – using a rating system that ranges from four (4) to one (1). Personality can include the supervisor rating the subordinate on their enthusiasm and initiative, sense of discipline, judgement, intelligence, cooperation and proactiveness, *inter alia*. Individuals are rated on a total of 15 personality factors. The ACR also includes 10 criteria for assessing performance, including quality and quantity of work, punctuality, promptness in taking action and carrying out orders, interest at work, and oral and writing abilities.

The ACR was adopted from the colonial administration and has undergone minor changes over time. Participants, however, stated that it had fundamentally remained unchanged. Despite the importance and seriousness afforded to it as a career-determining document, there is consensus among the participants about its ineffectiveness. Their reservation was that the ACR was problematic in that it is viewed "very subjective" (DC 8); that "it is not a good appraisal system in that it only captures personality, and does not evaluate performance" (UNO 3); and that "it is a horrible document [that] measures nothing" (Expert 3). These claims raised concerns about the basis on which DCs complete the ACR. Participants stated

[53] It is labelled a confidential document because administrative personnel subject to the ACR do not have access to the information related to the appraisal after it is completed. This implies civil servants cannot access their performance appraisals and thus remain unaware of the final assessment.

that it was based on "personal discretion" (UNO 1) where the DC does not abide by any specific standards, nor are any requirements imposed to consult the individual being assessed. Reflecting on this, participants insisted that "personal relations" between the DC and his followers indeed determined whether the follower received a good or bad score in the ACR:

> *It completely depends on the personal relations that you have with your supervisor. If you keep your boss happy, you get a good performance review, if you have any altercations, even though you have performed exceptionally well, you will still get a bad review. And thus often the ACR is really about how much the subordinate sucks up to the supervisor. It is entirely based on the relations.* Expert 6

The nature of such a personal relations is complex. Box 4 showcases an instance where ADC 3's fragile personal relationship with his DC was a source of anxiety for him, stemming from the perception that the smallest mistake can jeopardise his ACR.

Box 7. 4: Blending of the professional and private spheres – ADC 3

ADC3 described an instance that shows performance assessments can be arbitrarily determined by the DC, and, more importantly, it reveals blending of both the professional and private sphere which can be used to determine performance:

> *For instance, for most of the year, I'm doing quite well* [sic] *and have maintained a relatively good relationship with my supervisor, but in the last few days* [of the year] *if I make some silly mistakes my entire ACR might be ruined. I'll give you an example from practical experience. On this day, the DC's wife had come to the office for a visit, and instead of welcoming her cordially and greeting her, I was very busy that day and I was running around after a few other officers trying to get some work done. And you know, the DC noticed this, [sic] my entire year's hard work is gone. Thus, at the end of year, we* [followers] *are really tense, because, despite doing well throughout the year, if something goes wrong in around December, the whole year's hard work is gone. There is nothing objective about this. All you have to do is make sure you keep the DC happy whatever way you can.*

Blending of the professional and personal spheres form a key characteristic of the nature of personal relations and a key channel through which DCs might exercise influence over subordinates. This is another sign of the multiple logics operating in the Bangladesh public administration, in that the relationship between the DC and followers according to the bureaucratic-development logic is supposed to be structured and impersonal. Instead, it is intensely personal (i.e., the logic of personal relationships; see Chapter 5) largely enabled by the powerful patronage logic.

Further analysis reveals a key guiding principle of the patronage logic in operation in structuring relationship, that of loyalty (see Chapter 5). Loyalty manifests in the form being obedient to the leader and being supportive of whatever decisions or endeavours the DCs might engage in. The element of loyalty can become conflated with notions of hierarchy and how this inhibits 'insubordination'. However, loyalty as conventional practice suggests that subordinates must also adhere to orders from the DCs, despite such orders violating formal rules or regulations. As ADC 2 implied:

> *The relationship between the DC and junior officers, especially keeping in mind the ACR, the junior officer can actually say no to the political leader, but they can never say no to the DC. This has happened in my case. We had an issue with fertiliser distribution. And we are getting a lot of political pressure from different factions about who should get how much. And in that case, I also received a quota from my DC as well. So, I actually had to take away from the quota of the MP and give it to the DC.* ADC 2

Influence by DCs as leadership work is arguably conditioned and enabled by the patronage logic, allowing them to wield significant power and control over junior staff. It is further consolidated by the nature of accountability that defines the relationship between DCs and their followers. A formal type of accountability does exist within the Bangladesh public administration. It is one that participants describe as involving giving accounts to the supervisor, such as followers giving account to the DC through reports, completing paperwork, and doing the work instructed. Yet, concomitantly, findings also showed there was an inherent lack of accountability. Respondents complained that being held to account for achieving administrative outcomes is "not in realty operationalised as a formal type of accountability" (DC 2) or the fact that "[civil servants] claim something, but do something completely different", for what they actually do, they are not held to account for. It appeared that administrative accountability was indeed set up to only track inputs without much attention to outcomes, as UNO 1 explained:

> *Our civil service is not result-oriented. The government is not bothered about the quality of delivery. They only seen how much money has been disbursed or delivered* […] *they are not bothered about whether it has achieved the intended outcomes. Most civil servants think like this* […] *Even in the case of relief distribution, the government*

will not see whether relief was actually distributed to genuine people or not. These things aren't really thought of and hence there is no sense of accountability. UNO 1

Participants described this as a distorted culture of accountability, which raised questions about how DCs hold subordinates to account. UNO 3 explained that in fact accountability was entirely arbitrary, decided on by the DC on what to hold a follower account for:

There is no well-defined set of criteria of accountability that you will be evaluated against. It's overtly subjective and more importantly it's very arbitrary. You know my DC would arbitrarily ask others about me, whether I follow instructions, respect seniors, reply to emails, or whether I maintain a clean office. Based on this, I am held accountable for my performance. And in some other cases, the DC might think 'this guy has problems with AL leaders, and does not listen' and hence their performance turns about to be bad. UNO 3

Findings imply that accountability is indeed determined by perhaps whims and a superficial level of satisfaction of the leader. This interpretation is drawn from analysis that shows that, because of a lack of formal accountability that clearly defines responsibilities, junior staff members can be held accountable for whatever DCs deem appropriate. Holding to account for trivial matters of maintaining office cleanliness, disagreeing with supervisors, or even the political affiliation or non-affiliation of junior staff might have is indeed arbitrary, which is a clear manifestation of the patronage logic where accountability is directly to the leaders (i.e., accountability directly towards rules; see Chapter 5). DCs as leaders choose to hold followers to account on matters they decide are necessary, and thus in the process use accountability as an influencing mechanism by keeping followers beholden to the DC's wishes.

Findings have shown that the patronage logic enables contradictory practices that have become routinised, especially when compared to the appropriate leadership practices initially endorsed by participants. Institutional complexity arguably imposes competing pressures on DCs, both enabling and constraining their leadership practices. Yet these contradictory practices appear to have limited conflict, which in theory can draw sanctions from those who are considered legitimating authorities promoting the bureaucratic-development logic in the field. Findings thus far, however, show that bureaucratic violations are unlikely to lead to sanctions, perhaps because there are also authorities who legitimise contradictory practices

that are conditioned and enabled by the patronage logic. This interpretation in particular is revealing of possible fragmented institutional field that is the Bangladesh public administration, where multiple legitimating authorities exist promoting their own logic, making the institutional complexity experienced by DCs intense.

7.2 Enacting leadership by reclaiming agency

Findings thus far have shown structural pressures within the institutional complexity of the Bangladesh public administration both constrain and enable leadership enactment of DCs. Institutional logics direct behaviour of actors that are considered appropriate, conventional and even coerced for the sake of survival. There is, however, evidence that suggests that leadership enactment can also take agentic forms; that is, DCs exhibit conscious engagements with different institutional pressures to produce leadership enactment that enables them to fulfil their responsibilities through legitimate and effective means. The following sub-sections present thematically arranged findings that provide insights into how DCs, by way of exercising agency, enact leadership in an institutionally complex environment. This discussion commences by examining the leadership discretion of DCs and how they utilise agency to navigate institutional complexity and draw on different logics to legitimise discretionary enactment of the achievement of administrative ends.

7.2.1 The possibilities and realities of exercising discretion

Central to enacting leadership is the notion of administrative discretion. The capacity and ability to exercise discretion by DCs was an important line of inquiry that provided the means to investigate how DCs exercise agency to interact with available institutional logics in the Bangladesh public administration. This line of inquiry permitted exploration of the DC's leadership enactment that does not only include relationships with organisational members and external stakeholders discussed thus far, but also sheds light on how DCs directly engage in the policy implementation process, intervene in public service delivery, and contribute to the achievement of publicly valued outcomes.

Evidence of discretionary power was primarily gathered from the different achievements DCs and followers discussed in interviews. Achievements included improving school infrastructure and facilities, commissioning and building local infrastructure such as roads and sporting facilities, and improvement of public health standards. For example, DC 4 stated

that he became distressed after witnessing the appalling state of sanitation in one of the areas in his district, especially in considering the implications for hygiene and public health issues for the poor and rural community. Conscientious about his duty to address public health issues, DC 4 expeditiously undertook the initiative to improve sanitation coverage of the area:

> *I gathered all types of information from the different departments, including the public health department, about the sanitation coverage, and also sought information from the local hospital about the number of cases related to stomach-related diseases* […] *Taking all of this information into consideration, I came up with a project to improve the state of sanitation in the area. This was done in partnership with the public health department and NGOs* [...] *and, after one year, I was able to ensure 100 percent sanitation coverage in the area* […] *because of this, I also received government recognition.* DC 4

Achievements of what might be considered publicly valued outcomes are the result of broad policy and administrative directives DCs operate under. Expansive areas of responsibilities (see Chapter 6), coupled with administrative authority, afford DCs ample opportunities to exercise discretion, but whether they do so is an act of discretion. Exercise of leadership discretion is also evident in cases that show DCs act beyond the call of duty to achieve publicly valued outcomes, which were claimed not to be the direct result of policy directives. For example, DC 2 elaborated that his efforts to support education-related improvements in his district were intrinsically motivated, rather than originating from an administrative order:

> *I did a lot of the work that was necessarily not my responsibility, but I did them because I felt there was a need to, especially things that contributed to the development of immediate communities. For example, when I endeavoured to provide school uniforms to children in one of the schools. Their uniforms were in a terrible condition and such poor people in the rural areas don't really have access to the best resources. So, to restore a sense of dignity and honour among the school children, I managed to provide them with new uniforms. And I managed to do this without spending government money. Instead I tapped into local resources, especially elites in society and appealed to their sense of social commitment to give back to the community.* DC 2

Acting through leadership discretion for achieving a publicly valued outcome is indeed a choice for DCs, that is, a choice to follow a set of rules or guidelines imposed by one

institutional logic over another set of rules prescribed by another logic. The motivations of DCs to achieve publicly valued outcomes that carry 'development' undertones can be linked to the choice of DCs to draw on the bureaucratic-development logic to condition their administrative pursuits while experiencing institutional complexity. There are, however, additional resources related to the bureaucratic-development logic that further enable discretion. Embedded in stories of public value achievement was a type of collaboration or coordination with different stakeholders. For example, one of the DCs recounted his involvement with a local community in a climate change mitigation project to combat rising sea-levels and ensuing shoreline erosion. The project involved planting 100,000 fruit-bearing trees to combat erosion, and to make it sustainable the DC penned an agreement between the local community and local government authorities whereby local people contributed to the trees' upkeep and distributed the fruit among community members.

Leading collaborative efforts like this was also found during emergencies. Box 5 presents the experience of DC 7 in coordinating partnership with other governmental agencies and making discretionary decisions to ensure publicly valued outcomes were achieved.

Box 7. 5: Discretion, collaboration and value creation in the face of administrative violation

A key area in which DCs discussed the exercise of administrative discretion was during emergencies, particularly those related to inclement weather such as hurricanes and flood, which areas of Bangladesh are highly susceptible to due to their topography. During one such emergency, DC 7 provided an account of his actions in collaborating and coordinating efforts with the Bangladesh Army for a joint response during floods in his district. The account is particularly illuminating on how the elements of 'serving the public interest' related to how the bureaucratic-development logic licenses DCs to act in discretionary ways through collaboration, even if this might violate the rule-following doctrine:

> *I got a call from the UNO during the floods telling me how everything was being destroyed by the raging waters and he could hear cries for help but couldn't do anything about it. I tried calling the disaster authorities, the Secretary, and several related agencies, but did not get any swift response from them. I finally got in touch with the local army unit stationed in the district and requested assistance. But even then, the head of the army unit told me they would be willing to help but needed me to arrange formal approval from my bosses. You know something like this is a major decision, and getting the army involved means you are declaring the situation as a crisis. You have to get vetting from higher up the chain of command. But I couldn't get approval and time was running out. So I told them that the onus is on me, and requested him to proceed with deployment* [...] *Something like this was very risky, because even though I have certain authority, taking such a decision was outside the rules since I was not abiding by due process* […] *I couldn't get in touch with the approval authority* [but] *saving lives was more important at the time.*

Discretion also manifested in special efforts DCs chose to make in providing assistance to citizens who visit the DC office on a daily basis seeking various forms of assistance. This

includes citizens ranging from the poor and destitute seeking social assistance or more affluent citizens who seek advice and services in relation to land transfers, licenses or business regulation issues. In each of these cases, DCs exercise discretion. For example, observations undertaken during an all-day visit with DC 8 showed how the DC is able to accommodate such request. In the case of the poor and destitute, the DC was sympathetic to their needs and provided assurances about addressing their concern to the best of his abilities. With a businessman, however, the DC was less obliging and at times politely refused to render illegitimate favours frequently solicited, such as approving private land use for commercial purposes, because it violated government rules. Discretion, in this case, utilised the rule-following element of bureaucratic development logic, as the DC explained.

> […] *people come to my office thinking I will provide solutions to all their problems* [*and*] *the DC must think they will be able to solve all problems, possibly not all of them but most of them* […] *You saw how many service requests I received today, unfortunately I have to reject almost 90% of them. I will approve those which have merit according to the rules. Only in certain cases if there are any rational reasons, I will consider them as special circumstance at my own discretion.* DC 8

The discretionary nature of leadership enactment discussed above provides important insights about the value-creating opportunities DCs can pursue, particularly if they choose to condition that behaviour with the bureaucratic-development logic. Yet it is difficult to overlook the competing pressures the institutional environment can impose on DCs, especially in constraining their leadership discretion. For example, it engenders questions of how, in light of constraining influences such as strict adherence to rules and regulations, elements of hierarchy, and the disconcerting influence of politician, can DCs exercise such discretion, given the constraining forces can subdue the intent of discretionary enactment. This understanding prompted a line of probing participants to determine how DCs negotiate different institutional pressures to secure public value creation and public interest as a presiding element to shape discretionary enactment.

DCs suggested that one of the ways they retained their discretion was to categorically resist pressure from the patronage logic (i.e., political influence as the power of the patron). DCs claimed they did so "standing on one's ground", being firm with politicians when they

exercised untoward influence or make unsolicited requests, and most importantly being honest in their conduct. These claims, however, were challenged by, experts and followers, arguing that DCs making such claims had "obviously lied" (Expert 2) and that "there is no one outside the realm of political influence in the DC office" (ADC 1). Expert 5 explained why resisting political influence was not in the best interest of DCs:

> *You really have to question how many people can actually talk firmly with politicians* […] *there are numerous cases in the civil service where people who were firm with politicians have been made OSD. They have suffered because of this. They have been transferred or weren't given any promotion. These types of things also happen in which civil servants are identified when belonging to a certain political party.* Expert 5

Yet such questioning of resistance does not completely negate evidence of discretionary enactment. Analysis in fact revealed that an element of protection, from a patron in the institutional environment, paradoxically can enable DCs to reclaim their agency. In other words, participants said that having "backing" from powerful ministers or senior officers in the administration close to the executive or to the party in power enabled DCs to resist pressures and exercise discretion. ADC 1 and ADC 2 explained how their DCs would rarely be constrained by political influence:

> *My DC does not listen to anybody here, and myself I don't listen to most of the MPs here. The only thing that allows us to take this approach is political backing. All of us need this type of backing, otherwise we will not be able to work like this* […] *These are types of things that work here and can be more effective if you want to get work done in this country.* ADC 1

> *You know the last DC I served was able to navigate this complexity* [i.e., political influence] *very well. The MOPA* [Ministry of Public Administration] *minister empowered him to undertake the kind of work that he thought was necessary to effectively serve the constituency. So what can be said, is to survive* […] *he needed to have some sort of political backing.* ADC 2

Such findings were indications of agency, whereby DCs utilised the patronage logic to allow them to reclaim their discretion, which otherwise can also be constrained by pressures from

the same logic. This element of protection from an institutional member for exercising discretion opened an important avenue of inquiry to explore how DCs might use such institutional elements to further their agency to enact leadership. As discussed in the subsequent section, DCs engage in a number of agentic strategies that allow them to carefully consider and weigh up the repercussions of resistance but also the benefits of leveraging the available logics to enact leadership for the effective fulfilment of administrative ends.

7.2.2 Leveraging institutional logics for achieving administrative ends

Challenging pressures from politicians requires consideration of a number of factors, particularly that of adverse consequences DCs might face. To avoid hostility, some DCs do not to interfere in the engagement of local MPs and their businesses, despite being informed about its illegality. DC1 suggested this non-interfering approach "made the MPs happy" and it was done to "maintain good relationships with them". The latter reason of 'maintaining good relations' with powerful institutional members (i.e., ministers; senior government officials) was found to be particularly illuminating in that it empowered DCs to exercise their leadership discretion to achieve administrative ends. The case of DC 5 (Box 6) provided important insights into how 'good relations' are maintained through what can be described as *quid pro quo*, that is, DCs entertain political requests, at the same time also indicating loyalty, for which in return, they receive endorsement and support to pursue administrative ends, including value creation through discretionary means.

Box 7. 6: Quid pro quo: How DC 5 gathers support from institutional members

Prior to being appointed as DC, DC 5 worked in a central government agency. This agency is regarded as being pivotal in contributing to recent reforms in the public sector through designing innovative policies, working as an incubator for new ideas, engaging in advocacy and encouraging participation of civil servants in designing and implementing public service delivery reform. Participants also regarded the agency as strongly endorsed by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), affording it significant political clout and leverage. According to DC 5, she worked as a key member of the agency working closely with the head of the agency:

> *You know where I used to work previously, as head of the agency,* [name of head withheld] *gave me a lot of independence in how I went about my work* [...] *I myself essentially determined what areas I wanted to work on and what areas of innovation I could focus on* [...] *it was mostly about policy work. For example, there is a government policy that gives payment to the family of freedom fighters after their death to cover funeral costs. However, there was a lot of problems and families did not receive payments in a timely fashion. So I created a policy that provided payment to families the same day of the death of the beneficiary.*

DC 5 explained her new role as DC helped further the agenda of the government and more specifically the vision of the prime minister. Demonstrative of her commitment was a mural painted in her office with texts that referred to the current government's mandate and related slogans. It included slogans such as "ensuring every child's education", "women empowerment", "investment friendly Bangladesh", "spirit of independence" and "Sheikh Hasina's initiative - electricity in every home". When asked about it, the DC said: "This is some sort of a manifesto - the priorities of the current government. I keep it to remind myself whether I'm doing all this work or not [...] these are the priority areas of the prime minister and hence this is my priority as well".

It is reasonable to assume that her previously occupied position and her proclaimed commitment to the Prime Minister's vision make her likely to receive endorsement from institutional members such as members of the executive. Her devotion and commitment to them are indeed indicative of loyalty, enabling her to also receive protection to exercise significant discretion and also challenge pressures from other sources. However, her loyalty to the Executive implies inability to thwart pressures from the same constituency. As the DC suggested, circumventing rules for requests made by ministers have to be accommodated, as she fears even 'trivial' matters like protocol, which is essentially about "meeting, greeting, and making them [i.e., ministers] happy", if it is not up to expectations, can be the basis for a DC to be transferred.

The importance of gathering endorsement and support from powerful institutional members appeared critical for DCs exercising leadership. For example, UNO 2 described an instance where his DC was able to mount a challenge on political influence due to support from a minister. The respondent explained that when a minister sought to coerce the DC office into rigging an auction for shop space in the local market, the DC refused outright:

> *One strength we had was that we had a strong support of one of the ministers, hence the other minister couldn't do much about it. However, in most cases you will see that, someone would've been instantly transferred or some other arrangement would've been made against that person, such as departmental proceedings. These are the practical situations we deal with in the public administration.* UNO 2

Securing support and endorsement from institutional members thus forms an important precursor for DCs to enact leadership, in that DCs through their agency draw on patronage logic and elements of personal relationship to garner support from institutional members. More importantly, a strategy like this is key enabler for leadership enactment in pursuit of publicly valued outcomes. For example, a DC office was able to capitalise on the opportunity of using a large vacant piece of land and converting it into a sporting stadium with support and assistance from a minister that was claimed to have contributed towards positive youth development in the district:

> *The minster actually encouraged us, and with his help we built this stadium in the district. We did all the work necessary and approached the minister with our proposal and solicited his support. He agreed to help us by talking to one of his close acquaintances who was on the board of the BCB* [Bangladesh Cricket Board] *and whether something can be done about building a state-of-the-art cricket stadium here* […] *This stadium was massive for the entire community both as injecting money, but also engaging with the youth.* UNO 2

Leadership strategies such as utilising support from institutional members to create public value shows one of the agentic practices of DCs in navigating institutional complexity. Findings also pointed to other strategies that show how DCs may leverage the institutional logics available to them. One such strategy entailed the choice to maintain the discrepancy between formal administrative prescriptions and actual practices, which, according to participants, provided an effective means to produce publicly valued outcomes. This strategy was apparent in DCs who chose to collaborate and coordinate with external stakeholders, including other government departments and agencies at the district level. Findings show DCs disregard formally prescribed divisions between the different cadres and develop close personal relations that assist them in fulfilling administrative responsibilities. Formal boundaries created through the bureaucratic-development logic that promoted reforms such as departmentalisation were argued by participants to be problematic in that they impacted the 'unity of the public administration'. Thus, for practical reasons, DCs suggested that they try to ignore these formal boundaries and develop trust through personal relations. For example, DC 1 stated that he made it a point to visit all relevant government departments and believed that maintaining interaction with relevant stakeholders outside of official

engagements was key to "develop[ing] close personal relations which is extremely important". Some DCs urged that a major advantage of personal relations was the "informality" in the nature of communication that it allowed. DC 2 stated this informality made working in partnership with other stakeholders more effective:

> *One of the important things I came to realise was that, while there are lots of formal communications that are prescribed in the rules, such as, you know, formal letters or even discussing matters in committee meetings only, but what has been the most useful and critical for me, especially to achieve substantive outcomes, was this very informal type of communication I maintained with stakeholders. You know things such as discussing important issues in very informal settings, or making informal visits, or through personal phone calls. I found people to be more receptive to this type of communication. It smooths out a lot of the problems.* DC 2

Informal communications and personal relations as discrepancies were even cited as a way some DCs overcame the problems with police that were discussed earlier (Section 7.1.2) and worked collaboratively to maintain law and order in the district. Revealing the usefulness of discrepancies was ADC 3's experiences during weather emergencies while serving two different DCs. ADC 3 recalled that, while serving under one of the DCs, he experienced how the DC failed to respond to the emergency due to "preoccupation" with following rules. ADC 3 stated that, despite access to sufficient resources and relief material, the DC delayed disbursement of relief to affected communities:

> *Unfortunately for four whole days we did not distribute any type of food or other types of relief because we did not receive any formal allocation from the government* [...] *part of the reason being because all communication lines were down because of the destruction caused by the cyclone* [...] *I tried to convince my DC that we needed to act, but he insisted that he was not going to without formal allocation. You know he kept telling me whether I was going crazy or not and how could we distribute relief without formal government approval* [...] *the DC office cannot legally and officially distribute any relief without getting approval from the ministry. He was shackled by the idea that he couldn't operate without the approval.* ADC 3

ADC 3 contrasted this experience with one where the DC defied the formal approval process and opted to devise an effective response "to save lives" with the available resources. The DC also swayed other stakeholders to disregard formal rules at the time:

> [...] *we called the district food controller and the DC demanded that, whatever amount of food is requested, [it] be provided for responding to the situation. But the controller suggested that without formal approval or allocation form the ministry, they couldn't be of any assistance. But my DC was determined and explained that official approval might take even longer*[...] *You know he even threatened to have him* [food controller] *handed over to the police* [...] *the DC negotiated and proceeded with the distribution of food and relief and the controller was given a written letter from the DC that explained food relief was distributed without formal approval from the ministry* [...] *we distributed 2200 metric tons of food which far exceeded the numbers that were officially approved.* ADC 3

Lastly, the interviews show that the DC's managing discrepancies can be the result of negotiation and, most importantly, compromises DCs make for practical purposes. This interpretation shows how dealing with pressures from institutional members such as politicians are the realities DCs must confront, but how they can do so with a degree of adeptness to "manage them tactfully". One such tactful enactment involves negotiating and reaching an accord with institutional members. Exemplifying this was the case of DC 4. As illustrated in the previous section about DC 4 attempting radical change, he faced unrelenting pressures from local politicians while doing so. Realising the hindrances it created, DC 4 took measures to quell such pressures, allowing him to be more attentive to his pursuits:

> *I had six MPs in my area. They were creating a lot of problems. There was no coordination between them, even though they were from the same ruling party. One would say something and the other would contradict this. I tried my best not to get into direct conflict with them. So what I did was I called a meeting between me and all the six MPs and made a very honest request to them. I told them that whatever they request of me, I will do my very best to fulfil that request and I will do it immediately without delay. But I will not entertain the requests I can't accommodate and I told them not to keep pursuing it either* [...] *Despite saying all this, one of the MPs later came to me with request to transfer one of the junior officers from one office to another. This was a very small request. You know, it doesn't make much of a difference for me if I transferred that*

officer. These are the small types of request that I was able to accommodate. But the thing that was problematic was this one when at the time when I got a request from one of the MPs for recruiting five of his people into the school and he told me to take care of it. I told him directly that I couldn't do anything about it. And I even told him to go complain to whoever he wanted. Because of this, it was a little tense and confrontational for the first six months. DC 4

The findings are revealing of how agency is exercised by DCs in navigating institutional complexity and enacting leadership to achieve administrative ends. It shows that the patronage logic, despite being considered a fairly informal institution, is in fact powerful enough to be used for empowering the achievements for which public sector leadership is purposed. Evidence also shows that DCs can also choose to deliberately reject prescriptions of one logic over another for practical purposes, as it enables the efficient achievement of administrative ends. Such tactful utilisation of agency in enacting leadership, however, warrants a degree of caution on the part of the DCs, because, as the findings below show, utilising agency in drawing on the available logics can often lead to the pursuit of self-interest rather than administrative ends.

7.2.3 Exploitative leadership strategies in complex environments

Evidence discussed in this section suggests that DCs can also use leadership strategies to achieve ends that do not strictly align with their administrative responsibilities. For example, DCs may take advantage of their leadership position and use logics to acquire personal and material benefits or unfairly impose logics on certain stakeholders that may be counterproductive to creating public value. These leadership approaches are regarded as the exploitative leadership strategies of some DCs and thus may be regarded as taking undue advantage of the institutional complexity they experience.

The discrepancy strategy introduced in the previous section can also be unjustly enacted, especially when it is used to serve self-interest. Examples included decisions by DCs to distribute social-safety payments based on political inclination rather than eligibility of the beneficiary; awarding contracts to businesses arbitrarily, rather than on established criteria; and using the Local Resource fund to gain personal benefit. A more frequently cited example is the discrepancy found between The Government Servant (Conduct) Rules Act, which

governs the conduct of public servants, and the actual conduct of public servants. Expert 7 provided an account how a provision in the Act preventing civil servants from inappropriately engaging with politicians could be ignored:

> *The other day I witnessed a civil servant in the district go to the airport to receive a frontline leader of the current government and give them a formal reception with flower garlands and everything. Under the Civil Servant Act, that person should've been sacked right away. He cannot do that. You can only provide such protocol to people who are eligible, which is usually a sitting Member of Parliament or a Minister.* Expert 7

Such discrepancies are arguably enacted by DCs to build and maintain personal relations with powerful institutional members, who more than just a legitimating authority in the institutional environment, but can also provide material benefits to the DC. DC 3 in fact stated that civil servants who aspire to become DCs must have "good relations with the right people in authority". Other respondents confirmed this, explaining the rationale behind such actions, that civil servants only get "picked for certain positions and promotions because [of their] political connections" (Expert 6). Evidence gathered points to the dominant belief that the patronage logic is a legitimate and effective way of enhancing one's career:

> *You know, more than the ACR, I think about my political affiliations towards a particular government or party. This is what really matters in the Bangladesh public administration.* Expert 5

The antithesis of the discrepancy strategy was also found where leadership enactment seeks to ensure consistency between administrative rules and practices, yet the motives of doing so appeared exploitative. This was gleaned from conversations about the DCs' interaction with NGOs, which elicited inconsistent narratives from participants. For example, one narrative suggested NGOs as valuable collaborative partners in the pursuit of publicly valued outcomes such as improving biodiversity, delivering programs to build climate change and disaster resilience, and addressing social issues such as child marriage or violence against women. In such cases, NGOs are portrayed as cooperative stakeholders who share a common mission of development of the district. A competing and a more prevalent narrative among respondents, was more suspicious of NGOs and their intentions. For example, participants suggested that NGOs can "often have their own agendas" (ADC 3) and lack sense of responsibility as "they

are not accountable to the government" (DC 5). This implies that DCs can harbour a sense of distrust concerning NGOs and can be restrained in cultivating personal relations in the same way as with other government agencies or politicians. Instead, strong views emerged about greater scrutiny of NGOs and holding them accountable for their work:

> *We really maintain strict monitoring of the NGOs. They have to make a presentation in every meeting, reporting to us what work they are doing. If they are launching a new project, then we will usually visit that project* [...] *For NGOs to access their funds, they have an obligation to communicate with the district administration and properly implement the development work* [...] *We have to question why these projects are being implemented and to make sure they are implemented properly. This requires us to make sure that NGOs are adhering to guidelines and, importantly, to make sure they are not misusing the funds.* DC 5

A participant further revealed that NGOs need the "FC Forms" to be signed and approved by the DC according to government policy. FC forms relate to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Ordinance 1982 to which NGOs must adhere. Interviewees implied this allows the DC to exercise significant power over NGOs to police them, and if discrepancies are uncovered through such mechanisms, NGOs are either "warn[ed] or regulatory authorities are notified of breaches of such rules" (DC 5). Such actions appeared exploitative especially in light of the elitist character of DCs discussed earlier and the admission from participants that the relationship between the civil service and NGOs used to be one of "altercation":

> [There] *used to be a lot of altercation between the civil service and the NGOs* […] *some NGOs think they can work* […] *without being accountable to the government* […] *things have changed now. When NGOs come to work in the district, they now require a certificate from us* [i.e., the DC office]. *They* [NGOs] *know they require our* [DCs] *our approval to work*. DC 1

Overall, there appears, an implied desire among DCs to exercise strict control and demonstrate power over NGOs. This is drawn from the often aversive impression DCs have of NGOs and which they seek to address by holding NGOs "accountable" through upholding regulations.

7.3 Summary

This chapter presented findings that answer the second research question specifically in regard to how the organisational field of the Bangladesh public administration influences the ways in which DCs enact their leadership. It shows how structural characteristics of the institutional environment can both constrain and enable enactment, such as enabling a type of leadership that is enacted through and adherence to rules and regulations or be constrained by capitulating to political influence. The chapter also explained the role of agency and how DCs exercise it to engage and utilise available logics to achieve administrative ends. Findings showed that, while the bureaucratic-development logic defined motivations to create public value, DCs saw it as necessary to also draw on patronage logic and leverage personal relations with powerful institutional members to effectively exercise discretion for public value. Exploitative behaviour, however, also appeared to be an issue, where self-interest could fuel exploitative leadership strategies that take undue advantage of institutional complexity. Overall, these findings imply an important sense of how public sector leadership can manifest in institutional complex settings such as the Bangladesh public administration. Such complexity also exists in the context of change and, more precisely, the reform process that has remained a major challenge for the Bangladesh government.

The next chapter presents findings in relation to the third and final research question and provides an explanation of leadership enactment in the reform process.

Chapter 8: Leadership and change in the Bangladesh public administration

8.0 Introduction

The previous chapter answered the second research question showing how the leadership enactment of DCs were both constrained and enabled by structural forces in the Bangladesh public administration. The chapter also showed that DCs can exercise agency to interact with structural forces to legitimise their actions for the achievement of administrative ends. An important issue that remains unanswered is the issue of change within the Bangladesh public administration and the role of leadership in that process. Accordingly, this chapter examines the third research question:

How do public managers experiencing institutional complexity in post-colonial developing countries enact leadership in the implementation of public sector reform?

DCs play an important role in the implementation of reform policies. This chapter explores the leadership enactment of DCs in implementing reforms that could precipitate change in the Bangladesh public administration. Findings point to a divergent responses and outcomes in relation to reforms. First, evidence shows that resistance remains a key issue within the public administration as a recurring historical pattern. DCs were found to be key actors who can be enabled by certain logics to resist change. It highlights how DCs often harbour views of reforms as disruptions to existing routines, as impractical, or they deem current administrative practices to be sufficient, all of which can militate against change. However, the opposite is also true, that when DCs do endeavour to implement change they can also be constrained by the demands of institutional logics that limit the implementation of change. It shows that DCs who want to embark in change-oriented work can become discouraged by existing bureaucratic norms that legitimise resistance instead of change. These contrasting scenarios are discussed as leadership enactment that *gains legitimacy in the maintenance of the status quo*, which forms the first theme of the findings in this chapter. It draws on theme 6 (Table 4.2., Chapter 4) and first order codes such as *aversion to change, conformity* and *predictability*.

There are, however, rare instances captured in the findings that indicate that it is possible for DCs to overcome pressures of resistance and embark on change-oriented leadership. Evidence shows that by exercising their agency and drawing on prevalent institutional logics, DCs are able to craft strategies to implement local changes at the district level as part of wider public sector reforms. These issues are discussed in the second theme of this chapter – *institutional change: utilising the enabling power of existing institutional logics*. It draws on theme 7 and build on first order codes such as *patron endorsement* and *innovation.* This chapter concludes with a summary of the issues discussed.

8.1 Gaining legitimacy in the status quo

Participants discussed reforms in the Bangladesh public administration by referring to several recent initiatives, including digital government, performance management, and innovation in public service delivery. Several aspects of the reform process were discussed, including its pressing need, why reforms were implemented unsuccessfully, and why more recent reforms were met with cautious enthusiasm. However, an underlying theme that emerged consistently among in the interviews with experts, was that the Bangladesh public administration has undergone little change from its historical past. There were concessions about changes such as pay structures, changes in structure of central and local government, and weak attempts at reducing the size of government, but the conclusion reached was that administrative functioning and practices have essentially remained unchanged.

Unsurprisingly, this 'lack of reform' thesis proved to be true with currently serving public servants, as DC 2 corroborated (having been in the public service for over 20 years):

> *Yes, there have been some meagre changes, but in reality, I haven't experienced a lot of significant changes in how I go about my work.*

Experts explained that, despite the establishment of more than 14 independent commissions since independence tasked with formulating reform recommendations, only a few have been successfully implemented. Secondary analysis of commission reports provided corroborating insights into this. The most recent report, Public Administration Reform Commission (PARC) Report 2000, which concerned the last commission to be convened, made 30 such recommendations. Experts estimated that only "three to four" (Expert 7) of the recommendations were implemented but those too after a "considerable number of years after

the report was first published" (Expert 5). Multiple experts explained the reasons behind this limited success:

> *If you look at all the reform commissions, they were all ritualistic, they have come and gone, and have not made much of a difference. Nobody cares what those were all about. Some reforms that have been implemented are only ritualistic and ornamental, and the reason being they were never really politically owned.* Expert 7

> *Speaking as a civil servant, we were the ones who slowed down and halted the reform process* […] *we felt threatened* […] *when you sideline meritocracy, when you weaken the Public Service Commission, what happens then is people like us who indulge in nepotism and favouritism* […] *stopping the reform is beneficial for us* […] *if I see meritocracy as a priority, then obviously I will feel threatened because I won't be able to compete.* Expert 5

These accounts furnish reasons for failure at two different levels. From a macro-level perspective, experts argued that reforms in the past have rarely received the political reinforcement needed for effective implementation. At a micro-level, however, experts stressed that civil servants actively prevented reforms from being implemented. They argued that key reforms targeting personnel management and performance-related issues were seen as threats that could destabilise the current order of things. In other words, participants suggested that reforms trying to inculcate performance as a guiding principle in the public service were perceived as undermining longstanding criteria for career advancement such as length of service. Reforms could also weaken the prospects that politicisation offered in terms of career benefits (discussed in detail in the previous chapter). Reform misused in this manner highlights a struggle between multiple institutional logics fighting to preside over conditioning administrative practice. For example, elements of performance can be said to largely represent a possible introduction of a *managerialist* logic, a notion also explicitly stated by reform commission reports. Yet principles such as length of service or politicisation as determining career advancement are arguably promoted by the bureaucratic-development logic and patronage logic, respectively. In such a scenario, a new logic introduced through reforms is perceived as threatening, because it could jeopardise the career prospects of civil servants who would have a vested interest in the current institutional order.

In addition to viewing reforms as threats, DCs were often found not to fully embrace reform policies and this could militate against change. Participants pointed to several reasons for this. First, it was suggested that there is a tendency among senior bureaucrats and some of the DCs to preserve current administrative functioning and practices. In other words, DCs are claimed to show preference for existing practices, processes and ways of doing things:

> [...] *they are least bothered by it* [i.e., reform policies] *because they seem to think everything is running fine. Their type of thinking is 'why do you want to bring in new things and complicate issues'.* Expert 7

> [...] *government is trying to embed new type of thinking in the administrative system* [...] *but there are still* [DCs] *out there who don't understand these* [ICT reforms]*, and don't even want to understand. They think very traditionally and want to keep things the same.* DC 4

The impression gathered from these responses implies that DCs can find comfort in notions of familiarity that are bred from routine work. Participants indicated that DCs tend to be aggrieved when faced with disruptions and instead find stability in doing work in ways to which they are accustomed. Preference for routines manifests in actions shared by their followers, who suggested that DCs did not provide encouragement in the uptake of new reform policies to be implemented in meaningful ways. One of the followers stated that his DC was "more than satisfied" with how the district administration operated currently, and preferred that no "new problems are created […as a result of] taking up new additional responsibilities" (UNO 1). Other followers reported similar behaviour of their DCs who found no legitimate reason to take "risks and be innovative", because the DC was "content with [him] just completing existing work" (ADC 2). Thus, deliberate leadership enactment, such as discouraging subordinate uptake of new type of work in line with reform policies, can hinder reform implementation. This suggested that DCs can find legitimacy in not lending support to reform implementation in spite of reforms being promoted by central authorities such as the PMO or other powerful institutional authorities.

Reluctance of some DCs to implement reform policies was also based on practical considerations. For example, several participants disclosed that, while reforms related to digital government were generally a good thing potentially to improve performance,

efficiency and transparency, technical aspects such as the introduction of new technologies to improve file processing or online service delivery were perceived as cumbersome. For example, ADC 4 complained about a new file processing system that tracked performance of staff in terms of how quickly files were processed to completion. He suggested this new performance imperative imposed by reform authorities meant he had to process files online, but also ensure that hard copies were being preserved, resulting in duplication of work:

> *There is always some type of resistance* […] *The DC suggested that we are doing double the work, because a document needs to be signed, scanned and uploaded, and needs to be approved online along with the hardcopies. It is slowing down* [our] *workflow and can lead to inefficiencies.* ADC 4

Several similar accounts were recorded which indicated that new organisational processes imposed were often met with resistance because DCs found them to have little practical relevance in improving existing work or they were perceived as hindrances in meeting existing administrative responsibilities. These findings implied a resultant lack of commitment from DCs towards reform implementation. Evidence revealed there is a proclivity among DCs to focus attention on other "traditional priorities" (UNO 1; Expert 6) over reforms. As discovered over the course of several interviews with DCs, enacting leadership in the implementation of reform policies was rarely discussed as a priority, despite claims that current reforms were the most promising in decades. Conversations with DCs revealed less about their efforts concerning implementing reforms and suggested that they were more appreciative of their traditional priorities of law and order, development, and revenue collection. This interpretation was supported by the telling account of ADC 2, who found himself being rebuked by his DC and accused of spending excessive amounts of time engaged in reform-associated work:

> [Reform-associated work] *requires a lot time to be redirected from my usual work. And that is something that is not appreciated* […] *On several occasions I was told off by my DC by ordering me to 'stop all this unnecessary work'. This is quite problematic* […] *this type of behaviour is quite prolific as well, I would say 80 to 90 percent of DCs don't see value in this type of change and reform.* ADC 2

Other participants confirmed experiencing similar dismissive attitudes from DCs. They clarified that the reason DCs can show such attitudes is because administrative pressures of being held accountable for their "regular work" (Expert 6) can overwhelm them.

Consequently, reform implementation can be treated as "additional" (UNO 1) responsibilities. Thus, implementing reform policies can appear to be a burden for DCs. When such a view is combined with an under-appreciation of reform measure as useful, it creates fertile ground for DCs to resist changes and maintain the status quo. A former civil servant who is currently on OSD commented that change is something civil servants least prefer to entertain: "The implementation and changes that have been tried to be brought about [as a result of reforms] in the public service, has been slow. And that's how we like it as public servants" (Expert5).

Reluctance to implement reforms reflects the enabling element of structure, but also agentic pursuits of DCs. For example, finding legitimacy in continuing existing administrative practices and responsibilities represents the exacting expectation of the bureaucratic-development logic that manifests as routines and that a new managerialist logic in the form of information communicated technology (ICT) and innovation-related reform policies is yet be institutionalised to confer substantive legitimacy for DCs. Agency, on the other hand, manifests in the choice DCs make to reluctantly implement reform policies, because they find such policies do not serve practical purposes or improve efficiency in the current administrative work. Thus, this reflects utilisation of agency by DCs to abstain from embracing new policy prescriptions promoted by a managerialist logic and instead wittingly promote the administrative practices supported by the bureaucratic-development logic. Such influences of structure and agency provide valuable insights about how DCs navigate institutional complexity, which in this case implies senses of what is "traditional" pitted against new reform policies and enactment of leadership resulting in maintenance of the status quo.

Pinning the blame on DCs as leaders who are strategically averse to change and reform reveals only part of the story. Further evidence gathered suggests that DCs can also emerge as strong supporters and initiators of change. For example, several DCs interviewed displayed enthusiasm about implementing reform policies. Reforms included introduction of annual performance agreements, performance reviews, and most prominently reforms related to

digital government that entailed a gamut of initiatives introducing ICT into a range of organisational processes such as file management, and, importantly, in public service delivery. Speaking enthusiastically about digital government related reforms, DC 7 stated changes introduced by the government were solving various public sector problems:

> *The government is undertaking very serious reforms led by the Prime Minister's Office. We are associated with lots of ICT related to work* [through which] *we have become a lot more transparent* […] *Different types of corruption is also being reduced because of this* […] *people also face less problems when accessing public services. So, I think we are gradually moving towards significant change.* DC 7

In addition, the government's innovation agenda was seen as precipitating a gradual cultural change in the behaviour of public servants, enabling DCs to be more entrepreneurial in pursuing innovative means of public service delivery. However, further probes into the pervasiveness of such enthusiasm and the motivations for change it fostered uncloaked constraining pressures DCs can face in pursuing change. This is best illustrated by DC 4's case (Box 8.1) and how his pursuit of change spelled career troubles:

Box 8. 1: When change becomes a career threatening endeavour: The Case of DC 4

DC 4's story lays substance to the view that agency as a driver of change can become overpowered by the constraining structural forces in the Bangladesh public administration. The story begins with the desire of the DC to change an *age-old* organisational process and bring about efficiency in the office. It involved overseeing the development of a computer program that could assist in processing court cases at the district level which would eventually result in quicker turnaround times for case disposal:

> [As a result of the use of the program] *my office was* […] *disposing of more than 100 cases a month, as compared to less than 30, which is the case around most DC offices.*

Claim of such an achievement would generally draw appreciation, given the significant improvement in performance. This was not the case, however, as members of the Cabinet took notice and questioned its efficacy. The DC explained that his enthusiasm about the initiative ended abruptly as his superiors, irked at the thought that "a computer software was being used to give decisions on legal cases", and gave him a strong rebuke, saying, *"You have used a machine to bring about judgement in a case? Have you gone mad; do you think this is some sort of a game?"* This view remained, despite the DC's attempts to explain the computer program was only used as an aid and that human judgement was still the primary determinant in disposing cases. Disapproval quickly turned into the potential of facing departmental investigation for a case of wrongdoing:

> *I was under a lot of stress* [...] *I was going to do anything that was required. So I went see my superior and begged him. He told me that whatever I did was not appropriate and eventually the administration decided to not take any actions* [...] *It's worth mentioning* [my superior] *did have a liking for me* […] *I told him that never again will I try to come up with some type of innovation like this* [...] *These experiences were not just about the impediments* [to bring about change], *but it also created a lot of uncertainties in my career and most importantly my job security. I didn't have job security because of what I did.*

The case of DC 4 reveals that change as a product of individual agency can be met with sanctions if not received well by powerful institutional members. Several participants reflected on this, pointing out there is a looming element of fear that can inhibit change-oriented thinking among DCs. Participants explained that, despite civil servants exhibiting capacity to think in innovative ways, "they are not always able to contribute with their ideas […] because there is the element of fear in the administration [that] discourages civil servants to engage in change initiatives that are risky" (Expert 6). Participants further elaborated that this fear was borne from the chance of facing retribution that led participants to believe "why should [public servants] take risks, it can be career hampering [for them]" (UNO 1). This point consolidates the understanding that DCs are likely to enact leadership with a degree of caution when contemplating changes, which consequently can discourage exercise of agency in the change process.

The maintenance of the status quo and finding legitimacy in doing so is thus an important emerging narrative about leadership enactment in the reform implementation process. It

presents through contrasting cases where DCs can take deliberate actions to lessen the impact of reform policies on organisational change, but also find themselves in situations being inhibited by institutional pressures when wanting to precipitate change for the purposes of enhancing administrative work. Irrespective of which situations DCs find themselves in, maintenance of the status quo becomes both an intended and unintended consequence of DCs' leadership. On the other hand, there are participants' perspectives on DCs who are championing reforms to bring about substantive changes at various districts. The next section examines how some reform policies are being meaningfully adopted and the role DCs are playing in the implementation process.

8.2 Institutional change – Utilising the enabling power of existing logics

The recurring discussion of change and reform indicated that, despite forces acting to maintain the status quo, change in the Bangladesh public administration is a palpable phenomenon. Within this context, findings suggest leadership enactment can play a significant role. Evidence drew attention to the fact that, when DCs recognise value in prescribed reforms, this appreciation can be an important motivating factor in enacting change. Several accounts show there are a number DCs who have embraced reforms and endeavoured to implement them to make improvements in administrative work at the district level. For example, one DC believed the Government's recent reform policies in relation to ICT and innovation were precipitating gradual changes, demonstrated by the willingness of his employees to integrate new processes and practices in daily work. He elaborated that he was working with his team to implement reform policies and aimed to "make [the] office paperless, transfer all land management-related data online, and [make] access to public services simpler through online portals" (DC 1). Enthusiasm and commitment of DCs towards reform was also pointed out by followers who claimed that their DCs shared the belief that reforms were improving public service delivery. ADC 4 explained that his DC's use of social media platforms such as Facebook "made accessing the DC for the public much easier […] and created direct links between the DC and community". These changes were spoken of as transformative changes by participants that challenged existing administrative practices and norms. Participants added that practices like these were indeed reflective of an "open-oriented" (DC 2) district level government, one that was claimed to be more transparent, accountable to the public, and responsive to the public, a stark difference to the removed and kingly demeanour that some participants argued defined the position of the DC.

These is indeed evidence that suggest that leadership enactment that supports reform policies can play an important role in facilitating change in the institutional environment

Some respondents further pressed the claim that reforms were catalysing behavioural changes among public servants. They claimed that displaying risk taking and innovative behaviour had become more acceptable in the Bangladesh public administration, elaborating that a certain level of tolerance towards risk-oriented and innovative behaviour had diffused in the administration. This shift was perceived by respondents as the wider effect of the government's own interest in pushing the innovation reform agenda. In other words, behaviours such as risk-taking or being innovative are tolerated because such behaviour is increasingly endorsed by the government's current policy position. Several cases of innovation-related initiatives were gathered that gave the impression they were only made possible with support and endorsement from powerful institutional members. One such example included the transformation of the "service experience" for the general public in one the districts:

> [We] *establish*[*ed*] *a one-stop help desk for service seekers* […] *Usually what used to happen was when a citizen would come to seek services* […] *they ended up taking help from a middleman who ripped money off of them, or they would even speak directly to the service provider in the office and would still had to pay bribes* […] *The front desk we setup was one place where they could get all type of information and lodge their applications. This had the potential to reduce corruption, but we still had employees taking money to put the applications into the system. But since at least now we could track applications online, we could follow up the reason why an application was not processed.* UNO 1

The participant explained that something like this would not have been possible in previous times and that too many stakeholders involved would have resisted and opposed it vehemently. Other examples included developing online databases for gun licences and setting up online services for land transfer requests. These examples are demonstrative of the significant changes that are occurring at the district level, both in terms of organisational processes resultant of reform policies, but also changes in behaviour of DCs who are more willing to undertake innovative projects which may be considered an entrepreneurial part of their leadership.

This interpretation aroused particular interest to better understand the institutional factors that enable DCs to act in such ways. A key insight gleaned in relation to this was the sequence in which participants spoke of the changes in behaviour. Invariably preceding claims of innovation and change was a keen acknowledgement of support from key institutional members. These key members included the PMO, A21, GIU and also members of the Cabinet and senior-ranking civil servants who maintain close relations with the executive. Participants hailed such members as the "chief architects" (Expert 7) behind the recent wave of reforms. This meant these members enjoyed a degree of centrality in the institutional environment and thus were likely providers of legitimacy, as one expert pointed out:

> *…there has been some stimulus from the top. For example, we have the Governance Innovation Unit* [*and*] *and its head as a lot of political clout* […], *he has been able foster this new innovative type thinking* […] *there is also the 'Digital Bangladesh' movement that has been very successful at various levels of government because it has a lot of political backing* […] *These initiatives have created a lot of space for change and innovation. And given* [*they*] *are based in the PMO, and when a civil servants is trying implement their policies, the very culture of resistance is not there, because normally when someone who is trying to change something, there would be a lot of resistance especially from their supervisors.* Expert 7

This issue points to a key finding relating to leadership and institutional change in the Bangladesh public administration. The finding suggests that leadership enactment that can initiate change is enabled by structural forces. In other words, key institutional members who are representative of the managerialist logic and are providers of legitimacy, can enable and support DCs to pursue change, and without that change is unlikely to occur. However, such change endeavours are also the result of agency. It is particularly illuminating of DCs and their ability to utilise an existing logic (i.e., patronage logic and its elements regarding personal relations; protection) to introduce or enact practices that are promoted by a new logic. Encompassing this assertion is the case of DC 4 (Box 8.2), recommencing from where the story ended with the DC potentially facing serious repercussions for trying to initiate change.

Box 8. 2: Change through institutional endorsement - Case of DC 4 (continued)

After a turbulent period in his career where DC 4 was faced with potential departmental proceedings, he negotiated his way out of the situation and promised to avoid pursuing change and innovation in his work. That promise, however, did not last as the DC soon pursued other change initiatives. This time, he was more cautious but resilient, explaining "*I wouldn't say that I wasn't afraid, but you learn from your experiences. I was more careful about my future ventures"*.

The new change introduced an online file management system that he hoped would resolve the inefficient paper-based filing system. The DC pointed out that despite his best efforts to maintain secrecy around the project, several individuals in the administration had taken notice and were not entirely pleased. An influential minister to his surprise had taken notice of his work and was interested to assess whether it had the potential to bring about any improvement. This was an important turning point for the DC and his project, which gradually received traction and was noticed by senior officials in the PMO. DC 4 explained that PMO officials were interested in further scaling up the project and endorsed him to develop this new system:

> [...] *the district where I was piloting the project, incidentally [a senior government official] came to visit who was then [assistant] to the Prime Minister. I actually gave him a demonstration of this filing system, and he suggested that I go see him at the PMO with this. He was interested to see whether something like this could be implemented across government offices [...] And at the PMO, [a senior A2I official] also saw this [...] they saw a lot of value in it. After that I was given a team and developed a number of versions [...] but several failed. By that time I got posted to j-district* [pseudonym] *and before leaving [senior A2I official] told me that the main thing that I have to do is to make sure the entire district effectively implements this filing system, which I was able to do.*

The story of DC 4 presents a contrasting case of how leadership enactment for change can transpire. DC 4's initial experience shows that the pursuit of change can be career-threatening for DCs. However, his subsequent experience demonstrates that, when the change is endorsed by key institutional members, support becomes a key enabler of leadership enactment that can result in change and reform implementation in the Bangladesh public administration.

8.3 Summary

Findings related to leadership enactment and change in the Bangladesh public administration present conflicting narratives. One view suggests that there are strong institutional pressures that inhibit change enactment, underpinned by DCs' motives to acquire legitimacy by doing traditional routine administrative work and additionally believing new practices serve little practical relevance in improving administrative efficiency. Thus, enabling structural forces appears as a dominant institutional pressure to maintain the status quo, even in cases where DCs may have the desire to exercise agency but are discouraged by the risk of facing sanctions from key institutional members. Contrasting with this perspective is the interpretation that in certain cases DCs are able to combat structural pressures and enact agency to effectively pursue change strategies. Yet even within these cases that may imply the use of agency, the embeddedness of DCs in the institutional field is laid bare by the fact that leadership enactment for institutional change is only realised when endorsed and aligned with the interest of central institutional member as providers of legitimacy.

Chapter 9: Discussion

9.0 Introduction

The main aim of this thesis was to explore public sector leadership in a post-colonial developing country with specific interest in examining the institutionally complexity that imbues such settings and conditions the enactment of leadership. Bangladesh was chosen as suitable for exhibiting institutional complexity in its public administration with DCs at the district level as focal public leaders. The inquiry was motivated by two important reasons. The first was an empirical gap that neglects public sector leadership research in non-Western developing countries. This study could thus provide insights into examining how public managers enact their leadership in such settings and potentially and effectively help address the myriad public sector challenges faced by such countries. Second, it aimed to offer a contextually sensitive notion of public sector leadership, one that is a derived phenomenon deeply embedded within the traditions, cultures and governance regimes of countries that do not fit the typical profile of Western capitalist nations. Both reasons together justified the context-focused approach that was cognisant of the starkly different public administration systems found in post-colonial developing countries such as Bangladesh. Accordingly, the study was guided by the cultural-cognitive lens of institutional logics to understand the impact of the environment on human behaviour and action.

Three research questions framed this research:

RQ 1. *What is the nature of public sector leadership enacted by public managers in a post-colonial developing country, and what roles and responsibilities does this form of leadership entail?*

RQ 2. *How do public managers experiencing institutional complexity in post-colonial developing countries enact their public sector leadership roles?*

RQ 3. *How do public managers experiencing institutional complexity in post-colonial developing countries enact leadership in the implementation of public sector reform?*

Evidence collected suggests factors such as unique leadership roles and responsibilities of DCs at the district level, conflicting and competing institutional logics that promote disparate behaviours and motives among public managers, and the spectres of reform and change failure, complicated by institutional complexity, have fashioned a public sector leadership type that is inherently conscious and responsive to its environment. Underlying these findings, evidence shows that DCs are both constrained and enabled by the institutional environment they inhabit but are also adept in exercising agency to utilise available institutional logics and condition their leadership enactment to achieve various administrative ends, including create public value and enact change. The focus of this chapter is to discuss these issues in further detail and their implications in light of the extant literature.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first section discusses the roles and responsibilities of the DC which informs the nature of public sector leadership at the district level. This has important implications for how public sector leadership is conceived, which in turn explains what public leaders do in a developing country such as Bangladesh. Attention is next drawn to the nature of institutional complexity experienced by DCs and how this shapes their leadership. This discussion illuminates how elements of structure pertaining to different logics shape leadership, but it also calls attention to agentic actions of DCs, who employ a variety of strategies to engage with different logics in pursuing leadership enactment. The discussion on institutional complexity is extended to discuss the issue of change and reform implementation through leadership. In particular, it highlights a variety of factors, including motives, interests, and strategies of DCs, defined by the multiple logics that both inhibit and promote meaningful reform implementation through leadership enactment. Contributions are then summarised, and the implications for theory and practice discussed.

9.1 Conceiving public sector leadership at the district level - What do public leaders do?

The public sector leadership literature has engendered numerous perspectives that view leaders as organisational change makers (Andersen et al., 2016; Moynihan et al., 2012), as collaborators building bridges across organisations and sectors (Getha-Taylor & Morse, 2013; Kim, 2018), and as individuals who employ a variety of resources, including the assistance of followers and inter-organisational partners, in order to find solutions to complex public problems (Grint, 2005a, 2005b). The difficulty in these conceptualisations is that they

treat the various types of public sector leadership as existing separately and they are rarely considered as an integrated whole. Findings from the study challenge this notion and show public sector leadership as an integrated practice that draws on a variety of leaderships to pursue administrative ends. Within the Bangladesh public administration, this study finds that the nature of DCs' leadership is defined by their need to assume organisational leadership, work as a collaborator, and become a political operator. These roles are now discussed in detail.

9.1.1 Deputy Commissioner as the Organisational Leader

DCs play a critical role in the management of DC Offices as functional heads, directing overall operations, they deal with staffing and resourcing issues, and, importantly, oversee administrative and policy implementation at district level. These represent the organisational management aspect of public sector leadership that resonates with the ongoing debate about drawing distinctions between leadership and management (Hartley, Parker, & Beashel, 2019a; Tummers & Knies, 2015). Scholars on one side argue that leadership and management are mutually exclusive practices, against rival views that there are indeed significant overlaps between the two. Findings from this study strongly support the latter view with evidence showing that DCs as heads of organisations regularly engage in management tasks, including closely monitoring the work of followers, assigning tasks and providing instructions, and also prescribing corrective measures to ensure followers avoid deviation and committing errors (Taylor, 2016).

The performance of such managerial tasks by leaders is discussed rarely in the contemporary literature, yet seminal work of Mintzberg (1997) and prominent theories originating from the Ohio State University and University of Michigan leadership studies have underscored that leadership does entail a key managerial aspect (Fernandez et al., 2010). Similarly, in the Bangladesh context at least, managerial work undertaken by DCs as part of their leadership lends support to the arguments by public administration scholars (e.g., Taylor, 2016; Trottier et al., 2008) that management is fundamental to the practice of leadership in government. Thus, this study establishes that management-related work undertaken by DCs is one of three leadership roles at the district level in Bangladesh.

9.1.2 Deputy Commissioner as the Collaborator

The second leadership role performed by DCs is that of the collaborator. This is based on findings of this study which are corroborated by the literature, that show fulfilment of administrative responsibilities demands that DCs work in coordination and cooperation with a number of actors dealing with administrative concerns (Ahmad, 1991). Evidence was presented that DCs regularly work with various government departments, line agencies, citizens and NGOs. These practices increasingly promote DCs' work in partnership with individuals across sectors and organisations to ends, including the achievement of publicly valued outcomes (Wallmeier, Helmig, & Feeney, 2018). For example, DCs worked towards combatting 'wicked problems' (Brookes & Grint, 2010) such as climate change with the help of NGOs or worked with other government agencies to produce education-related social programs at the district level, all of which generally make positive contributions to society and are valued by the public (Benington, 2011; Bryson et al., 2014; Moore, 1995).

Collaborative leadership of DCs and claims of the value-creating role that it entails are nothing new, particularly in an emerging era of network governance (Chapman et al., 2016; Getha-Taylor et al., 2011; Kim, 2018; Morse, 2010). It has resulted in perspectives that highlight elements of collaborative leadership, including the importance of policy co-ordination and having a common vision and interest (Armistead et al., 2007), employing interpersonal skills in the absence of formal authority to work with individuals in different organisations (Currie et al., 2011), and also creating opportunities for others to exercise leadership agency (Sullivan et al., 2012). While these aspects may be relevant in both Western and non-Western contexts, it is important to note that much of this discussion occurs within the network/collaborative governance context that is framed as a post-NPM set of reforms across national and international administrative contexts (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Bryson et al., 2014). Interestingly, however, this study's findings on collaborative leadership elements at district level present a context that is yet to witness the formal imposition of network governance reforms from government, nor is its existence explicitly acknowledged within the developing country public administration literature. It is thus understood that the collaborative leadership of DCs is an organic development that has responded to administrative needs. In other words, collaborative leadership for DCs as a legitimate form of enactment is not promoted by reform measures nor new organising principles, but rather it arises from a basic need for DCs to achieve administrative ends.

A complementary explanation, however, can be found in the arguments of several scholars that relates collaborative leadership of DCs to organising principles. Prominent scholars such as Hood (2005) and Christensen (2012) have claimed elements of collaboration and horizontal coordination are essentially a 'repackaging' of old administrative principles that have been spun as reforms under 'new labels'. They argue that policy coordination and working across sectors and organisations to deliver public service and achieve substantive public outcome are nothing new. Rather they have been a part of 'old' public administration ideals. In this sense, collaborative leadership of DCs arguably also exists as a manifestation of horizontal coordination imperatives under a bureaucratic-development logic found to exist in several post-colonial developing countries (Samaratunge et al., 2017). Views expressed by Hood (2005) and Christensen (2012) imply that collaborative leadership is an important part of the repertoire of leadership enactment of public managers in post-colonial developing countries such as Bangladesh, despite the lack of narratives or formal recognition of existence of network governance, which remains a reform phenomenon discussed primarily within a Western country context.

9.1.3 Deputy Commissioner as the Political Operator

The third important role, which is a contribution of this thesis, is the role of the *political operator*. Politics and administration have been closely intertwined since the birth of the administrative discourse (Demir & Nyhan, 2008): "at the heart of the practice of public administration" is the relationship that civil servants have with political leaders (Svara, 2001, p. 176). The nature of this relationship has been subject to a larger debate, most prominently within the politics-administration dichotomy discourse (Waldo, 1948; Wilson, 1941). Strict divisions between public managers and their political masters later came under criticism, with scholars and practitioners promoting the importance of political accountability and for the administration to be more responsive to political leaders (Hood, 1991; Hughes, 2012). This unravelling of strict divisions gives the impression that public managers exercising leadership will require a degree of political adeptness to navigate what is often considered a complex relationship (Jacobsen, 2006).

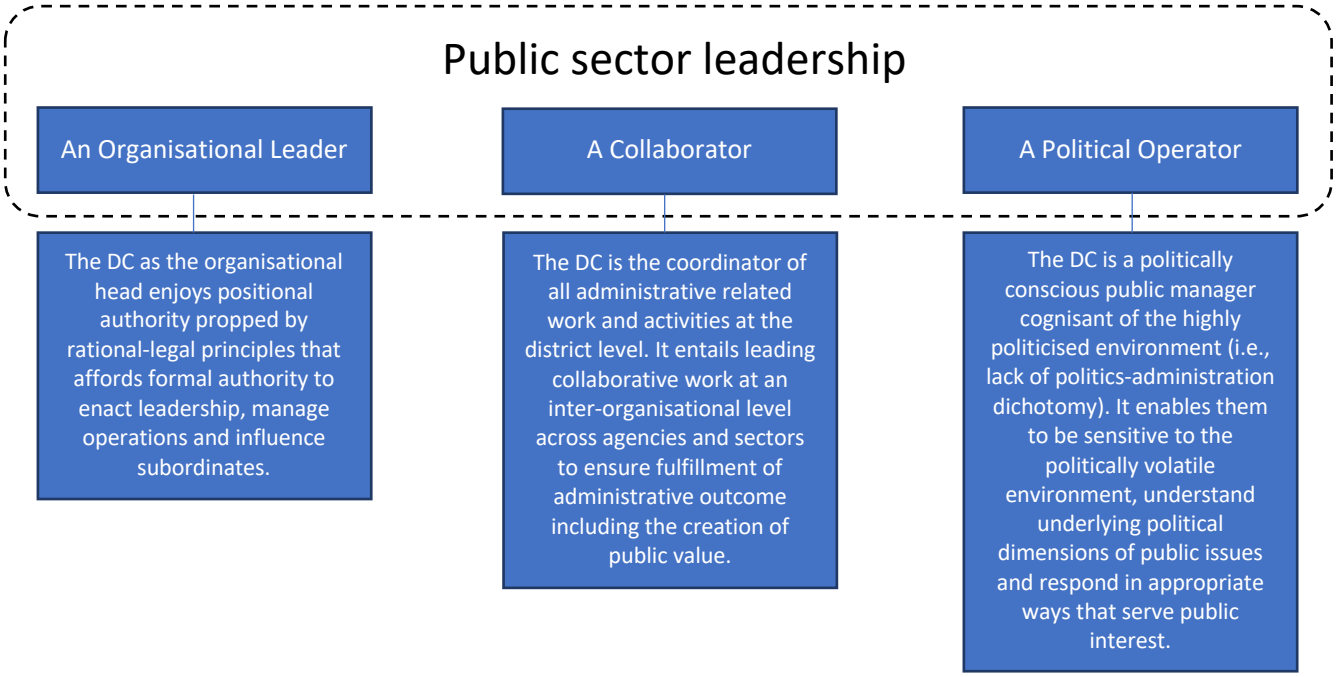
Indeed, there is a degree of acknowledgement within the public sector leadership literature of the political environment in which public managers are embedded (Moynihan & Ingraham,

2004; Van Wart, 2013b; Wallis & McLoughlin, 2007). However, such acknowledgement only amounts to a passive recognition, with the exception of Hartley et al. (2019b), while focusing mainly on the organisational leadership aspect and not elaborating political adeptness as key characteristics of public sector leadership. This may be warranted, given the context of these mostly Western studies in which the interaction with politics may only entail elements of political accountability and the associated factors of performance and achievement of substantive public outcomes. Findings from the context of the Bangladesh public administration challenge this passive acknowledgement and emphasise the importance of political skills being exercised by public managers. A number of findings contribute to this assertion. For example, the issue of protocol services to ministers or the differences in seniority between different party members that DCs must consciously address, require a degree of political astuteness (Hartley et al., 2019b). This point is amplified by the highly politicised environment DCs find themselves in (Huque, 2010; Zafarullah, 2013). Such a politicised environment implies that decisions by DCs are evaluated through a political lens by their political masters, who can impose sanctions and rewards through quasi-informal means (for example, being made OSD or receiving a promotion or not) that in reality are applied via formal mechanisms. The political operator within the context of this study is conscious of the politics of decision making because they are embedded actors in a highly politicised environment who must demonstrate significant degrees of political skills to ensure effective leadership (Hartley et al., 2019b; Van Slyke & Alexander, 2006). It entails developing the understanding of party politics and how the impinge the framing of administrative issues, the power bases of individual politicians, and being acutely aware of the political ramifications of actions and decision making.

In summary, the nature and conception of public sector leadership in Bangladesh includes a repertoire of leadership roles (Figure 9.1). DCs as public leaders must have the dexterity to exercise leadership within the boundaries of their organisation in managing administrative activities (i.e., as organisational leaders), achieve publicly valued outcomes through collaboration with actors outside organisational boundaries (i.e., as collaborators), and have the political skills to navigate the complex politics-administration relationship adeptly (i.e., as political operators). The importance of these issues is well encapsulated by Van Slyke and Alexander (2006) who conclude that "public sector leaders must have more than one leadership style and possess a multitude of tools in their leader tool boxes" (p. 372). Consequently, this study establishes that public sector leadership is a *protean* phenomenon,

whose exercise entails switching and changing leadership roles in response to the demands of the environment. The enactment of such multiple leadership roles is, however, complex within the Bangladesh public administration. Their enactment is complicated by the nature of institutional complexity experienced by DCs. The next section discusses how the multiple logics in the Bangladesh public administration shape the motives, behaviours and actions of DCs in enacting these leadership roles.

Figure 9. 1: Public sector leadership: a protean phenomenon



9.2 Navigating institutional complexity through leadership enactment

The core premise of this project is that leadership does not occur in a vacuum and that it is inherently influenced by its context (Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003; Bryman, 2004; Bryman et al., 1996; Ospina, 2017; Vogel & Masal, 2015). Adherence to this premise directed attention to the field-level institutional environment in which public managers enacting leadership are embedded (Bess & Goldman, 2001; Biggart & Hamilton, 1987; Currie et al., 2009b). The institutional logics framework (Friedland & Alford, 1991) formed the theoretical lens for examining the Bangladesh public administration as an organisational field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) containing multiple institutional logics that, as belief systems or organising principles, guide and condition human action (Thornton et al., 2012b). The institutional logic framework thus was determined as an appropriate choice for

understanding how a context that encompasses multiple logics, often referred to as institutional complexity (Greenwood et al., 2011), conditions leadership enactment of DCs in the Bangladesh public administration. The following subsections establish the nature of such institutional complexity in the research site of this study and present an institutional view of public sector leadership enactment.

9.2.1 Multiple logics and institutional complexity in the Bangladesh Public Administration

Institutional complexity explains the incompatibility of the multiple logics and the pressures they impose on participants in an organisational field (Seo & Creed, 2002; Xiaowei Rose, Danqing, & Jianjun, 2017). Institutional complexity scholars have argued there is a multiplicity of logics across a range of fields, including health care (van den Broek et al., 2014), judicial systems (McPherson & Sauder, 2013), the non-profit sectors (Battilana & Dorado, 2010) and public administration systems (Skelcher & Smith, 2015), where logics are often found to take rival forms that compete or conflict with each other (Scott, 2014). Yet few of these studies are situated in a post-colonial developing country so providing a relatively unexplored site for understanding institutional complexity.

Findings confirmed a high degree of institutional complexity experienced by DCs as evidenced by their conflicting and contradictory leadership enactment. For example, DCs attached a high degree of appropriateness to following rules and maintaining hierarchy and authority in exercising leadership, which is largely evidence of the pressures of the bureaucratic-development logic. The invocation of the bureaucratic-development logic reflects what March and Olsen (2013) consider normative pressures, explaining that behaviour that is particularly driven by rules in any field is considered exemplary behaviour because rules are seen as "natural, rightful, expected and legitimate" (p. 478). The bureaucratic-development logic here prescribes for DCs the 'appropriate' ways they should enact their leadership.

Competing against the bureaucratic-development logic is, however, the overwhelming pressures of the patronage logic. The patronage logic directly impinges on appropriate leadership behaviour and elicits contradictory leadership enactment. For example, due to pressures from politicians who are strong supporters of the patronage logic, the DCs' motives to adhere to exemplary behaviour are easily overwhelmed, and instead they adopt practices

endorsed by the patronage logic. Institutional scholars suggest that organisational fields are inhabited by actors who command disparate degrees of power and represent different logics, and they fight it out to make their logic dominant within a field; this is often described as 'arenas of power relations' (Pache & Santos, 2013; Steven & Jerome, 1991). Thus, the issue of politicians as powerful institutional members imposing demands that conflict with bureaucratic-development logic creates complexity for DCs.

Matters are further complicated with the introduction of a third logic, namely the managerialist logic introduced by the government. For example, the study found NPM-inspired practices such as performance management and digital government promoted different sets of behaviour and practices. While the managerialist logic is endorsed by the GoB, signalling a possible coercive pressure through government enforcement mechanisms (North, 1990), the strength of a new logic to impose definitive pressures on DCs can often be weak compared to more institutionalised logics (Smets, Morris, & Greenwood, 2012). This is largely evident in the resistance that some DCs exhibit in implementing reform policies. Findings like this suggest that, while the bureaucratic-development and the patronage logics have been sedimented through history (March & Olsen, 2013; Mutch, 2018) in the Bangladesh public administration, the managerialist logic represents efforts to induce change in the organisational field (Micelotta et al., 2017) and creates further institutional complexity for leadership enactment.

In summary, institutional complexity in the Bangladesh public administration is constituted by the patronage, bureaucratic-development and managerialist logics. Each of the logics has different strengths and supporters who duel in the arena to promote their logics in the field (Pache & Santos, 2013). It is within this type of institutional complicity that DCs experience multiple institutional pressures and demands that inevitably influence how they enact their leadership.

9.2.2 The influences of structure: The complexity of dealing with appropriate, contradictory and accepted ways of enacting leadership

The institutional logic framework as a distinct stream of research in institutional theory (Thornton et al., 2012b) has embraced several traditions of the field (Fine & Hallett, 2014), including the fundamental theoretical underpinning of explaining how social structures can

enable and constrain social action (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012b). Institutional logics thus can "restrict the set of possibilities of action" (i.e., constrain) and also "open up possibilities for action" (i.e., enable; Cardinale, 2018, p. 136). This section shows how structural forces in the Bangladesh public administration can condition leadership enactment that are contradictory yet continue to exist as legitimate practices.

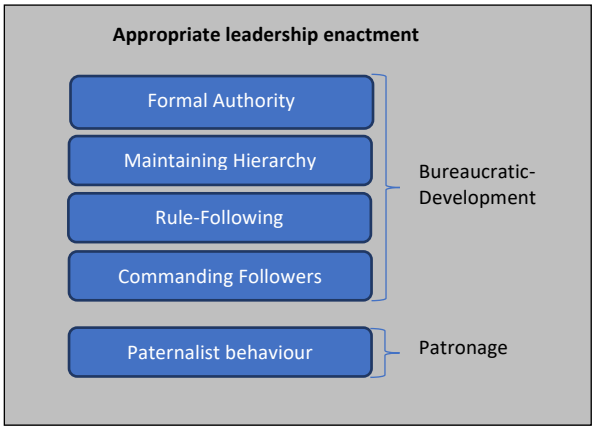
9.2.2.1 Enacting leadership the appropriate way

The predominance of the bureaucratic-development logic is of little surprise, given its sedimentation throughout Bangladesh's rich colonial administrative history (Alavi, 1972). Mutch (2018) provides strong support to this notion that logics that are historically constituted structures over longer time frames become greatly institutionalised in a field (Ocasio et al., 2016). History has aided the bureaucratic-development logic to become institutionalised, demonstrated by the regularity and unquestioned adherence shown by DCs in invoking it as a guiding principle: for example, the staunch belief that *formal authority* is the only legitimating factor for enacting effective leadership and influencing followers, or the DCs' penchant for enforcing and *maintaining hierarchy* among organisational members, all of which are enabled by the bureaucratic-development logic. Such practices are emblematic of Weber's rational-legal authority that imbues much of the bureaucratic-development logic. Legality of rules, obedience to those in authority, and following precedents of established rules and practices (i.e., *rule-following*; Aguilera & Vadera, 2008) define rational-legal authority and are cardinal beliefs of DCs. The significance of this relates to the degree of appropriateness that DCs attach to such behaviour, a type of social action institutional scholars explain as guided by the *logic of appropriateness.* It refers to human action being driven by "rules of appropriate or exemplary behaviour" (March & Olsen, 2013, p. 478). Appropriateness of human actions is described as 'rule-following' behaviour that assumes humans generally follow rules derived from laws, regulations, normative frameworks, values and belief systems, because it is the rightful, good and legitimate thing to do (Berger & Luckmann, 1991; Weick, 1995). It explains why DCs might prioritise the bureaucratic-development logic, given that its institutionalised form entails a degree of formality in that it manifests as the formal structure and written rules of the Bangladesh public administration. Thus, to be guided by formal administrative 'rules' is rational and reasonable for DCs.

But rules as appropriate guides are obscured by the fact the appropriated leadership enactment also includes *paternalistic behaviour,* sometimes expressed by DCs towards their followers. Paternalist behaviour appears incongruent with the impersonal-order promoted by the bureaucratic-development logic (Blau, 1963; Bozeman & Feeney, 2014; Keating, 1989). Yet the literature has suggested that maintaining impersonality is rarely a quality found in Bangladesh public administration (Zafarullah, 2013), which is consistent with the findings of this thesis. This is not surprising, because institutional logics exist as ideal types and are not concrete descriptions of what transpires in the organisational field (Currie & Spyridonidis, 2016; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). Institutional logics exist in nuanced ways as in the case of the Bangladesh public administration, where the impersonal order has found limited traction among other reified elements of the same logic. What is interesting about paternalistic behaviour is its links to the patronage logic, something which the anthropological literature has generally jettisoned, arguing that paternalistic behaviour as a form of organisation entails the leader providing care for followers and patronage is primarily sustained through favours or *quid pro quo* (Abercrombie & Hill, 1976). However, recent management literature on paternalistic behaviour actually mimics definitions of patronage, suggesting, paternalistic behaviour includes "authority consider[ing] it an obligation to provide protection to those under their care and in exchange expect loyalty and deference" (Pellegrini and Scandura, 2008, p. 568). Even public administration literature on patronage in developing countries, shows that patronage logic can also be laced with paternalism or paternalistic behaviour – where the leader "undertakes to *look after* [emphasis added] the [follower] in a fatherly, moral and emotional way" (Blunt et al., 2012, p. 67; Ugyel, 2014) and does not see the relationship merely as instrumental or of exchange only. This is consistent with both anthropological and leadership literature that documents paternalistic behaviour as a common phenomenon in non-Western agrarian societies across South Asia (Hiller et al., 2018; Zhang, Huai, & Xie, 2015) such as Bangladesh.

Figure 9.2 represents the *rightful* or *expected* way DCs enact leadership, because these actions adhere to the formal rules, ethos and expectations of the institutional environment (March & Olsen, 2013). This enactment is a manifestation of institutionalised rules, values and norms that pertain to the bureaucratic-development and the patronage logics. The blending (Lounsbury, 2002) of different logics enables DCs to enact leadership in an appropriate way without conflict, showing that DCs are able to synergistically accommodate the institutional pressures from the different logics

Figure 9. 2: Leadership: the appropriate way



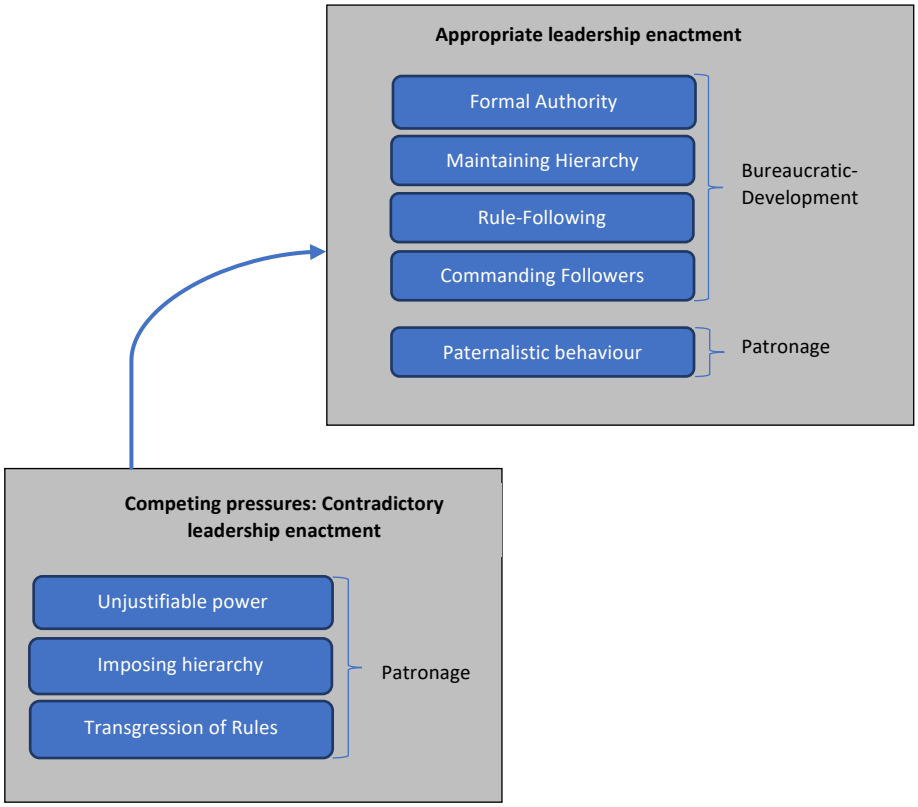
9.2.2.2 Dealing with competing pressures

Competing pressures from the patronage logic from the institutional environment do, however, challenge and contradict appropriate leadership practices, producing actions from DCs that indeed are conflicting (Figure 9.3). For example, instead of using formal authority and hierarchy to command effective undertaking of administrative duties as intended by the bureaucratic-development logic (Aguilera & Vadera, 2008), DCs use their positions to display *unjustifiable power* over followers to reassure themselves of their hierarchical positions, consequently making followers subservient, and the latter then become demoralised in performing administrative work. Thus authority and hierarchy (i.e., *imposing hierarchy*) are also devices for demonstrating unjustifiable power through the expression of intolerance towards followers' agency, emphasising the unequal power relationships that exist between the DCs (patrons) and followers (clients) as a consequence of their position, and enabling DCs to maintain their leadership status through the display of their power (Clapham, 1982). Such desires of exercising power were most notably documented in the DCs' relationship with the police, where their inability to impose command and control over administrative personnel in other government departments left them lamenting. It bolsters the argument that the patronage logic provides a sense of self (i.e., identity; Lok, 2010; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008) for DCs as powerful actors who demand deferential and subordinate individuals to be attentive to their wishes and over whom DCs may exercise extensive authority.

While this demonstrates how competing pressures from patronage enable conflicting leadership action, DCs are also constrained by the same pressures. *Transgression of rules* by DCs at the request of politicians is a key outcome of being constrained. Politicians

unequivocally are powerful constituents of the patronage logic (Osman, 2010; Sarker, 2008) and DCs' capitulating to their requests stems from the need to avoid legitimacy threats in an attempt to satisfy competing pressures from the patronage logic (D'Aunno, Sutton, & Price, 1991). Institutional scholars, however, draw attention to the fact that the threat to legitimacy from one group of institutional constituents in a fragmented field may not be enough to force full conformity (Pache & Santos, 2010; Scott, 2005). Instead, the degree of conformity depends on the means through which it is sought, for example, through legal power of regulatory authorities or through more normative ways such as accreditation provided by social organisations (Greenwood, Suddaby, & Hinings, 2002; Scott, 2014). Interestingly, these means highlighted in the literature have a kind of formal status within the institutional environment, that the means formally, within rules, can sanction actors who do not conform to expectations. This study, however, shows informal means, such as arbitrary imposition of sanctions (e.g., OSD or transfer) by politicians, can induce DCs to conform to the behaviour expected by the patronage logic (Lee, 2015). From an institutional perspective, this finding contradicts general understanding of the strengths of different logics that rules and laws are the most influential (Bromley & Powell, 2012). Instead, it shows that more powerful institutional pressures can take informal forms stemming from social structures rather than through coercive mechanisms of rules and laws. In this case, it is notable that the informal pressure was also coercive in nature.

Figure 9. 3: Contradictory leadership enactment



Contradictory enactment (Figure 9.3), such as transgression of rules, may indeed engender legitimacy threats from the bureaucratic-development logic, yet DCs are conscious of the fact that being more receptive to the pressures of patronage logic can result in gaining legitimacy and ensure survival through external support (e.g., support from politicians; Pache & Santos, 2010), which can offset the legitimacy lost from not abiding to bureaucratic-development logic (Kraatz & Block, 2008; Quirke, 2013).

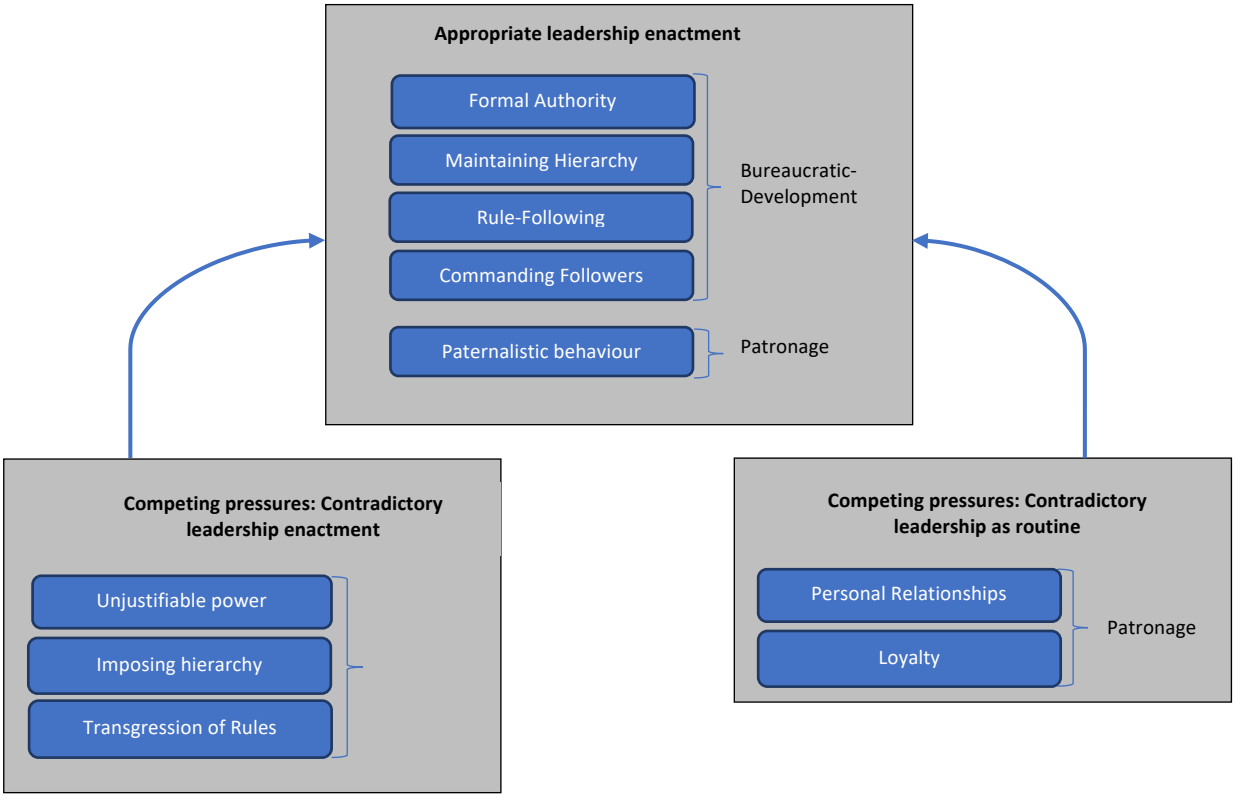
9.2.2.3 When contradictions become routine

Contradictory leadership enactment are not always the result of external pressures. They can also be enabled by the patronage logic that takes the form of internalised normative prescriptions that induce DCs to find routine in their actions. For example, dysfunctional performance systems, a culture of non-accountability, and utilisation of *personal relations* to influence followers were routine practices that made followers work at the behest of the leader, underpinned by the followers' unquestioning *loyalty* to the DC. Such practices, summarised in Figure 9.4, have indeed become the obvious and natural ways of doing things in the Bangladesh public administration, particularly the element of personal relations, which determines the effectiveness of patron-client relationships and the extent to which both the patron and client can derive benefits (Clapham, 1982; Grindle, 2012). For example, it is typical for DCs to manipulate personal relations that enable them to exert control and consolidate power, whereas for followers, personal relations and loyalty to DCs can bring about favourable performance evaluations that are needed for career growth or other material benefits. Such leader-follower interactions capture the mutually benefitting relationships promoted by the patronage logic (Scott, 1972; Weingrod, 1968), and have arguably achieved the status of a rule that has become a normative internal prescription to drive a such regularity (Hodgson, 2006) in leadership behaviour.

The prevalence of personal relations as "matter[s] of fact" (Binder, 2007, p. 571) in the organisational field is also explained by Thornton and Ocasio (1999), who argue that distribution of power within an institutional environment is based on the type of outcomes an institutional logic focuses attention on. The patronage logic is inherently instrumental and prioritises outcomes such as power and benefits for its subscribers, rather than administrative accountability, outputs or efficiency promoted by the bureaucratic-development logic. Given the relative neglect of such bureaucratic practices in the Bangladesh public administration

(Ahmed & Ahmed, 1996; Huque, 2011b; Jahan, 2015), DCs as subscribers of the patronage logic are able utilise personal relations for influence as routine leadership practices.

Figure 9. 4: Contradictory leadership as routine



In summary, then, institutional complexity and the associated structural forces in the Bangladesh public administration enable and constrain DCs in conditioning their leadership enactment. This reveals tensions between the different logics prevalent in the institutional environment that produce contradictory leadership enactment, yet such opposing actions manage to remain a legitimised part of the leadership repertoire of DCs. Such findings imply that public leaders such as DCs need to be responsive to and adhere to environmental pressures that inherently shape behaviours, actions and motives necessitated by the need to secure legitimacy and ensure survival.

This section partly answers the second research question, in that the foregoing discussion captures how structural forces in the institutional environment condition leadership behaviour. It paints a picture of institutionally constrained public leaders who have limited possibilities of actions, and have in essence have surrendered their discretion or agency to make choices, which many scholars consider to be the foundation of leadership (Kulich,

Iacoviello, & Lorenzi-Cioldi, 2018; Shamir & Eilam-Shamir, 2017; Tourish, 2014). The following section attends to these fundamentals of leadership. In particular, it highlights that, while structural forces can indeed shape leadership enactment, the ability to make choices is essential for DCs to engage with the structural forces which, in the case of this study, can enable leadership in order to effectively pursue administrative ends. In other words, it is the institutional adeptness of DCs that allows them to reclaim their agency and navigate the institutional complexity and engage with the prevalent logics to enact leadership.

9.2.3 Agentic leadership responses to institutional complexity: a double-edged sword

Friedland and Alford (1991) propose the institutional logics framework to enable viewing institutions as permanent and stable social structures that constrain human action, but they also provide partial autonomy to actors to strategically exercise agency and choose from the scripts in the prevailing institutional logics to guide and enable action (Cardinale, 2018; Mutch, 2018; Thornton et al., 2012b). Extrapolating this understanding within the context of this thesis reveals the possible exercise of agency by DCs to evaluate and choose from the multiple logics to enable their leadership enactment. This section discusses actions of DCs that are considered manifestations of agency to enable leadership enactment in the pursuit of administrative ends.

9.2.3.1 Creating public value through institutional adeptness

Emerging work on public sector leadership has affirmed that the purpose of leadership is to create public value[54] (Crosby & Bryson, 2018; Getha-Taylor et al., 2011; Quick, 2015), and arguably administrative discretion is a fundamental enabler to pursue such ends (Crosby & Bryson, 2018; Ospina, 2017; Van Wart, 2014). Underpinning the meaning of discretion are notions of 'freedom' and 'choice' that allow public leaders such as DCs to take effective actions to maneuver and optimise their interest in achieving administrative ends, including the creation of public value, contributing to the common good, and providing solutions to complex public problems (Getha-Taylor, 2008; Ospina, 2017; Silvia & McGuire, 2010). The embeddedness of DCs within the institutional environment, however, suggests that such interests and discretionary practices are constituted by field-level logics (Garrow & Grusky,

[54] Discussed in Chapter 2

2012) and, that agency plays a significant role in allowing DCs to select from the prevailing logics to guide their discretionary actions resulting in the achievement of public value.

The discussion thus far may, however, suggests that discretionary enactment in the Bangladesh public administration is a rarity (Siddiquee, 2003; Zafarullah & Huque, 2001), particularly in light of the coercive power of the patronage logic imposed by politicians that can lead to capitulation by DCs. Such constraining forces are not absolute as the following examples demonstrate. Evidence of public value outcomes that "add value to the public sphere" (Benington, 2011, p. 43) include: increasing sanitation coverage, combating climate change through reforestation, improving access to education in underprivileged communities, and effective responses during emergencies, are directly and indirectly linked to leadership discretion of DCs. These 'value creating' leadership outcomes, more than just being structurally enabled by the bureaucratic-development logic, are the agentic pursuits of DCs. This is because there are few coercive pressures (Scott, 2014) from the Government to hold DCs tightly accountable for such public value outcomes (Huque, 2011b). Rather DCs choose to be motivated through internalised prescriptions of fulfilling duties of development by drawing on the bureaucratic-development logic which serves the DCs' core functional needs (Besharov & Smith, 2014).

Leadership discretion for public value does not, however, occur simply because of the intents and motives of DCs to create public value. Rather, it requires a degree of institutional adeptness by DCs, who must exercise agency to draw on different institutional logics that ultimately results in the achievement of publicly valued outcomes. Institutional adeptness, as a contribution of this thesis, is defined as the skillful use of agency in navigating the institutional environment that require being cognisant of the prevalent logics and their supporters and utilizing them as a mean to achieve ends. More specifically, this study establishes that, as part of exercising institutional adeptness, DCs must enact two leadership strategies: *leverage endorsement from institutional constituents* and engage in *decoupling*, both of which support leadership discretion in creating public value.

Leveraging endorsement from institutional constituents entails four specific leadership tactics. First, findings showed that DCs need to *resist undue pressures* from institutional members such as politicians (carriers of patronage logic), which is key to reclaiming agency to exercise discretion. Some DCs do this by utilising the same logic that are promoted by

politicians (i.e., patronage logic) to *seek protection* from patrons (i.e., senior civil servants, more powerful politicians, the PMO), who have greater power in the institutional environment and are also supporters of the bureaucratic-development logic. This finding has important implications for the capability of DCs in assessing the institutional environment and devising appropriate leadership strategies. Studies of fragmented fields argue that, when actors are faced with multiple and disparate constituents imposing their logics, they are likely to try to 'balance' and sufficiently meet such disparate demands so as to avoid legitimacy loss (Deephouse, 1996; Whetten, 1978). However, these studies pay limited attention to *when* actors actually may use prevailing logics to resist pressures from one of the constituents and thus not have to satisfy all demands. By doing this, it is possible for actors to maintain legitimacy while rejecting demands from at least one of the constituents, especially when there are power disparities between constituents seeking conformity (Greenwood et al., 2002; Pache & Santos, 2010). A fragmented field where power differences between constituents determines who is dominant and gets to enforce their logic (Meyer & Scott, 1991) indeed creates conditions and opportunities for DCs to demonstrate political astuteness (Hartley et al., 2019b). Political astuteness in this thesis involves DCs assessing and evaluating strengths of constituents pertaining to each logic, and then aligning themselves with the more powerful constituents to mount resistance on the less powerful constituents. Being astute at deploying such strategies indeed unlock paths for leadership discretion.

Leadership discretion for public value, however, is not fully realised only by defying political pressure. In fact, by defying pressure from one set institutional constituents (i.e., politicians), DCs strengthen ties with another, especially with powerful institutional constituents who provide protection. DCs are required to pledge loyalty and obedience to such powerful institutional constituents through practices such as *transgression of rules* (e.g., by accommodating rule-violating requests from ministers) due to looming threats of sanctions (Oliver, 1991). DCs in return are granted latitude and resources to engage with the bureaucratic-development logic to enact leadership and produce publicly valued outcomes.

However, this type of loyalty alone is unlikely to garner support and protection, because appealing to interests of institutional constituents is equally important. For example, pitching ideas or 'selling' public value initiatives that a DC has ambitions of implementing has to appeal to and align with the constituents' interest if it is to receive further endorsement and legitimacy. This speaks of the 'ties of interest' promoted by the patronage logic (Bearfield,

2009; Weingrod, 1968), or *alignment of interest* in this case, which becomes the mechanisms of gaining respect and endorsement from legitimating institutional constituents (Greenwood et al., 2017; Pache & Santos, 2013), such as individuals among cabinet Ministers, officials from the PMO, or powerful individuals close to the Executive who share the importance of the bureaucratic-development logic to guide administrative work. In summary, leveraging endorsement from institutional constituents (Figure 9.5) is indeed a powerful leadership strategy that shows that the patronage logic as an informal institution can be effective in catalysing effective public sector leadership.

The second and equally important strategy that can support leadership discretion for public value is decoupling[55] (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). One of the ways DCs engage in decoupling is through *overriding rules* that allow them to be partially exempted from the necessity to conform to elements of the bureaucratic-development logic (Oliver, 1991), which require adherence to administrative rules. This type of leadership strategy was evident in cases when DCs felt compelled by the circumstances of emergencies to avoid adherence to bureaucratic rules so that an appropriate and expeditious response could be enacted to save lives. Indeed, by overriding rules, which in principle violates the bureaucratic-development logic, DCs still managed to avoid legitimacy threats because such motives remain guided by the duty to create public value.

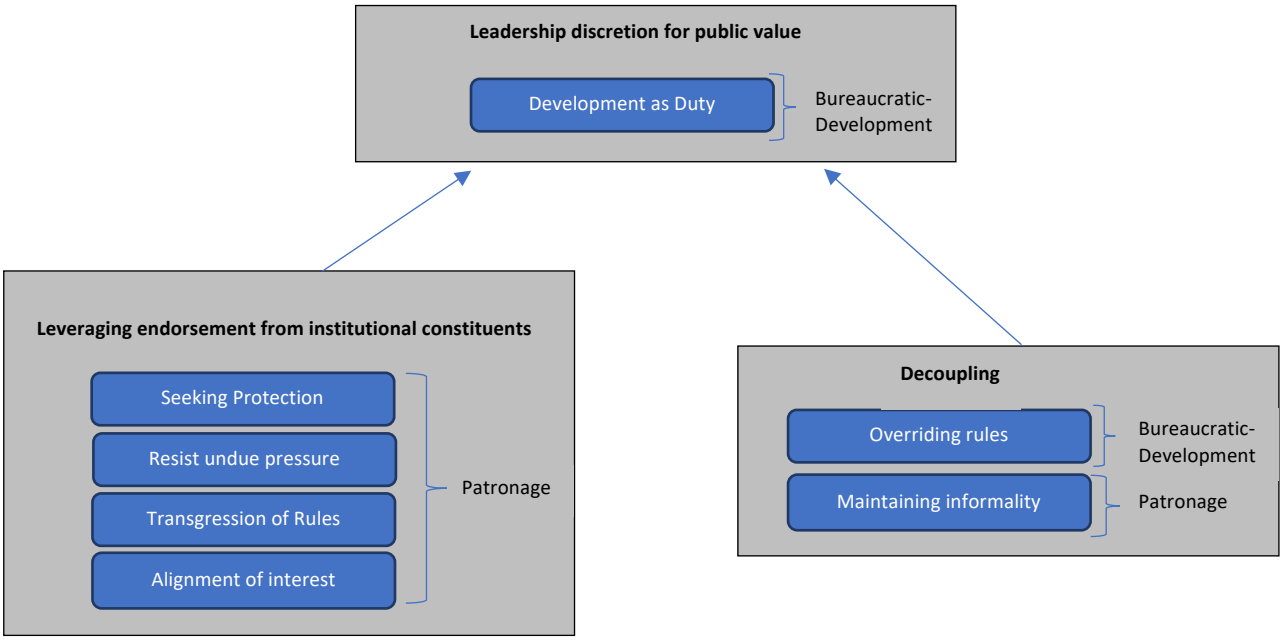
The second tactic of decoupling used by DCs is through *maintaining informality* in how they communicate with a variety of stakeholders and work in partnership with them to create public value. Informality is enabled by the personal relations promoted by the patronage logic (Clapham, 1982) that allows DCs to maintain close working relations, such as those with the police in maintaining community safety. These are decoupled practices that for practical reasons deviate from formally prescribed mechanisms (Westphal & Zajac, 2001) of official letters and committee meetings (Bromley & Powell, 2012), since informal relations are seen as more effective leadership approaches in working with partners to create public value.

Figure 9.5 summarises how agentic actions by DCs can enable leadership enactment for the creation of public value. The process and actions through which DCs secure legitimacy for

[55] The term decoupling is discussed is Chapter 3 as a tactic under the *avoidance* strategy in Table 3.2 in Chapter 3.

discretionary leadership enactment suggest a conscious engagement with and deliberate use of logics that are available in the field. In other words, the interpretation and translation of logics into everyday actions in the Bangladesh public administration shows DCs exercising agency to use logics as 'tools' that are used in a contested environment to meet leadership responsibilities (Currie & Spyridonidis, 2016; McPherson & Sauder, 2013). As is shown, both bureaucratic-development and the patronage logic can be used by DCs for pursuing value-creating opportunities, demonstrating the utility factor of logics (McPherson & Sauder, 2013). Enacting leadership for DCs is thus about recognising utility of the prevailing logics. For example, the patronage logic supplies the necessary means to foster patron-client relationships with powerful institutional constituents and leverage the relations, while concomitantly DCs invoke and are guided the bureaucratic-development logic to achieve publicly valued outcomes. From an agency perspective, this shows the DCs' ability to combine competing logics (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Binder, 2007; Greenwood et al., 2011) to enact leadership within institutional complexity and carve out potential paths to achieving publicly valued outcomes.

Figure 9. 5: Institutional adeptness of public sector leadership in creating public value



9.2.3.2 Leadership discretion and its deviant use

Public sector leadership research has rightly focused on positive administrative outcomes, such as those discussed above. There are also studies that establish that public sector

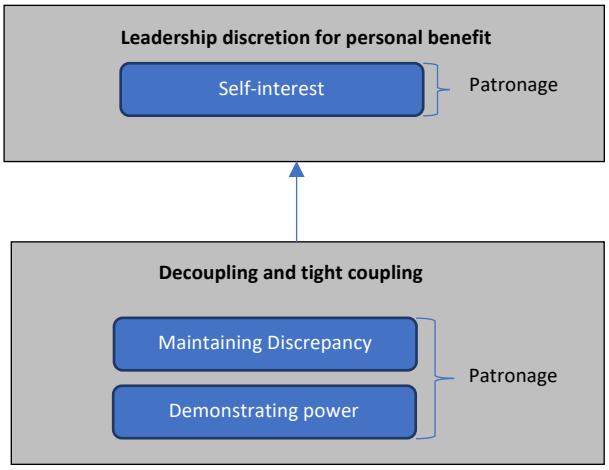
leadership work should involve rooting out improper administrative practices such as corruption, particularly within developing countries (Bashir & Hassan, 2019). However, few studies examine the deviant aspects of public sector leadership, one that might direct attention towards personal interests and which may not strictly align with achieving administrative ends. This study found that public leaders such as DCs often find it difficult to escape the ubiquity of the patronage logic as a proverbially detrimental and improper force in administrative functioning in a developing country such as Bangladesh (Jahan & Shahan, 2008b; Sarker, 2008; Zafarullah & Rahman, 2008).

Discretionary enactment to achieve personal interest can target benefits such as promotions, favourable transfers or power consolidation, much of which is historically legitimated by the patronage logic in the Bangladesh public administration (Sarker, 2008; Sarker & Zafarullah, 2019; Zafarullah & Siddiquee, 2001). These pursuits are made possible by administrative discretion because of the choices that DCs make in using their discretion in improper ways. Two specific leadership strategies support such uses of leadership discretion: *maintaining discrepancy* and *demonstrating power*, which are contributions of this thesis. First, maintaining discrepancy is another form of decoupling (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). The literature establishes that decoupling can occur as a mechanism to safeguard legitimacy (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Westphal & Zajac, 2001) or as a way to meet the demands of contradictory pressures (Boxenbaum & Jonsson, 2017; Ruef & Scott, 1998) or, as in the case of this study, for efficacy purposes (i.e., public value) (Bromley & Powell, 2012). Little, however, is discussed about personal interests of leaders which can also influence decisions to decouple, for example, when DCs choose not to implement programs according to policy guidelines as a favour to politicians with the hope of receiving some type of material benefit in return. This finding contributes to conceptions of decoupling as not just a coping device within institutional complexity (Binder, 2007; Misangyi, 2016; Oliver, 1991), but that it can also serve personal interests of leaders who have the power to conceal such improper administrative functions under a façade of acquiescence (e.g., through maintenance of elaborate paper work; Oliver, 1991). The dominance of the patronage logic justifies the pursuit of personal interests and enables DCs to 'get away' with decoupling for personal gains, since they have little fear of being detected because wider issues of rule enforcement and administrative accountability have historically remained weak in the Bangladesh public administration (Ahmed & Ahmed, 1996; Huque, 2011b; Jahan, 2015).

The second leadership strategy used to support discretionary enactment to achieve personal interest is through demonstrating power. Theoretically, this is a type of tight-coupling – closer integration between policy and practice (Lom, 2016; Meyer & Scott, 1991) or as Oliver (1991) suggests a type of 'compliance', where an individual chooses to comply with an institutional demand in anticipation of a self-serving benefit. For example, this type of compliance was reflected in DCs' intentions to strictly impose administrative rules when dealing with NGOs. There might be reasons to believe that such a leadership strategy may arise from a sense of duty to enforce rules enabled by the bureaucratic-development logic, yet this must be transposed to the current government-NGOs relations context. Despite NGOs enjoying a substantial presence in governance and development issues and being formally recognised as collaborative partners of the government (Tsujinaka, Ahmed, & Kobashi, 2013), NGOs operate under significant regulatory scrutiny and control by the government (Haque, 2002; Jamil, 1998). Regulatory controls, such as the requirement for government approval before utilising and disbursing foreign aid, create conditions that can make some NGOs, particularly the smaller ones, beholden to the government (Mir and Bala, 2015). NGOs at the district level must seek formal approval from the DCs, who may be presumptively suspicious about NGO operations. DCs indeed wield significant authority and power over the NGOs and compliance to hold NGOs accountable is arguably guided by intentions to demonstrate power and authority and enforce a pseudo-hierarchical relationship between the DC Office and the NGOs.

Figure 9.6 summarises the institutional adeptness of DCs that supports the improper use of leadership discretion in the pursuit of personal benefit. It is largely reflective of the frustrations that emerge in a patronage-ridden bureaucracy such as in Bangladesh where improper actions and corruption by civil servants remain problematic (Sarker & Zafarullah, 2019). In that sense, DCs as embedded actors are also part of that reality: their leadership discretion, in certain cases, can do harm than good to the work of the public administration. Such conclusions serve to re-emphasise the notion of agency as a 'double-edged sword'. The institutional complexity in the Bangladesh public administration is formed by the bureaucratic-development and the patronage logics, with the latter clearly dominant. As a consequence of these logics, DCs can utilise their agency in using such logics as 'tools' to condition leadership enactment to achieve good, but it would be naïve not to consider the possibilities that it can also cause harm.

Figure 9. 6: Institutional adeptness in the improper pursuit of personal benefit



In returning to the research question of how public managers such as DCs enact their leadership while experiencing institutional complexity, this study finds that public sector leadership is both constrained and enabled by structural forces that condition and produce contradictory leadership practices. Despite contradictions, these leadership behaviours are concomitantly displayed, legitimated by competing forces in the form of conflicting institutional logics. It is difficult to comment on what objective impact such structurally conditioned leadership practices have on various organisational or administrative outcomes, but this study identified multiple instances showing that public sector leadership as practiced is significantly different to what is found in the literature, for example, compared to transformational or entrepreneurial leadership models that are inherently guided by the principles of markets and other institutional enablers (e.g., principles of merit, performance and accountability) prevalent in Western settings.

This study also finds that a structurally constrained public leader such as a DC not only has to adhere to the rules and surrender his or her agency. Public sector leadership that can navigate the prevalent institutional complexity adeptly can make a substantive impact with that leadership and fulfill its fundamental purpose of creating public value. Yet agency must also be cautiously used, as logics in the Bangladesh public administration can be alluring enough to conditions actors' intentions away from public value towards more deviant uses.

9.3 Can Bangladesh public administration foster an 'enterprising' public leader for change?

This section answers the third and final research question that sought to understand how leadership may be enacted while experiencing institutional complexity in implementing public sector reform. It shifts attention away from the wide range of leadership roles and outcomes associated with DCs and focuses specifically on the DCs' responsibility in implementing reform policies.

Substantive reform remains elusive in the Bangladesh public administration (Aminuzzaman, 1992; Khan, 1989; Sarker, 2004; Sarker & Zafarullah, 2019; Suk Kim & Monem, 2009). Efforts to introduce NPM-type reforms in the public service, which included performance management systems, merit-based promotion, and delegation of authority, have proved largely unsuccessful. From an institutional logic perspective, reforms imply a gradual shift from one dominant logic to another (e.g., shifting from traditional bureaucratic logic to managerialist logic) under the assumption that administrative systems would be better organised under the new logic (Cloutier et al., 2016; Meyer & Hammerschmid, 2006). Based on the findings from this study and elsewhere in the literature, it is appropriate to suggest that Bangladesh is yet to witness a shift away from the bureaucratic-development and patronage logics.

Among factors identified that militated against change, a fundamental reason for reform failure was a type of resistance erected by DCs. This contrasts with what is generally claimed in the mainstream literature about public leaders as change agents who galvanise support for the implementation of reform policies, minimise resistance (Ospina, 2017; Ritz et al., 2012; Van Wart, 2013a) and in some cases who work autonomously to improve public service delivery motivated by an independent agenda of change (Wallace et al., 2011).

Instead, DCs engage in leadership practices by mounting resistance that is arguably directed towards the "preservation of existing institutions" (Wallis & Bruce, 1986, p. 96). Such "bureaucratic resistance" is hardly new in the Bangladesh public administration (Zafarullah & Huque, 2001, p. 1383). In fact, scholars have argued that, historically, reforms such as those like NPM that attempt to introduce merit and performance management in decision making have been perceived by civil servants to be threatening: they could downgrade

officers' status and undermine practices where promotions and transfers to lucrative positions are based on patronage relations (Alam & Teicher, 2012; Huque, 2010; Khan, 1991). These studies, however, have not gone beyond seeing the "self-preservation" (Zafarullah, 2013, p. 933) narrative as an empirical problem, nor have they examined why public sector leadership engages in this type of institutional maintenance (Lawrence et al., 2009).

Resistance in this study is partly shown to be caused by the sense of comfort, security and stability DCs find in the existing arrangements promoted by the bureaucratic-development logic, including practices of maintaining paper-based file processing, fulfilling traditional priorities and actively promoting such practices among followers. Institutional scholars suggest that preservation of institutions through "supporting, repairing and recreating" provides stability in belief systems and social structures (Lawrence et al., 2009), because humans have innate proclivities to seek out a "stable world…[with] recognizable shapes…[that have] permanence" and build schemas for sensemaking (Berger & Luckmann, 1991; Douglas, 1966). Hallett (2010) translates this as the tendency of actors such as DCs to adopt individualised routines. These are routinised practices that largely reflect the bureaucratic-development logic, which have become taken-for-granted practices and, under current institutional order, DCs generally know what to expect and thus a find a type of "epistemic security" (Hallett, 2010, p. 59) in the bureaucratic-development logic.

This inclination to maintain the existing order is explicable via the 'taken-for-granted' senseless reproduction of institutions, that is, institutional logics constrain human behaviour and results in conformity to expectations set by the logic (Jepperson, 1991). This is partially true, as many of the accounts in this study have demonstrated the constraining forces of the bureaucratic-development logic. However, acts of resistance are also purposive and interest-driven (Battilana & D'aunno, 2009; Zilber, 2009), where actors such as DCs are "unwilling to compromise or adopt institutional change" (Rainelli Weiss & Huault, 2016, p. 993). For example, DCs do this by emphasising the importance of traditional work (e.g., administering law and order, or development coordination) to followers that is part of their everyday routine, and concomitantly discard new reforms (digital government) as being disruptive. Such purposive acts of institutional maintenance are clearly agentic, displaying the choices DCs make to reject practices promoted by a new logic (i.e., managerialist logic). DCs achieve this through two salient tactics. First, DCs can choose to *demonise* (Lawrence et al., 2009) reforms. This entails a type of institutional work where DCs negatively evaluate reform work

undertaken by followers by telling them it is a waste of time, thereby attacking the normative foundations of the new logic (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). The second tactic used by DCs is *deterrence* (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) and this highlights the coercive pressures of institutions where DCs believe they have to comply with the demands of the traditional work for which they claim to be held accountable by the cabinet. For example, DCs believed that reform can be a drain on time and resources, and consequently directed attention of followers to fulfilling traditional duties such as law and order.

Tactics discussed above demonstrate the exercise of agency of DCs to suppress the intrusion of a new logic that could potentially disrupt existing arrangement that serve their interest (Currie & Spyridonidis, 2016) by selecting one legitimating logic over another. In contrasting and rare instances when DCs do embark on change-oriented work, for example, the first instance in which DC 4 attempted to introduce a computer program to aid the processing of court cases, it was seen as a threat by institutional members which questioned existing ways of doing things (Micelotta et al., 2017). This highlights the role of institutional constituents (e.g., the Cabinet or the PMO), who find such change efforts disruptive, that they do not align with logics that they promote and thus should be sanctioned. This finding contrasts with the precedence that is afforded to individual agency as a driver of change, either as disruptive practice, such as protests and boycotts (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010), or as mundane everyday actions that are unobtrusive and gradual (Smets et al., 2012). Instead, the Bangladesh public administration is seen as a highly institutionalised field (Micelotta et al., 2017; Xiaowei Rose et al., 2017; Zilber, 2016), where the state remains the most powerful agent of institutional change and without whose endorsement individual leadership agency is unlikely to create disruptions or even bring about gradual unobtrusive change (Smets et al., 2012).

Evidence of pockets of local change, however, were identified, such as the enthusiasm among some DCs about digital government and also in government documents that showed a prominent push to inculcate innovative behaviour among civil servants in Bangladesh. Unsurprisingly, the state also appeared as an important catalyst in such changes and more specifically central and powerful institutional constituents such as the PMO and its associates have been instrumental in driving that change. Within such an environment, individual leadership agency of DCs does, however, emerge as a surprising factor that can precipitate local changes. In particular, the case of DC 4 and the second instance in which he transformed a DC Office to adopt digital government initiatives showed that aligning interest

with the most powerful institutional constituent who share a similar change provides DCs with leverage in pursuing change. This tactic demonstrates the DC's capability to leverage the existing patronage logic to garner support and protection of powerful institutional constituents such as officials from the PMO and gradually to introduce the managerialist logic through the introduction of digital government policies. It allowed at least one DC to embark on change without facing threats or sanctions from powerful institutional constituents. The term *mimicry* (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) comes closest to explaining this tactic, which suggests that actors can leverage existing taken-for-granted norms and associate them with new practices to ease adoption. In fact, what this study contributes is not the associating of one logic with another, but rather using one logic (i.e., patronage logic) as a conduit to introduce another (i.e., managerialist logic). This is deemed an agentic and 'enterprising' nature of public sector leadership that creates enterprising avenues by identifying the potential brought about by a new logic and seeks endorsement of central and powerful institutional constituents who are willing to sponsor the introduction of a new logic.

It would be premature to make any substantive claims of institutional change, since the Bangladesh public administration remains an institutionally complex setting governed by two historically contingent logics (i.e., bureaucratic-development and patronage) that are influential in framing and guiding behaviour of field-level participants. Recent reform efforts by the Government indicate that a possible third managerialist logic has sparked enthusiasm among some public servants. DCs are found to leverage existing logics so that they become conduits for introducing new practices. Leadership enactment facilitating reform is far from transformative as presented by scholars (Wright, Moynihan, & Pandey, 2012); rather, it would appear to be sedimented change in which elements of the proposed reform are gradually introduced while still acknowledging and utilising existing institutional arrangements.

9.4 Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the answers of the following research questions in light of the theories that were used to frame this thesis:

RQ 1. *What is the nature of public sector leadership enacted by public managers in a post-colonial developing country, and what roles and responsibilities does this form of leadership entail?*

RQ 2. *How do public managers experiencing institutional complexity in post-colonial developing countries enact their public sector leadership roles?*

RQ 3. *How do public managers experiencing institutional complexity in post-colonial developing countries enact leadership in the implementation of public sector reform?*

The chapter drew on leadership theories related to the wider area of public sector leadership and the institutional logics literature to explain the findings. In doing so, it presented three broad areas of discussion related to each of the research questions. In answering the first research question, this thesis found public sector leadership in a post-colonial developing country such as Bangladesh to be protean in nature that entails switching and changing between three specific leadership roles including, an organizational leader, a collaborator, and a political operator. The second research question was answered by elaborating on the nature of institutional complexity currently prevalent in the Bangladesh public administration followed by a demonstration of how different institutional logics structure leadership enactment and also how public leaders deploy leadership strategies to achieve administrative ends by utilizing their agency. For the third research question, this thesis found that while leadership was predominantly found to be engaged in institutional maintenance to hinder any significant change, evidence of rare instances showed that public leaders in a highly institutionalised setting such as the Bangladesh public administration, can be enterprising in using existing institutional orders to initiate change and introduce a new logic.

Discussion in this chapter has provided the groundwork to identify the five distinct contributions of this thesis. These are summarised in the following paragraphs.

The first contribution is to the public sector leadership literature. The findings point to the suggestion that public sector leadership is a protean phenomenon that adapts to the demands of multiple roles with which public managers must cope. Within the specific context of the Bangladesh public administration, this means public leaders at the district level must effectively assume organisational leadership by dealing with internal management issues,

including managing resources, staffing and the logistics of policy implementation; public leaders must also ensure collaboration is sustained through external partners to ensure the creation of public value; and, last, public leaders must be politically astute in dealing with the significant presence of politics and politicians in carrying out administrative work.

The second contribution challenges the conventional view among institutionalists that coercive institutional pressures are generally attributed to formal rules and regulations that can be the basis for rewarding or sanctioning actors (Bromley & Powell, 2012). Within the context of the Bangladesh public administration, it is possible that informal norms can in fact be more powerful so as to trump official rules and thus can be used as the basis for rewards and sanctions to elicit contrived behaviour.

The third contribution relates to the positions of actors experiencing institutional complexity and how they respond to demands in a fragmented field where multiple institutional constituents impose disparate demands. The literature assumes actors generally try to 'balance' (Deephouse, 1996; Whetten, 1978) these demands by negotiating compromises with each institutional constituent (Pache & Santos, 2013), which results in partial conformity and thus reduces chances of legitimacy loss. Evidence contrary to this showed that actors can afford not to balance these demands and instead can choose to meet the demands of one legitimating authority over another. This is primarily contingent on the power bases of different constituents. Individual actors can choose to comply with the demands of the more powerful institutional constituent while rejecting the demands of the other without risking loss of their overall legitimacy within the institutional environment.

The fourth contribution relates to the institutional work literature and, specifically, the type of agentic work done by actors to initiate possible institutional change. While the literature provides few examples of institutional work that resembles the type of work found in this study, evidence points to an altogether new and different institutional work that shows how actors can use an existing institutional logic as a conduit to introduce a new one, and thus initiate institutional change.

Finally, this thesis makes an important, practical contribution. It relates to informing policy makers of the practical realities public leaders in the Bangladesh public administration deal with on an everyday basis. In particular, leadership strategies presented in this thesis can

inform the training of civil servants with a view to providing knowledge that can help them in navigating their environment and to achieve more substantive public outcomes. The implications of such knowledge about leadership strategies is not without complications, particularly the use of patronage as a resource by public leaders. Patronage practices can result in good, as uncovered in this study, but it occurs under a shroud of compromises that are unethical in nature. It is thus challenging to advocate for public sector leadership training and development from a policy perspective that acknowledges the presence of patronage and to encourage public leaders to utilise its mechanisms to achieve public good. But, on the other hand, if the patronage logic can indeed provide a conduit to introduce a new logic that can possibly replace it (important implications for successful reform), it may be possible for public leaders to more consciously embrace patronage as way of achieving a greater good in the long run.

The next chapter presents the concluding chapter of this thesis. It discusses the implications of contributions and future directions they may provide. Limitations are also discussed before presenting concluding remarks about the importance of public sector leadership in developing countries.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

This thesis framed the issue of public sector leadership in a developing country context as a serious need that has been neglected in earlier literature. It argued that any investigation on the subjected matter would have to be undertaken by prioritising the social and cultural context of developing countries where public sector leadership is exercised as an embedded practice. Accordingly, two research aims were developed to guide this research: to document the leadership roles and responsibilities of public managers in a post-colonial developing country, and to examine how administrative systems in such a setting condition the leadership enactment of public managers in fulfilling those roles and responsibilities. These aims were underpinned by the belief that the pervasiveness of public sector leadership across different cultural settings deserved a nuanced use of "diverse" theories to understand the phenomenon (Crosby & Bryson, 2018, p. 1277). This meant acknowledging existing leadership theories but not dogmatically applying them. Instead, a more social and culturally sensitive view was required to fulfil the research aims, one that captures the contextual realities of public administration in developing countries and explains how actors embedded within that reality conduct themselves. Such a contextual focus, operationalised through the institutional logics framework, offered a useful way to address the research aims. A qualitative case study design adopted, with the Bangladesh public administration as an appropriate site for research. DCs, as representative heads of government at the district level, were chosen as focal leaders. Findings demonstrated that administrative contexts impose different sets of roles and responsibilities, and actions pertaining to their fulfillment are a manifestation of the cultural 'scripts' thrust on enactors of leadership by the environment in which they are embedded. This thesis provides support for the arguments of scholars who have advocated for context as the primary interest in studying leadership (Biggart & Hamilton, 1987; Bryman et al., 1996), but, importantly, few public administration scholars have adopted this view. If our understanding of public sector leadership is to be truly enhanced (Crosby & Bryson, 2018), then the contributions of this thesis is to demonstrate that being sensitive to context will yield richer and more meaningful understanding of the exercise of public sector leadership, certainly in the developing country context. The following section discusses the implications of these contributions and future directions they provide.

10.1 Implications and future directions

The contributions of this study have three important implications for the public sector leadership field, institutional theory, and leadership practices in the Bangladesh public administration. First, this study finds merit in the idea that public sector leadership conceptions should be diverse and that it is a phenomenon glossed by the cultural environment in which it is found. This contextually sensitive perspective allows a more meaningful exploration of how leadership as a crucial element within public administration exists in differing settings and may be improved. To attempt convergence of public sector leadership thought between different fields and sectors (Ospina, 2017) would be naïve and a rejection of the complex realities of public administration systems in developing countries, where the majority of the population of the world currently resides. This is not to discount Western scholarship; rather it is used as a source of guidance in exploring the diversity of leadership enactment in a wider range of settings than were examined in earlier literature. The findings and analysis in this study lead to the conclusion that it is equally, if not more important, to be cognizant of contextual conditions that shape and condition human behaviour and which consequently impacts on how leaders lead. Such a theoretical understanding of enacting leadership through institutional complexity can indeed be transferred to other similar settings. For example, administrative systems in countries such as Pakistan, India and Nepal, which share similar historical development and patterns of reform as Bangladesh (Haque, 2013), can considered settings where public managers also likely leverage institutional adeptness to enact leadership to achieve various administrative outcomes. Future development and testing of leadership theories can consider more studies in settings as such, taking note of administrative contexts and the institutional realities.

The second implication is related to the nature of institutional complexity. The general presumption about institutional complexity is that it only exists between different logics within an organisational field (Greenwood et al., 2011). This study found that complexity can exist within logics themselves, as was found in the example where DCs needed to serve public interest, but violated administrative rules to do so, thus generating complexity within the bureaucratic-development logic. The term *intra-institutional complexity* (Meyer & Höllerer, 2016) has been used previously, but its use was misleading, because it described complexity that existed at the organisational field level. Much of the literature already acknowledges institutional complexity exists at the field level (Fossestøl et al., 2015;

Greenwood et al., 2011; Kodeih & Greenwood, 2014; Xiaowei Rose et al., 2017) without mentioning *intra-institutional complexity*, which, this study argues, is perhaps more appropriately reserved to examine the complexity within logics. Future research can shed light on this type of complexity that has implications for how actors interpret and deal competing elements within an institutional logic and maintain legitimacy through their actions.

The third implication, perhaps controversially, relates to the paradox that leaders use patronage logic to achieve administrative ends. Patronage has generally been considered something that is an evil, or a tool for perpetuating class inequality and oppression, and that it should done away with in every society (Bearfield, 2009; Ferri & Zan, 2019; Piliavsky, 2014; Pitcher, Moran, & Johnston, 2009). However, the problem is that this has created a "moral aversion" (Piliavsky, 2014; p. 5) to critically analysing how it is being used, especially if we consider leadership outcomes such as public value and initiating change to be a good thing. This is not to endorse patronage, but it also rather to suggest that future research on public sector leadership and public administration generally takes note of the realities in developing countries and how existing environmental mechanisms can be leveraged for the common good.

10.2 Limitations

This thesis is not without limitations, including methodological and conceptual ones. Methodologically, findings are focused on public sector leadership at the district level in Bangladesh. It would be erroneous to draw generalisations for other jurisdictions, such as the national level in Bangladesh, or cultural settings, including different types of developing countries. For example, Painter and Peters (2010b) point to significant institutional differences in administrative systems between groups of developing countries (e.g., between East Asian, Latin American, and Islamic developing countries) which would make it difficult to transplant conclusions from this study to those settings.

Another methodological limitation of this paper relates to socially desirable response during interviews. It refers to the proclivity in individuals to report an answer in a way they deem to be more socially acceptable than would be their 'true' answer (Callegaro, 2008). This is particularly the case during interviews, when the interviewer is present and responses to

questions are directly communicated by the participant to the interviewer. This may be considered to be the ease somewhat in this thesis, demonstrated in particular by the very different views DC's had of themselves compared to the views shared by other groups of interviewees. For example, some DCs have suggested dealing effectively with political pressure while experts on the other hand believed DCs more often than not capitulate to political pressure. It is indeed difficult to control for this in qualitative research. However, it is believed that through the wording of interview questions and the fact that different groups of participants were interviewed to gather an overall view of the DCs leadership, would reduce some of the bias because of social desirability and present a more balanced views of the participants

There are also other methodological limitations. First, this is not a longitudinal study and is cross-sectional in nature. This restrained understanding of some public sector leadership issues including relationships with followers which may change over time or the creation of public value which may take considerable period of time. This can indeed have implications for effectiveness of the public sector leadership model proposed in this study. This thesis also relies primarily on interview data. Drawing on the analysis of more historical documents, including those related to government policies, could have further informed discussions on the formation of institutional logics and enabled examination of how or what may change logics, which could have provided more insights on leadership agency in achieving institutional change.

A conceptual limitation of this study is its use of the term 'public value' as an outcome of public sector leadership. Several references that point to the creation of public value have included improvements in access to education in poor communities or mitigation efforts to address climate change, *inter alia*. It is reasonable to consider such outcomes as public value, given their consistency with Bryson's (2014; p. 448) definition of public value as an outcome that is "good for the public". In a country like Bangladesh, where access to education is a development priority (Lewis, 2018) and the risks of climate change make it one of the most vulnerable regions (Sovacool, 2018), these examples of public value can be considered good for the public. However, some scholars have argued that public value is also something that is most valued by the public (Benington, 2011; Hartley et al., 2019a), implying that it is the public who decides what is of public value. This is a limitation of this study, since community members who may receive the benefits of public value were not interviewed, and

thus, from this perspective, it cannot be ascertained whether public sector leadership enactment had created public value.

In conclusion, this thesis makes a number of strong contributions. But, to an extent, it is also constrained by some weaknesses. Some of the clear strengths of this thesis are the insights it provides about the realities that public managers such as DCs are faced with in enacting leadership in a developing country like Bangladesh. Few studies, using the robustness of the institutional logic framework, have been able to capture the complex social forces that public sector leaders have to negotiate, and in some cases, adeptly overcome to achieve substantive public outcomes. It also provides a window into the realities that public sector leaders in developing countries are faced with, especially their use of 'unconventional' means to achieve outcomes. Leadership strategies described in this thesis are only unconventional from a Western perspective but can be considered effective and very much the norm within the research context of this study. A more tentative, but interesting, element of the contributions of this thesis relates to institutional change in the Bangladesh public administration. In a setting where reform has been fairly elusive, it is indeed promising to see a finding that explains how public sector leaders such as DCs can initiate institutional change. However, the strength of this claim should be treated with caution, as it is yet to be seen how widespread such a type of leadership is and whether it is prevalent enough to achieve institutional change.

This thesis is not only motivated by the need to widen understanding of public sector leadership that only relate to the theoretical advancement of the field. Motivation also stems from the need to ensure that public leaders effectively contribute to and find solutions to the pressing public problems. There is increased volatility faced by governments across countries. This relates to the problems including climate change, international trade relations, migrations, rapid urbanisation, rising populations, and ethnic and religious unrest. Public leaders across levels of government can play a critical role in addressing these concerns, particularly at the local level. Even more crucially, effective public sector leadership is needed in developing countries, where the challenges are manifold. Developing country governments face additional and complex challenges, including mal-governance, limited public resources, dysfunctional public institutions, and, as found in the course of this study, a very different set of cultural norms and values that guide administrative behaviour and thinking. Thus, widening public sector leadership thought must also be treated as an

empirical imperative, guided by the purpose to foster effective public leaders in developing countries.

Last, as a note to comparative public administration scholars, who are few enough in number, there is an immediate need to resuscitate comparative administration research that once adorned the pages of popular journals. Much of this waning may be attributed to the emphasis on 'scientific testing' public administration topics are subjected to in Western literature that have limited application in developing countries arising from the inherent incongruities between Western administrative principles and starkly different social realities in developing countries (Haque, 1997). Yet this does not imply it is not worth exploring the same or similar topics in the latter settings, especially if understanding them can add value and help developing country governments overcome challenges. This research shows that comparative public administration scholars have well–established, sophisticated theories at their disposal that can allow avenues of inquiry to open up. Importantly, a renewed interest in developing countries that does not just offer empirical insights but also contributes to wider theory can perhaps generate interest among wider public administration scholarship and realise the potential of doing research in developing countries.

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Appendix 1: Inteview protocol

Introductory remarks:

Good morning/afternoon Mr. *(insert name of interviewee)* and thank you taking the time out of your busy schedule to meet with me today. I understand that as the DC, you have to maintain a very busy schedule, and I very much appreciate the time that you have given to me. I decided to approach you for an interview for my research project because I thought you were one of the most suitable candidates. My project aims to shed some light and develop an understanding how public leaders such as yourself exercise their leadership within government. I want to understand how you as public leaders, work in your jurisdiction; how you lead your organisation and your subordinates; I want to learn about your achievements; and I also want to know the challenges that you face on daily basis.

Before I begin, I would like to provide you with a brief explanatory statement that includes details of the project and should address any questions that you might have. I would also like to inform you that no audio-recordings of this interview will be conducted. Our conversation today, will be recorded through my personal note taking only. I will maintain strict anonymity and if any identifying characteristics are recorded, will be omitted/changed or changed so as to avoid any identification. This interview is completely voluntary and you can opt out at any point in time of the interview.

Interview questions:

1. Can you please describe your current role and responsibilities and functions it entails?

   Probes: Can you please give an example what a typical day in the office is like for you? Can please share some of your achievements? Do you think the role of the DC has changed, in terms of functions and also in terms managing relationships both within your organisation and with outside actors?

2. The administrative and the political structures in Bangladesh are closely intertwined. Within the capacity of your current role, what type of interactions do you have with politicians?

   Probes: Do you see benefits or challenges that arise out of this relationship? Do politicians have any authority or influence over the office of the Deputy Commissioner? In your role, do you feel any requirements to be accountable to politicians?

3. To what extent do you think reforms are necessary within the Bangladesh public administration?

   Probes: What are the changes have you experienced, if any, as a result of reform? Have changes impacted your role as a public leader? Have you tried to implement changes within your organisation? Did you face any challenges? Can you give examples?

4. Closely related to the idea of reform has been the repeated efforts at improving the performance and accountability of the public sector. In your opinion, how would you describe the current focus on performance and accountability in the Bangladesh public administration?

   Probes: Do you think performance and accountability is important in your organisation? How are such imperatives???communicated to you subordinates within your organisation? How do you empower your subordinates achieve high performance and accountability? Can you give examples?

5. The government is increasingly dealing with multiples stakeholders in the public sector that include both private companies as well non-government organisations to deliver different types of public services. Could you tell me the ways in which you manage your working relationship with external stakeholders?

   Probes: How do you approach working with external stakeholder and for what? (Prompts for this question: actively seeking out new contacts, maintains communication; building trusting partnerships). What type of actions/activities do you undertake to coordinate efforts? How do you resolve conflicts? Can you give examples? Are citizens/community part of your external partnership endeavours?

6. Can you tell me about how within your current role you have done something with the vision to improve the work that your organisation does or something to improve/solve a problem in the community?

   Probes: Did you feel that these initiatives entailed any risk taking? Tell me about how your subordinates contribute to generating new ideas and innovative solutions? (Prompts for this question: motivates and encourages subordinates to be innovates, allows mistakes to occur, and does always follow procedure)

Appendix 2: Explanatory Statement

(formerly on Monash University letterhead)

This information sheet is for you to keep.

Title of Study: An institutional perspective on public sector leadership in the developing country context: Understanding leadership roles in the Bangladesh public administration

Investigators:

Professor Julie Wolfram Cox
Department of Management
Monash University
Email : Julie.wolfra.cox@monash.edu

Professor Julian Teicher
School of Business and Law
Central Queensland University
Email: j.teicher@cqu.edu.au

Associate Professor Quamrul Alam
School of Business and Law
Central Queensland University
Email: q.alam@cqu.edu.au

Shibaab Rahman
Phd Candidate
Department of Management
Monash University
Email: shibaab.rahman@monash.edu

You have been invited to participate in the above-mentioned study. Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before deciding whether or not to participate in this research. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, you are encouraged to contact the researchers via the phone numbers or email addresses listed above.

Purpose of research

The aim of this research is to provide a better understanding of public sector leadership in Bangladesh. The overarching purpose is to understand perceptions of senior and mid-level public managers of the Bangladesh public administration about leadership especially under the changing public sector context that have impelled public sector managers to deal more with issues such as trust, collaboration, innovation, adaptation and entrepreneurship. In this regard, we hope to discussion a number of issues with participants including their roles and functions, performance and accountability, change and reform, collaboration with different stakeholders, and the role of politics in administration. This research will contribute to the much needed expansion of the literature on public sector leadership, especially within a developing country context.

Why were you chosen for the research

The research hopes to engage with senior and mid-level public managers of the Government of Bangladesh who have had substantial experience as public managers and have undertaken leadership roles as Deputy Commissioners (DCs) at the district administration level. Thus by engaging with DCs, the research will be able to capture, explore and understand the complexities of leadership in the developing country public sector context such as Bangladesh. You have been chosen for the project because of your relevant experience and/or work responsibilities that make you a suitable candidate as a participant.

What does the research involve?

After reading this explanatory statement and signing the consent form, you will be requested to participate in a semi-structured interview conducted by Mr. Shibaab Rahman.

How much time will the research take?
The interview will take approximately 45-60 minutes to complete.

Benefits of the Research to Individual
The research currently does not envisage any direct benefits to the individual participants. However, findings from the study could possibly make significant contributions towards understanding public sector leadership that remains an under-research topic within the wider discourse of public management and leadership. More importantly, the research could shed light on how to address issues of public sector leadership and improve the leadership capacities of senior and mid-level public managers whose work underpin the development work of a growing economy such as Bangladesh

Inconvenience or Discomfort
Participation in the research project will not cause any inconvenience or discomfort other than taking up to 45-60 minutes of your time. The interview questions are designed only to draw out your opinions and there are no right or wrong answers.

Payments
No payments will be made to the participants of the research project

Voluntary Nature of Participation
You have been invited to participate in the research project by researchers from Monash University. Participation is entirely voluntary and you are not under any obligation. If you decide to participate in the study, you can withdraw at any point in time without being penalized or disadvantaged.

Confidentiality
Information that you provide during the interview will only be accessed by the investigators of the research project from Monash University mentioned earlier. No reports relating to the research, including research publications and oral presentations will disclose your name, your organisation's name or any other details that will identify you or your organisation.

Data Storage
Data collected through interviews such as transcripts, notes and audio recordings will only be stored on computers of the investigators of the research project at Monash University. Data may be stored on University computers of the investigators for up to 5 years as per Monash University guidelines, but will be destroyed after such a period has expired. Any report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants or their organisations will not be identifiable in such a report.

Results
Findings from the research project will be made available to the participants after the PhD thesis is successfully submitted or any research publication arising from the research is accepted by an academic journal.

If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator:	If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research (Project number: 9123) is being conducted, please contact:
Professor Julie Wolfram Cox Department of Management Monash Business School Monash University Email: Julie.wolfra.cox@monash.edu	Executive Officer Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) Building 3e, Room 111 Research Office Monash University VIC 3800 Tel: 03 9905 2052 Fax: 03 9905 3831 Email: muhrec@adm.monash.edu.au

Appendix 3: Consent form

(formerly on Monash University letterhead)

Consent Form

By signing this form, you are providing consent to participate in the research project titled:

An institutional perspective on public sector leadership in the developing country context: Understanding leadership roles in the Bangladesh public administration

NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Monash University researchers for their records

I agree to take part in the Monash University research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I will keep for my records. I understand that agreeing to take part means that:

I agree to be interviewed by the researchers	☐ Yes	☐ No
I agree to allow the interview to be audio-taped	☐ Yes	☐ No
I would like to be sent a transcript of the interview for my approval before it is included in the write up of the research	☐ Yes	☐ No

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw from the project at any point in time, without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics.

I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual or organizations will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party.

I understand that data from the interview, including the audiotapes, transcripts and notes will be kept in secure storage and accessible to the research team only. I also understand that the data will be destroyed after a 5 year period.

Participant's Name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 4: Human Research Ethics Approval

Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee

Approval Certificate

This is to certify that the project below was considered by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee. The Committee was satisfied that the proposal meets the requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and has granted approval.

Project Number:	9123
Project Title:	An institutional perspective on public sector leadership in the developing country context: Understanding leadership roles in the Bangladesh public administration
Chief Investigator:	Dr Julian Teicher
Expiry Date:	18/05/2022

Terms of approval - failure to comply with the terms below is in breach of your approval and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.

1. The Chief Investigator is responsible for ensuring that permission letters are obtained, if relevant, before any data collection can occur at the specified organisation.
2. Approval is only valid whilst your hold a position at Monash University.
3. It is responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure the project is conducted as approved by MUHREC.
4. You should notify MUHREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.
5. The Explanatory Statement must be on Monash letterhead and the Monash University complaints clause must include your project number.
6. Amendments to approved projects including changes to personnel must not commence without written approval from MHUREC.
7. Annual Report - continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an Annual Report.
8. Final Report - should be provided at the conclusion of the project. MUHREC should be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected completion date.
9. Monitoring - project may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by MUHREC at any time.
10. Retention and storage of data - The Chief Investigator is responsible for the storage and retention of the original data pertaining to the project for a minimum period of five years.

Thank you for your assistance.

Professor Nip Thomson

Chair, MUHREC

CC: Dr Julian Teicher, Assoc Professor Quamrul Alam, Mr Shibaab Rahman

List of approved documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Consent Form	consent form	11/05/2017	1
Explanatory Statement	Explanatory Statement_final	11/05/2017	1
Supporting Documentation	Indicative list of interview themes_final	15/05/2017	1

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Appendix 5: Profiles of Deputy Commissioners

Participant Codename	Gender	Length of service (years)	District profile
DC 1	Male	15-20	Peri-urban
DC 2	Male	20-25	Peri-urban
DC 3	Male	15-20	Peri-urban
DC 4	Male	20-25	Urban
DC 5	Female	15-20	Peri-urban
DC 6	Male	15-20	Peri-urban
DC 7	Male	20-25	Peri-urban
DC 8	Male	20-25	Urban
DC 9	Male	20-25	Peri-urban
DC 10	Male	20- 25	Urban
DC 11	Male	20-25	Peri Urban
DC 12	Male	20-25	Peri Urban