

**PUBLIC SERVICE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
IN MALAWI**

PhD. (DEVELOPMENT STUDIES)

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**UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI
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**PUBLIC SERVICE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
IN MALAWI**

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DECLARATION

This thesis is based on my own original work undertaken in partial fulfillment of a PhD degree in Development Studies at the University of Malawi. The research has neither been previously submitted to any other University for a degree nor published elsewhere.

Previously published materials by other authors which have been cited in some sections of the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATION OF DISSERTATION

The undersigned certify that this thesis represents the student's own work and effort, and has been submitted with my approval in partial fulfillment of a degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Development Studies at the University of Malawi.

Signature:_____ **Date**_____

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Supervisor

DEDICATION

To my beloved parents – Nephtali (late) and Vainess, and my family- wife, sons and daughters for their massive support and encouragement during the entire rigorous doctoral study period

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ABSTRACT

This thesis was motivated by reports that the onset of the incumbent democratic dispensation in 1994 in Malawi gave rise to various development challenges. The public service has since been characterized with high staff turn-over, politicization of the bureaucracy, ineffective leadership, coordination and collaboration, and rampant corruption involving public servants (Hussein, 2018). Such reports have bluntly indicated that the country has stagnated in terms of development. The study therefore set out to interrogate the central question whether a linkage exists between Public Service HRM and national development. In undertaking this study, selected models of motivation (Guest, 1997; Purcell et al, 2003; Becker et al 1997; Wright and Nishii, 2006) and effective public policy implementation models (Kingdon, 1995; Laswell, 1956; Sabatier, 2005) guided the study. The thesis took a mixed methods research approach.

The study gives us an opportunity to understand the extent to which the general application of HRM practices in the public service influences national development. It also validates the positive correlation that public service HRM and national development have. This study further argues that HRM practices in government systems should be consistently and professionally applied in order to mitigate the constraints hampering national development. Evidence indicates that improper application of HRM practices like lack of promotions and promotions solely on the basis of connections with politicians and sexual relationships between senior managers and female staff, low salaries, and lack of training opportunities render public service ineffective in national development implementation due to frustrations, disappointments, unresponsiveness, low commitment to duty and ultimately brain drain among public servants. In few MDAs where the HRM practices are fairly good, public servants are fully committed to national development.

Relating to national development, the study argues that chaotic management and lack of sufficient numbers and motivated public servants in part explains the failure of some development projects in the country. The study discovered that unqualified members of staff still exist in crucial MDAs to national development. Although government entities do have qualified staff, there are also capacity gaps due to unfulfilled positions. The unqualified staff and unfulfilled positions in government entities combine to thwart effective implementation of national development and service delivery. The study therefore pinpoints that national development implementation undertaken by the public service, as the primary

implementing agency of national development, is directly influenced by the availability of motivated and adequate numbers of staff.

Key words: public service HRM, national development, motivation, public policy implementation

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AMO	Ability + Motivation + Opportunity
CMST	Central Medical Stores Trust
CEMCA	Commonwealth Education Media Centre for Asia
DEVPOL	Development Policy
DHRMD	Department of Human Resource Management and Development
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
HR	Human Resource
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LIHACO	Lilongwe Handling Company
MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MDG	Millenium Development Goals
MEGS	Malawi Economic Growth Strategy
NERA	Malawi Energy Regulatory Authority
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MRA	Malawi Revenue Authority
MPRS	Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy
MPSR	Malawi Public Service Regulations
MSA	Multiple Stream Approach
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
NPM	New Public Management
OBL	Organic Budget Law
OPC	Office of the President and Cabinet

OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAP	Poverty Alleviation Programme
PFM	Public Finance Management
PMS	Performance Management System
PSR	Public Service Regulations
RBV	Resource Based View
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
SCO	Senior Clerical Officer
SPC	Secretary to President and Cabinet
SPSS	Statistical Package for Statistical Students
STA	Senior Technical Assistant
TA	Technical Assistant
TC	Tobacco Commission
TO	Technical Officer
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction of the Study

The main thrust of this study was to understand the relationship between Public Service Human Resources Management and national development implementation in Malawi. The study was conducted to complement efforts aimed at enhancing national development implementation by governments particularly in developing countries like Malawi. It emerged against the backdrop of contestations that globally, effective national development implementation is dependent on myriad factors one of which is motivated human resources in organisations both public and private sectors. For example, it is observed that the micro-level, the individual income growth is associated with advanced levels of education, which can be considered as an essential foundation for the enhancement of an individual's labour productivity and the introduction of novelty which contributes to the overall competitiveness of the country (Bundala, 2012, Rodrick et al, 2002 and Ramires et al, 1998). In addition, it is elaborated that government activities are typically highly personnel intensive and thus, human resources management (HRM) practices are central to improving the quality of services offered by the governments (Ingraham and Kneedler, 2000). On the other hand, the concept of national development has been defined as the efforts that governments undertake to improve the living conditions of the citizenry in society (Umaru, 2002). What this means is that effective national development implementation and public service human resource management are inseparable and their relationship require to be carefully and thoroughly understood.

The current chapter outlines the focus and the problem the study is attempting to address. The description of the problem constitutes the background to the study whose objectives and research questions are also stated in this chapter.

1.2 Background and Context

Public service human resources capacity is presumed a necessary condition for effective national development implementation by governments because good government is not a luxury but a vital necessity without which there can be no development, economic or social (Cchibber, 1997). The author posits that it is true that state-sponsored development has failed but the agonies of collapsed states such as Liberia and Somalia demonstrate all too clearly the consequences of statelessness. He further underscores that development requires an effective state that can play a catalytic role, encouraging and complementing the activities of individuals and private businesses. This implies that for effective national development implementation to take place, the role of human resources in public service delivery cannot be overemphasized.

As indicated in the introduction section of the study, HRM practices play a critical role to improve implementation of government operations and activities in societies. Furthermore, it is also argued that HRM is of central significance to every nation as they strive to govern well and deliver services effectively (Tessema et al, 2015). It is thus emphasized that organizations need to effectively manage their human resources if they are to maximize individual and organizational performance (Hays, Kearney, & Coggburn, 2009) and important aspects of managing human resource are HRD and utilization (Tessema & Astani, 2012). It is noted also that the increasing complexity in the role of the state in the context of rising aspirations of people and scarcity of resources pose tremendous challenges to the management capacity of the state and that in this rapidly changing environment where the needs are great, resources are scarce and pressure to achieve objectives is so high that effectiveness of the civil service is crucial (Lee, 2014). All this in turn signals that countries have to make continued efforts in order to maximise the benefits derived from human resources development which has become a widely used term (Werner & DeSimone, 2009).

Debates in empirical studies have also confirmed the link between the human resource development and economic growth and development at both micro and macro levels. One factor noted in this respect relates to the education that people have. The only caveat highlighted is that the level of people's education itself cannot achieve a significant transformation in the economy, but in a symbiosis with a sound national policy, it has a major impact on improving economic activity performance (see Rodrik et al, 2002; Ramires et al, 1998; Ranis et al, 2000; and Bundala, 2012). When analyzing human resources and development, it has been concluded that there is a bidirectional link: one runs from economic growth to human capital, as the resources from national income are allocated to activities contributing to human capital development; the other runs from human capital to economic growth, when human capital helps increase national income (Tessema et al, 2015).

In Malawi, almost all policy documents have identified the crucial role that a competent public service workforce plays in national development implementation. The improvements in public service human resources development are usually made through the traditional strategies which include training and education, compensation, conditions of service and promotions. These strategies are meant to increase the productive capacity of public servants for improved performance in their jobs as well as their contributions towards national development implementation. There is an expectation that when public servants' performance is improved, it would automatically translate into effective national development implementation in the country. However, this study seeks to better understand whether the human resources management strategies deployed in the Malawian public service lead to effective national development implementation. Furthermore, it aims at checking if at all there are challenges, what are these challenges and how to overcome them.

The Government of Malawi has also undertaken several public sector reforms with the view to propel societal transformation in the country. Development literature indicates that the country has never been devoid of policy documents articulating national development agendas. Such public policies usually instigate public reforms aimed at efficient and effective utilization of resources. For example, Chirwa (2002) explains that industrialisation process from independence had usually been guided by development strategies like the First Development Plans (1961-1964), the Second Development Plans (1964-1969) and the first Statement of Development Policies (DEVPOL I) (1971-1979). These initial development policy documents were later followed by the second Statement of Development Policies (DEVPOL II) (1987-1996), the Policy Framework for Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) (1995), the Malawi Vision 2020 launched in 1998, the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy (MPRS) (2002), the Malawi Economic Growth Strategy (MEGS) (2004) and the Malawi Growth Development Strategy (MGDS) 1 (2006-2011), MGDS II (2011-2016) and MGDS III (2017-2022).

In all these policy documents, national development agendas were well articulated and strategies for implementation were set out. Currently, the country is implementing a 50- year development plan called Malawi 2063 which aims to transform Malawi into a wealthy and self-reliant industrialised upper-middle-income country by the year 2063. The MW2063 has been developed through an inclusive and participatory multi-stakeholder consultative process involving Malawians of different backgrounds from all corners of the country and in the diaspora (MW2063).

However, reviews of the progress on implementation of the country's aspirations articulated in these development plans do not paint a very good picture about what is obtaining on the ground. For instance, Chirwa (2005) reports that generally the performance of the agricultural sector, which is the mainstay of the economy in Malawi, has been disappointing in spite of the many policy reforms that have been implemented in the sector.

The poor performance of the agricultural sector in Malawi has been attributed to, *inter alia*, low levels and growth rates in productivity, bad weather conditions, landholding sizes and fragmentation, lack of markets and value addition, policy environment and supply responses (Harrigan, 2003). But the major obstacle to agricultural sector productivity has been identified as the inadequate provision of extension services due to lack of staff particularly in rural communities where over 80% of smallholder farmers are located.

According to Masangano and Mthinda (2012), the major problem in agricultural sector transformation is the inadequate number of trained extension workers, which results in a large extension worker-to-farmer ratio. It is indicated that in some areas there are no field extension staff. The authors lament that this is the sad reality despite common knowledge that one important factor that affects the capacity of an organization to carry out effective extension activities is the size and the technical and management expertise of the extension staff.

The evidential information indicated above briefly explains the background and context in which the subject-matter of the study is located. It has looked at the rationale for the interest to understand the puzzle in question for this study. The next section describes the problem that the study is attempting to answer.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Globally, several studies have revealed that a multitude of public service human resource capacity utilization initiatives have been made with the view to strengthening national development implementation in developing countries including Malawi (Tessama et al, 2015; Pfeffer, 1994; Mello, 2005; UNDP, 2010; Lee, 2014). Although such public sector initiatives contain strategies for robust human resources capacity utilization, there is still evidence that the potential of the public service human resource capacity has still not been maximised as demonstrated by many unsuccessful implementation of development programmes or projects. For example, the UNDP Malawi National Development Report (2010:82) explains that *“experience with past programmes has shown that the main deficit in programme implementation is commitment to consistent policy implementation, and strengthening the capacity of the civil service to deliver”*. This commitment to consistent policy implementation can only come from motivation of people working within or with the government.

According to Pfeffer (1994:33), *“having good HRM is likely to generate much loyalty, commitment, or willingness to expend extra effort to achieve the organisation’s objectives”*. The researcher holds the view that part of the challenges in unsuccessful policy implementation in developing countries lies with human resources management (HRM) in the public sector organisations. Stone (1998) also attests to this by highlighting that HRM is either part of the problem or part of the solution in gaining the productive contribution of people.

However, there seems to be a mismatch between this recognition and the manner in which human resources capacity is utilized for effective national development implementation. It is noted in development literature that a significant challenge is to influence desired and optimum use of the different tools and systems for effective utilization of human resources.

Extant literature provides necessary tools and systems to support institutional performance in public organizations. In fact notable performance improvements have been registered but the desired level of performance has not yet been achieved (UNDESA, 2007; Tessema et al, 2015) It is confirmed that the HR problem for organizations is often not so much the availability of well-trained/developed employees, but how they were utilized once they were recruited and trained into the organization. This suggests that effective human resources utilization, which is greatly affected by motivation, is also very crucial in tapping their productive capacity for national development implementation. So the big question that needs to be answered now is: Why is the public service human resource capacity in Malawi seemingly failing to help the county in effective national development implementation? This question can be answered by understanding whether HR management practices, work motivation and strategies in the Malawian Public Service are linked to spurring development implementation in the country.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

It is against this backdrop that the purpose of this thesis study was to understand the relationship between public service human resource management and national development implementation in Malawi. In order to effectively achieve this thesis main goal, four specific objectives were formulated for the study.

1.5 Specific Objectives of the thesis study

The specific objectives of the thesis study were as follows:

- a) To examine the linkage between Public Service HRM and national development implementation in Malawi;
- b) To assess the effectiveness of public service HRM in national development implementation in Malawi;
- c) To establish challenges constraining the potential of the Public Service human resource capacity in implementing national development in Malawi; and
- d) To develop a Public Service HR capacity-based framework for ameliorating the Challenges constraining effective national development implementation in the country.

Through this analysis, the researcher envisages to complement efforts aimed at enhancing effective national development implementation by governments particularly in developing countries like Malawi.

In order to effectively achieve the foregoing objectives, the study was guided by the following research questions:

- In what ways is Public Service HRM linked to the country's state capacity in implementing national development? By further establishing the linkage between the two variables, the study shall provide policy insights on the need of the importance to integrate the two in Malawi.
- What is the level of effectiveness of public service human resource capacity utilisation in national development implementation in Malawi? By elaborating on the extent to which public service HR is engaged in national development implementation, the study shall document how the public service in Malawi has aligned itself towards the achievement of national development aspirations and suggest mitigating factors for re-alignment.
- What are the constraints for the realisation of the potential of Public Service human resource capacity in national development implementation in Malawi? Identification of the constraining factors for the optimum utilization of the public service human resource capacity in national development shall help policy makers as well as implementers to develop strategies for avoiding or resolving the challenges.
- How could the identified factors constraining Public Service human resource capacity be mitigated to improve development implementation in the country? By suggesting a model or framework which is based on human resource capacity in the Public Service, the study would highlight the strategic importance of motivated human resources as a necessary condition for national development implementation particularly for governments in the developing world.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The main contributions of this thesis are threefold. At empirical level, it enhances the literature on the intersection between Public Service human resource capacity utilization and national development implementation and fills specific lacuna in the capacity challenges experienced by the Public Service in national development implementation in Malawi. At theoretical level, the study significantly contributes towards better understanding of the work motivation processes as necessary conditions for enhancing national development implementation and to debates on the relationship of the study themes with the view to achieve sustainable development in the country's specific context. This study underscores that since national development implementation requires a robust Public Service, motivation of public servants necessarily needs to become integral to both scholarship and debates concerning effective national development implementation. The study, as such, attempted to contribute to development literature by bringing up the linkage between public service human resources capacity utilization and national development implementation.

The study also makes invaluable contribution by flagging up specific gaps in human resource development strategies currently deployed in the Public Service in Malawi. Previous studies analyzing national development implementation challenges in the country have consistently regarded human resources capacity issues simply as general issues requiring administrative action without necessarily linking its implications to national development implementation. The current study importantly unravels the ways in which human resources capacity utilization challenges could adversely affect national development implementation with the view to identify strategies for ameliorating its impact on the achievement of the country's development aspirations.

1.7 Key Concepts of the Study

The major concepts guiding this study include Public Service human resources capacity, HR utilization, development administration and work motivation. Now these conceptual issues are briefly laid bare in this section in order to provide the reader with an analytical grasp of the study.

1.7.1 Public Service Human Resource Capacity

The term capacity has various definitions in development literature. There is no single definition of the concept although its main thrust relate to the achievement of outcomes, outputs and impact from predetermined objectives through performance of appropriate tasks effectively, efficiently and sustainably. Capacity is thus understood as “the ability to perform appropriate tasks effectively, efficiently and sustainably” (Hilderbrand & Grindle 1997: 34). It has been argued by many commentators that capacity has many dimensions and that it depends on both, internal management (organizational models, processes, resources, management styles, human resources, etc.) and external factors (institutional context, policy networks, general economic, social and political trends, international pressures, etc.) (UNDESA, 2007).

Since this thesis is concerned with the examination of the intersection between public service human resource management and national development implementation, the definition adopted for the concept in the study reflects the abilities of human resources in the public service to rollout national development policies. As the UNDESA (2007) report emphasizes, in order to enable the State to meet new demands and challenges, it is necessary to reshape and reinforce policy capacity. The policy capacity of the State refers to the ability for public sector's executives to make and implement policies. Policy makes and implementers together entirely face new environments that cannot be properly managed with the kind of capacities on which they have traditionally relied. The pressures for change demand new behaviours and skills from the people that work within government. In this case the public service human resource capacity should be understood to take into consideration appropriate expertise, skills, ethical behaviours and belief systems befitting government employees charged with responsibility to effectively and efficiently implement national development.

1.7.2 Effective Development Administration

As already alluded to above, this study is premised on examining public service human resource management for effective national development implementation. Societies throughout history do achieve development aspirations via public policy implementation. However, it is noted that the inadequacy of development administration in many developing countries is now recognized as a major obstacle to development, perhaps more serious an obstacle than the lack of capital or foreign aid. Herbert Emmerich, a noted scholar and administrator, estimates that 80% of the plans of the world are incapable of being fulfilled because of administration (Rodman, 1968).

According to Grant (2006) effective development administration depends on the adjustment of the bureaucracy to the vastly increased number, variety and complexity of governmental functions required to respond to public demands for development. But it has to be appreciated that implementation of development policies is mainly carried out by public servants who need to have the necessary skills for the job. According to Nalbandian and Nalbandian (2003), skills necessary for public servants include administrative skills, political and policy skills, skills related to public service values, and emotional and personal attributes. The aforementioned skills may lead to high performance of public servants depending on their utilization (Ferris et al, 2007; Hays, et al, 2009). Again, we note essential aspects of HR capacity which are crucial for national development.

1.7.3 Utilization of HR Capacity for Effective National Development Implementation

Effective national development implementation is largely dependent on a functioning public service in developing countries. The public service is in this case viewed as the organization which is the creator of an enabling environment as well as the implementer of development in societies. To this end, public sector organisations usually design programs for human resources development (HRD) which are meant to ensure that developing countries have an adequate and continuous supply of competent public servants.

As argued by the ILO (1998), effective HRD programs (training and education) are increasingly important in the development process of countries in general and developing countries in particular. Hilderbrand and Grindle (1997: 53) indicate that “while training and recruitment are important aspects of developing capacity, effective utilization of human resources within organizations is the most important factor in determining whether public officials are productive or not.” Ineffective HRD and utilization practices are a major limiting factor in the development process of many developing countries (Hilderbrand & Grindle, 1997; Kiggundu, 1989; Tessema & Astani, 2012). Thus, it could be argued that one of the main reasons for the failure of development programs and projects as well as of government routine operations is either a lack of competent public servants or an inability to effectively utilize the existing expertise of the human resource (Tessema et al, 2005). What this implies is that sometimes it is possible for developing countries to have competent public servants and yet still fail to fully utilize their expertise for effective national development implementation.

1.7.4 Work Motivation

Pardee (1990) explains that motivation of employees at the workplace is an important ingredient in improving productivity and performance in organisations, both private and public. The term motivation is variously defined by different researchers in literature (see Atkinson, 1964; Yorks, 1976; and Vroom, 1964). Originally the term motivation is derived from the Latin word for movement (*movere*) (Steers and Shapiro, 2004). Despite the various definitions of motivation in literature, scholars agree that three common attributes denominate the meaning of motivation, namely: it (1) is a presumed internal force; (2) energises for action; and (3) determines the direction of action (Russell, 1971; Pardee, 2004; Campbell and Pritchard, 1976).

In fact it is highlighted that “motivation has to do with a set of independent/dependent variable relationships that explain the direction, amplitude, and persistence of an individual’s behavior, holding constant the effects of aptitude, skill, and understanding of the task, and the constraints operating in the environment” (Campbell and Pritchard 1976: 63–130). This implies that managers in public sector organisations must comprehensively understand how to motivate public servants in order for them to effectively, efficiently and sustainably perform development related tasks.

Various theories that contain conceptual underpinnings and prepositions relating to how to deal with the motivation of employees in organisations exist in literature. Most of these motivational theories were mainly developed by psychologists who were concerned with instincts and drives as the basis for understanding individuals’ behavior at the workplace (Steers and Shapiro, 2004). Scanning the literature on motivation processes identifies two categories of theories with each category focusing on a different component of work motivation. The first category is the content theories which focused on identifying factors associated with motivation in a relatively static environment and these included Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (1943); McClelland’s Needs for Achievement (1961); and Herzberg’s Two Factor Theory (1966).

The second category is the process theories which take into consideration a series of cognitive theories of motivation that collectively attempt to understand the thought processes that people go through in determining how to behave in the workplace. Theories in this category include Vroom’s Expectancy Theory (1964), Adams’ Equity Theory (1963), Locke and Latham’s Goal-setting Theory (1990), and Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory (1977). Two of the above theories were mainly generated during the late 1960s. This period is usually referred to as the “GOLDEN AGE” of work motivation theories because never before and some would argue, never since has so much progress been made in explicating the etiology of work motivation (Steers and Shapiro, 2004).

The relevance of the concept of motivation in this thesis study cannot be overemphasized. This is because the study sought to better understand whether public service human resources capacity utilization is linked to national development implementation in developing countries. Public service human resources capacity is about the skills, expertise and behaviour of government employees. These people need to be well-motivated to effectively carry out their responsibilities.

1.8 Choice of Empirical Case: The Malawian Public Service

The study uses an empirical case of the Malawian Public Service with the main aim of unraveling a deeper understanding of the linkage that myriad HR management systems, policies, practices and strategies are impacting national development implementation in the country. The Malawi Public Service is apparently the main engine driving the economic growth and development in the country because it creates enabling environment as well as implements development. At the moment, the Government of Malawi employs an estimated number of 250,000 public servants thereby making it the biggest employer in the country. With this huge number of staff, the Malawi Public Service becomes a complex organisation regarding human resources capacity utilization in the country. According to Ayee (2008), the Public Service implies the invocation of the power of the state and it is this ability to invoke (to a greater or lesser degree) the compulsive power of the state and the control of these powers through recognized processes of political control, which brings the civil service within the purview of the public sector and the public service in particular. The author identifies three broad groups as follows:

⑦ Bodies, which are readily recognizable as obviously exercising governmental functions: ministries, departments, agencies, local government units and similar public bodies. These are clearly governmental bodies in the fullest sense most with long histories.

⑦ Bodies such as state enterprises, boards and corporations, parastatals, such as electricity and water enterprises, the governmental sanction of which lies in the legislation which determines their institutional structure, finances, powers and duties; but whose external façade rests on long established professional or technical personnel and practices and which mainly began life as private ventures.

⑦ Institutions whose activities concern citizens pursuing their individual personal interests but which can enforce certain of their decisions by sanction of a government power conferred upon them. Examples of this group are professional regulatory bodies in which state power is usually conferred to enable a body to have an ultimate enforcement role, considered to be of public benefit.

Thus, the civil service as an integral part of the public service is said to represent a group of institutions which have in common some reliance on the power of the state from which they can justify their activities (Ayee, 2008). To avoid the usual confusion between the two terms, that is, civil service and public service, Maikudi (2012) points out that the public service comprises of government ministries, extra-ministerial departments and statutory agencies and corporations while the civil service constitutes the inner core, or the heart of the public service. It is explained that the civil service is therefore made up of a well-organized body of permanent paid officials of MDAs under the executive arm of government, charged with the responsibility of implementing government policies and programmes in accordance with the laid down rules and procedures (Anifowose and Enemu, 1999). This study's focus is on human resources capacity and utilization in the civil service as the inner core charged with the responsibility of implementing government policies and programmes in Malawi.

1.9 Structure of the Study

This thesis study is organised into eight chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the study by providing the parameters within which the thesis study was located in terms of the overall focus of the study, background information, the research problem, purpose and significance of the study and the choice of the empirical case. The chapter also presents the structure of the report.

In chapter 2 the focus is on comprehensive review of literature on HRM for national development with the aim of providing the theoretical and contextual understanding of the case under study. This chapter also provides the empirical literature on Public Service human resource capacity and national development implementation.

Chapter 3 details the research paradigm, the research design, research strategy, sampling, data collection methods and analysis techniques. The justifications for the choice and clarifications for each one of these have also been provided in this chapter.

In chapter 4, 5, 6 and 7 presentations of the findings and discussions of the same are made here. The chapters provide explanations to the achievement of the specific objectives of the study. In other words, the chapter contains evidence-based answers to the achievement of the thesis study objectives outlined in the first chapter. The chapter uses graphs and tables to simply the findings.

Chapter 8 pulls all the findings together and draws conclusions and policy implications.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the study's introduction and has highlighted the parameters of the study. The chapter points out that the examination of Public Service HRM and national development implementation presents enormous challenges for both researchers and development practitioners. This is caused by the complexity, influences and the multiplicity of factors affecting the analysis. Nevertheless, it is expected that with clear objectives focusing on the intersection between public service human resource management and national development implementation in a single developing country situation like Malawi, the underpinning factors involved would be unraveled.

The next Chapter analyses foundational insights in extant literature about Public Service human resource management and effective national development implementation. It situates public service human resources capacity utilization and national development implementation within public administration and management and reviews various theoretical perspectives of human resource management and national development. Based on these, the chapter develops a multi-faceted public service human resource management and effective national development implementation conceptual framework in order to guide the study's methodologies, data analysis and provides the basis for drawing the conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1, we introduced the study in terms of its central focus, objectives and significance. We also discussed the statement of the problem that the study is attempting to address through rigorous empirical investigations of the Malawian Public Service Human Resource Management effectiveness in national development. The background context of the study problem and the three case studies to be investigated had were also briefly introduced in the chapter.

This chapter is now concerned with the review of the scholarship on public service human resources management and effective national development implementation. The gist of the review for the two phenomena is on the discussion of the variables for the success or failure of policies and programmes as instruments through which governments implement national development.

In the literature there are wide variations regarding the variables for the success or failure of national development implementation by governments. Besides, the literature identifies public service HRM and its practices as having a major influence on whether national development programmes and projects are successfully implemented or not. The incumbent study has attempted to review a few HRM theories including NPM as it relates to human resources management in the public sector. With respect to national development, the review of literature focuses on two analytical models of effective public policy implementation by Laswell (1956) and another model by John Kingdon (1995), that is, the *Stages Model* and the *Garbage Can* (also

know as *Multiple Stream Approach* (MSA)), respectively. These two models of public policy implementation processes were selected in this study owing to their thorough analysis of the variables relating to the success or failure of public policy implementation in developing countries. The next section is a discussion of the theoretical perspectives of public service human resource management as well as the characteristic features of HRM. This review also discusses the role that public services human resources management has in national development.

2.2 Theoretical Perspectives of Public Service Human Resources Management

In literature the term Human Resource Management (HRM) has been variously defined and there is no single conceptualization of the term. Despite the variations on the understanding of the concept, there appears to be many similarities between the various definitions offered. In general terms, HRM is understood as an approach to the management of people in organisations. In this regard, one of the commonly used definition of HRM which is somewhat focused on the strategic component of the concept is offered by Wright and McMahan (1992:298). These scholars' definition states that HRM refers to, “*the pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable an organization to achieve its goals*”. Another commonly used definition in literature is that offered by Beer, Spector, Lawrence, Mills and Walton ((1984) in which the employment relationship is emphasized. According to them (1984:1), HRM refers to “*all management decisions that affect the nature of the relationship between the organization and employees- its human resources*”. After investigating the various definitions of HRM, Boselie (2002) explains how the concept is composed. *Human* refers to the employment relationship between employer and employee. *Resource* refers to employees being a source of organizational success. *Management* refers to the activities of managers toward employees so that the latter exhibit desirable behavior and achieve organizational goals. It is on

the basis of this decomposition that Boselie (2002) comes to a somewhat more specific definition of HRM. He (2002:28) defines HRM as “*management decisions related to policies and practices which together shape the employment relationship and are aimed at achieving individual, organizational and societal goals*”. For the incumbent study project, this is a more applicable definition since it reflects both the policies and practices (content) and the process (management decisions) components of HRM. More specifically this definition underscores the diversity of performance, an aspect that is particularly important to this thesis.

In terms of conceptualization of HRM, there again appears to be no general agreement among researchers. According to Vermeeren (2013), several conceptualizations of HRM can be distinguished in the HRM literature. In this context, a distinction can be made between the *instrumental approach* and the *system approach* to HRM. The instrumental approach examines the influence of individual HR practices on performance whereas the system approach adopts the principle that ‘the whole is more than the sum of its parts’ and examines a bundle of HR practices. Adopting the instrumental approach, studies concerning the relationship between HRM and performance first investigated the impact of separate HR practices on performance (Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Delery & Doty, 1996). However it is reported that nowadays the focus is increasingly on internal consistency or ‘fit’ of different HRM practices and this is more in line with the system approach (Boxall & Purcell, 2003). With respect to this currently dominant HR system approach, there is continuing debate among scholars regarding the appropriate bundle of HR practices (Boselie et al., 2005). The major issue of concern observed with this debate is around the question whether HR practices that are successful in one context can be copied and be equally successful in any other branch or industry. This theoretical debate has two competing schools: the best-practice (*universalism*) school versus the best-fit (*contingency*) school (Boxall

& Purcell, 2003). It is explained that the best-practice school advocates a universalistic approach that implies that one size fits all. On the other hand, the best-fit school believes that the success of HRM depends on aligning HR practices with the organizational context. With respect to this debate, Boxall and Purcell (2003) argue that certain HR practices are universally important (best-practice) but that the exact design should depend on the organizational context (best-fit). The broad debate around the merits of universalism and contingency theory dominated the field of strategic HRM in the 1980s and remains important in any kind of theory building. Since the early 1990s however, another line of thought has grown in significance. Since then, the strategic HRM literature has increasingly been influenced by the branch of strategic management known as the resource-based view of the firm (RBV). Vermeeren (2013) opines that the RBV focuses on the internal strengths and weaknesses of organizations, paying particular attention to the ways in which organizations can develop valuable resources and erect barriers to their imitation. It is said that the RBV has as its starting point a fundamental belief in the decisive value of employees' input in determining performance. Now relating the RBV to the debate between the best practice and best fit in HRM literature, it is concluded that the strategy theorists who work with the RBV aim to discover how an organization can build an exclusive form of fit (Boxall & Purcell, 2003).

After reviewing the definitions and conceptualization about HRM as discovered in literature, it is also imperative to appreciate the role and activities involved in HRM. It is not possible to discuss all the HRM activities and functions in this study but our attempts will focus mainly on those activities deemed pertinent for the attainment of the objectives of the present study. As noted earlier on, HRM is concerned with the management of people with the view to help organizations to achieve their goals and our particular interest is on the practices and processes

followed in carrying out the HRM activities in this respect. The reasoning behind this interest arises from the fact that Chitescu and Lixandru (2016) emphasise that when we speak of human resource as a “resource”, we take into account that each employee who develops professionally adds value to the organization, increases its value and efficiency, and is a source of income. Thus, it is of paramount importance that HRM activities are carried out in an orderly manner so that organisations are good at achieving their predetermined goals and objectives. In fact Armstrong (2006) adds that the human capital of an organization consists of the people who work there and on whom the success of the business depends. Bontis *et al* (1999) have defined human capital as follows: “*Human capital represents the human factor in the organization; the combined intelligence, skills and expertise that gives the organization its distinctive character. The human elements of the organization are those that are capable of learning, changing, innovating and providing the creative thrust which if properly motivated can ensure the long-term survival of the organization*”. Therefore it is emphasized that HRM aims to ensure that the organization obtains and retains the skilled, committed and well-motivated workforce it needs. This means taking steps to assess and satisfy future people needs and to enhance and develop the inherent capacities of people – their contributions, potential and employability – by providing learning and continuous development opportunities. It involves the operation of “*rigorous recruitment and selection procedures, performance-contingent incentive compensation systems, and management development and training activities linked to the needs of the business*” (Becker *et al*, 2001). As such human resources are generally regarded as the prime asset of organisations so much so that investing in them guarantees survival and growth of organisations in the turbulent environment.

In the literature different scholars have outlined various HRM activities which are done by managers in organisations. Although this is the situation there is acknowledgement that the overall purpose of human resource management is to ensure that the organization is able to achieve success through people. HRM aims to increase organizational effectiveness and capability – the capacity of an organization to achieve its goals by making the best use of the resources available to it. Ulrich and Lake (1990) remarked that: ‘HRM systems can be the source of organizational capabilities that allow firms to learn and capitalize on new opportunities.’ Brown (2004) further observes that Human Resource Management has as its central focus, “*managing people within the employer – employee relationship*” and involves marshalling the productive capacity of an organization’s members (Stone 1998: 4). According to Stone (1998), the domain of HRM covers the acquisition, development, reward and motivation maintenance and departure of employees and typical areas of concern include HR planning and capability audits, recruitment and selection of employees, promotion, skill development and training, career progression, performance appraisal, formulating employment conditions and compensation and reward. It is further added that HRM is concerned with understanding and interpreting the legal framework and context regulating conditions of employment and employment relations (Wright and Ferris, 1996). As can be inferred from the HRM activities above over the years the focus of HRM has included the development of organizational capacity to adapt to changing environmental dynamics. This implies that the orderly management of people within organisations is deemed a powerful tool for adapting to turbulent environments and achieve impressive organizational performance in a complex world. Asserting to the same argument Casio & Aguinis (2011:9) are of the view that the quality of a nation’s workforce is a crucial determinant of its ability to successfully compete in a global market. The authors argue, “*Human*

Resource Management (HRM) underscores a belief that people truly make a significant difference; only people among other resources have the capacity to generate value”.

Another aspect that has been noted in the literature is the debate among scholars in terms of the evolution that the management of people in organization has gone through. Generally, there is consensus among researchers that the concept of HRM is an accumulation of the various perspectives regarding the management of people at the work place. It is reported that the management of people in organizations has had a very long history because of the need for employment management needs. Some scholars like Legge (1995), Storey (1993) and Hope-Hailey *et al*, 1998) have highlighted the revolutionary nature of HRM. On the other hand others have denied that there is any significant difference in the concepts of personnel management and HRM. Torrington and Hall (1995) suggested that, *“Personnel management has grown through assimilating a number of additional emphases to produce an even richer combination of experience... HRM is no revolution but a further dimension to a multifaceted role”*. However the major variations from scholarship over the management of people have centered on the similarities and differences observed between personnel management and HRM. According to Armstrong (2006), the differences between personnel management and human resource management appear to be substantial but they can be seen as a matter of emphasis and approach rather than one of substance. The conclusion on this issue is that it is simply a sterile debate. It is said that though HRM is regarded by some personnel managers as just a set of initials or old wine in new bottles at least it has the virtue of emphasizing the virtue of treating people as a key resource, the management of which is the direct concern of top management as part of the strategic planning processes of the enterprise (Armstrong, 1987). The highlighted similarities and differences between HRM and personnel management are summarized in the table below.

Table 2:1 Similarities and Differences between HRM and Personnel Management

Item	Similarities	Differences
1	Personnel Management strategies, like HRM strategies, flow from the business strategy.	HRM places more emphasis on strategic fit integration
2	Personnel Management, like HRM, recognizes that managers are responsible for managing people. The personnel function provides the necessary advice and support services to enable managers to carry out their responsibilities.	HRM is based on management-and business-oriented philosophy
3	The values of Personnel Management and at least the soft version of HRM are identical with regard to respect for the individual, balancing organizational and individual needs, and developing people to achieve their maximum level of competence both for their own satisfaction and to facilitate the achievement of organizational objectives.	HRM attaches more importance to the management of culture and the achievement of commitment (mutuality).
4	Both Personnel Management and HRM recognize that one of their most important functions is that of matching people to ever-	HRM places greater emphasis on the role of line managers as the implementers of HR policies.

	changing organizational requirements - placing and developing the right people in and for the right jobs.	
5	The same range of selection, competence analysis, performance management, training, management development, reward management techniques are used both in HRM and in Personnel Management.	HRM is a holistic approach concerned with the total interests of the business – the interests of the members of the organization are recognized but subordinated to those of the enterprise.
6	Personnel Management, like the soft version of HRM, attaches the importance of communication and participation within an employee relations system.	HR specialists are expected to be business partners rather than personnel administrators.

Source: *Armstrong (2006)*

According to Brown (2004), the applicability of HRM to public sector organisations is clearly established. It is explained that public sector organisations need to hire, develop and train employees, and establish payment systems, set conditions of employment and develop a coherent set of employment policies. Brown however highlights that the only caveat is that the particularity of the public sector with a focus on public interest outcomes rather than private interests may add a layer of complexity that does not easily fit with HRM as a strategic partner in achieving organizational competitiveness and business outcomes.

Agreeing with Brown on the applicability of HRM in the public service, Vermeeren (2013) points out that in the literature specific institutional, organizational and workforce characteristics relating to HRM are found. However, Vermeeren highlights that there is an important distinction between workers in the public service on one hand and those in the private sector on the other hand in terms of their legal status. Private sector employees are subject to private law whereas

many public sector employees are subject to administrative law. This is a crucial difference since it implies a different judicial process in the event of conflicts between employer and employee. There are also five additional differences often mentioned in the literature between the public sector and the private sector as shown in the table below.

Table 2:2 HRM Differences between Public and Private Sectors

#	Notable differences between public and private sectors
1	HRM policy in the public sector has traditionally been paternalistic in nature, purporting to protect and promote the wellbeing of the workforce while in the private sector HRM aims at safeguarding the shareholders profit maximization objective.
2	The working conditions are highly standardized in the public sector such that employees performing the same task have the same terms and conditions. In the private sector, however, employees are treated on the basis of their experience and education qualifications.
3	The industrial relations have a strongly collective character in the public sector. This refers to the extensive scope for staff participation and consultation, and a strong role for trade unions in pay negotiations, which in turn was reflected in higher levels of union coverage in the public sector. To the contrary, individual staff have to negotiate pay with management and trade unions are restricted in the private sector
4	Public organizations are expected to behave like a role model and set standards for private organizations to follow.

Source: *Vermeeren (2013)*

These differences observed in literature between the public sector and the private sector make HRM practices to be complex in public services. This means that governments ought to have robust mechanisms for ensuring that the management of HRM activities are carried out in an effective manner and with awareness of the relevant regulations and laws which protect and safeguard the wellbeing and rights of civil servants. The complexity of the human resources management in the public sector entails that managers comply with the provisions of the relevant laws regulating public services. Effectiveness in this case can only be achieved with compliance.

According to Pecikoza (2014), improvement of public sector performances seems to be only possible when the public sector has sufficient, qualified and involved staff that will cope with changing contingencies. It is highlighted that public sector organizations usually strive to do more with less and to overcome this conflicted agenda, these organizations must identify innovative ways to increase efficiency and lower cost while at the same time maintaining quality service delivery. Because of the nature of the public sector, a range of arguments have been put forward to indicate its uniqueness. Lawton and Rose (1994) have summarized this uniqueness as follows:

1. Public sector organizations are not exposed to the competitive world of the market and hence have no incentive to reduce costs or operate efficiently;
2. Objectives are usually ill-defined and expressed in vague terms such as serving the public, maintaining law and order, reducing inequality, removing poverty or improving health;
3. Strategic planning is more difficult because of the short-term consideration of politicians;

4. The public sector organization is susceptible to greater and more open accountability with politicians, pressure groups, taxpayers and voters all having an interest in the performance of the public sector;
5. The functions of the public sector are limited by statute;
6. The public sector is funded by taxation and not by charging for its services.

Earlier on we discussed the fact that there are bundles of HR practices characterizing the way in which organizations whether public or private manage their employees. We also observed that the exact design of the HR practices by organizations should take into consideration the circumstances each organization finds itself in. Although some HR practices are deemed to be universal in nature, it is advisable that organizations fully understand their respective context before adopting them.

The practice of HRM in general is underpinned by a number of theories. Common categories of HRM theory discussed in literature are those listed by Guest (1997) and Boselie et al (2003). On one hand there are three categories of HRM theory described by Guest, namely;

1. *Strategic theories* – in the UK the implicit but untested hypothesis is that good fit (between HR practice and the internal and external context) will be associated with superior performance. In the United States the focus has been more on classifying types of HR strategy. The hypothesis is that firms that have a fit between business strategy, structure and HRM policy will have superior performance.

2. *Descriptive theories* – these either list areas of HR policy and outcomes (Beer *et al*, 1984) or adopt a systems approach, describing the relationships between levels (Kochan *et al*, 1986). They are largely non-prescriptive.

3. *Normative theories* – these are normative in the sense that they establish a norm or standard pattern in the form of prescribed best practice. These take a considerable risk in implying ‘one best way’.

Boselie et al (2003) on the other hand have also explained three categories of HRM theory, namely;

1. *Contingency theory* – HRM is influenced by the organization’s environment and circumstances (Legge, 1978).

2. *The Resource-Based View* – HRM delivers added value through the strategic development of the organization’s rare, hard to imitate and hard to substitute human resources (Barney, 1991, 1995).

3. *AMO theory* – the formula $\text{Performance} = \text{Ability} + \text{Motivation} + \text{Opportunity to Participate}$ provides the basis for developing HR systems that attend to employees’ interests, namely their skill requirements, motivations and the quality of their job (Appelbaum *et al*, 2000; Bailey *et al*, 2001; Boxall and Purcell, 2003).

The above six theories of HRM discussed in the literature emphasize important insights and knowledge about the manner in which organizations should develop and implement their HR systems in order to ensure that they obtain maximum contributions from their employees. It should be noted that these various theories point to the diverse characteristics of HRM. We have observed that HRM is multi-faceted, strategic and commitment-oriented, adopts a unitary rather than pluralist viewpoint, and is founded on the belief that people should be treated as assets and is management-driven activity. It is explained that in its fully developed form, HRM functions

as a system; it links, integrates and coheres (Schuler and Jackson, 1987). The implication here is that impressive performance of organizations in terms of achieving their goals and objectives depends on how effective and sound the HR practices are based on the theoretical assumptions outlined above. For example, OMA theory underscores that performance is driven by ability, motivation and opportunity made available to employees in organizations. It means that it is possible for individual employees to have the skills and knowledge about their jobs but this can come to nothing if such employees are not well motivated. When employees lack motivation on a daily basis, there is a high risk that they would be frustrated and organizational activities will not be effectively implemented. This will in turn lead to the failure of the organization to achieve their goals. It was noted by Karen Legge (1995) that human resources *“may be tapped most effectively by mutually consistent policies that promote commitment and which, as a consequence, foster a willingness in employees to act flexibly in the interests of the “adaptive organization’s” pursuit of excellence”*.

In the course of reviewing the scholarship on public service human resource management, the researcher stumbled on the philosophy of New Public Management (NPM) which is claimed to have been a dominant paradigm in as far as improving the performance of public sector organizations is concerned. Different scholars have proffered various definitions for NPM despite the apparent consensus that this is a borrowed concept from the private sector. According to Islam (2015), the New Public Management approach emerged to replace the traditional model of public management during the 1980s and 1990s in response to the inadequacies of the traditional model. It is observed that one of the most influential factors leading to the emergence of NPM has been the historical shift in state ideology since the late 1970s in advanced capitalist

nations towards a neo-liberal framework which rejects the welfare state, opposes a large public sector, doubts government capacity, blames public bureaucracy, believes in the private sector superiority and emphasizes market competition in service delivery (Haque and Burdescu, 2004). In the literature three main attacks on government which necessitated the adoption of NPM have been explained namely, (a) the scale of public sectors (the argument was that government handling scale was simply too large consuming too many scarce resources), (b) the methods of government (the argument was that bureaucracy is a highly unpopular form of social organization), and (c) the scope of the government (the argument that government involves itself in too many activities) (Islam, 2015). These attacks were wide-ranging on government particularly on its bureaucracy and became a source of unease and yet there was increasing demand for more services. As a result, efforts were initiated to reform the public sector and this is usually credited with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 in the USA and Margaret Thatcher in the UK in 1979. Economic theorists at the time claimed that government was considered as an economic problem restricting economic growth and models backed up their arguments by explaining that less government would improve aggregate welfare by improving economic efficiency. So instead of governments forcing people to do things through the bureaucracy, markets were superior in every respect, with words like 'freedom' or 'choice' (Friedman and Friedman, 1980).

Several theories have provided the theoretical underpinnings of NPM and have helped shape NPM ideas, in particular public choice theory, principal and agent theory and transaction cost theory. Public choice theorists like Niskanen (1971) and Larbi (2003) have criticized the Weberian bureaucratic model as lacking cost-consciousness because of the weak link between costs and outputs. This gave theorists a plausible weapon to support their views that government

is too big and inefficient and offered a sharp contrast to the model of the traditional model of public administration. It is explained that public choice is a sub-branch of economic thought which is concerned with the application of microeconomics to political and social areas. The key assumption of public choice is a comprehensive view of rationality. Instead of being motivated by the public interest, bureaucrats, like anyone else, are assumed to be motivated by their own selfish interest. According to Hughes (2003), public choice provided alternatives the most obvious being to allow competition and choice and to return as many activities as possible to the private sector.

The economic theory of principal and agent has also been applied to the public sector especially concerning its accountability. It is highlighted that the theory was developed in the private sector to explain the divergence often found between the goals of managers (agents) in private firms and shareholders (principals). The theory attempts to find incentive schemes for agents to act in the interests of principals. It proposes that the activities of managers need to be monitored by shareholders by the possibility of takeovers or bankruptcy while the presence of a non-executive board may help in attenuating the discretion of management (Vickers and Yarrow, 1988). This theory elucidates that in order to ensure compliance in behavior of agents with the wishes of the principals, there should be contracts which specify their obligations and rights. In the private sector, shareholders seek maximum profits while managers might want long-term growth and higher salaries for themselves.

Transaction cost theory, the other key economic theory in the managerial change, challenges the notion that transactions are without cost and specifies the circumstances where a firm may prefer market testing or contracting to in-house provision. Williamson (1986) pointed out that there are some transaction sectors like constructing roads and highways, transportation, public-private

partnerships, etc, which would be less costly if contracted out to reduce administrative costs and provide competition.

The NPM doctrine driven by these three economic theories triggered a plethora of reforms in public sector organizations around the globe in the 1980s and 1990s and correspondingly precipitated a proliferation of studies on NPM driven public sector reforms. Many researchers have however pointed out that although extant studies on public sector reforms take recognition that new business practices also embraced new ways of managing public sector employees, there is a dearth of studies on the implication of NPM reforms for employment relations in the public sector (See Bach and Bordgon, 2011; Cooley, 2002). In fact, Aucoin (1990) observes that NPM emphasizes on giving higher priority to the “management” of people, resources and programmes compared to the “administration” activities, procedures and regulations. The incumbent study will attempt to assess the effect that NPM based business practices has had on the contributions of human resources management in public sector organizations towards national development. In other words, this researcher is interested in understanding whether public service HRM practices borrowed from the private sector have helped government employees to give their best in national development implementation.

According to Nabaho (2015), the traditional model of public administration, the longest standing and most successful theory of management in the public sector, is often regarded as starting in the 1850s in Britain and was informed by the recommendations of the Northcote-Trevelyan Report. It is explained that the Report made recommendations aimed at transforming the British public service, *inter alia*, “the public service should be carried out by the admission into its lower ranks of a carefully selected body of young men” through “the establishment of a proper system of examination before appointment”. The Report further recommended abolition of patronage

and the substitution of recruitment by open competitive examinations under the supervision of a central examining body; the organization of office staff of central departments into broad classes to deal with intellectual and mechanical work, respectively; and filling higher posts by promotion from inside based on merit” (Hughes, 2012:46). It is reported that generally, Weber’s theory of bureaucracy is regarded as “the most important theoretical principle of the traditional model of public administration” and that needless to say, personnel management in the traditional model adhered to bureaucratic theories of Max Weber in practice than in breach (Hughes, 2012:48)

Nabaho (2015) observes that a closer analysis reveals that the “civil servant” or individual public official occupies a pivotal position in Weber’s theory of bureaucracy. The traditional career service model of public sector personnel management exhibited the following elements: uniform employment conditions under the control of an independent central agency; recruitment based on competitive examinations; promotion based on merit (although in practice seniority was often the dominant criteria); rights and duties of public servants codified in a Public Service Act; tenure of appointment; and pension benefits upon retirement (Caiden, 1965, pp.2-5). Another noteworthy element of the model was neutrality of public servants while implementing government policy decisions. The model also envisaged that civil servants would remain in office throughout changes in government. The traditional public administration was also faulted for rigidity in managing civil servants. These features are noted to have characterized the bureaucracy in the traditional model of public administration and gave the opportunity to the birth of the NPM based approach which is commonly referred to as the antithesis of the traditional model of public administration.

As indicated earlier on, there are many definitions of the NPM paradigm in extant public administration literature. For example, Drechsler (2005:95) regards NPM as “the transfer of

business principles and management techniques from the private into the public sector” while Gray and Jenkins (1994:306) conceptualises NPM as the “art of private sector management” extended into the public sector. According to Hood (1991), the NPM paradigm advocated replacement of traditional methods and ethos in the public sector by the supposedly superior private sector practice. It is pointed out that such a transfer of business concepts, techniques and values was considered a *sine qua non* for improving the public sector. Hood (1991:4-5) notes that the key doctrinal components of NPM include hands-on professional management; explicit standards and measures of performance; greater emphasis on output controls; disaggregation of units in the public sector; greater competition in the public sector; private sector styles of management practices; and greater discipline and parsimony in resource use. This same point in the change of management styles for government employees is also made by Brown (2004:37) who says that this new philosophy of management calls for “a more flexible and responsive approach to questions of recruitment and selection, performance management of public sector employees”. As can be seen from the highlighted main components, the NPM theory was characterised with several principles. According to Hood (1991), NPM had seven core principles as explained below.

Table 2:3 Seven core principles in NPM – inspired reforms

Hands-on management	Active, visible control of organisations by identifiable professional managers who are free to manage using private sector styles of management.
Unbundling	Disaggregation of formerly monolithic organisations into corporatized units around specific products and services.

Productivity	Do more with less. Public service provision with lower resource use.
Marketization	Use market mechanisms and competition to overcome pathologies of traditional bureaucracy.
Performance orientation	Define, preferably quantitatively, goals, targets, outputs and indicators of success based on explicit standards. Deliver what is promised. Link resource allocation and rewards to measured performance to enhance accountability.
Service orientation	Improve government-consumer relations so as to improve the satisfaction of the latter.
Decentralization	Place policy decisions as close as possible to the people who will be affected by those decisions.

Source: *Hood* (1991, 4-5)

In summarizing the key differences noted with the traditional public administration model and the New Public Management paradigm, Araujo (2001) provided the factors in the table below.

Table 2:4 Comparative assessment of Traditional Public Administration and NPM

Elements	Traditional Public Administration	NPM
Government organization	Service provided on a uniform basis operating as a single aggregate unit	Break-up into of traditional structures into quasi-autonomous units
Control of public organizations	Control through the hierarchy of unbroken supervision and checks and balances	Practices on professional management with clear statement of goal and performance measure

Control of output measure	Control on inputs and procedures	Stress results and output control rather than procedures
Management practices		Using private sector management style
Discipline in resource use	Due process and poetical entitlements	Checks resource demands and do more with less

Source: Araujo (2001), *Improving Public Service Delivery*

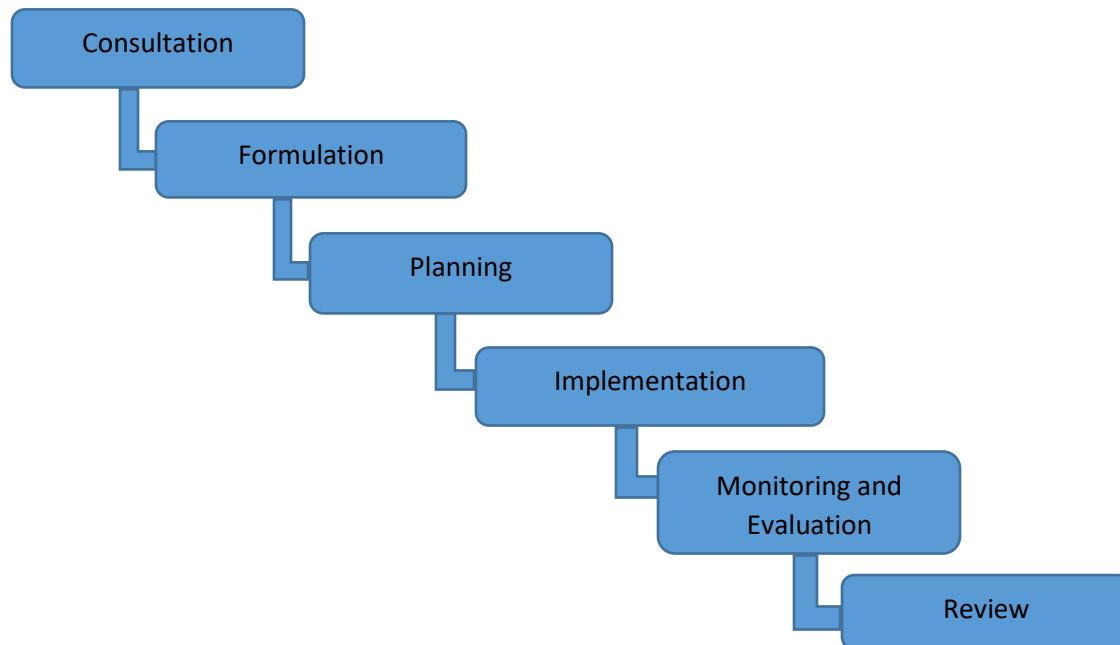
The NPM based practices were religiously believed to be the magic bullet for enhancing the efficiency, effectiveness and overall quality of service delivery by public sector organizations. However, NPM was criticized for, among other things, not being suitable for developing countries due to lack of necessary expertise and have unreliable information systems (Polidono, 1999).

2.3 Theoretical perspectives on National Development

It has to be noted that national development is the other variable in this research. Scholarship provides various connotations for the concept but in this study national development is being looked at from the perspective of the efforts that governments undertake to improve the living conditions or wellbeing of the citizenry in society. According to Umuru (2002), the concept of development is associated with modernization, material advancement, industrialization scientific and technological progress, the emergence of nuclear energy, electronic and biological revolution, new knowledge about man and the universe. It means urbanization, socio-cultural

transformation, mass literacy, vertical and horizontal mobility, employment opportunities and the emergence of specialized and independent occupational roles. Umuru further explains that a nation is a large community of people sharing common language, common culture, common history and having a common constitution and government. He illustrates the point by emphasizing that Nigeria is a nation and that it shares common characteristics of a nation such as binding principles and policies. It is underscored that the ultimate aim of national development must be to bring about sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual and bestow benefits to all through self-reliance and mobilization of domestic resources, the transformation of the structure of rural production, the development of small-scale industries and the acquisition of technological and scientific skills. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2009) pinpoints that decision-making in development planning usually takes place at various levels starting with national level which includes bodies with policy and planning authority and functions at the scale of an entire country and cutting across sectoral boundaries. It is explained that policy decisions taken at this level potentially affect all sectors and all parts of the country. The next level is the subnational or local level and this is similar to national level with the exception that decision making happens at the scale of an administrative region. Then there is sectoral level which includes bodies with policy and planning authority and functions within a given sector at the level of an entire nation or region. Policy decisions taken at this level directly affect activities within this sector, and potentially other sectors indirectly. The last level given in decision making in development planning process is that of project level. This is the level charged with the execution of a particular activity or set of activities, whose basic objectives and parameters (as well as budget allocations) have already been set at the level above

(typically a sectoral programme). The OECD has also outlined the main steps involved in national development policy cycle as depicted below.



Source: OECD, 2009. *Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Development Co-operation. Policy Guidance*. OECD, Paris.

In literature there are other similar models explaining the steps or activities involved in national development process. Although some variations are observed in the processes with the models, the main activities or steps are common in most national development in these frameworks.

Mostly cited models of policy analysis in literature include the *Stages Model* by Laswell (1956) and *The Garbage Can Model* also known as *Multiple Stream Approach (MSA)* developed by John Kingdon (1995). These famous models or frameworks for national development are important in the incumbent study because they provide insights into the intricacies of the dynamics about what actually happens during national development. We will now turn to the discussion of these two models.

The Stages Model

The stages model, introduced by Laswell (1956) consisting of seven stages - intelligence, promotion, perception, invocation, application, termination, and appraisal - is one of the two earliest models (the other one is system model developed by David Easton in 1965) that maintain its validity and prevalence in public policy analysis. Thus the stages model is an essential key reference point for public policy studies. It is explained that in the stages model, as one of the pioneering frameworks in public policy analysis, policy making process has a progressive cycle (Gosling, 2004:92). With the widespread of public policy studies in 1970's and 1980's, the stages model was reformulated and utilized by various scholars in different ways. In other words, the stages/phases of the stages model, also known as process/sequential model, have been differentiated over time and among scholars. Although originally the stages model was described by Laswell (1956) in seven stages, Dorey (2005) divided the stages/process model into five or six different stages and developed in his books which are also used as course materials. Even Anderson (2014) mentions about five different stages of the stages/process model. As he stressed, formulation of public policy is the main focal point on his studies. The stages model which is applied currently has basically five stages. These stages are expressed as agenda setting, formulation, legitimation, implementation, and evaluation (Sabatier, 1999; 2007).

In *Agenda Setting* which is the first stage of the stages model, issues such as how the problems arise and come to the public agenda are dealt (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995: 104). Moreover, in the process of agenda setting in which problems are transformed into policy designs (Hill, 1997), problems and possible solutions gain or lose the attention of public and the elite (Birkland, 2004: 109). It is explained that agenda setting process is shaped by the specific priorities of policy makers (MacRea and Wilde, 1985), thus even if there are many issues that are likely to come to

an agenda, only a fraction of them are carried to the public agenda by governments and other actors (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995). According to Peters (1996), it is not feasible for many problems to be on the agenda at the government level. Each social problem has a degree of importance and innovation (Gosling, 2004), which highly affects the capacity of the problems to reach the government level. For example, governments seem to act quicker on urgent issues such as bird flu, aids, and oil crises (Knoepfel et al., 2007).

In the *Formulation Stage*, policy alternatives are developed in order to struggle with the current problems on the public agenda (Dye, 2008; Ripley and Franklin, 1984). In this way, the number of policy options is reduced and the policy makers make their final choices/decisions easier (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995). In other words, in the policy formulation stage which is basically the pre-policy decision stage, a set of policy alternatives and solutions is generated and also narrowed so as to ease the final decision (Sidney, 2007). In public policy formulation process various mechanism are developed to respond to social problems (Peters, 1996), and a number of actors play crucial roles. These actors can be counted as parliament, government, public bureaucrats, political parties, pressure groups, think tanks and the media. In the formulation stage which is one of the most functional stages of the stages model, answers to some of the necessary questions are sought. These questions can be expressed as follows: What is the plan to deal with the problem? What are the goals and priorities? What are the costs and benefits to achieve goals? What are the positive and negative externalities in each alternative? (Cochran and Malone, 1999: 46).

Legitimation Stage holds a key for the public in public policy making process in which different alternatives are taken into account and policies are shaped accordingly. According to Kraft and Furlong (2004), the decisions taken by policy makers are given a legal force or political activities

are legitimised. It is difficult for policy makers to direct the legitimisation stage independently from the thought that is highly common in the society. Similarly, Anderson (2014) emphasises that legitimisation stage is influenced by the public and thus policy makers have to take into account requests and demands of citizens. Moreover, Anderson (2014) reveals that the political future of the policy makers might be short if the request and needs of the citizens are not taken into consideration in the process of public policy formulation. Policies made by the policy makers in order to provide solutions to social needs and problems might lose its effectiveness over time. At this point, necessary regulations are passed on by making changes in the policies.

The *Implementation Stage* of the public policies takes place after the completion of legitimisation process. As stated by Fitz et al. (1994) policy goals are transformed into actions in the implementation stage. The achievement of the policy objectives highly depends on the effective implementation (Ripley and Franklin, 1986). In this context, if the policies are not implemented coherently and efficiently, it is not feasible to reach the set goals even if the policies are well-formulated (Edwards, 1980). On the other hand, social, economic, technological and political conditions significantly influence the implementation stage of public policies (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995). The fact that public practitioners have sufficient knowledge and experience about the policy area, increase the possibility of successful implementation of the policy (Peters, 1996). Public support is also crucial for the smooth public policy implementation (Anderson, 2014). Moreover, there are some other factors that have an impact on the implementation process such as clearly written and easy-to-understand policy law text (Matland, 1995; Dye, 2008). Since the street-level bureaucrats are close to the problems and are able to observe the practices on the spot and have discretion authorities; it is easier for them to understand the needs and

expectations of the citizens. Thus, the decisions and the behavior of the street-level bureaucrats can have an essential effect on the outputs of policy implementation (Lipsky, 1980).

Evaluation is the last stage of the stages model. In this stage, the results and the outputs of the implemented policies monitored and assessed (Dunn, 1981; Peters, 1996). Additionally, it is mainly examined whether the policies and program reach the determined goals and objectives (Kraft and Furlong, 2004). In other words, the overall success of the policies in meeting the aims and targets of the national program is measured in the evaluation stage/process (Peters, 1996; Dye, 2008). In the evaluation stage, the effort spent in the public policy making and implementation process is tackled and scrutinized by using organisational methods based on performance, effectiveness, and productivity (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995; Peters, 1996). Moreover, the conscious or unconscious effects of the policies on the society are examined in detail (Dye, 2008). In many public policy analyses (especially in the evaluation stage), various numerical models and techniques are applied (Jones, 1977), and empirical studies related to the sector that is affected by the policy are conducted. In empirical studies, surveys and/or interviews are the most common and convenient tools/methods in order to aggregate information from individuals about the implemented policies. Furthermore, the attitudes of the individuals toward policies can be measured by using these methods. Thanks to this, the weaknesses and the strengths of the policies are identified and the feedback is given. At the end of the evaluation stage, the policy cycle might be reversed and the process can be initiated from the first stage of public policy analysis (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995; Jann and Wegrich, 2007).

The Garbage Can Model also known as Multiple Stream Approach (MSA)

The other famous model in national development studies is the Multiple-Streams Approach (MSA) which was developed by John Kingdon (1995) and is based on the “garbage can” model

of organizational behavior (Cohen et al, 1972). It views the national development process as composed of three independent streams: a problem stream consisting of various conditions that policy-makers find through indicators, focusing on events and feedback and want addressed; a politics stream consisting of national mood, pressure-group campaigns and administrative or legislative turnover; and a policy stream including a “soup” of ideas that must have value accessibility and technical feasibility to compete to win acceptance by policy-makers. Policy outputs are created when the three streams are coupled or joined together at critical moments in time. Kingdon (1995) labeled these moments “policy windows” and defined them as fleeting opportunities for advocates of proposals to push their pet solutions. It is pointed out that Windows are opened by compelling problems or by events in the politics stream. In the former situation, the policy process is consequential; that is, policy solutions are developed in response to specific problems. This is in accordance with the rational choice theory that assumes policy makers attend to problems first and then develop policies to solve them (Zahariadis, 1998). In the latter situation where windows open in the politics stream, attention is focused on solutions first before problems can be clearly defined. In such cases, the policy process is doctrinal; that is, policies are made in search of rationale. Policy proposals must be in accordance with the doctrine of a political party, and thus the most important thing is the solution to be adopted rather than the problem to be solved (Zahariadis, 1996). Coupling takes place during open windows and is facilitated and manipulated by “policy entrepreneurs” (Zahariadis, 2007). They are more than mere advocates of particular solutions; they are power brokers and manipulators of problematic preferences and unclear technology. They have access to policy makers; they own resources; and they possess strategies including framing, affect priming, “salami tactics” and the use of symbols. When windows open, policy entrepreneurs must immediately seize the opportunity to

initiate action. They use their access, resources and strategies to attract problems to their solutions and find politicians receptive to their ideas (Zahariadis, 2003; 2005).

The original MSA framework, as discussed above, aims to explain the process of public policy-making, i.e., how and why a policy idea, instead of others, is put onto government agenda and eventually becomes a policy to be implemented. It does not deal with policy implementation, and thus has limited power to explain the performance of a policy after implementation. The reason is that implementation often diverges from plan. The contents of the streams may change; the coupling situations may consequently change; new problems may emerge; new policies may float around the policy stream; and the political support and preference for a policy may fade away during its implementation. Despite this, scholars commonly agree that the MSA provides heuristic value for the study of policy implementation and suggest that different stages of policy process are characterized by different configurations of streams. For instance, Lemieux (2002) suggested that agenda-setting involves coupling the problem and politics streams; policy formulation involved coupling the policy and politics stream; and policy implementation involved coupling the policy and problem streams. Based on Lemieux (2002), Ridde (2009) proposed that if implementation does result from a coupling of the problem and policy streams, it can only succeed if the politics stream is consistently favorable to it; and if a policy originated from the center is implemented at local level, it has greater potential for success in a centralized system.

The two models discussed above give important insights into national development process because they highlight what should be expected in undertaking national development activities. They start by pointing out that national development should aim at resolving problems bothering the people in their communities. In order to effectively to do this, it is emphasized that

consultations with the affected people is always important as this ensures sustainability of the proposed solutions. In addition, the models also emphasize the roles played by other stakeholders like parliament. It is also important to comprehensively understand how different problems get government attention as explained by Kingdon (1995) since politics has so much influence over whether public policies or national projects would be effectively implemented or not in society.

2.4 Observed Flaws in Public Service HR and National Development Literature

It is worth noting that, firstly, there are overlaps between some of the theories, models and frameworks of national development. The overlaps clearly suggest the serious lack of a single comprehensive theory for effective public service HRM involvement in national development. National development can be a very complex process depending on the problem to be resolved and context to be changed and therefore this shortcoming calls for the development of a single comprehensive theory to guide the process. The need for a single comprehensive theory of national development cannot be overemphasized.

The second flaw discovered is that national development requires the involvement of a diverse category of people who have different backgrounds and predispositions. Thus, although national development implementation studies seem to advocate for combination of highly educated people and locals as key implementers, there is urgent need to incorporate the modalities for taking on board the locals who also possess indigenous tacit knowledge and experience of the local conditions from the public policy formulation stage to public policy implementation. Usually there are consultations with the locals which take place during policy formulation and this is the point that must never be undermined because successful implementation depends on the locals as target groups. Involving the locals at all levels and stages of national development is critically important.

Then, it has been noted also that the public policy implementation studies pay extensive attention to the set of conditions that theory says must exist in order for the development process to be effective. But sometimes what makes public policies or programs to be successfully implemented is informal guesses (common sense). According to Fletcher (1984), critics of formal implementation theories have argued that theory is not necessarily better than common sense for guiding implementation. Common sense has been defined as a group's shared tacit knowledge concerning a phenomenon. One could argue that common sense about how or why something works (or does not) also constitutes a theory, albeit an informal and non-codified one. In supporting this argument, Nilsen (2015) explains that it is important to explore how the current theoretical approaches can be further developed to better address implementation challenges. It is also emphasized that empirical research is therefore needed to study how and the extent to which the use of implementation theories, models and frameworks contributes to more effective implementation and “*under what contextual conditions or circumstances they apply and do not apply*” (Nilsen, 2015:9).

2.5 Linkage between Public Service HRM and National Development

Since the central focus of this study is to seek deeper understanding of the intersection between public service human resources management and national development, it is imperative to consider what scholarship says how the two themes are interrelated. Sometimes there are doubts raised about whether human resources contributes significantly to economic growth and development of societies. However, there is massive empirical evidence which shows that human resources capacity is crucial for national development implementation particularly in developing countries where the public service is still the main actor in this process.

According to Pecikoza (2014), organizations use human resources practices as a strategy to gain competitive advantage within the market. Pecikoza explains that through adequate implementation of human resources practices, organizations attract, develop and retain committed employees who are crucial in supporting the organizations to achieve goals and objectives. Furthermore, HRM practices have been defined as institutional efforts meant to support people in contributing to their full potential, fully and aligned with the directions of the organization and that this brings success to the people and the institution together, resulting in a high performance organization. It is this approach that is critical to the long-term success of any organization. Examples of HRM practices that organizations create in order to maximize human resources influence on organizational performance include: analyzing and design of work; HR planning; recruiting; selecting the best employees; training and development; compensation; performance management and appraisal; and employee relations. The basic idea is that a particular bundle of HR practices has the potential to contribute to improved attitude and behaviour, lower levels of absenteeism and labour turnover. Such HRM practices therefore generate higher levels of productivity.

In the literature, the initial studies concerning the relation between HRM and performance were basically aimed at the impact of separate HRM practices on individual performance (Delaney and Huselid, 1996; Bowen and Ostroff, 2004). But this has now changed because of the need for increased internal consistency of different HRM activities. There is now unanimity that the bundle of HRM practices is more than the sum of the separate parts (Paauwe and Boselie, 2003).

With the passage of time, scholars have now suggested that many HRM practices have the potential to improve and sustain organizational performance. Some of these best practices proposed by Pfeffer (1998) include: employment security, selective hiring of new personnel,

self-managed teams and decentralization of decision making as the basic principles of organizational design, comparatively high compensation contingent on organizational performance, extensive training, reduced status distinctions and barriers, including dress, language, office arrangements, and wage differences across levels, and extensive sharing of financial and performance information throughout the organization.

In another meta-analysis of 104 articles Boselie and Wiele (2001) concluded that the top four HRM practices are training and development, contingent pay and reward schemes, performance management (including appraisal), and careful recruitment and selection of new personnel were the most commonly listed essential HR activities. Another study by Redman-Simmons (2009:234) also identified an HRM bundle of key practices which support service organizations quality strategies: careful recruitment and selection (e.g total quality management, zero defects recruitment, right first time recruitment), extensive remuneration system (e.g bonuses for staff available for multi-skilling), team working and flexible job design (e.g designing empowered jobs), training and learning (e.g front line staff having interpersonal and social skills), employee involvement (e.g keeping employees informed of key changes in the organization), and performance appraisal which is linked to contingent reward systems.

The discussion above have been on what literature indicates are the bundle of HRM practices meant to maximize human resources capacity utilization for purposes of enhancing performance of organizations in general. But improving public service performance seems to be only possible when the public sector has sufficient, qualified and involved staff that will be able to cope with the changing contingencies. It is highlighted that the public service continually strive to do more with less and to deal with this conflicted agenda. Public sector organisations must identify innovative ways to increase efficiency and lower costs while maintaining quality services

(Vermereen et al., 2008; Pecikoza, 2014). Again, public sector HR professionals are faced with a variety of barriers including old information technology (IT) systems, lack of management support, inadequate funding, aging workforce and increased competition with the private sector for employees (Lawton and Rose, 2001). As such, specific HRM practices are supposed to be used to enhance the human capital of employees so that they can contribute optimally in the performance of the public sector.

This takes us to the scholarly debates about the actual link between human resource capacity and how it influences national development. There are disagreements among researchers in as far as how human resources management utilization influences national development in societies is concerned. There are two major different approaches identified on this discourse in literature, namely: the conviction concerning the link and the doubt about the link or even denial (Chew, 2004). Despite the controversy about this public service HR-national development nexus, much of empirical research on the added value of best HRM practices demonstrates evidence that HRM is critical to national development (Pecikoza, 2014). The first systematic empirical of HRM and performance link were published in 1994 and 1995 by authors such as Arthur (1994) as well as Huselid (1995). The bulk of literature accepts that HRM practices have a significant impact on organization performance and national economic growth and development.

According to Chew (2004), the lack of understanding on mediating variables and their effect on HRM-Performance linkage, the existing gap in explaining this link, is referred to as the “Black Box”. The “black box” refers to the often unclear process that occur when inputs are converted into useful output. The “black box” is also described as “gap”, “largely unexplained facet” or “remaining void” in terms of explaining the processes and mechanisms by which HRM-

Performance impact operates (Savaneviciene and Stankeviciute, 2010:429). However, scholars continue to explore the “black box” of HR practices and their impact on employee attitudes and organizational outcomes like absenteeism and turnover. Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, absenteeism, voluntary turnover and human resources management practices are just some of the variables that are measured in addition to basic demographic information like occupation groups and union status (Pecikoza, 2014). Because of the studies on these variables, scholars have managed to theorise the means through which this relationship between HRM and organizational performance occurs. Below are a few models designed to open up the “black box”.

Becker et al. (1997) Model

Pecikoza (2014) explains that the model suggests that business strategies drive the design of the HR system. He further posits that HRM practices directly impact employee skills, employee motivation, and work design which consequently influences employee’s creativity, productivity and discretionary behavior. These variables in turn result in operational performance which relates to profitability and growth, ultimately determining organizational market value. Clearly this insinuates that business strategies are critical in determining human resources management practices which should be properly aligned in order to influence effective operational performance.

Guest (1997) Model

According to Guest, Vroom’s Expectancy Theory of motivation provides one possible basis for developing a more coherent rationale about HRM-Performance link. As indicated above, Expectancy theory proposes that performance at individual level depends on high motivation,

possession of the necessary skills and abilities and an appropriate role and understanding of that role. The conclusion is a motive to choose such HRM practices that encourage skills, motivation and an appropriate role structure. These factors influence behavior outcomes which later translate into performance outcomes. In other words these are the variables directly linking human resources capacity utilization to national development implementation.

Purcell et al., (2003) The People – Performance framework

This framework is built on two assumptions central to unlocking the black box of the HRM-Performance linkage, namely: 1) the framework advances the concept of discretionary behavior by suggesting that virtually all employees have the capacity to engage in discretionary behavior; 2) the critical role of line managers because they have discretion in the way that they apply HRM and the way they behave towards employees. The implication here is that the way in which supervisors and managers relate to subordinates directly influences how the employees would engage in discretionary behavior. Discretionary behavior ultimately affects employees' contribution towards organizational performance and this could either be negative or positive.

Wright and Nishii (2006) Model

Wright and Nishii examined some of the mediating processes that might occur in HRM-performance relationship by examining the relationship at multiple levels of analysis. These authors present the model that includes intended HR practices, actual HR practices, perceived HR practices, employee reactions and performance. According to this model the actual HR practices exist objectively and must be perceived and interpreted subjectively by each employee. The perceived HR practices and employee reactions are two individual level variables that are central to causal pathways and core to the opening of the “black box”. It can be deduced from

these processes that the individual is caused to behave in certain ways depending on how he or she perceives the HR practices existing in the organisation.

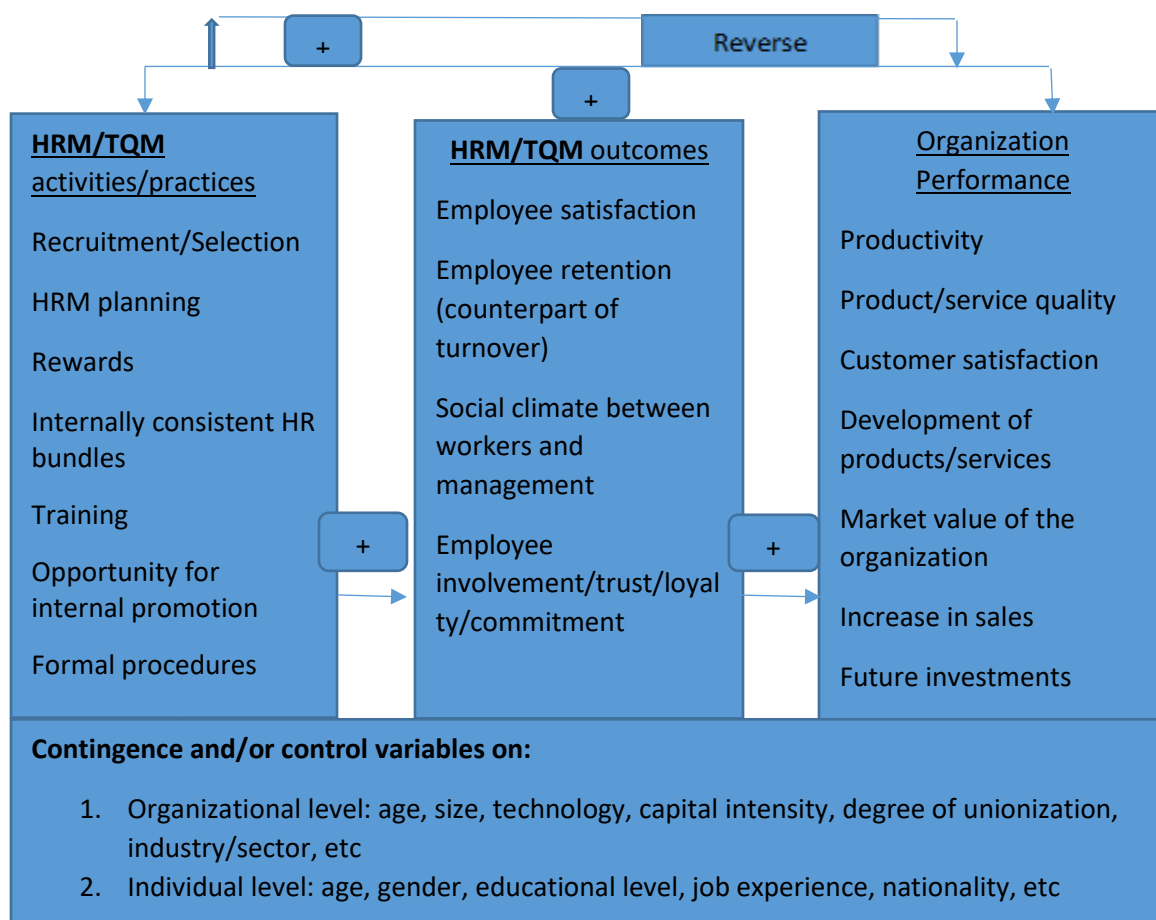
Analysis of the linkage between HRM practices and performance is important because it demonstrates the modalities through which human resources contributes to the success or failure of national development. The models discussed above clearly show the manner in which business strategies, HRM practices and other factors like motivation affecting public service HRM can potentially thwart or derail the achievement of national development aspirations. The extant literature is replete with frameworks or models explaining direct linkages that exist between public service HRM and national development in developing countries. As pointed out above, the example of the People-Performance Framework with its emphasis on the concept of discretionary behavior which suggests that virtually all employees have the capacity to engage in discretionary behavior on a daily basis is very critical in this study. The framework also highlights the fact that line managers have discretion in the application of HRM practices and the way they behave towards their subordinates. These two aspects have implications on employees' productivity in organizations.

Generally, understanding the linkage between the two phenomena in this study will be done by investigating HRM practices and their impact on performance especially when it comes to the achievement of set development objectives and goals. Both scholarly literature and empirics have demonstrated in this review that HRM practices have potential to either assist the public service to direct effective national development or drift it altogether. The propositions in these models and frameworks have mainly underscored the fact that potentially all government

employees have the ability to reduce the capacity of the public service to effectively implement national development.

Paauwe (2004) presents a summary of the conceptual model of the available empirical research on HRM-performance link. This is a model of HRM activities in relation to HRM outcomes and organizational performance as can be observe in the figure below.

Figure 2.2 HRM Model Depicting Link Between HRM and Performance



Source: Adapted from Paauwe HRM and performance (2004)

Paauwe (2004) explains that some HRM activities influence the performance of the organization directly and that organizational performance will give rise to a change (very often perceived as

an improvement) in HRM practices. This suggests that both HRM activities and organizational performance should have a bidirectional link in that while HRM activities would directly improve operational performance of the organization, organizational performance must engineer improvement of HRM activities in the organization particularly when there are criticisms. The implication here is that outcries from employees in organizations should be used as spring boards for improving the effectiveness of the HRM practices which in turn influences their contributions.

2.6 Effectiveness of Public Service HRM in National Development

In the literature, there is sort of a ‘mixed bag’ in as far as the effectiveness of the public service HRM in national development is concerned. There are times that notable achievements have been made by the public service in delivering national development in societies but at the same time the public service has been faulted for retrogressive national development. In case studies conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa by Rob and Richard (2007) have almost all referred to the problem of how to develop (or restore) loyal, capable and efficient civil services. It is reported that civil services have been described as over-sized, unresponsive, rule-bound or with not enough (effective) rules, low incentive, driven by corruption or patronage and red tape. Nevertheless the public service (ministries, local authorities and departments) has always been the tool available to African governments for the implementation of developmental goals and objectives. It is seen as a pivot for growth of African economies and poverty reduction. According to Lufunyo (2013), the public service is responsible for the creation of an appropriate and conducive environment in which all sectors of the economy can perform optimally. Lufunyo further emphasizes that it is this catalytic role of the public service that propelled governments all over the world to search continuously for robust mechanisms and good HRM practices

through public sector reforms which would lead to better quality of public service delivery and sustained economic development in societies.

A number of empirical studies demonstrate the fact that governments around the globe depend on the public service HRM for improved service delivery and national development. UNCTAD (2006) explains that the development of domestic productive capacities and associated growth in productive employment opportunities is central to a paradigm shift from a consumption- and exchange-oriented approach to poverty reduction and national development. According to UNCTAD, the identified general requirements for the public sector to increase productive capacities include the following;

- Improved coordination between economic agents to take account of the production and investment complementarities
- Enhanced State capacities rather than State minimalism; which means:
 - Administrative, judicial and law enforcement systems that are honest, impartial and competent
 - A civil service and agencies capable of drawing up coherent development programmes and implementing specific policies that serve the broader national interests and are not captured by sectional and individual interests
 - Funding to implement good governance agenda
- Flexibility to experiment, make mistakes and make incremental improvements so as to learn what works and what does not in a particular country.

As can be observed from this list, national development is basically a function of an effective public service. All the general requirements for productive capacities for national development depend on how effective the public service HRM is implementing development in societies.

In the literature, another classic example in terms of the effectiveness of public service HRM in national development is Rwanda. According to Chemouni (2017), the principle of merit-based recruitment in Rwanda has been considered as pivotal to the reconstruction of the country, the promotion of peace and national development. In his study about the politics of core public sector reform (PSR) in Rwanda, Chemouni reports that his project focused empirically on the core public sector: how the central state apparatus is staffed, financed and coordinated. It does so by exploring reforms in five state functions: coordination of central ministries and agencies; public finance management (PFM – specifically budget formulation and reporting, and procurement); civil service management; external audit; and anti-corruption. It is highlighted that these aspects are not only typical of PSR (e.g. World Bank, 2008: 4-7), they are also representative of two basic dimensions of the core public sector. The first is the *management* of the public sector, i.e. the ability to guide and regulate administrative conduct in the public sector, as reflected by coordination, PFM and civil service management. The second is to ensure *compliance* in the public sector, i.e. the ability to identify and sanction deviations from the norms regulating the public sector, as reflected by the external audit and anti-corruption aspects of PSR.

The analysis by Chemouni (2017) about the effectiveness of the public sector reforms in Rwanda reveals interesting insights regarding the manner in which the bundle of HRM practices

potentially drove national development in that country. For example part of the reforms agenda targeted the introduction of merit-based system of recruitment and promotion of civil servants in Rwanda. It is reported that historically, the recruitment and promotion of civil servants in Rwanda was mostly based on favouritism and that this contributed to the civil war and genocide in the country. Chemouni posits that the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) aimed at basing its strategy of legitimation on two sources: rapid socio-economic progress; and impartial rules. This provides a powerful framework to explain PSR success in Rwanda. It is highlighted that PSR was first necessary for the state to become a tool robust enough to implement the rulers' ambitious developmental project. This was, for instance, visible in the way in which the government endeavoured to recruit capable civil servants or quickly improved coordination, planning and budgeting as a response to challenges in implementing the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) and Vision 2020, two national development instruments at the time. The commitment to PSR was such that donors considered that some reforms went 'too far', given the capacity of Rwanda, as was the case with the Organic Budget Law (OBL) in 2006. In addition, the high developmental ambitions of the regime in a context of poverty meant that PSR was considered vital to manage the state's scarce resources in the most effective way. The implication here is that the success story of national development in Rwanda after genocide in 1994 is attributed to among other factors effective public service HRM which contributed to the productive capacity of the country.

The public sector reforms in Rwanda which deliberately focused on building a functioning public sector that inspires confidence to donors for their external financial support for national development agenda; reforms in budget formulation and budget reporting for maximizing the use

of resources to implement the nation's development agenda; and transparent and efficient procurement system that engender civil servants to comply with the relevant rules and regulations were all done with the infusion of best fit HRM practices. There was acknowledgement of the low staff capacity when reforms were being implemented in Rwanda but necessary mechanisms were put in place so as to align the strategies to the local conditions prevailing in the country. Although most public sector reforms in Rwanda reflected best international practices, efforts were made to ensure that there was sensitivity to the local conditions. This was necessary so as to avoid a gap between what was on paper and what was actually working on the ground with the reforms.

Another empirical study on public sector reforms in Tanzania by Lufunyo (2013) also demonstrated that the public service HRM is key to service delivery and national development. Data collected from a case study design using a purposive sample of 40 councilors as representatives of the citizen and 80 public servants as part of management side of Dar es Salaam City council revealed that the final analysis established that that the public sector reforms infused with bundles of HRM practices in local authorities have contributed to improved service delivery. For instance, it is highlighted that public sector reforms have significantly improved the level of competence and training to public servants. It is reported that 75.8% agreed that the reforms have improved their level of competence thereby allowing the civil servants to effectively carry out their duties and responsibilities in the implementation of national policies and programmes.

The empirical cases above elucidate the fact that the effectiveness of public service HRM in national development implementation greatly depends on effective management of the bundle of

HRM practices highlighted above. Cases of Rwanda and Tanzania, for example, clearly demonstrates that optimal contributions by human resources in national development implementation is bolstered through various motivation strategies available in literature. So whenever national development is ineffectively implemented in societies, one of the possible causes has to do with public service HRM practices. After highlighting the empirical cases for effective public service HRM in national development implementation, the following section briefly explains some of the factors constraining HR capacity utilization in national development.

2.7 Constraints for Public Service HR Capacity Utilization in National Development

In this section, the researcher attempted to review the literature concerning the other factors responsible for the effective public service HR utilization in national development implementation. This review led to the discovery of some factors that act as constraints in this process. Mostly the reasons proffered for the sub-optimal contributions by the public service in effective national development implementation have to do with human resources management related practices themselves. It has been highlighted that although the goals of HRM can reasonably be well defined, the related list of HRM practices for superior performance is far from clear and awaits either a clear theoretical specification or a much stronger empirical base (Guest, 1997). Guest further pinpoints that there is a tendency to focus predominantly on the internal characteristics of HRM at the expense of broader strategic issues such that in the end much emphasis is put on advocating a best set of practices while ignoring the variety of pressures and consequent business strategies thereby taking a considerable risk in implying ‘one best way’. However as we noted earlier on there is no one-size-fits all strategy as everything depends on contextual factors.

The first factor noted with effective public service HR utilization in national development in literature relates to the availability of adequate number of personnel with appropriate qualifications in the relevant bureaucratic organization. According to Santoso (1986), unskilled personnel or shortage of personnel will adversely affect a program's success or slow down implementation process. It is emphasized that although different scholars on public policy differ on the exact definition of resources, there is a general agreement that the lack of human resources may result in program failure or partial implementation of public policies.

Santoso (1986) also explains that continuous and seriousness of supervision is another variable relevant to the success or failure of national development implementation because effective supervision is crucial in preventing subordinates from deviating from policy objectives and in minimizing mismanagement. Most problems to do with cases of corruption by local bureaucrats in various developing countries have been attributed to weaknesses in the supervision of national development policies or program implementation.

Another important constraining factor affecting optimal public service HR utilization in national development noted in literature is the type of regime under which the local government exists. According to Pressman and Wildavsky (1974), studies of policy implementation in both Western and developing countries suggest that regime structures have shaped the policies and their outcomes according to whether they are democratic, authoritarian, or more or less open systems of government. It is reported that in Western liberal countries, bureaucrats have greater

autonomy than their counterparts in the developing countries. However, it is noted this autonomy sometimes hampers national development because bureaucrats can ignore government policy directives. This autonomy is blamed for fragmentation in national development implementation as it allows differences in perspectives as to whether a program is important or not.

In ending this section on the discussion on factors constraining effective public service HR utilization in national development, it is observed in scholarship that the focus of attention is on continuous improvements needed to be done with public administration as an indispensable instrument of economic and social development. There is evidence that indeed the *“blame for poor developmental performance is in large part attributed to the failure of development administration”* (Turner and Hulme, 1997: 13). It is for this reason that scholars have continued to focus more closely on the environment in which administration is practiced and considering the various human resources approaches to national development. This perspective is relevant to public sector management not only because it focuses on the relations between bureaucrats, politicians and organisations but also on power and politics which shape policies and their outcomes (Riggs, 1964).

2.8 Framework for Ameliorating Public Service HR Utilization Constraints

In the literature it is emphasized that effective public service HR capacity utilization in national development requires a framework that addresses the causes of the constraining factors. As indicated above, there are certain preconditions which should exist for successful national development as well as the bots and nuts for the public service to get the best contributions from government employees.

The extant literature on effective national development has been clear about the importance of availability of relevant capabilities in implementing agencies of public policies. It has to be recalled that national development is, in this study, regarded as a comprehensive term which refers to improvement in living standards of people, increase in per capita income, delivery of social amenities like education, healthcare, social services and poverty reduction among the citizens of a country. Under it, a country through its bureaucratic machinery, is supposed to use its resources in a fair and just way to implement national development programmes and policies intended to benefit a large number of people. According to (UNDESA 2007:225), “.....*there is a tendency to focus attention to the management of finances for implementing projects and programs aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and indeed this is important. However, in this context, managing the human resource is no light matter. Of all the resources that go into implementing any project or program, none is more important than the human resources. Even a tractor cannot drive itself!*”

So, it should be emphasized that competent human resources (with developed knowledge, technological skills and experience) that will be leaders in nation building is an important factor for ensuring success of national development strategies and to respond better to challenges and advances in globalization. The human resource development of the individual is indispensable to economic development of society. As economic development progresses, the role of human capital increases and the quality of labour becomes important. Effective national development requires the public bureaucracy to have adequate staff in terms of overall numbers and more importantly in terms of specific areas of professional, technical or managerial competence and expertise. The lack of these is counterproductive as the capabilities of government bureaucracy

in terms of expertise and skill determine, to a large extent, policy implementation success or failure (Ikelegbe, 2006).

The other capability for effective public service HR capacity utilization in national development noted in literature has to do with government employees' attitudes. Implementation of national development is usually a political process involving interaction between many actors who have different goals, values, interests and backgrounds. Thus the efficacy and efficiency of national development are determined or influenced by attitudes and reaction of the street-level bureaucrats and target groups. It is explained that usually the attitudes of these actors towards public policies are graded into three levels, namely: obedience, recognition and internalization. These three aspects about attitudes of implementers and target group influence implementation to either go smoothly or not since they determine acceptability of the public policies (Zhang, 2017).

It is a well-known fact that governments have constraints like limited financial resources and sometimes fail to adequately address the various needs of its employees. When this happens employees become frustrated and use their discretionary judgment to determine the level of effort they should put in doing their work almost on a daily basis. The concept of discretionary behavior in the context of national development is very important in this study. This is mainly the case because effective national development crucially depends on the predispositions of frontline staff (also known as street-level bureaucrats) who are the main actors in the implementation of public policies (Lipsky, 1980; Meyers and Nielsen, 2012). As Matland (1995:151) notes:

Decentralization should occur within a context of central control. Street-level bureaucrats do have great discretion in their interactions with clients. To proceed from this fact to theorize that because such flexibility exists it should serve as the basis for

designing policy, however, is to turn the role of theory on its head (Linder and Peters 1987). It effectively equates description with prescription. Flexibility and autonomy might be appropriate when the goals of the policy formulators and implementers are the same, but if they differ greatly, flexibility and autonomy may lead to policies which result in lower performance on official goals.

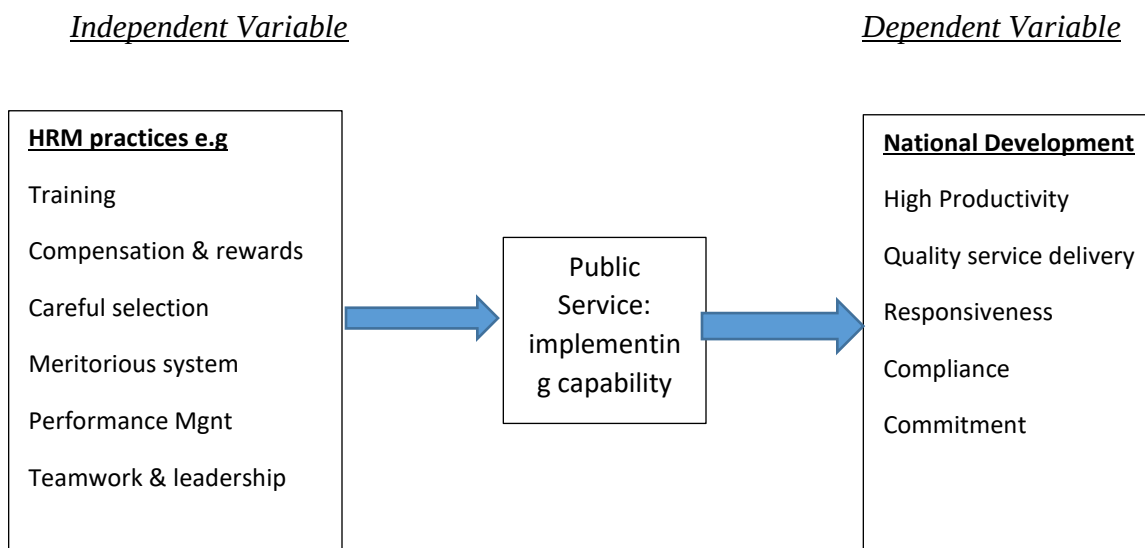
The other issue worth noting relates to the degree of ambiguity prevalent in a particular public policy. Matland (1995:158-59) explains that there are different types of ambiguity, which fall into two categories, “ambiguity of goals and ambiguity of means. In top-down models goal clarity is an important independent variable that directly affects policy success. Goal ambiguity is seen as leading to misunderstanding and uncertainty and therefore often is culpable in implementation failure. The position of top-downers is quite explicit—policies should be pushed in the direction of greater goal clarity”. In affirming the same argument, Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) view ambiguity as problematic, because it will leave implementers responsible for interpreting policies, which could lead to drifting away from the intent of the intervention. In this vein, it is concluded that human resources and public policies are critical success factors of public service effectiveness.

In view of the scholarship regarding the prerequisite mechanisms for effective public service HR utilization in national development, the researcher has designed a simple conceptual framework which is a combination of motivation strategies and public service preconditions required for effective national development. The main purpose of the framework, as highlighted in the literature, is to suggest a re-consideration of the use of a bundle of HRM practices by governments as a means of rejuvenating their effectiveness in national development and service delivery.

2.9 Conceptual Framework of the Study

In the literature, linkages between public service HRM and national development are revealed. This is particularly the case in developing countries where the public service is still considered the dominant implementing agency of national development. It is explained that implementation of public policies through which national development is achieved is a complex process involving interactions with many actors (Sabatier, 2005; Anderson, 2014). So for effective national development to take place, a set of conditions for successful implementation must obtain and this mainly hinges on the availability of well trained and motivated human resources in governments. Human resources are identified as the most strategic resource possessing so much influence to either drift implementation, slow it or keep it on track (Chitescu and Lixandru, 2016; Kiggundu, 1989; Casio & Aguinis, 2011; Zhang, 2017). If HR is to effectively influence national development, public services must have proven bundle of HRM practices explained in extant literature so that it obtains optimal contributions and high productivity from its human resources. These relationships are conceptually presented in the figure below.

Figure 2.3 Conceptual framework for effective national development formulated by author



2.10 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed existing literature on the main focus of this study which is the linkage between the two phenomena of the study; namely, public service HRM and national development. Based on relevant theoretical underpinnings, models and frameworks located in both national development implementation studies and human resources management, the chapter has identified proven strategies which the public service can utilize in order to maximize the contributions that public servants would potentially make in national development. The chapter has identified factors and preconditions for successful national development as well as the bolts and nuts for enabling the public service to obtain optimal contributions from government employees in developing countries. The factors and preconditions were observed to characterize the policies themselves, the implementing agency capability and the target groups. Most importantly, it was discovered that human resources have so much influence to either drift national development, slow its implementation, or keep it on track depending on, *inter alia*, how well motivated they are in the workplace on a daily basis. The role of HR in influencing effective national development can therefore not be overemphasized.

In addition, the review unraveled multiple constraining factors in the implementation process of national development in societies. The main issue noticed with implementation is that it is a political process involving various actors who should interact together and therefore implementers (public servants) should be adequate enough and need to have both managerial and political skills in order to effectively coordinate and collaborate with other actors involved so that effective national development would take place.

The linkages between public service HR utilization and national development have been demonstrated from both the human resources management and national development

implementation studies perspectives. It is from both scholarly explanations and empirics used in this chapter that a conceptual framework to guide this study has been formulated. The conceptual framework will form the basis for the themes to be investigated during fieldwork using the research methods explained in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2 the review focused on the theoretical underpinnings, conceptual frameworks and empirics about the link between public service human resources management and national development implementation as discussed in literature. More importantly the variables and preconditions which must exist for effective national development implementation particularly in developing countries like Malawi were underpinned. The empirics demonstrated that human resources management in public service has the potential to either slow down national development implementation or facilitate its effectiveness depending on how well the government employees are motivated on a daily basis.

This chapter now turns to the systematic discussion of the research methodology and the justification for its adoption in carrying out this study. In other words, it elaborates on the research design philosophy, approaches, tools and techniques that were selected to guide successful execution of the study project.

3.2 Research Design

Before divulging into this study's research design, it is important to briefly discuss some concepts pertinent for increasing our understanding of research activities. Research has its own theoretical underpinnings in order researchers to effectively carry out collection and analysis of data. Failure to grasp these important issues may negatively impact the research outcomes because researchers should clearly understand research process and design in the first place.

In literature there are various definitions of the concept of research. However the major activities involved in the research process include systemic inquiry, multi-step process and data-based investigation aimed at finding answers into a specific problem (Cooper and Schindler, 2008; Sekaran, 2009; Bassey, 1999; Saunders et al, 2012; Collis and Hussey, 2009). But despite all these common elements identified in the meaning of the concept of research, there is no singular definition of the concept in literature. According to Collis and Hussey (2009), research means different things to different people. However the authors conclude that from the many different definitions that have been advanced, a consensus can be seen because research is deemed as a process of enquiry and investigation, a systematic and methodical enquiry, and an effort of increasing knowledge development.

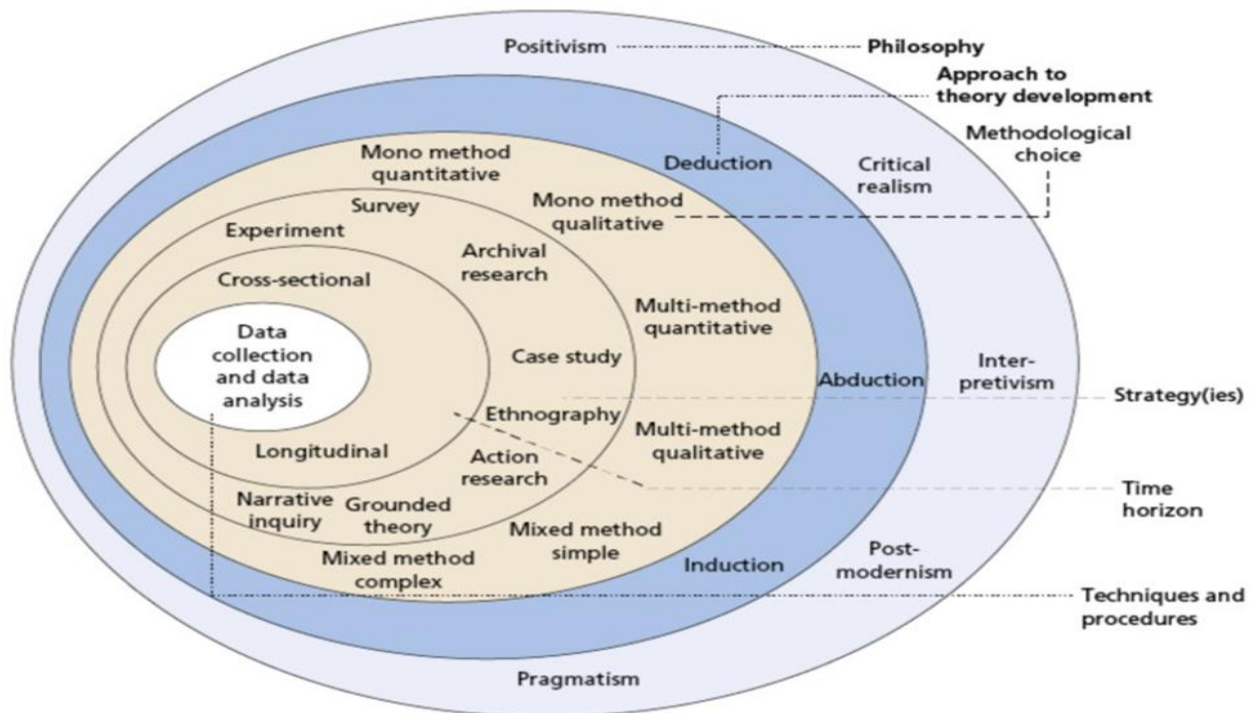
Sadava and McCreary (1997) have identified seven issues that should be addressed before performing research, namely:

- identifying the research goals,
- defining the variables,
- selecting a research method,
- identifying the ethical considerations of the study,
- identifying the practical considerations of the study,
- analyzing the data, and
- finally determining the limitations of the study.

In order to effectively implement research projects, Grix (2010) postulates that the elements of research should be presented as a coherent whole, linking and justifying the strategies for answering the research questions within a philosophical framework. Hence, it is emphasized that a set of methods and philosophical assumptions through which research is conducted should be grasped (Collis and Hussey, 2009; Easterby-Smith et al., 2012).

Saunders et al (2018), presents the elements of research as consisting of a concentric layer of processes, beginning from the outer layer, philosophical conceptualization of what research is, approach to theory development, methodological choices (mono/mixed methods), strategies, whether cross-sectional or longitudinal in time horizon and techniques and procedures (see Figure 3.1: Research Onion).

Figure 3.1 Research Onion



Source: ©2018 Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill

From these references, it is concluded that research methodology represents a systematised process that is followed by researchers in their collection and analysis of data, with the intention of properly identifying issues to be discussed as well as achieving the objectives of the study under investigation.

Sadava and McCreary (1997) also suggest certain questions that must be addressed to select an appropriate method for conducting research including what, why and how questions. They emphasize that the answer to the “what” question explains the research focus, the answer to the “why” question provides the reason for investigating that specific research topic, and the answer to the “how” question explains the research method for that topic focus area.

In the current study focus, the “what” and the “why” questions were considered and clarified in chapter one and two, while the “how” question is concerned with the research methodology, which refers to the procedural framework within which the research can be conducted (Remenyi et al. (1998).

In summary, research should cover the research design, data collection methods, data analysis, presentation and discussion of findings, conclusions and recommendations and limitations of the study and areas for further research.

Designing a research study requires following a particular path through which the systematic investigation or research can be conducted. Saunders et al (2012) posit that this path should be considered as involving the identification of the research philosophy, research approach and strategy and methods of data collection and analysis. Usually it is a requirement that justifications for the choices made over each of these aspects of the study is provided. There are many alternatives available in the public domain so providing justifications for the choices is important.

3.3 Research Philosophy

Understanding of the research's philosophical position is useful in helping researchers to clarify alternative designs, approaches, methods and techniques for a particular piece of research and to identify which of these alternatives are more likely to be applied in practice (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012). What this means is that it is crucially important to understand the research philosophy at an early stage as this helps in determining the most appropriate research methodology for that particular study. Saunders et al. (2012) also state that research philosophy reflects the way the researcher thinks about the development of knowledge, which in turn affects the way he/she goes about doing the research.

The concept of research philosophy basically refers to the progress of scientific investigation practice that is based on people's views and assumptions concerning the nature and development of knowledge. It hinges on the manner in which a researcher thinks about the way knowledge develops. In the social sciences, there are contestations regarding the most appropriate philosophical position from which methods should be adopted. This debate has resulted into a formation of a continuum between the two main paradigms that dominate the literature: positivism and interpretivism. Saunders et al. (2012) and Collis and Hussey (2009) suggest that the two main distinct and contrasted philosophies that dominate the research process are known as, positivism and interpretivism. The latter is described by Remenyi et al. (1998) and Creswell (2008) as a qualitative research, while the former is described as a quantitative research.

The distinction between the two types has been described by Amaratunga et al. (2002) as that the positivists usually use quantitative and experimental methods to test hypothetical-deductive generalisations. They also search for causal explanations and fundamental laws to formulate hypotheses for subsequent verification. This needs the observer to be independent from the subject being observed. The interpretivist inquiry, on the other hand, uses qualitative and naturalistic approaches to inductively and holistically understand human experience in context-specific settings. It tries to explain a phenomenon rather than search for external causes or fundamental laws. Shaw and Gould (2001) state that in qualitative research, researchers attempt to understand meanings that people give to social phenomena. This is usually done by concentrating on observations to express reality and describe people in natural situations. Whereas in quantitative research, Bryman and Bell (2011) note that researchers seek to generate numerical data and exhibit a view of the relationships between theory and research as a deductive and a predilection for a natural science approach, as well as having an objectivist conception of social reality.

Epistemology

Epistemology is concerned with the origin, nature, scope and limits of knowledge (Grix, 2010). It is a study of knowledge, which examines the relationships between the research and what is being researched. It is a branch of philosophy that deals with the origin and scope of knowledge and answers the basic question of what distinguishes true (adequate) knowledge from false (inadequate) knowledge. It assumes that knowledge exists whether we are conscious of it or not. According to Thomas (2009), epistemology refers to the study about how do you look and find out about the world that we have defined ontologically. In the case of this study, since the focus was on the linkage between public service human resource management and national development implementation, true knowledge related to what the implementors of national development in Malawi would say about these two study variables.

Positivists believe that the social world exists externally and its properties should be measured through objective measures, whereby an observer must be independent from what is being observed. That means the researchers are working with an observable social reality and looking for general laws and cause-effect relationships that exist between, events by using systematic, rational methods. On the other hand, interpretivists believe that the social world does not exist externally and the researcher is part of it and can participate and interact with what is being researched. They search for explanations of human action by understanding the way in which the world is understood by individuals (Collis and Hussey, 2009). They aim to explain human actions by understanding how the world and its events are perceived by the individuals who experience them, where meaning is not discovered but constructed (Crotty 2003).

Ontology

The term Ontology comes from two Greek words “onto” which means something that exists, and “logos” which denotes logical knowledge. Therefore, ontology is the study or concern about what kind of things exist. Ontological assumptions are concerned with what we believe constitutes social reality. Ontology, describes the nature of reality that researchers investigate (Grix, 2010).

It is based on two stances/positions that range from realism to idealism, where realism assumes social and organisational reality exist independently of our awareness or consciousness. On the other hand, idealism describes a reality that is perceived in different ways by individuals, everyone experiences a discrete, subjective reality of objects and events (Sexton, 2003; Patthirage et al., 2005). It is explained that ontology describes the phenomena being investigated, whether it is an external objective to the researcher, and the researcher is independent of being researched or it is constructed as the researcher is not independent but he/she is an essential part of it.

Ontologically, positivists realise reality as being external and objective, while interpretivists understand reality as holistic and socially constructed and given meaning by people, rather than by being objectively and externally determined (Amaratunga, 2001; Saunders et al., 2012; Easterby-Smith et al., 2012).

Axiology

It is pointed out that axiology is concerned with the values of the researcher that appear during the investigation of the phenomena, and based on whether the reality is objective and “value free”, where the researcher does not impose any value judgments on the subject of research, or “value-laden” or value-biased where value judgments are involved (Ahmed, 2012; Sexton, 2003; Collis and Hussey, 2009). According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2012), in value-free or value-neutral research, the choice of what to study and how to study it can be determined by objective criteria rather than by human beliefs and interests, while in value-laden research, the choice is determined by human beliefs and experience.

Therefore, the positivists believe that science and the research process are value-free as the properties should be measured through reflection. They see the phenomena being researched as objective and cannot be affected by their research activities. They also attempt to explain the behaviour of the subject under research by identifying fundamental laws through observable reality. In contrast, the interpretivists believe that the research process is value-laden, because the action of people, who interact with the environment, is affected by the interpretations that they themselves place on different situations (Saunders et al., 2012).

The foregoing discussion of the major philosophical paradigms and their underlying assumptions for undertaking scientific research point to the fact that it should be possible to identify the appropriate path in order to successfully implement this study. This is because public servants who are the implementors of national development know the processes or issues that would make or break national development implementation in the country. As explained in Chapter 1, the study investigated the relationship between public service human resource management and national development implementation in Malawi. The idea was that by analyzing whether public human resources management influences the success or failure of national development implementation, it would be possible to develop a framework or model for mitigation identified constraining factors for effective national development in the developing countries like Malawi.

Thus, the study obviously deals with human behavior and stakeholders that have different perspectives on the national development implementation processes. Therefore, it is deemed to be more explanatory in nature. The study's nature therefore makes it unapproachable from the isolated standpoint demanded by the positivist approach. The interpretivism paradigm was thus identified as the most appropriate to this study because it allows the researcher to take on an empathetic stance in observing human behaviour and action as it occurs in real life (Collis and Hussey, 2009). The paradigm also helps to gain an in-depth understanding of the social context and the complexity of interaction and activities among various stakeholders involved in national development implementation process within the Malawian context. In addition, the identification of the research philosophy is crucially important in the formulation of suitable research approach and design by which the current study would be analyzed. The different research approaches and their importance to this study are discussed in the following section.

3.4 Research Approach

Ghauri et al. (2008:138-9) define research approach as, *“a systemic enquiry focused on the orderly collection of data for the purpose of obtaining information to find solutions to a research problem”*. It is also explained that research approach is, *“a strategy of inquiry which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to research design and the collection and analysis of data”* Myers (1997:5). Other scholars have defined research approach as a general plan of activity, including the collection of data and analysis in ways that assist to achieve the research aims and answer the research questions (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). It is emphasized that the choice of research approach, therefore, is dependent on the nature of the research problem and questions, the type and amount of knowledge available on the question, and resources for conducting the research (Williams, 2003). It is also being guided by the selection of the research paradigm, which influences the way in which the researcher collects data (Collis and Hussey, 2009). There are two main methodological approaches in literature, namely; deductive and inductive approaches. The major differences between these two are summarised by Saunders et al. 2012 and Bryman (2011), as illustrated in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Major Differences between Deductive and Inductive Approaches

Deductive Approach	Inductive Approach
-Scientific principles; -Moving from theory to data;	-Gaining an understanding of the meanings humans attach to events ;
-The need to explain causal relationships between variables;	-A close understanding of the research context;
-The application of controls to ensure validity of data;	-The collection of qualitative data;
-The operationalisation of concepts to ensure clarity of definition;	-A more flexible structure to permit changes of research emphasis as the research progresses
-A highly structured approach; -Research independence of what is being researched ;	-A realisation that the research is part of the research process;
-The necessity to select samples of sufficient size in order to generalise conclusions.	-Less concern with the need to generalize.

Source: *Saunders et al. (2012)*

On one hand, the inductive approach seeks to understand a social or human problem from multiple perspectives, while the deductive research is used when a researcher would collect data and develop a theory and hypothesis and design a research strategy to test the hypothesis as a result of data analysis (Saunders et al., 2012; Yin, 2009). Since the focus of this study is to seek understanding of whether public service human resources management influences successful national development implementation or not, the inductive approach was deemed to be the most appropriate option for the phenomena being investigated. Sekaran (2009) indicates that the selection of an appropriate approach is crucial to the success of any research. The two key justifications for this selection are the characteristics of the research problem and the type of the research question. These have been detailed in the research strategy design section below.

Saunders et al (2012) elaborate that the two research approaches – deductive and inductive – are basically related to the two distinct philosophical paradigms discussed above. It is explained that the deductive approach is mostly used by positivists while the inductive approach is most adopted by interpretivists. After providing the rationale for the choice of the research philosophy and approach for the present study, it is imperative to turn to the construction of a research strategy as a fundamental step in achieving the research objectives and answering the study's research question.

3.5 Research Strategy

According to Saunders et al (2012), a research strategy is a way by which a research question(s) could be answered in order to achieve the research purpose and objectives. Saunders et al also postulate that the choice of a research strategy is guided by the research questions and objectives, the extent of existing knowledge, the amount of time and other available resources, as well as by the research philosophical underpinnings. Yin (2009) explains that different research strategies exist in the social sciences literature such as: surveys, histories, experiments, analysis of archival information, ground theory, ethnography, feminist perspective, and case studies. It is pointed out that some of them are associated with the positivistic paradigm while others are associated with the interpretivist paradigm. The experimental studies and surveys are close to the positivist, whereas action research, case studies, ethnography, feminist perspective, ground theory, hermeneutics and participative enquiry refer to the interpretivism paradigm (Sexton, 2003; Mangan, 2004; Gill and Johnson, 2006; Easterby-Smith et al., 2012 and Saunder et al., 2012). Because the present study is underpinned by the interpretivist philosophy and is characterized by inductive approach the most appropriate research strategy is a choice from ethnography, action research and case study.

Ethnographic Research

Ethnographic research is as one in which the researcher uses socially acquired and shared knowledge to understand the observed patterns of human activities. It claims that all evidence is relative, and cannot be independent of the investigator (Yin, 2009). According to Collis and Hussey (2009), this type of research is well fitting to provide researchers with rich insights into the beliefs and values of human and organisational aspects of a socio-cultural phenomenon. It requires the researcher to spend a significant amount of time in the fieldwork to fully participate in its society (Myers, 1997). The ethnographic research is better suited to understand the reasons for behaviour of the subject over extended period of time within a natural setting (Burns, 2000). It is a strategy that is used to interpret the social world of research subject. Given these explanations it was deemed not suitable.

Action Research

Action research is an approach which assumes that the social world is constantly changing, and the researcher and the research itself are part of this change. Ahmed (2012) explains that action research and ethnographic research are most favoured options in research undertakings that are highly rooted in social science and are characterised by the high level of involvement of the researcher with the subject of the research.

Therefore, these two research strategies require the researcher to be a participant observer and to interact with the subject undertaken. Collis and Hussey (2009) explain that action research is a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve their own social practices through intervention experiments. It is used to describe, interpret and explain events as well as to solve a problem and make changes on the situation being researched through a cyclical process. These processes are planning, acting, observing and reflecting (McNiff, 2002). Therefore, an action research approach is always connected to social action or, as Kemmis (1993) notes, is regarded as a concrete and practical expression of the aspiration to change the social world. It is a technique involving a higher level of researcher involvement with the intention of implementing change within the organisation undertaken (Saunders et al., 2012).

The action research, therefore, leads the researcher to enter a situation, in order to bring about changes, and to monitor the results. This requires a close collaboration between the researcher and the participants. For this reason, Brydon-Miller and Greenwood (2006) state that action research is not conventional research because the researcher and the participants work on a voluntary partnership to form a collaborative team that determines the subject and methods of the work. They also learn and apply the methods together, analyse the outcomes, design and implement the actions arising from the process, and together determine process. Therefore, action research has been accepted as a valid type of applied research designed to find an effective way of bringing about a conscious change in a controlled environment. This study isn't premised on applied research hence the action research is not suitable.

Case Study

Robson (2011:178) defines a case study as, "a research strategy that involves an empirical investigation of particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence". Similarly, Yin (2009:13) defines case study as, "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident". Thus it can be concluded that Yin agrees with Robson although Yin takes the definition further by emphasizing the suitability of the case study to investigate phenomenon at the instance when the boundary between a phenomenon and the context is not clear. This statement underscores the important point that an important strength of case studies is the ability to undertake an investigation into a phenomenon in its context; it is not necessary to replicate the phenomenon in a laboratory or experimental setting in order to better understand the phenomena. Thus case study is a valuable way of observing the world around us. Yin (2009) also suggests that the decision of the determination of the most suitable strategy for a particular research is dependent on:

- ② The type of research questions being addressed,
- ② The extent control of the research over behavioural events, and
- ② The degree of focus on a contemporary event as opposed to a historical event.

In the final analysis, the rationale for the choice between these three different strategies should be based on the nature of the investigation and the type of required information. The nature of the present study as earlier indicated necessitates the collection of data held by the implementers in this case civil servants owing to their direct involvement in national development within the Malawian case studies selected.

The purpose of this present study does not require a degree of control over the event and the researcher's intervention with what is being studied, which is one of the major characteristic of the case studies. The event being examined in this study is a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, although historic information was used. Also, the type of the research questions posed in this study are framed as "why", and "what", which lead to determine the relevant strategy to be used. On the basis of these grounds, the case study strategy was chosen for this present study.

The case study was deemed the most appropriate research strategy with a higher degree of suitability, and was therefore preferred in this study against the other strategies. Case studies tend to gain in-depth insights into the topic and describe the total situation as a combination of different factors and to provide a better ability to deal with the real life situation as the main focus of the incumbent research. As a result, the case study research strategy was adopted to describe and explain how the public service human resource management in Malawi influences national development in terms of implementation.

In order to reduce bias which might be there if only one MDA is studied, the author opted to have Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Local Government and Ministry of Health as cases while the Department of Human Resources Management and Development (DHRMD) was specifically studied to understand it as a policy maker and implementer in HR. The other strength of case studies lies in its ability to bring out detailed information from the viewpoint of the people involved in the national development implementation process by using multiple sources of evidence. Yin (2009) further suggests that the case study research strategy could be applied to explain complex causal links in real-life interventions, to describe the real-life context in which the intervention has occurred and to explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear set of outcomes.

Limitations Of the Case Study Research Strategy

The main limitation noted with the case study strategy pertains to the extent to which results generated from the cases can be generalised to other populations (Yin, 2009; Stake, 1995). A comprehensive understanding of generalisability is provided by Kaplan who underscores that the “generalisations must be truly universal, unrestricted as to time and space. It must formulate what is always and everywhere the case, provided only that the appropriate conditions are satisfied” (quoted in Lincoln and Guba, 2000:27). Because of this, it has been said that case study results may fail to account for causal linkages and outcomes in other cases beyond the present one (Gomm, Hammersley and Foster, 2000; Stake, 1995). However, other scholars argue that case studies are not meant to generate wider generalisations but rather to be used for in-depth understanding of the uniqueness of the case in question (Silverman, 2002; Punch, 2005; Stake, 1995). The argument of such scholars has been that attempts to generalise from single case studies would be problematic because generalisation to “cases not studied always entails some risk of mistaken inferences because they may differ from the case or cases studied in the values of potentially causal variables omitted from the theoretical framework” (George and Bennett, 2005:110).

In spite of these arguments and counterarguments, the proponents of case study strategy have been quick to pinpoint that there is some room for generalisations in case study designs (see Blaikie, 2000; Mjøset, 2006). Winters and Mor (2009:1082) point out that, “generalisation from case studies is possible”. Flyvbjerg (2006:228) adds that “*one can often generalize on the basis of a single case, and the case study may be central to scientific development via generalization*”. However, there is generally agreement that these generalisations are tentative (Stake, 1978). Similarly, Kennedy (1979:664) emphasises that in case studies “*an inference of generalisation is always tentative – that is data may offer confirming or disconfirming evidence but never conclusive*”. Evers and Wu (2006:511) emphasise that “*provisional generalisations from single cases*” can be made when methodologically there is:

- An exploration of the impressive amount of empirical knowledge that is contained within the theories that are used to make observations, to classify phenomena, and to understand and interpret cases; and
- Recognition of the role of a pattern of inference known as abduction, or inference to the best explanation, in drawing conclusions from case studies.

This present study will utilise the case study strategy with the view to draw tentative generalisations which would underscore the significance of the study to countries with similar contextual conditions. It has to be noted though that the generalisations made from cases are understood differently from the narrow “statistical generalization” appropriate to surveys (Blaikie, 2000; Yin, 1989; Stake, 1978). The emphasis in case study generalisations is on “analytical generalisations”, where “previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical results of a case study” (Yin, 1989:38; Johansson, 2003); “naturalistic generalization”, which is attained by recognizing the “similarities of objects and issues in and out of context and by sensing the natural co-variations of happenings.. (with the aim of) being both intuitive and empirical” (Stake, 1978:6); “fittingness”, which refers to the degree of comparability of different contexts (Scapens, 2004:269); “relatability”, which pertains to the extent to which the “details are sufficient and appropriate for other cases in a similar situation to relate their circumstances to that described in the case study” (Bassey, 1981:85); and “pragmatist strategy of generalization” which is to “generalize without cutting off grounding in specified contexts because generalization is desired, but not at the cost of the grounding in specific contexts” (Mjøset, 2006: 759).

It is for this reason that the study's provisional generalisations did not take the form of statistical generalisation because the study is mostly based on qualitative design although there are some quantitative elements. In this study "naturalistic" and "analytical" generalisations had formed the basis for drawing wider policy implications to other countries with similar contexts.

Triangulation

It has been suggested in literature that the case study is also known as a triangulated research strategy because the need for triangulation arises from the ethical need to confirm the validity of the research findings (Stake, 1995). Yin (2009) explains that in case study research this could be done by using multiple sources of data, because the problem in case studies is to establish meaning rather than location. Triangulation is important to ensure the validity, reliability and completeness of the information (CEMCA, 2002:44) due to the subjectivity and limitations that may be inherent in the use of one technique.

In particular, the triangulation process is based on the understanding that any bias and limitations inherent in a particular data source or method would be neutralised when used in conjunction with other data sources and methods (Creswell, 1994, Yin, 2009). There are four types of triangulation identified: data source triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and methodological triangulation (Rowley, 2002; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Collis and Hussey, 2009). Sexton (2003) has also added another type called data analysis triangulation. Briefly these types of triangulation have been explained below.

- The Investigator triangulation is where different researchers independently collect data on the same situation and then the results are compared.
- The methodological triangulation is where researcher uses two different methods, both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection to increase confidence in the interpretation.
- The triangulation of theories is where a researcher borrows models from a discipline and using the to explain situations in another discipline
- The data analysis triangulation is where the researcher uses more than one technique to analyse collected data.

Given the potential advantages of triangulation, three types of triangulation – methodological triangulation, data triangulation, and data analysis triangulation - were used in the present study to obtain a comprehensive understanding about the main focus of the study. It will be noted that the utilization of these types of triangulation enabled the researcher to explain the linkages between public service human resources management and national development implementation in Malawi. These were also helpful in unearthing constraining factors for effective national development implementation in the country. In this way, triangulation proved effectiveness in achieving the principal purpose and objectives of this study.

With respect to data triangulation, this study used different sources of data collection including desk review of official documents, key informant interviews and questionnaires were deployed in the process of this research to make sure that the collected data remain the same in different contexts.

In terms of methodological triangulation, the two main methods of data collection are viewed as the qualitative and the quantitative. The qualitative method is subjective and uses language and description, while the quantitative method is objective and relies heavily on statistics and figures (Amaratunga and Baldry, 2001). In the context of this study, the rationale for leaning more on qualitative research as opposed to quantitative research has been illuminated by Silverman, (2009) that the aim of understanding a phenomenon from a variety of perspectives of the participant and its particular social and institutional context is largely lost when textual data is quantified. Robson, (2011); Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that the main feature of the qualitative research is to allow the researcher to gain a holistic overview of the context under study; to capture data on the perceptions of local actors from the inside; and to understand key relationships and how different aspects of life are interrelated.

Miller et al. (2004) also note that the qualitative research is a flexible and repetitive process allowing the researcher to respond to unanticipated opportunities that arise in the route of the research. It will therefore be noted the qualitative method of data analysis is deployed in this study in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the intersection between public human resources management and national development implementation in Malawi. More importantly, it is deployed to explore perceptions, attitudes and experiences of key actors involved national development implementation. In terms of the triangulation of data analysis, the collected data was analysed by using two different techniques: content analysis and SPSS/excel.

3.6 Research Techniques

It has been established in literature that the term techniques refers to the tools that are used in collecting and analysing data (Yin, 2009; Bryman, 2008). Because the case study has been selected as the major strategy of this study, the research techniques will be discussed within the remit of case study research. Usually research techniques are described under two sections: data collection techniques and data analysis techniques.

3.6.1 Data Collection Techniques

This study used various qualitative and quantitative data collection tools in order to be robust in adequately gathering the necessary data for answering the research question and objectives. The deployment of a variety of data collection instruments was deemed pivotal for triangulation purposes. As already alluded to above, triangulation is important to ensure the validity, reliability and completeness of the information (CEMCA, 2002:44) due to the subjectivity and limitations that may be inherent in the use of one technique. Moreover, it is explained that the triangulation process is based on the understanding that any bias and limitations inherent in a particular data source or method would be neutralised when used in conjunction with other data sources and methods (Creswell, 1994, Yin, 2009). Thus the data collection techniques deployed in this study included desk reviews of official documents, key informant interviews, and administration of questionnaires to purposively sampled research participants.

According to Collis and Hussey (2009), there are two major types of data collection: primary data and secondary data. The primary data is principally collected through interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, focus groups, and questionnaires, while the secondary data is the type of data that has been collected by others. It can be in the form of written text such as books, journals, administrative and public records, and reports as well as non-written documents such as films and television programmes (Saunders et al., 2012). Because the case study was selected as a suitable research design for this study, Yin (2009) and Stake (1995) emphasise the significance of multiple source of evidence in the case study and identify six sources of data collection. These are: documentation, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, archival records, and physical artifacts. As indicated above, this study used three sources of data collection, namely; desk review, key informant interviews and questionnaires as discussed below.

3.6.1.1 Interviews with Key Informants

Interviews were used to gather information from key informants. This technique was seen as a key data collection method as it “provided information not recorded elsewhere, or not yet available (if ever) for public release” (Richards, 1996:200) but very central to the study. It was deployed because there was need for an in-depth understanding of the national development implementation issues under study. In-depth interviews were done at all levels of analysis and interviewees included officials from the Ministry of Health (both nurses and health surveillance assistants), Ministry of Agriculture (extension workers), Ministry of Local Government, and the Department of Human Resources Management and Development (DHRMD). In total eighteen (18) interviews were conducted by the researcher. The people interviewed included those that are currently working in these organisations and those retired or relocated to other organisations but were involved in one way or the other in the implementation processes of the programs under study.

These interviews were done using open ended semi-structured interview guides. According to Stake (1995), semi-structured questionnaires are used to give enough latitude and flexibility to the respondents of explaining the issues under study since purpose was “not to get simple yes and no answers but descriptions of an episode, a linkage, and explanation”. It is also pointed out that semi-structured questionnaires are employed as interview subjects “do not like being put in the straightjacket of closed ended questions but they prefer to articulate their views, explaining why they think what they think” (Aberbach and Rockman, 2002:674). This allowed further probes to bring out issues critical to the study. For ethical reasons, all the interviewees were promised that their responses would be held in confidence and that the researcher would solely be used for academic purposes and that their identities would remain anonymous. This made the interviewees to be more comfortable in participating in the study since there were no fear of some negative implications and consequences. Tape recorder was used to record the interviews and transcription begun within 24 hours.

Sampling

The study sought to investigate the influences that the public service HRM has in national development implementation processes in Malawi. With this in mind, the use of a random sampling technique was deemed not appropriate to select the required sample for in-depth interviews because it would include some not directly involved in the process and knowledgeable about the topic (Silverman, 2002). Schutt (2006:313) notes that, “*researchers should try to select interviewees who are knowledgeable about the subject of the interview, who are open to talking and who represent a range of perspectives*”. This is the reason that a non-probability (purposive sampling) technique was used. Purposive sampling has been defined as a non-probability technique where sampling is done in a “*deliberate way, with some purpose or focus in mind*” (Punch, 2005:187).

This is why actual respondents were purposively selected on the basis of their positions and association with the national programmes in question and their knowledge of the implementation dynamics. For the actual selection of the respondents in purposive sampling, the procedure is to “establish contact with a key person, or highly placed manager, [in order] to take his or her help in identifying the right persons” (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2002:176; Hartley, 2006). The actual selection of the respondents was done with the assistance of the programme officials from the MOH, DHRMD, MoASF and MOLGRD. These government officials were very instrumental in identifying personnel that were key to the implementation processes of the national programmes in question from which research participants were recruited. This was critical in order to “maximise what we can learn” (Stake, 1995:4) as it enabled the selection of “information rich cases for in-depth analysis related to the central issues being studied” (CEMCA, 2002:47).

3.6.1.2 Survey Questionnaires administered to selected Civil Servants

Yin (2009) pinpoints that this tool can be used to gather primarily quantitative data although qualitative data can also be obtained through the inclusion of open-ended questions. It is further explained that the technique should be done in a structured way with a list of both closed and open ended questions deployed. The rationale for the choice for the deployment of this technique was based on the need for the study to gather a lot of data from a large group of people.

Sample size determination and sample selection are fundamental issues in ensuring a representative sample is selected (Saunders et al, 2012). However, since the purpose of the study is not to generalize findings so as to prove a theory, purposive sampling was used and as such, the author administered 200 questionnaires to government employees in DHRMD, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Health. According to Saunders et al (2012) postulate that the method is relatively less consuming in terms of time and resources unlike observations or experimental methods which would require much more time and resources. Furthermore, the tool requires those who were involved in the cited national programmes implementation to be targeted. The survey questionnaire provided research participants with a list of options to choose from as well as open questions that required participants to make explanations on certain issues.

The survey questionnaires solicited data answering to the specific objectives of the study. In terms of the first component the study collected and analyzed the extent of the effectiveness of engagement of public servants in the formulation and implementation stages of public policies. Attempts were also made at establishing the linkages on how public servants would influence the success or failure of implementation of national development. The idea was to unearth the mechanisms which the government uses to ensure it obtains full commitment to duty from public servants directly involved in national development implementation in the country.

The second component in the survey questionnaires related to the need to understand the HRM related factors affecting national development in Malawi. Here the survey concentrated on analyzing whether prevailing HRM practices in government have potential to spur effective national development. This was done by investigating into the manner in which government employees are recruited, promoted, compensated, trained and generally motivated. The researcher looked at instances where empirics indicate successful implementation of public policies in order to gain insights and lessons about what worked and what did not as well as analyzing factors responsible for the failed implementation of national programmes/projects. On the basis of the solicited data in both instances, I was able to propose a robust framework which is envisaged to ameliorate the challenges constraining effective national development in Malawi.

3.6.1.3 Desk Review /Documentation

Desk review or documentary analysis was done to bring out the prevailing contextual and practical HRM and national development issues under study. This activity was carried out in parallel with interviews because the researcher intended to “produce work with textural depth as well as empirical strength” (Lilleker, 2003:208). Specifically the desk review underpinned the public service HRM practices which would not be established through the interviews and questionnaires. According to Appleton and Cowley (1997), documentation analysis provides a wealth of easily accessible and readily available research data that is central in addressing research questions.

Desk review, in this case, involved the review and analysis of literature related to the study. I was interested in reviewing official publications, policy documents, ministerial speeches, circulars, and operational policy guidelines. Additionally, professional newsletters relating to issues under investigation as well as other relevant literature providing insights into the national development implementation processes under study were also analysed. This enriched the study insights gained.

3.6.1.4 Limitations of the Data Collection techniques deployed in the study

It is common knowledge that data collection techniques have inherent challenges in the manner in which they can be relied upon and the three methods deployed in this study are no exception. The researcher was aware of this and undertook steps to overcome the limitations. For example, Pershing (2002) lists the following shortfalls for desk review or documentation analysis:

- Documents, in their creation may have been adjusted or selectively edited to make an organizational record look good and thus can be misleading.
- Employees may alter their work if they are aware that documents they produce are being analyzed.
- Documents may be inaccurate or out of date.
- Some documents may be difficult to access, if restricted to authorized staff or if recordkeeping procedures have changed over time.
- Documents are limited to a historical focus.

In order to overcome the limitations associated with the three data collection techniques deployed in this study, the researcher to a large extent depended upon triangulation processes and making follow-ups with research participants. The case study strategy permitted greater flexibility in terms of moving back and forth on pertinent study issues that were not clearer in the first instance.

3.6.2 Data Analysis Techniques

The present research project deployed a mixed methods approach requiring collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. Therefore, the analysis of these two types of research data caused the analysis to be carried out differently as explained below.

3.6.2.1 Quantitative Data Analysis using Chi-Square

Two objectives of this research contained elements requiring numerical data analysis. The elements related to establishing the level of effectiveness of the public service human resources capacity utilization in national development and examining the relationship between human resource management and national development implementation. In order to successfully achieve these specific research objectives, the researcher decided to use Chi-square test as the tool is recommended by various scholars interested in measuring relationships between study variables. Without utilizing the Chi-square test in analyzing the numerical data in this case, it would be almost impossible to empirically confirm or invalidate the linkage existing between public service HRM capacity utilization and national development. In addition quantitative data analysis was carried out using SPSS as this is the software that the researcher is familiar with and was readily available for the analysis.

3.6.2.2 Qualitative Data Analysis using Content Analysis

This research project deployed content analysis to analysis qualitative data. Vehkapera, (2004:574) has defined content analysis as a “systematic and replicable technique for compressing many words of text data into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding”. Furthermore, Tambulasi (2011) posits that the analysis predominantly involves categorizing issues according to the recurrent themes emerging from the data collection exercise and that based on the data gathered, general thematic issues of any subject matter under study could be informed by systematic comparisons and aggregation of issues arising at each level of analysis. It is highlighted that special attention should be paid to patterns, divergences, trends, theoretical constructs and themes evolving from the qualitative data collected. Again, content analysis was chosen because it allows the researcher to sift through large volumes of data with relative ease in a systematic fashion (Stemler, 2001). Data analysis using this approach comprised four analytical coding techniques: Open Coding, Axial Coding, Selective Coding (from content analysis) and Coding for Process (from Grounded Theory). Strauss & Corbin (1998) and Kandadi (2006) explain these techniques as follows:

- Open Coding: Data is categorized into various units
- Axial Coding: Identifying relationships between categories
- Selective Coding: Integrating categories into a theory
- Coding for Process: defining a series of evolving sequences of action and interaction that occur over time and space, changing or sometimes remaining the same in response to the situation or context

In extant literature these analytical steps do not necessarily follow one after the other in a conservative manner but rather that these separate levels of coding are often carried out simultaneously (Kandadi, 2006; Hussey and Hussey, 1997). It is from these processes of systematically categorizing, coding, comparing, aggregating and cleaning of qualitative data that the researcher was able to formulate conclusions from the study findings.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

This researcher complied with the ethical requirements for conducting research at this level. According to Wells (1994:284), in terms of academic work, ethics is defined as “*a code of behaviour appropriate to academics and the conduct of research*”. He further argues that the appropriateness or acceptability of our behaviour as researchers shall be affected by broader social norms of behaviour. A social norm indicates the type of behaviour that a person ought to adopt in particular situation (Robson, 2002; Zikmund, 2000).

Some of the ethical issues highlighted in the literature are privacy of possible and actual participants, consent of participants, maintenance of the confidentiality of data provided by individuals and their anonymity, reactions of participants to the way in which one seeks to collect data and behaviour and objectivity of the researcher.

The first step taken in order to comply with the ethical code of conduct in carrying out this thesis study was that before commencement of the fieldwork, I obtained a letter from the Dean of the then Faculty of Social Science at Chancellor College of the University of Malawi that authorized me to approach the selected MDAs cases studies to collect data (*See Appendix*). Furthermore, the researcher sought informed consent from all research participants through explanations of the purpose of the research project as well as asking them if they would agree to participate in the project. With regard to the issue of confidentiality, the researcher had to assure the respondents that their responses would be kept in highest confidence and that their identities would remain anonymous. The other ethical consideration relate to time management. The research team was aware that research participants needed not to be inconvenienced and therefore efforts were made during fieldwork to the participants indicated the time they would spare for the interviews. All these research ethics protocols were deemed necessary and were complied with in the course of this particular research project. Ethical considerations did not only mean collecting and analysing data morally but also implied planning and framing research questions ethically (Mason 2002).

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has explained in detail the study's methodology. It has emphasized that the methodology adopted and deployed was guided by the research objectives and the conceptual framework established in Chapters 1 and 2 respectively. The population and sample of the research project comprised of public servants purposively selected in the case study government MDAs (i.e Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health and the Department of Human Resource management and Development) who are directly involved in human resource management activities and the implementation of national development programmes in the country. The research project depended upon the utilization of mixed methods that solicited both qualitative and quantitative data. However, this study was heavily skewed towards the qualitative approach. Three data collection techniques were deployed and these included key informant interviews, survey questionnaires and desk review. Towards the end, the chapter discussed the data analysis techniques used for both qualitative and quantitative data, and ethical considerations.

The next three chapters present the analysis and discussion of findings in general terms from the data collected for the study. This is then followed by the discussion of the findings pertaining to the answers for the specific research objectives of the study and attainment of the overall purpose of the study.

CHAPTER 4

Demographic Characteristics of Research Respondents

4.1 Introduction

Chapters 4,5 and 6 of the study present the findings and analyses beginning with this chapter which presents the analysis of demographic characteristics of research respondents from whom quantitative data pertaining to the study was collected. The analysis of demographic data demonstrates the extent to which the findings of the study are representative by age and gender profile, level of work experience in the public service, occupational diversity and academic qualifications of respondents. The quantitative questionnaire had a 70% response rate.

4.2 The age profile of Respondents

The working population (people aged 15 and older who supply labor for the production of goods and services) is 52.3% of the Malawi population (estimated at 4.2 million), NSO (2018).

This number includes people who are currently employed and also those who are unemployed but seeking employment as well as first-time job seekers. The public sector employs about 6% of the entire workforce in formal employment sector. The youth (15-34), though constitute a bigger proportion of the population, has a lower labour participation rate compared to the middle age 35-60.

Table 4.1 Age Profile of Respondents

Age	Respondents	
	Frequency (n)	Proportion
18 - 35	35	25%
36 - 44	64	45%
45 - 60	35	25%
Over 60	7	5%
Total	140	100

The age profile of research respondents showed a spread from 18 to 60 with categories including those in the age ranges of 18-35; 36-44; 45-60; and over 60. The modal and median age group of the respondents was the 36 -44 age category. This is in keeping with labour participation rates for various age groups. It is thus concluded that in terms of age, the study participants were selected based on proportional to size sampling technique.

The major differences noticed with the responses from senior public officers and those of low-ranking positions were three-fold. One, the senior public officers were interested in seeing through their employment with governments regardless of the motivation challenges they were experiencing while low ranking officers were just waiting for opportunities to come their way before resigning from government. The other difference related to the fact that senior public officers were frustrated and concerned with the delays with which promotions were done while low-ranking officers did not have concrete concern with promotion procedures. For them what mattered most was the fact that there was need for promotions and that promotions should be meritoriously done. Furthermore, the last difference is that the low-ranking officers seemed to be time conscious and therefore frustrated with the long time that salaries were taking to be revised upwards given the high cost of living and that training opportunities were almost impossible to come their way due to the secretive manner in which training is implemented by government MDAs.

4.3 Number of Years of Experience Working in the MDA

It was observed that most participants (42.9%) had been working in the current position for more than 6 years in their respective government ministries, departments and agencies. However, participants were placed in different years of experience category (for 2 years and below; between 3 and 5 years; between 6-10 years; and above 10 years).

Tabel 4.2 Number of Years of Experience of Respondents

Years of Service in Current Post	Respondents	
	Frequency (n)	Proportion
2 years and below	25	17.9%
Between 3 and 5 years	40	28.6%
Between 6 and 10 years	60	42.9%
Over 10 years	15	10.7%
TOTAL	140	100%

From this table, it shows almost 50% of respondents had worked in the current MDA for a period not exceeding 5 years and the other half had worked for a period 5 years and above. It may be concluded that the study gathered data from a cross-section of respondents with various levels of experience.

4.4 Occupational Category

Involvement of respondents from all the occupational categories is observed giving an indication of a wide variety of perspectives to the study themes. Occupational categories in the study included Director/Deputy Directors, Chief Officers, Administrative Officers/Professional Officers, and Technicians. The combination of responses demonstrates an appropriate representative sample. This implies that all categories of staff in government contributed to the collected data.

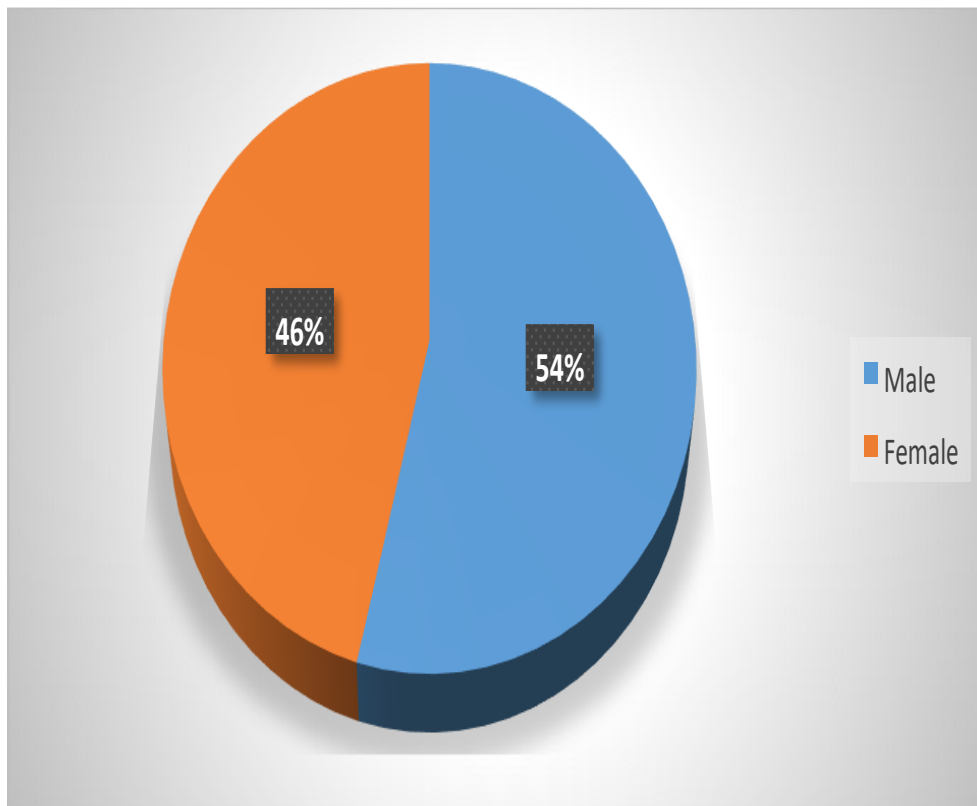
Table 4.3 Occupational Category of Respondents

Occupation	Respondents	
	Frequency (n)	Proportion
Director /Deputy Director (P4 and above)	24	17.1%
Chief Officer (P5)	29	20.7%
Administrative Officer	38	27.1%
Technician	42	30%
Others	7	5%
TOTAL	140	100%

4.5 Gender Distribution

One of the demographic characteristics information included related to whether the respondent was male or female. Data collected for the study was provided by both male and female respondents who are currently working in different occupational categories in various government ministries, departments and agencies. The inclusion of both gender in this study ensured that collected data is not biased against one particular gender. There were 76 male respondents (54%) against 64 female respondents (46%) in the study as represented by the pie chart showing the gender distribution below.

Figure 4.1 Pie Chart showing Gender Distribution of Respondents



4.6 Qualifications of the Respondents

Last aspect included in the demographic characteristics of the respondents for the study was their qualifications. From the study findings it was discovered that there were varied qualifications for the respondents and these included holders of diplomas, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees and PhDs. Majority of the respondents were holders of bachelors' degrees (42%) followed by diploma holders (33%), masters degrees (18%), PhD holders (2%) and the rest had Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) and below (5%). This means that the study data was collected from professionals with diverse qualifications and background in their field of specializations. It is important to highlight that this mix of diverse qualifications and experience provided a rich assurance of the unbiased level of the findings of the study.

Table 4.4 Qualifications of the Respondents

Qualification	Respondents	
	Frequency (n)	Proportion
MSCE and below	7	5%
Diploma	46	33%
Bachelors	59	42%
Masters	25	18%
PhD	3	2%
Total	140	100%

4.7 Conclusion

Basing on the analysis of the information solicited in the questionnaires used to collect data for this study, the preceding sections have presented the demographic characteristics of the research respondents approached in undertaking this study. The demographic characteristics highlighted above have given a significant picture about the composition of the research respondents in terms of age, experience, occupational categories, gender and qualifications. The mixture of the demographic characteristics analysed in the questionnaires deployed in undertaking this thesis provides a better understanding of the avoidance of any skewedness or bias towards any particular demographic characteristic like gender.

A deliberate coverage of a diverse group of the research respondents in terms of age, occupational categories, experience, gender and qualifications means that the thesis findings represent an unbiased reality on the ground. In other words, the richness of the collected data in this study does not only hinge on the diverse responses from the research respondents but the findings are also a true representation of the concerns coming from those directly affected by the issues at hand given the various input from across the spectrum. The feedback was received from both senior public officers to low-ranking officers.

The major differences noticed with the responses from senior public officers and those of low-ranking positions were three-fold. One, the senior public officers were interested in seeing through their employment with governments regardless of the motivation challenges they were experiencing while low ranking officers were just waiting for opportunities to come their way before resigning from government. The other difference related to the fact that senior public officers were frustrated and concerned with the delays with which promotions were done while low-ranking officers did not have concrete concern with promotion procedures. For them, what mattered most was the fact that there was need for promotions and that merit should be based on merit. Furthermore, the last difference is low-ranking officers seemed to be time conscious and therefore frustrated with the long time that salaries were taking too long to be revised upwards given the high cost of living and that training opportunities were almost impossible to come their way due to secretive way in training is implemented by government MDAs.

CHAPTER 5

Examination of the Linkage between Public Service Human Resource Management and National Development Implementation in Malawi

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher presents the study's key findings regarding the first specific objective of the study which was an examination of the linkage between Public Service HRM and national development implementation in Malawi. In Chapter 1, it was stated that the main puzzle the thesis attempted to resolve related to the empirical evidence that the public service human resource management in Malawi was struggling to effectively implement national development in the country (Chirwa et al., 2008; UN Country Assessment Report for Malawi, 2010, and Masangano & Mthinda, 2012). In order to adequately answer this central question, the researcher carried out this empirical study by examining human resource management (HRM) practices prevalent in the Malawian Public Service against what extant literature indicates would enable organizations to obtain maximum contributions, high commitment and productivity from members of staff in effective national development implementation. The key findings are presented in frequency tables Table 5.1, Table 5.2 and Chi-Square analysis Tables 5.3a & 5.3b. The findings are discussed in relevant sections as presented below.

The chapter is dedicated to present findings on the first objective of the study namely to examine the link between public sector HRM and national development implementation. The flow is: first is the highlights of the key finding about the linkage between public service HRM

and national development; second is a discussion of the bundle of HRM practices that are considered the main human resources management activities for maximizing contributions and performance of public service employees; and lastly a summary of the chapter.

5.2 Key Finding about the Linkage between Public Service HRM and National Development

The first objective to be addressed is “to examine the linkage between Public Service human resource management and national development implementation in Malawi”. The objective is expressed below as the null and alternative hypotheses:

Null Hypothesis: There is no relation between effective national development and HRM practices;

Alternative Hypothesis: There is a significant relation between effective national development and HRM practices.

Specifically, the researcher collected data on human resource management practices in the public service in Malawi with the intention of establishing whether there is a linkage existing between human resource management and national development. The extant literature has explained that this relationship depends on the manner in which main human resources management activities including recruitment and selection, performance management, rewards and compensation, promotion and training and development are implemented.

Table 5.1 Perception of Respondents on how Public Service implements HR practices

Variable	Frequencies (n)			Proportions (%)		
	No	May Be	Yes	No	May Be	Yes
My MDA is employer of choice	107	18	15	75	13	12
HRM practices in my MDA are conducive	32	90	18	22	63	15
HRM practices in my MDA can sustain my commitment	117	13	10	83	9	8
My MDA adhere to laid down procedures for recruitment and promotion	80	50	10	56	36	8
Public service has adequate mechanisms for motivating its employees	19	27	94	14	21	65
Public sector HR policies, procedures and processes in my MDA meet the needs for equitable employment practices	17		123	12		88
Did you ever get promoted during the past 5 years?	120		20	84		16

Did you ever see any staff resign the employment in your MDA?	6		134	4		96
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From Table 5.1 above, as many as 88% of respondents were of the view that the Public Sector HR policies, procedures and processes (as contained in the MPSR) meet the needs for equitable employment practices and 65% Public service has adequate mechanisms for motivating its employees. Coupled with Table 5.2 below, as many as 90% of respondents considered HRM practices important to their career progression It might be concluded, in agreement with literature on the subject, that HR practices are key to employee motivation and their productivity.

Table 5.2 Further HR Practices

Variable	Slightly (%)	Fairly (%)	Important (%)	Very (%)
Importance of HRM practices towards your career progression	3	7	27	63
How compliant is your MDA to relevant law in undertaking HRM activities?	57	36	2	5
Is compliance to laid down procedures a priority	35	62	3	0

in your ministry?				
How important is the amount or level of discretion you exercise in the discharge of your daily duties?	0	10	30	60

The study also collected data on employee perception on the performance of public sector HR.

Table 5.1 above presents findings on selected HR practices as below:

- 8% of respondents said “HRM practices in my MDA can sustain my commitment”;
- 15% of respondents said “HRM practices in my MDA are conducive”;
- 8% of respondents said “My MDA adhere to laid down procedures for recruitment and promotion”;
- 16% of respondents reported to have ever been promoted during the past 5 years; and
- 12% of respondents said “My MDA is employer of choice”.

Conversely, in response to the question “what demotivates you in the discharge of your duties”, the following was obtained:

- Lack of motivation and low compensation both at 67%;
- Too much work load at 60%;
- Poor relationship with supervisor at 24%; and
- Poor supervision at 17%

The above findings are indicative of the poor performance of the HR function in the public service despite having policies, procedures and processes which are considered very good. It was therefore not puzzling to witness significant brain drain as 96% of respondents reported to have ever seen a member of staff leave employment in the civil service. The Malawi Public Service is arguably not an employer of choice.

It was noted that this challenge had caused huge gaps and necessitated the usage of unqualified staff in national development implementation in the country. Another key finding is the level of discretion staff use in the discharge of their duties was quite high at 60%. High level of discretion is considered healthy only when the policy formulators and policy implementers share a common agenda. Else, implementation may risk taking a completely different direction when there is high level of discretion at implementation floor.

As stated from respondents regarding the manner in which these human resource management activities are being implemented in the public service in Malawi, there is chaotic management of human resource in government system. Zhang (2017), Chitescu & Lixandru (2016), Cascio & Aguinis (2011) and Kiggundu (1989) concluded that as a consequence of chaotic and improper management of the human resources in organizations be they private or government, there is low commitment and glaring frustrations prevalent among public servants particularly those at the frontline of national development implementation. In some cases, the frustrations among public servants have led to departures of key individuals who could be crucial in facilitating the implementation of national development projects and programmes.

In this thesis the Chi-Square Test of independence carried out established a positive relationship between effective national development and main HRM practices which including careful recruitment and selection of new personnel, meritorious promotions, performance management, training and development. These HRM practices were analyzed in relation to effective national development indicators like productivity, commitment, compliance and effectiveness. This was confirmed by a Chi-Square of 21.2082 as depicted in the calculations in the tables below. The researcher used two key assumptions, namely; first, a null hypothesis which said that there is no relation between effective national development and HRM practices and secondly, the alternative hypothesis was that there is a significant relationship between effective national development and HRM practices. The significant level (α) of 0.05 was used.

Table 5.3 Linkage between HRM & National Development-Observed Values

Effective National Development/ HRM Practices	Productivity	Commitment	Compliance	Effectiveness	Total
Recruitment & Selection	6	7	5	7	25
Promotion	9	8	7	6	30

Performance Mgnt	6	9	8	5	28
Training & Development	5	6	7	7	25
Compensation & Rewards	8	8	9	7	32
Total	34	38	36	32	140

The calculations of collected data revealed a Chi-Square of 21.2082 which is more than the significant level (0.05) of 20.013. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This result based on the parameters devised in the conceptual framework for the thesis indicates that the bundle of HRM practices has direct correlation in terms of what happens to national development if the practices are not properly managed in the public service.

Key assumptions:

Null Hypothesis: There is no relation between effective national development and HRM practices

Alternative Hypothesis: There is a significant relation between effective national development and HRM practices

Significant level (α) = **0.05**

Table 5.3b of Expected Values

Effective National Development/ HRM Practices	Productivity	Commitment	Compliance	Effectiveness	Total
Recruitment & Selection	6.07	6.79	6.43	5.71	25
Promotion	7.29	8.14	7.71	6.86	30
Performance Mgmt	6.8	7.6	7.2	6.4	28
Training & Development	6.07	6.79	6.43	5.71	25
Compensation & Rewards	7.77	8.69	8.23	7.31	32
Total	34	38	36	32	140

Calculation of Chi-Square (χ^2)

Observed Value (O)	Expected Value (E)	(O-E)	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² ÷E
6	6.07	-0.07	0.0049	8.072
9	7.29	1.71	2.9241	0.401
6	6.8	-0.80	0.64	0.094
5	6.07	-1.07	0.0749	0.012
8	7.77	0.23	0.0529	0.0068
7	6.79	0.21	0.0441	0.0065
8	8.14	-0.14	0.0196	0.0024
9	7.6	1.4	1.96	0.2579
6	6.79	-0.79	0.6241	0.0919
8	8.69	-0.69	0.4761	0.0548

5	6.43	-1.43	2.0449	0.3180
7	7.71	-0.71	0.5041	0.0654
8	7.2	0.8	0.64	0.0889
7	6.43	0.57	0.3249	0.0505
9	8.23	0.77	0.5929	0.0720
7	5.71	1.29	1.6641	0.2914
6	6.86	-0.86	0.7396	0.1078
5	6.4	-1.4	1.96	0.3063
7	5.71	1.29	1.6641	0.2914
7	7.31	-0.31	0.0961	0.0131
Chi-square				21.2082

Degrees of freedom = (columns-1)

(rows-1)

= (4-1) (5-1)

= **12**

Significant level (α) = 0.05

X tabular Value = **20.013** *X calculated Value* = **21.2082**

The study findings in this case have validated the proposition in extant literature (See Paauwe, 2004; Purcell et al. 2003; Guest, 1997; and Lufunyo, 2013) that the HRM performance link in organizations including public services have direct implications for the performance of national economies. Although the strength of the individual HRM practices in relation to their contribution towards national development would have to be interrogated in future research, there is empirical evidence that the proper management of the bundle of HRM practices contributes to effective national development particularly in developing countries where the public service still remains the primary conveyor of development.

To illustrate the point of the chaotic management of government human resources, it was discovered that despite the Malawi Public Service Regulations (MPSR) clearly stipulating the procedures to be followed in recruitment and selection, promotions and training of public servants, there is evidence that some public servants have not been promoted for over 10 years when the policy requires 4 years of experience at a particular position, other individuals have been promoted several times without any merit but due to political connections, and still others have been trained by government although there are no training plans in place at all. Worse still, the MPSR requires that no individual should be employed in government ministries,

departments and agencies without interviews. However the study findings reveal that several individuals joined the public service without any interviews.

The link between HRM practices and performance is provided by Brenda (2013) who says that HR practices are implemented to influence employees, with the ultimate aim of positively influencing the organization's performance and in the case of the public service, the aim is to positively influence development outcomes.

It is further explained that accepting this viewpoint, a central thrust becomes that employees' attitudinal and behavioral reactions to HRM will be one of the mechanisms through which HRM impacts on performance. Boxall and Purcell (2011) observe that, according to the AMO model, people perform well when: they are able to do so (i.e., they can do the job because they possess the necessary knowledge and skills - Abilities); they have the motivation to do so (i.e., they will do the job because they want to and are adequately incentivized - Motivation); and their work environment provides the necessary support and avenues for expression (for example the opportunity to be heard when problems occur - Opportunity to perform). Obviously, it can be deduced from this that HRM practices determine the extent of commitment and levels of productivity from employees in public sector organizations.

Just to emphasize the point, the feedback from the respondents in this study reveal the chaotic manner in which HRM practices are being implemented. While it was acknowledged by almost

all the respondents (97%) that HRM practices like training and development, careful recruitment and selection of new personnel, performance management, meritorious promotions and competitive compensation and rewards were very instrumental for career progression of public servants, it is observed that there is need for drastic reforms to be made in these aspects in government MDAs. For instance, the findings show that despite the Malawi Public Service Regulations (MPSR) comprehensively outlining the procedures and processes to be followed in the recruitment, promotion and training of officers, apparently there is total disregard of the requirements for these HR activities in government MDAs. Because of this improper management of HR activities, it was discovered that many respondents (68%) unsurprisingly indicated that they can never trust HRM decisions to be made on the basis of what the law and regulations stipulate. Other respondents (27%) were not even sure whether to say that HRM decisions would be guided by what the laws or regulations say or not. A very small number of respondents (5%) simply said HRM decisions might reflect the dictates of the relevant law.

The other key finding is that the improper management of most HR practices in government MDAs has led to a condition where public servants' commitment to development has gone down because of glaring frustrations with what happens with HR practices. It was observed that there is now an apparent indifferent attitude in terms of whether HRM practices in government MDAs still have the same influence in directing public servants to be seriously committed to duty in their respective roles. One key informant during interviews also collaborated this observation and commented in this way:

I cannot hide my frustrations with the way in which colleagues have been promoted several times and sent for further training despite their deplorable and unprofessional misconduct at the office. It seems nobody cares whether one is performing their duties diligently or not. To me, this clearly shows that something is seriously wrong with public service human resources management.

It should be noted that HRM practices are considered independent variables meaning that national development projects would not be effectively implemented if something goes wrong with the practices. The study findings regarding the HRM practices in government MDAs included in this project give a very gloomy picture because it seems that public servants have problems giving their best contributions due to frustrations emanating from poor HRM practices implementation. In other words, the findings suggest that government MDAs are hardly maximizing the potential that public servants have in terms of their abilities, knowledge and skills in national development and service delivery due to poor HRM practices.

Through the analysis of the data collected on HRM practices from respondents from various government MDAs, it was re-validated that a positive relationship exists between public service HRM and national development. The study, like other empirical studies on the topic, has confirmed the fact that effective national development depends on good HRM practices like competitive reward and compensation, careful recruitment and selection of new personnel, meritorious promotions, performance monitoring and evaluation, and training and development of members of staff. These same practices identified by Pfeffer (1998) and Huselid

(1996) as the major human resources management activities which must be effectively carried out by both private and public organizations have also been observed to be the major reasons that the public service in Malawi is struggling with. Apparently there is chaotic management of these human resources management activities in the public service which has led to frustrations and disappointments, departures of key personnel from government system for greener pastures, low commitment to national development, and low morale among public servants due to low salaries, lack of performance monitoring and evaluation, intense political influence in the recruitment and promotions and lack of training opportunities.

5.3 Discussion of the Bundle of HRM Practices Considered Major HRM Activities

The section shifts to discussion towards how the five major human resources management practices which include careful recruitment and selection of new personnel into the public service, competitive reward and compensation of public servants, meritorious promotions, performance monitoring and evaluation, and training and development as indicated above have been poorly managed in the Malawian Public Service in the recent past. Analysis of empirics for these subthemes highlights insights into how public service HRM could be affecting national development implementation in the country.

5.3.1 Careful Recruitment and Selection of New Personnel into the Public Service

One of the key findings in this study is that the majority of respondents (57.1%) reported that recruitment and selection of new personnel in the public service is not being done properly due to non-compliance with set procedures and processes as stipulated by the Malawi Public Service Regulations (MPSR) and other relevant laws. It is also observed that recruitment and selection of new personnel is simply carried out as a formality because it is a requirement by law when in actual sense individuals get into the public service due to factors like political connections as well as where individuals coming from. MPSR requires that new personnel into the public service should be competitively recruited and selection of the best candidates for jobs should be based on right experience, skills, knowledge and abilities. This resonates well with what Otoo and Mishra (2018) posit as they argue that qualifications, work experience and communications or interpersonal skills are measures of competence in relation to applicant's technical skills. The concept of communication skills has been pinpointed as a generic term incorporating many skills like teamwork, leadership skills, problem solving, crisis management skills, presentation skills, ability to negotiate with or persuade others, cultural adaptation, social competence and language proficiency.

There is a clear distinction made between recruitment and selection in extant literature. According to Barbar (1998), there are two important phases of the recruitment processes that are very essential for good recruitment and selection processes. First, to attract large numbers of applicants and the second is the ability of Human Resources Department to make the best

selection out of the total applicants. It is opined that recruitment process is effective if it brings enough pool of applications and the selection process is handled with ease. The effectiveness of the recruitment process is directly influenced by whatever happens during the recruitment process. In this study, it was discovered that public sector organizations are good at attracting large pools of applicants through vacancy advertisements in widely circulating local newspapers as these ensure providing chances to all eligible or potential candidates. However, some respondents faulted the shortlisting process because they indicated that this is where set procedures start to be contravened as other factors like political connections determine who gets onto the shortlist.

Public service organizations like government ministries, departments and agencies need to ensure that effective recruitment and selection practices are done so that national development is fulfilled. Otoo and Mishra (2018) explain that when the selection process goes wrong it has both cost and time implications for the organization because the organization will have to incur extra cost to remedy the process. It is further highlighted that careful selection is also important because of the legal implications of incompetent hiring and the courts are increasingly finding employers liable for negligent hiring. Negligent hiring occurs when employees with criminal records or other problems find their way into organizations as employees. This is why it is therefore important to ensure the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process (Turner, 2010). Despite the many studies positing that every organization's survival depends on how effective its recruitment and selection practices are,

anecdotal evidence shows that most public service organizations globally fall short of this. For instance, it is pointed out that it often a challenge for the Human Resources Department to invite applicants for interviews (Adu-Darkoh, 2014). As alluded to above, this study's findings also show that sometimes the recruitment and selection process is not watertight as there is evidence that some unqualified individuals have found their way into the public service. In fact Ombudsman reports (2020 and 2021) faulted the manner in which several senior officers were recruited at Malawi Energy Regulatory Authority (MERA), Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA), Central Medical Stores Trust (CMST), Tobacco Commission (TC) and Lilongwe Airport Handling Company (Lihaco) just to mention a few. The net effect of such wayward processes is that it has led to frustrations and low morale among staff.

5.3.2 Competitive Reward and compensation of Public Servants

Another key finding in this study related to low salary and poor conditions of service prevailing in public sector organizations. This factor was observed to be among the major causes for departures of key personnel from government to greener pastures as well as low productivity due to lack of adequate motivation. According to Ajmal *et al* (2015), offers of good compensation packages often enable organizations to attract and subsequently retain high caliber talents in their workforce and it is further explained that there is often a need to keep employees motivated and satisfied, and monetary reward is used in this regard. Shakeel (2015) also notes that compensating employees equitably has the ability to minimize turnover in organizations. Compensation has generally been understood to include wages and other benefits (White, 2000).

Organizations, both public and private, are encouraged to use various compensation strategies in order to obtain maximum contributions from members of staff. To achieve this, motivation has been identified as the starting point. Motivation has been defined as the force which drives or inspires behavior towards a particular direction (Bartol and Martin, 1998). It can be seen in the willing efforts which employees exert in order to achieve organizational goals (Robbins and Judge, 2010) and the motivation of employees plays a vital role in the operations and success of organizations (Greenberg, 2011) hence managers motivate their employees in anticipation that they will perform in a certain desired manner. There are different categories of theories of motivation in extant literature. Wood et al. (2004) explains that categorically, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory, McGregor's Theory of X & Y, and Ouchi's Theory Z are called content or need-based approaches because they focus mainly on what drives employees to achieve a given task while satisfying their various needs in the work environment. On the contrary, Vroom's Expectancy Theory and the Theory of Locke and Latham (1990) are based on the process approach in which motivation is used to transform employees to perform with a certain desirable attitude (Lam and Tang, 2003). Wood *et al.* (2004) included the reinforcement theory in this group. In the process-based approach, changing or modifying employees' behavior and attitude is achieved through conditional rewards (or compensation) and self-directed lifelong learning processes (Hassan, 2009). By factoring individual differences this approach offers employees the opportunity to attain their needs which include self-esteem and self-fulfillment.

The main point with motivation of employees in organizations is that there is need to use a diversity of strategies because individual employees' needs are different. In other words what is motivating to an individual may not have the same influence on another depending on their level or status. In this study, the majority of respondents (85%) indicated that the problem in the Malawian Public Service is not the lack of diverse motivation strategies but rather the challenge is with implementation of the same. It was observed that salaries are very low and other benefits are not made available to everyone and that the main disadvantaged are those street level bureaucrats at the frontiers of national development implementation. Since the available motivation strategies with the exception of salaries are not readily available to street level bureaucrats, there is too much low morale at this level and very little willing effort is exerted towards national development implementation. In some cases, the lack of incentives at lower ranks of the public service has led to departures of key personnel in national development implementation. In other words, the ineffective implementation of motivation strategies is adversely affecting the rolling out of national policies and programs and therefore impeding service delivery to the masses due to demotivation and high turnover.

5.3.3 Meritorious Promotion

As highlighted in the previous chapter, this study found that promotion of public servants in Malawi Government is mostly based on other factors rather than merit. Promotion of public servants without merit was discovered to be one of the main factors alongside low salaries and

too much workload leading to frustrations and low commitment among government employees. In fact the commonly given factor for promotion of public servants was political connection and the region where one comes from. The other factors given for promotion was relationships with bosses as well as favoritism, nepotism and corruption.

In the Malawian Public Service, among other factors, the minimum number of years required for promotion for any particular position is 4 years at the previous position according to SPC circular dated 07/09/1986. This policy according to this study's findings has in some cases not been complied with at all. The findings revealed that individuals who are politically connected have been promoted two to three times within a space of 7 years, implying that their promotion was done with less than 3 years of experience which is contrary to the required minimum of 4 years.

The other thing discovered with promotion of public servants in the Malawian Public Service is that in some instances individuals with serious disciplinary cases were promoted, in the process rendering the whole idea of excellent performance unnecessary. The promotion of public servants with disciplinary cases was also observed to be the cause for low commitment to duty in implementing national development in the country because other public servants didn't really understand why they should bother being committed to duty when their colleagues got promoted despite bad behavior at the workplace.

According to Ombudsman report (2021), the system in the Malawi Government is that all positions are supposed to be transparently and competitively filled using both internal and external sources using public service commissions as shown below.

A) Appointment and Disciplinary Committee located in all MDAs:

From Clerical Officer/TA to SCO/STA and equivalent grades

B) Public Service Commission catering for the entire Public Service:

From Executive Officer/TO to P5/S5

C) Office of the President and Cabinet catering for the entire Civil service

From P4/S4 to P1/S1

The Ombudsman report indicates that the Human Resources Manual for the public service clearly stipulates the steps that must be followed by these institutions and other responsible officers in order to effect appointments and promotions of public servants in an open and fair manner. The human resources management activities in the Malawi Public Service are supposed to be conducted in compliance with the provisions of the relevant legal framework which include the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi (1994), the Public Service Act (1994), the Government's Human Resources Management Procedures Manual, the Employment Act

and the Labour Act. The best candidates are supposed to be recruited based on objective and excellent interview performance results. This is in line with what the Malawi Public Service Regulations requirements. In this study, the respondents expressed reservations with this arrangement for senior grades because they feel that the system is mostly abused in favour of those individual government employees who are well connected with politicians and senior officials.

5.3.4 Performance Management

In terms of this study's findings it was discovered that some government ministries, departments and agencies do carry out performance monitoring and evaluation while other public sector organizations do not. Most respondents (about 68%) from public sector organizations confirmed in this study that they had never been subjected to any formal or informal performance appraisal in their respective positions in government despite working for about 10 years. The rest of the respondents reported that either their performance had been formally appraised or that they were not sure if they are evaluated in terms of performance in their respective jobs. This finding is consistent with what Vermeeren (2013) found in her study that HRM has less effect on performance in highly institutionalized sectors (such as hospitals and local government) than in less institutionalized sectors such as hotels. It is further argued that, traditionally, public sector organizations are relatively highly unionized. Trade unions may enhance the impact of HRM on wellbeing and subsequently on performance through their agency role as monitors and enforcers of employment contracts.

However the importance of performance management in the public service is echoed in Mandishona's (2003) argument that everything being equal, an organization's success depends on how people are viewed and treated, and how they in turn view the organisation and behave towards it. Performance management is thus of great importance to public service. According to Dzimbiri (2008), it is generally believed that performance management optimises the contribution of people to the service while at the same time meeting the individual needs of employees. The role of performance accountability in the public sector is more important than the private sector. The benefits of performance management to the public service include; clear work goals and responsibilities; greater commitment and motivation of staff at all levels; reliable method of measuring performance; focus on results; elimination of unnecessary activity; improved retention and attraction of staff; improved communications; greater managerial motivation through goal setting; more effective development of people; and can be linked with a variety of human resource systems like performance appraisal, performance related pay, training and development, transfer, promotion, demotion, etc (Public Service Commission, 1998:3).

Theoretically, the concept of performance management is based on the Goal Setting Theory which was proposed by Edwin Locke in the year 1968 (Obasan and Sotunde, 2011:116). The theory emphasizes the important relationship between goals and performance. It is highlighted that the goal setting theory starts from the simple observation that setting performance goal

for employees motivates them to strive towards achieving these goals. In this way, an assigned goal influences employees' beliefs about being able to perform the task at hand and if it becomes certain that current performance is not achieving desired goals, employees will be motivated to increase effort or change their strategy (O'Neil and Drillings, 1994:94; Schultz, 2006:16). It suggests that the individual goals established by an employee play an important role in motivating him for superior performance. This is because the employees keep following their goals. If these goals are not achieved, they either improve their performance or modify the goals and make them more realistic. In case the performance improves, it will result in achievement of the performance management system aims (Salaman, John and Billsberry, 2005). The reason why goal setting typically has a positive effect on performance is that a specific high goal affects choice, effort, and persistence; that is, a specific goal or target increases a person's focus on what is to be accomplished versus putting it off for a later date. Commitment to a specific high goal also leads to persistence until the goal is attained.

Goal setting theory was developed inductively from the results of empirical studies conducted in laboratory and field settings on individuals and teams. The theory as observed by Latham, Borgogni and Petitta (2008:392) states that:

- A specific high goal leads to higher performance than an easy goal; a general goal such as

 'make children healthy' or an exhortation to 'do one's best,' or no goal setting.

- Given ability as well as commitment, the higher the goal, the higher a person's performance.
- Variables such as participation in decision making, feedback, including praise, competition, and monetary incentives only affect a person's behaviour to the extent that they lead to the setting of and commitment to a specific high goal.

In Malawi Government, there is evidence that some of these elements of goal setting theory are carried out as demonstrated by the availability of public policies, strategic plans and national development plans. One key informant during interviews reported that:

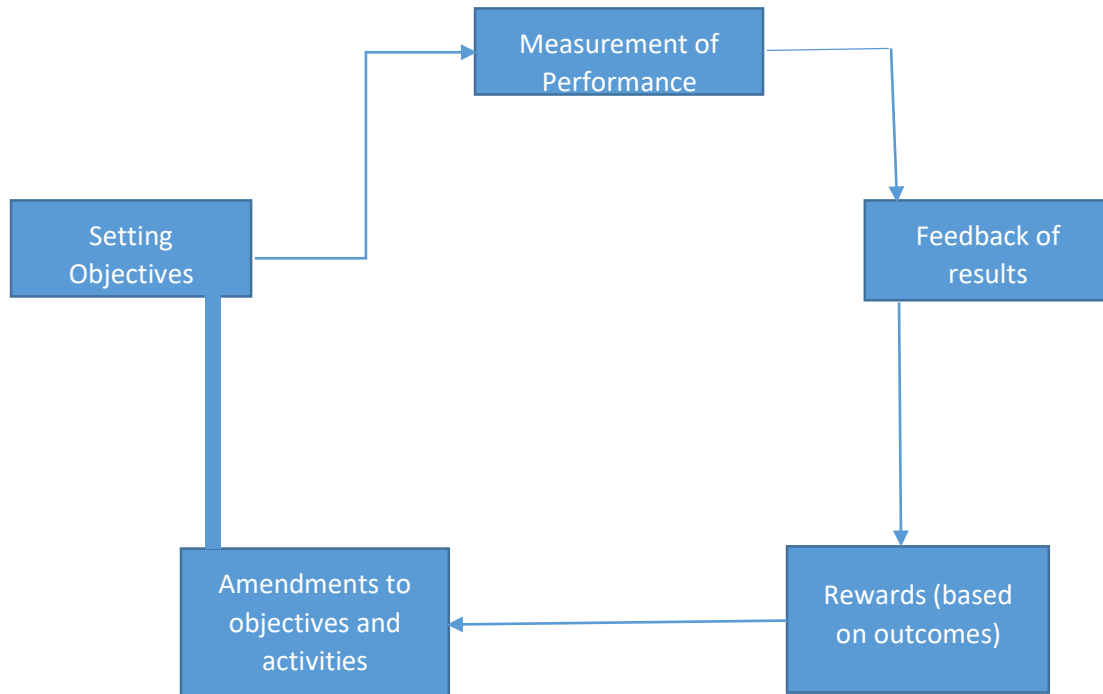
As a department, we usually undertake short and medium term planning and we have documents containing our departmental plans whether annual or 5-year plans. These plans assist us in determining what activities we want to do so that we can achieve our objectives, the strategies that we have to deploy during implementation of these plans, and the deliverables that we use for monitoring the progress that we are making. The planning and implementation of our plans here of course has its own shortfalls because sometimes we have big problem with staff motivation particularly our members of staff in the rural communities who often complain about transportation and accommodation. We have limitations because we cannot do everything we plan.

In extant literatures, the key features of a successful performance management system according to Fryer; Antony, and Ogden (2009:482) include:

- Alignment of the performance management system and the existing systems and strategies of the organization.
- Leadership commitment.
- A culture in which it is seen as a way of improving and identifying good performance and not a burden that is used to chastise poor performers.
- Stakeholder involvement; and
- Continuous monitoring, feedback, dissemination and learning from results.

Furthermore, Mabey, Salaman and Storey (1999:180) have prescribed the model of performance management system in the form of 'performance management cycle'. This cycle suggest how performance management system should be implemented in an organization as shown below:

Figure 5. 1: The Performance Management Cycle



Source: *Mabey, Salaman and Storey, (1999:93).*

As can be observed from the figure above, the five elements of performance management system cycle include:

- Setting of objectives.
- Measuring the performance.
- Feedback of performance results.
- Reward system based on performance outcomes
- And amendments to objectives and activities (Mabey, Salaman, and Storey,1999:95). Every organization desires to be productive.

In essence, high productivity is the major aim for the existence of any organization. But on the contrary, the bid to attain higher productivity has remained a wishful thinking for many public sector organizations in Africa. This was the main reason why Simon (1957:109) argued that the issue of productivity is the only reason for all the various reforms exercises that is being carried out in most public organizations so as to make them efficient. Productivity in public organization entails the attainment of predetermined goals with minimal expenditure of resources. Mali (1978:24) posited that productivity is the measure of how well resources of an organization are brought together and utilized for the accomplishment of a set of results. This means reaching the highest level of performance with the least expenditure of resources. By this therefore, it is not wrong for one to link productivity with performance management. Thus, performance management practices are linked to the productivity and performance. Performance measurement is an important tool to improve productivity and responsibility and almost all countries around the world have invested resources to implement this system.

Boyle (2006:6) described productivity as a measure of the amount of output generated per unit of input. In many countries, public sector productivity has been assumed to be zero in the national accounts. The output of the government sector has been measured as of value equal to the total value of inputs. Kalliola (2003:113) also argued that the legitimacy of public services is derived from the capacity to respond to the needs of citizens in an economically efficient way. That concise statement encapsulates the emerging consensus that, while public sector productivity involves efficiency and outputs, it also involves effectiveness and outcomes (Pritchard, 2003:33; Tolentino, 2004:3). The productivity of the public sector is as important to

the economic performance of a country as the productivity of the private sector. Thornhill (2006:3) identifies three main reasons why public sector productivity is important.

- **First**, the public sector is a major employer.
- **Second**, the public sector is a major provider of services in the economy, particularly business services (affecting costs of inputs) and social services (affecting labour quality).
- **Third**, the public sector is a consumer of tax resources.

Thus, changes in public sector productivity can have significant implications for the economy. It is with this link between performance management and productivity in the public service that makes the call that government employees should be treated well and motivated so that they could make maximum contributions towards national development implementation. The fact that the productivity of the public sector is as important to the economic performance of a country as the productivity of the private sector means that any laxity in performance monitoring and evaluation in the public services will have devastating effects on the realization of development aspirations.

Other than interrogating whether performance management is done or not in government ministries, departments and agencies, the incumbent study also investigated what could be the challenges with performance management in the Malawian Public Service. The major reasons identified with performance management implementation in MDAs include the following:

- Lack of performance appraisal forms;

- No commitment from supervisors;
- Lack of seriousness from top leadership to consistently implement performance management system; and
- Laziness among responsible officers carry out performance monitoring and evaluation.

Apparently some of these challenges observed with performance management in the Malawian Public Service were also identified by Fryer et al. (2009) as these authors isolated the key features of a successful performance management system. The incumbent study has also discovered some resistance to the implementation of performance management in the public service. Through desk review of public service management policies, the researcher was able to observe that attempts to institutionalize performance management which started around 2001 by the Malawi Government were abandoned all together as the system was deemed discriminative since it only targeted senior officers living out junior staff. But without systematic performance monitoring and evaluation it will difficult to ascertain productivity of public servants and therefore difficult to pinpoint the practical challenges in national development implementation.

Surveying extant literature indicates the following benefits of Performance Management System (PMS):

- 1) Performance management facilitates the implementation of business strategy by indicating what to measure, determining appropriate means of measuring, setting

targets and linking the measure with organisational performance (Schein, Shaw & Beatty, 1991).

2) Performance management improves the organisational performance (McDonald & Smith, 1995).

3) Improves processes within the organisation (Rummler & Brache, 1995).

4) Improves employee performance (Egan, 1995; Longenecker & Fink, 1999)

5) Improves team performance (Kenett et al., 1994; Lawler, 1994)

6) Eases implementation of change in the organisational culture (Wellins & Schultz Murphy, 1995)

7) Improves customer satisfaction (Bilgin, 2007)

8) A competitive advantage is obtained (Bilgin 2007)

9) Improves quality of supervision (Bilgin, 2007)

The challenges and resistance experienced with performance management system in Malawian Public Service imply that the many benefits cannot be derived from its implementation. This also has implications for the effective implementation of national development in the country because processes, individual and team performances can hardly be improved. Ultimately this means that the entire public service performance is difficult to be improved since there are no

entry points for effectuating the desired improvements. Mildiana (2014) states, "Evaluation of employee performance is very important for the realization of good governance, because without a performance evaluation system, it will be difficult to find the source of human resource problems. The absence of a performance evaluation system also results in improper personnel-related planning".

5.3.5 Training and Development

One of the main human resources management activities identified in extant literature is training and development of members of staff by organizations. The present study therefore investigated how the Malawian Public Service conducts this activity which is aimed at improving the performance and contributions that public servants make in national development implementation. This study's findings revealed that some government ministries and departments do develop annual training plans which are used for identification of individual public servants for training while other government ministries and departments do not have such annual training plans. However, it was observed that even those ministries and departments without training plans still had some individuals sent for training whether locally or abroad.

The other issue found in this study with training and development in government ministries and departments related to how individual employees are included onto the annual training plans as well as how they are sent for training. This was an issue of concern with respondents because they felt that there were no transparent or clear cut processes and procedures to be

followed in the identification of individual government employees for training. No wonder there were suspicions that there could be corruption, favoritism and relationships with supervisors as factors that help the identification for those public servants benefitting from training activities.

Kumari and Kumar (2018) posit that trainings of staff should be conducted in a systematic order so as to derive expected benefits from it and it is also explained that the training system involves four stages, namely:-

- a. Assessment of training and development programme's needs.
- b. Designing the training and development programs.
- c. Implementation of the training program
- d. Evaluation of the training program.

Furthermore, the authors say that training and development is necessary because of the following reasons:

1. Employees are able to balance their work life and personal life in a better manner which leads to reduction of stress.
2. Such programs help in improving physical and psychological health of the employees, thereby bringing down the absenteeism rate.

3. These programs develop the employee morale, increase the productivity, job satisfaction and commitment of the employees towards the organizational goals.
4. These programs also aim at the progress of the individuals in their personal and professional lives.
5. They improve the communication between all levels of management which helps in minimizing conflicts between different levels of employees.
6. Such types of programs lead to effective negotiation and enable the designing of the contracts which satisfy all sorts of employees.
7. These programs enhance efficiency of management and strengthen employee organization.

The authors also highlight the fact that there are generally two categories of the methods of training, namely; on the job trainings - these methods (like internships, job rotation, job coaching and apprenticeships) are generally applied on the workplace while employees are actually working and off the job trainings which include classroom training, audio-visual, simulation and sensitivity training. Each category of the methods of training has its own merits and demerits which should always be taken into consideration during implementation. It is emphasized that training enables the employees to develop their skills within the organization and hence naturally helps to increase the organization's market value, earning power of the employees and job security of the employees. Training moulds the employee's attitude and helps them to achieve a better cooperation within the organization.

5.4 Extent of the Implications for the Linkage between HRM Practices and Public Service Performance

The key finding in this thesis that there is a positive correlation between public service HRM and national development has far-reaching implications on how the public service carries out service delivery in the country. This section highlights a few subthemes that were investigated in the course of undertaking the study to appreciate what this means in terms public service performance in implementing national development.

The main activities investigated in this regard included existence of a human resources management system, performance management; compliance with laid down public service procedures, and extent of discretion that government employees exercise in carrying out their duties and responsibilities on a daily basis. The existence of a human resources management system is confirmed in the Malawi Government but the system apparently needs to be reformed so that basic requirements are working once again. For instance, the findings show that there are several unqualified employees and those who joined the public service without following requisite procedures like interviews. What this means is that quality of work and level of productivity is compromised because of unqualified members of staff carrying out services for which they are not competent to do.

5.4.1 Performance Management in Government MDAs

One of the glaring issues observed with government ministries, departments and agencies is whether the MDAs are delivering on their mandates in the expected manner because the whole essence of a performing public service hinges on the achievement of mandates. But for the

mandates to be attained, the public service HRM should individually and as teams perform to their best abilities. In this study, this issue was construed to be related to performance monitoring and evaluation because it is assumed that the MDAs could only deliver on their mandates if individual members of staff and teams contribute their best in their day to day duties and responsibilities.

However, this is only possible when performance is monitored and evaluated in a systematic manner. According to Ahmed et al (2012), performance evaluation is part of the human resource function concerned with helping organizations improve performance and at the same time help improve individual performance. Furthermore, performance evaluations are used to track individual performance against organizational goals, as well as to identify individual strengths and opportunities for future improvements. It is for this reason that performance management was included as a subtheme in this study. The feedback from respondents in this study show that it is a mixed bag in terms of how performance monitoring and evaluation is being done in government MDAs. While there is an indication that some MDAs do conduct performance management, in majority of the MDAs the finding is that no performance management is carried out at all as 83% of respondents indicated that it is not done. In fact it is observed that despite performance appraisal not being done, some lucky individuals still get promoted twice or thrice in the MDAs where there is no established system of monitoring and evaluating performance of individuals.

The study also interrogated the reasons why performance monitoring and evaluation was not being conducted in some MDAs. The reasons given included the lack of performance tools or forms for performance appraisal, indifferent attitude from supervisors, laziness and political interference because politicians are interested in cutting corners to ensure that their people are promoted without challenges. As a consequence, what is implemented is simply a mechanism to make sure that certain individual members of staff are promoted when opportunities arise and in this case, there is no meritorious system for effecting promotions of members of staff in the MDAs.

5.4.2 Extent of Discretion Exercised by Public Servants on Daily Basis

Discretion exercised by public servants in carrying out their duties and responsibilities on daily basis was another important subtheme investigated in this study. Purcell (1999) postulates that in managing performance strategies it is crucial to recognize that, in circumstances of lean production, employees increasingly come to possess knowledge and skills that management lacks: *“Employees need to be motivated to apply these skills through discretionary effort. And it is often the case that the firm’s business or production strategy can only be achieved when this discretionary effort is optimally contributed”* (p.234). In terms of this study, the interrogation focused on the extent to which public servants exercise discretion in implementing national development projects. The respondents overwhelmingly (over 95%) revealed that they have enormous amount of discretion which they exercise almost on a daily basis. The findings also show that this enormous amount of discretion emanates from the fact that public servants are supposedly experts in their fields and therefore they work with minimum supervision. It is also noted in the findings that the same level of discretion is also at the disposal of supervisors who

are required to regulate the behavior of street level bureaucrats involved in national development implementation. However, the findings revealed that since there is chaotic management of human resources in government MDAs, discretionary effort is sometimes at the centre of frustrating national development implementation as individuals lack commitment to duty due to the constraining factors indicated above. Using their respective discretion both individuals and supervisors are at liberty to choose which project activities to implement or not.

5.4.3 Compliance with Laid Down Public Service Procedures and Regulations

Another key finding about the implications of the positive correlation between public service HRM and national development had to do with the level of compliance with laid down public service procedures and regulations in human resources management by government MDAs. This was intended to determine administration lapses in public service HRM which is, in turn, expected to have adverse consequences towards maximum contributions and professionalism expected of government employees. In addition, the section also sought to identify factors that constrain public servants from being fully committed to national development implementation.

The finding in this study is that there is serious non-compliance with laid-down HRM procedures and processes in many MDAs as indicated by the fact that as many as 79 respondents (representing 57.1%) ultimately said that there is non-compliance with set procedures and regulations particularly during the recruitment, training and promotion of public servants. Only few respondents (35.7%) indicated that there was compliance with the procedures and the rest of the respondents were noncommittal to whether HRM procedures

were being complied with. The respondents revealed that the non-compliance with set HRM procedures in the MDAs was evidenced by cases of new personnel joining the MDAs without going through the normal interview processes, promotions being done without performance monitoring and evaluation and the many cases of irregularities and maladministration as recently reported by the Ombudsman (2021). It was observed also that the net effect of non-compliance with set HRM procedures in the MDAs was that it had left many civil servants with low commitment to duty as well as huge frustrations because they would see their undeserving colleagues getting promoted several times without any basis and in worst scenarios, officers with serious disciplinary cases would also be promoted.

The feedback from the study respondents further revealed that the major causes for non-compliance with set HRM procedures in government MDAs included intense influence from politicians who stop at nothing to circumvent the procedures as well as selfish interests by those in decision-making positions and cases of corruption. It is noted that the issue of corruption was more pronounced in the identification processes for officers to be offered training opportunities by government particularly in MDAs where there are no developed annual training plans. The other aspect that the researcher attempted to delve into related to whether respondents considered their MDAs to prioritize compliance with laid down public service procedures and processes in the recruitment, compensation and promotions of public servants, whether the MDAs develop training plans for continuous development of public servants and indicate the factors that prevent MDAs from complying with laid down public service procedures and process in human resource management. The study discovered that

there is little prioritization of compliance with laid down public service regulations on training, promotions and reward and compensation as indicated by as many as 73% of research respondents disagreed with the statement that government MDAs prioritize compliance with set procedures and processes in implementing human resources management activities. In addition, the section also sought to identify factors that constrain public servants from being fully committed to national development and service delivery. A number of constraining factors were revealed by the respondents and the common factors on the list included low salaries, lack of promotions, too much workload due to shortage of staff, political interference in the public service human resources management, corruption and poor conditions particularly for street level bureaucrats. Out of these factors, low salaries (48%) and lack of promotions (34%) were noticed to be the major factors causing low commitment among public servants.

Non-compliance with public service procedures and regulations for HRM in government MDAs shows that selfish interests from public servants could be dominating what takes place with public policy implementation. In other words, failure to comply with laid down public service procedures and regulations in the human resources management observed in MDAs implies that the attainment of the mandates is minimal and it is most likely that delivery of services meant to respond to the demands of the masses is greatly compromised. Non-compliance has been identified as one of the major factors causing low commitment to duty among public servants hence the fear that it adversely affect national development.

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, findings were presented and discussed aimed at answering the first objective of the study namely, “is there linkage between the performance of a set of HR practices in the public service and national development”. To achieve this objective, the performance of the public service HR policies covering five key areas of recruitment and selection, involvement, training, development and education, work conditions; competence-based performance appraisal; and compensation rewards (Armstrong, 2009 & Dessler, 2002) and assessment of relationship between these HR issues and national development were done. Several authors affirm that the performance of public services and ultimately national economies is dependent on robust HRM practices like careful recruitment and selection of new personnel, meritorious promotions, performance management, among others.

In this study, the performance of the HRM function on the core HRM policies has demonstrated chaotic management observed with the public service HRM in Malawi. In all policy areas, the perception of staff were that the public service HR performed below par, making the public service not an employer of choice. Consequently, most staff reported low levels of motivation and staff brain drain was common. To make up for brain drain, it was common to have high number of roles being carried out by under-qualified staff. Paauwe (2004) asserted that robust performance of HR activities lead to an organization having adequate, involved and motivated staff who are knowledgeable of their roles and this enhances the achievement of organizational goals. For the public service, achievement of organizational goals imply creation of conducive

environment in which all economic players operate optimally, service delivery improvement and successful implementation of development projects and programmes. Conversely, poor performance in key HR activities lead to public service which is not adequately staffed, is demotivated and unclear of key roles to be performed, creating the potential of derailing the implementation of national development and service delivery due to low commitment to duty among public servants. In this study, performance in all HR policy areas was below par. Chirwa et al (2008), UN country Assessment report for Malawi (2010) and Masangano and Mthinda (2012) all concluded in their studies that the performance of the public service was not satisfactory and was linked to HR activities. It is thus concluded that there is a link between how well the HR activities are implemented and the level of national development achieved.

CHAPTER 6

Effectiveness of Public Service Human Resource Management in National Development

Implementation in Malawi

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we discussed the examination of the link existing between public service HRM and national development by analyzing the manner in which key human resources management practices are implemented in government in Malawi. This was the first specific objective of the study. The present chapter answers to the second specific objective of the study which relates to the assessment of the effectiveness of the public service HRM in national development implementation in Malawi. The analysis of the findings in the preceding chapter confirmed the proposition that there is a positive relationship between public service HRM and national development implementation. This is because good HRM practices in the public service ensure high productivity, high commitment and capability among public servants as well as overall performance in national economies. The performance of the public service in implementing public policies and programmes is strengthened by effective implementation of these HRM practices analyzed in this study.

This chapter now turns to the discussion of the effectiveness of the Public Service HRM in national development implementation in Malawi, which is the second objective of the study. On one hand, UNCTAD (2006) argued that the general requirements for the public service to effectively increase productive capacities for quality service delivery and implement policies and projects included: coordination; enhanced state capacities in administrative, judicial and law enforcement; capability of developing programs; funding; and flexibility to experiment. Rob & Richard (2007), on the other hand, contended that effectiveness is constrained by factors characteristic of the public service namely:

oversize, unresponsive, rule bound or not enough effective rules, low incentive, patronage and red tape. Lastly, Lufunyo (2013) affirmed the catalytic role that the Public Sector needs to play, creating an appropriate and conducive environment in which all sectors perform optimally. It is clear that the proper execution of right mix of human resources management activities in the public service will directly affect national development in the country. It is envisaged that by highlighting the effectiveness of public service HRM, useful insights for policy modifications and practical resolutions on some long outstanding issues in national development would be achieved.

The study findings have revealed three common themes in how HRM practices are determined in government ministries, departments and agencies: (i) the Malawi Public Service Regulations (MPSR) provide guidelines on how bureaucrats should be incentivized, and these are supposedly common to all public sector organizations; (ii) the history of senior management that have worked in an organization might bring their own innovations to bear; and (iii) the role of external events such as demands of trade unions. The effectiveness of the Public Service HRM in national development implementation is being considered in this country's context. The effectiveness of the Malawian Public Service is discussed through a preview of the strengths and weaknesses observed with the HRM system currently in place.

6.2 Observed Strengths with the Malawian Public Service HRM System

The Malawi Public Service Management Policy (2018) clearly shows that the public service in Malawi has a very elaborate structure for human resources management. All human resources management issues in the Malawi Government are handled through the Department of Human Resources Management and Development (DHRMD) which is under the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC). The DHRMD is headed by a senior Permanent Secretary and is the custodian of the Malawi Public Service Regulations (MPSR) which is a policy document stipulating all the procedures and processes to be followed in executing human resources management activities like recruitment and selection of new personnel,

promotion of public servants, performance management, deployment and training and development. The common service for human resources in the Malawi Government is coordinated by DHRMD which is responsible for deployment of all human resources across all ministries, departments and agencies.

The arrangement is that in government ministries, departments and agencies there is a directorate, section or unit charged with the responsibility of managing human resources issues. In most cases such directorates, sections or units are headed by Directors and these are supported by other human resources management officers. Such directorates in most cases act as advisors on human resources management issues to other directorates and are often consulted for guidance on particular human resources related issues. For instance, in the event of death of a member of staff, the directorate of human resources management provides guidance on what the policy says regarding the kind of support whether coffins, transport or other requirements that the government ministry, department or agency can render during bereavement. In addition, the directorate also facilitates processing of other benefits for the deceased family like gratuity or pension.

All personnel files and other important documents are maintained by such directorates or sections in MDAs. Although there are challenges in terms of updating personnel files because of shortages of human resources members of staff, the government has a fully-fledged department with requisite human resources management policies to provide for an effective and efficient human resources management system.

6.3 Observations on the Implementation of Malawi Public Service HR System

6.3.1 Discretionary Effort of Public Servants in Implementation of National Development

In order to comprehensively report on the effectiveness of the Public Service HRM, it is important to highlight that the Department of Human Resources Management and Development (DHRMD) which is under the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) in Malawi is responsible for the organization of postings and conditions of the government employees. The Public Service is organized into ministries, departments and agencies (statutory corporations included), usually these public sector organizations are established by statute and render specified public services. Each public service organization is tasked to provide various types of development projects or programs. These include construction projects: boreholes, buildings, roads and canals; as well as non-construction projects such as procurement, training, and advocacy. Our analysis in this incumbent study is based on data collected from respondents drawn from some of these entities.

Once public servants are posted in these public sector organizations, they are responsible for the transformation of government policies into public service delivery by designing and implementing projects or programs. These development projects or programs are usually assigned to organizations centrally by the National Assembly which enacts a budget law specifying the projects to be implemented each fiscal year. The passage of this bill is that after receiving inputs from the executive branch of government, a draft Appropriation Bill is presented by the Minister of Finance to the National Assembly. The draft bill is then split into sectors (agriculture, education, water, health etc.) and sent to sectoral committees of the House. These committees are delegated to hold hearings with relevant parties, to scrutinize the proposals, define budgets for each project and decide which organization is responsible for its implementation. These committees are staffed by politicians with qualifications or experience in the relevant sector. These sectoral committees then recommend a budget for the sector to an Appropriation Committee which merges the recommendations into a single budget. This unified budget

is then voted on by the National Assembly to form that year's Budget Appropriation Bill. This legal document defines the responsibilities of civil service organizations in terms of projects to be delivered.

This study investigated the level of discretion that public servants exercise on a daily basis during implementation of the approved projects or programs in the annual budget. The implementation of development project activities in the annual budgets year after year are aimed at improving the suffering of the masses in the country but this has been noted to be slow and making little impact on the ground particularly of the past two decades. In this study the respondents overwhelmingly (over 95%) revealed that they have enormous amount of discretion which they exercise almost on a daily basis. This extensive amount of discretion was not only found to be with street level bureaucrats but also supervisors in government ministries, departments and agencies.

According to Rodger (2014), evidence confirm that two dimensions of management practice: autonomy and performance incentives/monitoring, do indeed correlate to the quantity and quality of public services delivered, as emphasized by the public administration and economics literatures respectively. Furthermore, it highlighted that the overall positive correlation of public service autonomy with project completion rates provides support to the notion that public agencies ought to delegate some decision making to bureaucrats, relying on their professionalism and resolve to deliver public services (Simon 1983). It is argued that the evidence is less supportive of the notion that when bureaucrats have more agency or organizations are more flexibly structured, then they are more likely to pursue their own, potentially corrupt, objectives that diverge from societal interests, resulting in fewer public services being delivered. However, this study findings show that because public servants have enormous amount of discretion in discharging their responsibilities, they may use this to frustrate the

implementation of public policies since they have low commitment to the same. What this means is that some public servants particularly street level bureaucrats are less productive in their jobs because of the motivation issues exposed in this incumbent study.

The use of discretionary effort in carrying out public service delivery has been identified as crucial in this study. It has been suggested here that if poor HRM practices prevail in public sector organizations, there is deliberate move to thwart implementation of public policies.

6.3.2 *Public Sector Reforms implementation*

Governments around the world have over the years adopted and applied multiple public sector reform initiatives in order to enhance service delivery to citizens and improve implementation of public policy and programmes (Mpabanga, 2015).

In the case of Malawi, it is observed that even the Malawi Public Service Management Policy (2018) acknowledges that the public service is unable to deliver adequate and quality public services and to effectively implement policies and programs that are crucial for poverty reduction and overall effective national development. It is reported that as a consequence, the country has been unable to move out of the low-income bracket, to move the majority of its people out of poverty and is unlikely to realize development aspirations articulated in Vision 2063. The Chatsika Report (1995) and others have more than once highlighted the numerous HRM issues like low salaries and lack of promotions and recommended implementation of reforms for improving motivation of public servants for effectiveness service delivery and national development. The poor handling of the public service HRM practices have led to deteriorating morale, ethics and professionalism among public servants due to a number of

factors including low remuneration packages, unattractive conditions of service, poor working environment including inadequate office infrastructure, political interference and non-adherence to government procedures and public service code of conduct. This has led to widespread corruption, misappropriation of government resources and abuse of government property such as vehicles. In addition, the weak human resource management infrastructure in government as evidenced by lack of strategic human resource planning and development and poor implementation of human resource policies and procedures has led to fostering mediocre performance and demoralization of capable public servants.

In an attempt to overcome the indicated challenges in the Malawian Public Service, there have been continuous initiation of public reforms programmes with the view of improving the effectiveness with which the public service implements delivery of services and national development in the country. Examples include the Chatsika Report (1995) which recommended complete restructuring of the compressed salaries which were inherited by the Malawi Government at independence in 1964. The Chatsika Report was published in 1995 following a Commission of Inquiry into the Conditions of Service of Civil Servants in Malawi. The Commission was set up basically after noting that despite the previous two inquiries (i.e Skinner Report, 1963 and Herbecq Report, 1985) on the conditions of service for civil servants in the country, the conditions of service were still those inherited from the colonial civil service before independence. After the end of one-party system in 1994 in the country, the Government of Malawi in collaboration with development partners set up a commission of inquiry headed by a High Court judge, Justice Lewis Chatsika hence the name the Chatsika Report. The main aim of the inquiry was to review and modernise the civil service in line with the prevailing liberalised economy concepts

including competition. One of the key proposals in the report related to substantial pay increase to attract suitably qualified managers to manage the civil service in the country.

Despite the initiations of public sector reforms with every change of government, there has been very little impact made in improving the effectiveness of the public service in national development implementation. This study's findings have validated the notion that the major challenge with public sector reforms in the country has been lack of implementation of the reforms. The study further revealed that the failure to implement public reforms programs is attributed to a number of factors including ineffective leadership for the implementation of the reforms, indifferent attitude by public managers to follow up on the implementation of the reforms and general resistance against the reforms by senior officers who deem themselves as biggest losers if the reforms are implemented.

6.3.3 Enhancing Capacities of Public Service Employees

The HR function is executed by the HR common service otherwise known as DHRMD. 92% of respondents consider DHRMD to be managed by competent staff. The Malawi Government, through the DHRMD, continues to develop strategies for increasing productivity of its employees in the country. Some of the strategies deployed by the government include sending public servants for training abroad and locally with the view to improve their productivity. In addition, there are times that the government has used expatriates to provide on-the-job training to locals. The strategies deployed by the government in trying to improve the productivity of public servants were observed to be diverse and this is in sync with what is recommended in existing literature on the subject matter. For instance, Armstrong (2006) argues that using a diversified approach to increase employees' productivity is crucial.

The HRM policies which focus on bringing staff into the public service and consequently enhance their capacities are recruitment and selection, training, development and education. As mentioned later in the thesis, there is significant levels of unqualified staff as well as unfilled vacancies in the Public Service. This clearly shows grave challenges in the recruitment and selection function. In terms of developing employees' competences acquisition through training, development and education, only about 30% of respondents confirmed that their MDA develops a Training Plan annually.

6.4 Weaknesses Observed with the Malawian Public Service HRM

After the discussion of the strengths observed with the Malawian Public Service HRM, we now turn to the preview of the weaknesses noted with the same. The weaknesses are meant to provide a full picture of the Malawian Public Service HRM and to trigger some rethinking towards improving the HRM system in government.

6.4.1 Intense Political Interference in the Management of Public Service HRM

The thesis findings have highlighted the fact that political interference in human resources management activities continues to be one of the biggest weakness in the public service. It was observed that the situation is so intense that at the end of the day very few human resources related decisions are made by technocrats without the interference of politicians in government MDAs. The net effect of this interference is that those individual employees of government who are not connected to politicians are left out in the cold and are the ones who do not get promoted let alone sent for training. It is now almost a norm that politicians have to have a say on who gets government employment and promoted in the public service.

Although there was evidence that vacancy advertisements are floated in local newspapers for the general public to know about employment opportunities in government, the study findings revealed that these are mostly fulfilled simply as a formality when in actual sense decisions on recruitment and promotions are premeditated well in advance. The politicians get their preferred candidates for government employment as well as promotions through those public officers directly involved in the processes and stages of recruitment and promotion. Usually this is done regardless of whether the preferred candidates meet the minimum requirements and job specifications and perform successfully during selection processes. The presence of unqualified staff in MDAs via political interference compromises quality delivery of services by the public service. In addition, it also causes too much frustrations to those staff who are qualified. Although the study confirmed the availability of qualified human resources management in government system, their professionalism and utilization in the public policy implementation is adversely affected by political interference. A key informant said the following during one of the study interviews conducted:

At the moment what happens is that whenever we have HRM activities like recruitment and selection of new members of staff or promotions or training, the major determining factor is what politicians tell the controlling officers or what the controlling officers want. In all this there is no merit or performance issues at all because what gets done at the end of the day is what these people with influence desire. I remember one time after conducting interviews for P5, we were advised to hold interview results till the time we were told to review the same to favour particular candidates. The situation is really bad and there no compliance with what MPSR stipulates.

Another key informant interviewee reported that

Politicians in Malawi have over the years greatly influenced the contravention of human resources management processes and regulation and that this tendency has had serious

implications on professionalism and corruption regarding the management of human resources in government in the country.

Respondents in general unanimously felt that intense political interference in HRM activities in MDAs had rendered professionalism and compliance with the public service processes and regulations to be thrown out of the window.

Another political reason for the struggle of the Malawian Public Service HRM to carry out public policies in the country relates to the tendency to abandon national development projects/programs with the change of governments. Malawi follows a 5-year political cycle and whenever there is change of government every 5 years, national development programs are abandoned. When this happens in most cases some people join the public service due to their political connections and without compliance with laid down public service regulations. The abandonment of national development projects and programs was revealed by participants to be one of the factors leading to frustrations and disappointments among public servants because through these new faces appear on the scene without the due process.

6.4.2 Allowance Syndrome Observed within the Malawian Public Service

This weakness relates to the finding that public servants receive low poverty salaries for their services to the government. It will be recalled that low salaries in the public service was discovered a major cause for low commitment to duty and when asked what keeps the government employees in their jobs, it was revealed that allowances had become a means for survival so much so that public servants were so preoccupied with how to maximize allowances to supplement the low salaries. The allowance syndrome has affected everyone without exception in the public service in Malawi both senior officers and low ranking officers. According to one of the research respondents interviewed, “the allowance syndrome in the Malawian Public Service is the main reason why people don’t quit their jobs despite receiving low

salaries. We have had cases where some public officers would draw allowances for over 1,000 days and yet we only have 365 days in a year.” This summarizes the level of attitude in public servants towards allowances to government MDAs.

6.4.3 High Vacancies Rate and High Proportion of Unqualified Staff for the Job Personnel in the Public Service Particularly at Low-Ranking Positions

The availability of the right numbers and qualified staff is one of the prerequisite conditions for successful implementation of public policies or national programmes in both developed and developing countries (Dzimhiri, 2008).

The findings indicate that in many MDAs, a good number of unqualified staff exists and perform duties and responsibilities for which they are not supposed to. It was also noted that there are cases of individuals who joined the government system without going through interviews as per the Malawi Public Service Regulations (MPSR). The existence of unqualified staff in government system means that public policy implementation and service delivery are greatly compromised and therefore the government can't be expected to effectively roll-out projects and programmes to achieve national development.

The other common weakness that is exacerbating ineffective implementation of public policies by MDAs is continuous shortage of staff. Apart from the thesis finding that there are departures of public servants for greener pastures, it was also observed that there are many unfilled vacancies in MDAs for all occupation categories. Respondents in the study actually expressed surprise that no systematic and deliberate mechanisms were being put in place to ensure that the vacancy rates in MDAs are reduced.

The worst hit ministry identified through the study with serious unfilled vacancies was Ministry of Health where it was observed that out of 12 established positions for Obstetricians/Gynaecologists, only one is filled representing a 92 percent vacancy rate; all the 12 posts for Surgeons are vacant; all eight posts for dental Surgeons are vacant, and there is a 92 percent vacancy rate for Paediatricians (*Weekend Nation newspaper*, 2021). The study discovered that due to the critical shortage of staff, there was evidence that unqualified individuals were doing jobs which they are not qualified for.

With such scenarios of inadequate numbers of staff due to unfilled vacancies, the government MDAs are usually constrained in terms of the development activities that they can implement. Coupled with this, the quality and effectiveness of service is compromised due to the presence of unqualified individuals who carry out duties and responsibilities for which they are not qualified for.

6.4.4 Selfish Interests Resulting In Personal Glory At The Expense Of Greater Good

Another weakness observed relates to the thesis finding that in the Malawian Public Service there is a tendency for public servants to be more interested in achieving their selfish interests at the expense of the greater good. This finding was more pronounced with suspicions of corruption and fraudulent activities which take place during recruitment and promotions of public servants. The evidence demonstrated the fact that HRM activities are infested with vices like corruption, nepotism, favouritism, and cronyism. While the MPSR clearly stipulates that recruitment and promotions of public servants should be guided by objectivity, professionalism, transparency and accountability, only those individuals who have connections or relationships with politicians or senior officials in government generally have advantages to easily progress in their careers. However, such tendencies were observed to be causing so much pain and frustrations in other public servants who are not connected. Such public servants did not

hide their low commitment to duty in their work suggesting that national development and service delivery could be hampered due to the low commitment from some public servants.

6.4.5 *Inconsistent Performance Evaluation and Monitoring in MDAs*

Evidence from the incumbent study findings shows that some MDAs do have reviews of performance of individual employees. This was revealed by 38% of the research respondents in this study. However it was discovered that the majority of the MDAs particularly government ministries do not carry out employees' performance evaluation. The study also investigated the reasons for lack of performance evaluation and it revealed that there are no performance evaluation forms and general performance management system. This was noted to be the contributing factor as to why performance evaluation is not done in some MDAs.

The performance of individual employees of government is crucial for the effective service delivery because we have noted elsewhere that national economies depend on the performance of individuals in government. Performance monitoring and evaluation tools have been viewed as one of the key measures designed and adopted to enhance performance of individuals, teams and the organization in general (Armstrong 2009).

In extant literature, the concept of performance management is theoretically under-pinned on the theory of motivation. Several motivational theories exist in the literature and include Maslow's needs hierarchy theory, Herzberg's two-factors theory, expectancy theory, goal setting theory, McClelland's needs achievement theory, etc. (Bateman and Zeithaml, 1993; Inyang, 2008b; Kreitner, 1998). Of all

these theories the goal setting theory fits the performance management concept best. This is because performance standards are antecedent situations in the employee's work environment. Goals are performance levels which individuals and organizations have agreed upon as performance standards. Philosophically, the goal setting theory is based on the assumption that people have conscious goals that energized them and direct their thought and behavior toward one end (Bateman and Zeithaml 1993).

In the case of the Malawi Government, this study revealed that while the benefits of performance monitoring and evaluation are fully recognized, its institutionalization in ministries, departments and agencies has faced weak and inconsistent. It is on record that on several occasions there has been abandonment of performance management system despite initial investments being made by government on the same. The issue of inconsistencies surrounding performance management in MDAs was noted to be so serious that it was also discovered as a major cause for frustrations and disappointments among some public servants because there are instances where undeserving officers end up being rewarded in one way or another at the expense of qualified and high performing officers.

Definitions in extant literature show that performance management has the following characteristics: strategic (concerned with the broader issues facing the business), systemic, systematic and holistic. It is integrated in four ways: vertically aligning business teams and individual objectives; functionally integrated; human resource integration and integration of individual needs (Esu and Inyang, 2009) .

In order to increase our understanding of performance management, the definition of the word performance by Brumbach (1988) that performance means both behavior and results is important. It is explained that behavior emanates from the performer and transforms performance from abstraction to action. As instruments for result, behaviors are also outcomes in their own right - the product of mental and physical efforts applied to tasks - and can be judged apart from results.

It is important to note that the scope of performance is broader than performance appraisal. Performance appraisal according to Fajana (2002:283) “focuses on the extent to which an individual is carrying out assigned duties, as well as joint actions that can be taken by both the supervisor and the subordinate to manage observed variances between set standards and actual performance”, while performance management deals with the processes and activities of the organization that enhance the design, development, implementation of performance technologies. It embraces all formal and informal methods adopted by an organization and its managers to increase commitment and individual and corporate effectiveness. Performance appraisal is reactive while performance management is proactive.

Performance refers to the results to be achieved, while the process of achieving this performance is performing. This is achieved by defining the role profile of the role holder - what is the main output area of the role holder. Performance is a multi-dimensional construct, the measurement of which varies depending on a variety of factors. The desired performance is closely related to the organisation's vision: social responsibility, customer orientation, profitability, corporate image, etc. The desired performance of each employee should begin from the pre-recruitment stage. A performance management system enables individuals and organization to achieve strategic ambitions through processes that are both systemic and systematic (Watkins, 2007b). Performance improvement management systems in the public and private sectors show some minor differences existing between them. This is because they both seek to achieve goals – micro or macro. Performance management

focuses on future performance planning and improvement rather than on retrospective performance appraisal (Armstrong, 2004).

For effective national development to take place in any society, it is important to recognize that the nation's bureaucracy is fundamental to the state's capacity to protect its people, regulate the economy and deliver public goods. As we have re-confirmed in this study, public servants are a key link between public policy and its implementation. Most countries rely heavily on government bureaucracies to manage investments in social sector projects (Rodger, 2014). However, to achieve this end, there is need for HRM practices like performance management, meritorious promotions, competitive compensation and effective training and development which hold key to increasing productivity and to maximizing contributions by public servants to be effectively implemented.

Previous studies have shown that management practices matter significantly for the performance of public services. Bloom et al. ([2013) show that management plays an important part in explaining the productivity of hospitals and McCormack et al. (2013) do the same for university departments in the UK. In the developing world, Horak and Sheng (2014) present evidence from a pilot study that measures management practices in Chinese Hospitals. Rodger (2014) indicates that management practices matter significantly for the performance of the public service in Nigeria. However, the only thing noted with such management studies is that the impact of different forms of management differs from the existing literature that has arisen from Bloom and Van Reenen (2007) that mainly focused on the private sector.

In this study it has been observed that the Malawian Public Service HRM has been entangled in sorts of challenges and weaknesses. These challenges or weaknesses, among other things, include inconsistent performance monitoring and evaluation and non-compliance to the relevant law and regulations in HRM activities decision-making affect their productivity and contributions to national development. There

was an overwhelming response of over 86% validating the notion that chaotic management of human resources management in the public service dampens their commitment to duty and therefore their contributions and productivity at the workplace are minimal. The implications of these highlighted weaknesses is that effectiveness of Malawian Public Service in increasing the productivity and contributions of government employees in national development is significantly compromised.

6.4.6 High Staff Turnover of Public Servants for Greener Pastures

The last key weakness discovered through the study findings concerns the continuous brain drain of public servants for greener pastures from the government system whenever there are opportunities for them to do so. Almost all the participants (95%) from different MDAs in this study indicated that during the past 5 years, they knew several colleagues who had resigned from government after they landed on new jobs. This finding was noted across all occupational categories but was more critical at the junior level. The reasons advanced for the resignations were varied but the most common grounds were low salaries, lack of promotions and too much workload. This finding was also noted to be linked to the causes of low productivity and low commitment among the participants as they indicated that there are no adequate incentives despite having too much workloads on a daily basis.

In addition to the political reasons highlighted above, the study findings also revealed that the struggle for the Malawian Public Service HRM to effectively carry out public policies are caused by motivational factors. Research participants indicated that the government system continues to be characterized by frequent departures of key personnel for greener pastures and delays in replacing them; frustrated

public servants, inconsistencies in the application of incentives and lack of commitment to development; lack of motivation particularly for street level bureaucrats whose salaries are very low; and lack of patriotism from the highest level all the way down. These factors are basically pointing to the need for adequate motivation of public employees at all levels in the public sector. When people are not motivated well enough, they cannot be expected to be more productive and achieve high performance.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the strengths and weaknesses observed with the Malawian public service HRM in delivering services. Generally, the study findings have shown that there is little effectiveness by the public service in Malawi because of the numerous highlighted weaknesses. The weaknesses continue to dampen the morale of the public servants so much so that ineffective public service HRM has resulted in low productivity, low commitment to duty and failure to implement public sector reforms aimed at strengthening HRM practices.

Chapter 7

Framework for Ameliorating Factors Constraining Public Service HRM capacity utilization

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed two key findings of the thesis. One concerned the level of effectiveness of the Public Service Human Resource Management in national development implementation and another related to the factors constraining public service HRM to implement national development in Malawi. The chapters revealed that the major factors constraining public service effectiveness in national development mainly have to do with political, motivational and structural reasons. This present chapter now highlights the proposed framework for ameliorating factors constraining Public Service HRM effectiveness in national development implementation. As observed in the preceding chapter, the study discovered that the combination of political, motivation and structural categories together militate against any effort to improve the Public Service HRM effectiveness in national development implementation in the country. This situation was noted to be exacerbating the frustrations, disappointments and subsequent departures of some key public servants for greener pastures.

We now turn to the elucidation of the proposed model or framework developed for ameliorating the impact that the identified constraining factors dampening maximum public service HRM capacity utilization has on national development and service delivery in the country. The model provides the answer to the attainment of the last objective of the study. Before explaining the model a preview of the key constraining factors for HRM capacity utilization in the public service as well as preview the bundle of noted HRM practices in the public service organizations is presented.

7.2 Summary of the Public Service HRM Capacity Utilization Effectiveness

In chapter 6 we discussed the three categories of reasons responsible for the public service HRM ineffectiveness in national development implementation and the noted challenges responsible for poor HRM practices in the country as revealed by respondents' feedback. Further analysis of the constraining factors points to the fact that the majority of the factors (8 out of 12) identified related to human resources management in government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs). This validated the argument that human resources in organizations let alone their effective management is the most important asset providing competitive advantage to organizations which enable them towards the achievement of their strategic goals and objectives (Armstrong, 2009).

7.2.1 Key HRM Constraints Affecting Effectiveness

The human resources management related constraining factors for the Malawian Public Service HRM effectiveness in national development implementation were observed to have the negative effect of dampening concerted efforts for the Malawi Government and other stakeholders to cause the public

service HRM to rapidly transform the sectors of the national economy. Furthermore, a reflection on the factors reveals an outstanding and urgent need for the beautiful public reforms documents to be translated through implementation so that improvements regarding human resources management practices in the public service would be achieved. The missing link in this process has been discovered to be the performance of individual employees and teams in the government due to political, motivational and structural grounds as highlighted. This thesis therefore recommends that the proposed framework for ameliorating the constraining factors should be comprehensively analyzed, understood and adopted with the view to improve the performance and productivity of government employees in MDAs.

According to Pfeffer (1998) and Huselid (1996), the bundle of HRM practices meant to allow organizations both public and private to achieve their strategic goals and objectives and improve national economies are well known. The major HRM practices identified include careful recruitment and selection of new personnel, meritorious promotions, competitive compensation and rewards, robust performance monitoring and evaluation, and effective training and development.

7.2.1.1 Recruitment and Selection of New Personnel

The Malawi Public Service is characterized by high vacancies rate and significant numbers of staff performing roles they are not qualified and experienced to do. This clearly demonstrates weakness in the implementation of the HRM policy on recruitment and selection of staff. The obvious consequence is high vacancy levels which affect capacity to deliver on services and programmes implementation.

7.2.1.2 Training, Development and Education

This HRM policy, when implemented effectively, ensures that employees acquire competences, they become life long learners by stimulating learning and knowledge production. This study has confirmed that training is not prioritized and consequently significant numbers of employees tend to perform

duties not competent in. Learning is not stimulated and thus requisite knowledge in the discharge of roles and responsibilities is not developed.

7.2.1.3 Work Conditions

This policy covers such factors as benefits, health, safety and technology enjoyed or lacking by employees at the work place. High political influence affects the quality of the work conditions. Respondents, as discussed in the earlier chapter, reported high incidences of lack of adherence to set rules and laws governing the operations of the HR function. Thus, only about 17% considered the public service an employer of choice and as many as 95% of respondents had witnessed a work associate resign from employment.

7.2.1.4 Competence-based Performance Appraisal

This policy entails evaluation of performance and competence of staff to support decisions about promotions, career planning and development. However, this policy was amongst the most poorly performed in the public service.

7.2.1.5 Compensation Rewards

The implementation of this policy serves to reward performance and competence through remuneration and incentives. The study confirmed other studies (Chatsika Report (1995) that the public service has very uncompetitive compensation rewards regime. This status quo has over the years created a huge appetite to make up the shortfall with allowances staff claim.

7.3 Synopsis of the Study's Empirical Findings and the Bundle of HRM practices

Based on the empirical findings in this thesis project as detailed in the previous chapter and summarized above, the same bundle of HRM practices have also been discovered to be the missing link in as far as the Malawian Public Service HRM performance is concerned. In other words, the key findings in this thesis contributes to the extension of existing knowledge that unravel the link on how organizations could maximize contributions and productivity from their human resources and the development of national economies. Previous studies contain models or frameworks for unlocking the 'black box' as already depicted in the literature chapter. Models demonstrating how to unlock HRM-Performance linkage sometimes is misunderstood but it is the answer in terms of explaining the processes and mechanisms by which HRM-Performance impact operates (Chew, 2004; Savaneviciene and Stankeviciute, 2010:429).

7.4 Strategies for Improving Public Service HRM effectiveness in National Development

Apart from investigating the highlighted strengths and weaknesses observed with the Malawian Public Service, the researcher also sought the perspectives of the study respondents on what they thought are the strategies which could be used to turn around public service HRM effectiveness in implementing national development in the country. This was important because the research participants were assumed to have knowledge about what is going wrong on the ground as pointed out in the findings above and should also have ideas about what could be done in order to correct the situation. The perspectives on the strategies reflect input from all the occupational categories of those approached in the study starting with Directors/Deputy Directors all the way down to the lower ranking officers in government MDAs.

First, the findings indicate the urgent need to revise upwards the low salaries for both senior and junior staff and to implement harmonization of salaries in government MDAs. During the study, the issue of low salaries was observed to be one of the most commonly given reasons alongside lack of promotions and too much workload for public servants to leave government employment. Although low salaries was a reason given for resignation particularly for most junior staff in MDAs, it was noted that the issue applied equally even at the top ranks of government system. The other issue discovered about salaries in government MDAs was that there were serious inconsistencies and disparities noted with different occupational categories. For instance, it was revealed that a Principal Secretary who is usually a controlling officer at a ministry was receiving around MK1 million a month while a mere Director in a state-owned enterprise or parastatal was receiving more roughly around MK3.5 million. It is on such basis of the disparities that the research respondents suggested harmonisation of the compensation and reward system in government.

Secondly, the study findings have revealed the serious need for the re-establishment of a system for a careful recruitment of new personnel and meritorious promotion of government employees. As indicated above, the study shows that some individual members of staff in MDAs have overstayed in one position for about 10 years without any promotion while others have been promoted twice or thrice during the same number of years. Furthermore, the findings have also shown that other factors rather than merit have been the determining factor for the recruitment and selection of new personnel in government MDAs. It is suggested that intense political interference has played a major role in the recruitment and promotion of public servants.

Thirdly, the study has also highlighted the critical need for the institutionalization of a robust performance management system in all government MDAs and for all occupations. While it is evident from the findings that some MDAs do performance monitoring and evaluation, there is completely no mechanisms whatsoever for tracking down progress in terms of how individual members of staff are

performing in their work in other MDAs. In fact a good number of respondents (about 65%) expressed surprise that despite the lack of tools for measuring performance, some of their colleagues were being rewarded with promotions without any basis. It is observed that it has almost become a norm to see individual members of staff in certain MDAs to be promoted despite their lack of professionalism and grave misconduct at the work place.

Fourthly, the study findings demonstrate the necessity for the integration of HR into the national development planning in government MDAs in order to achieve successful implementation of development programs and service delivery. The findings showed that where individual members of staff were involved in human resources management activities like training and development through participation in training needs assessment, commitment levels from such public servants seemed to be high and they in turn tended to give their best contributions. This was shown through the longevity with which they stayed within the MDAs. It is expected that integration of HR into national development planning in government MDAs would strengthen the development of mechanisms for ensuring maximum contributions from staff. Then the issue of training and development also needs to be properly organized in government MDAs because the study findings reveal that this is one area where corruption and political connections have dominated what happens in MDAs. Very few respondents (about 15%) indicated that annual training plans existed and that there are procedures which have to be followed for someone to be included for training whether locally or internationally. The rest of respondents vehemently rejected the existence of annual training plans in their MDAs and pointed out that despite this, many of their colleagues were being sent for training. It is suspected that the major factors for members of staff to be identified for training included corruption, nepotism, relationships between female public servants and male supervisors, connections with some politicians and also where one comes from.

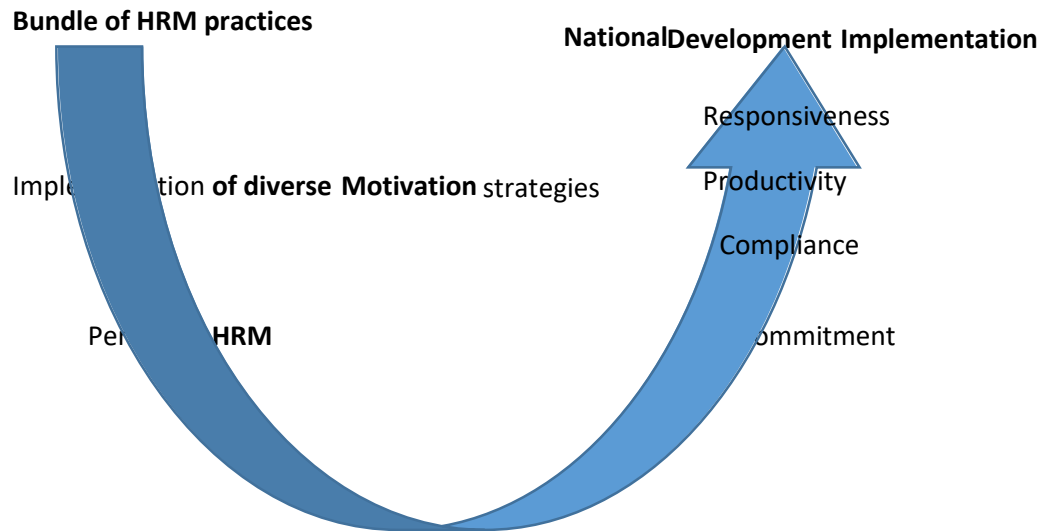
Last but not the least is the issue about the need for effective implementation of public sector reforms. Many respondents (64%) in this study indicated their participation in several studies previously aimed at bringing about improvements in the effectiveness of public service HRM. It was observed that almost every administration initiates a public sector reform program. However, it is reported that the biggest challenge related to the implementation of the reform programs. Public servants know about the recommendations like upward revision of salaries for junior staff and harmonization of salaries between private and public sectors that are made in many beautiful policy documents but most of these recommendations are simply gathering dust in offices. Apparently there is no interest and political will to follow up on such policy recommendations aimed at making the public service effective in national development.

7.5 The Framework for Ameliorating Constraining Factors for Malawian Public Service HRM Effectiveness

This thesis project was premised and guided by the conceptual framework expounded in Chapter 2 under Section 2.9 of the study. The conceptual framework illustrated mastery of the linkages revealed in previous models for unlocking the black box between public service HRM and how it boosts improvements in national economies. The complex process through which the implementation of public policies enables national development was also highlighted in the models (Sabatier, 2005; Anderson, 2014). Now the developed framework should be of particular interest for developing countries where the public services are the main conveyors and the dominant implementing agency of national development and service delivery in responding to the demands of the masses. The framework is an important instrument for bolstering public service effectiveness.

The review of literature for this study revealed that for effective national development to take place in countries where public services are conveyors of national development, a set of conditions for successful implementation must obtain. One of such critical conditions related to the availability of well trained, adequate and motivated human resources in governments. Human resources were identified as the most strategic resource possessing so much influence to either drift implementation, slow it or keep it on track (Chitescu and Lixandru, 2016; Kiggundu, 1989; Casio & Aguinis, 2011; Zhang, 2017). If HR is to effectively influence national development, public services must have proven bundle of HRM practices explained in extant literature in place so that organizations obtain optimal contributions and high productivity from their human resources. The major highlighted bundle of HRM practices included careful recruitment and selection of new personnel, meritorious promotions, competitive compensations and rewards, performance management and training and development. When these HRM practices are effectively handled, the ultimate result is that there is high performance, compliance with procedures and regulations, responsiveness, high productivity and high commitment to duty from public servants thereby increaing national development and quality service delivery. Based on the mastery of these relationships and linkages between HRM and performance, the researcher has proposed the framework presented below.

Figure 7.1 Framework for Successful National Development Implementation developed by the author



The bundle of HRM practices reviewed in literature and which form the independent variable in the proposed framework, when combined with diverse motivation strategies, provides a better perception of human resources management in public sector organizations. Consequently, this translates into high productivity and performance at individual, team and public service levels leading to increased national economies derived from compliance, commitment and responsiveness of government employees. When government employees are productive, highly motivated and with high commitment, they perform to the maximum of their abilities thereby making maximum contributions to national development and service delivery. Conversely, it has been discovered that poor or chaotic management of human resources in public sector organizations dampen or thwart implementation of national development and service delivery because government employees are demotivated, frustrated, disappointed, less productive and have low commitment to duty.

The highlighted factors restraining the Malawian Public Service HRM from effective service delivery and public policy implementation basically pinpointed to the improper manner in which the bundle of HRM practices are managed in government. The proposed framework above attempts to straighten out the

observed political, motivational and structural issues so that government employees would make maximum contributions and act to their best ability to boost the implementation of public policies in the country.

It is therefore advisable that the developed framework above is comprehensively understood because it is depicting the urgent need for the re-establishment of good HRM practices in the public service. It is a call to return to the basics in as far as public service human resources management is concerned with the view to strengthen implementation of national policies and programs in order to improve living conditions through increased quality service delivery. Successful implementation of development programs is dependent on effective HRM practices in government system.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the framework developed by the author with the strategic goal of strengthening the concerted efforts in ameliorating the factors constraining the Malawian Public Service HRM from effectively implementing national development. The framework consists of the bundle of HRM practices together with diverse motivation strategies on one hand as independent variables. On the other hand, the framework indicates the ultimate development outcomes like compliance, productivity, commitment and responsiveness when the bundle of HRM practices are effectively implemented in government. The end result is that there is high performance at individual, teams and public service levels leading to increased national economic growth and development. The relationships and insights derived from the developed framework essentially validates the notion that national

development is boosted when there are deliberate efforts by governments to properly manage their human resources via good HRM practices. Good HRM practices give rise to commitment to duty, productivity by public servants, responsiveness to public demands, and compliance with set procedures and regulations all of which are critical indicators of effective national development implementation.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusion and Recommendations of the Study

8.1 Introduction

In concluding this thesis report, it should be recalled that our central focus was to understand the linkage between public service HRM and national development implementation. This central focus of the study was to be attained through the achievement of four specific objectives, namely: (a) to analyze the linkage between public service human resource management and national development; (b) To examine the extent of effectiveness of public service human resource management in implementing national development; (c) To discuss challenges constraining the potential of the public service human

resources capacity utilization in effective national development; and (d) To develop a framework for ameliorating the factors constraining effective public service HR capacity utilization in national development. In order to achieve these specific objectives of the thesis study, the researcher deployed a mixed method approach as the appropriate path involving the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. The data was collected through 140 administered questionnaires and 12 semi-structured interviews conducted with key informants drawn from government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs). The research respondents were purposively sampled because of the need to collect data from appropriate subjects who are familiar with the subject matter.

8.2 Summary of Key Findings and Issues Examined

The key finding of the thesis is that there is a positive correlation as revealed by a Chi-Square of 21.2082 which was more than the significant level (0.05) of 20.013 between public service HRM and national development and this extends our knowledge about the HRM-performance link in organizations. This key finding in the study caused the null hypothesis that there no relation between public service HRM and effective national development implementation to be rejected and the alternative hypothesis that there is significant relation between public service HRM and effective national development implementation to be accepted. To my knowledge, this is the first attempt to directly investigate the link between HRM-performance nexus in organisations and assess its impact on national development implementation. This relationship was discovered through the analysis of data regarding the bundle of HRM practices that included careful recruitment and selection of new personnel, meritorious promotions, competitive compensation and rewards, performance management and training and development.

The study also highlighted that public service performance and its effectiveness are dependent on how well the human resources management activities are handled within government system. In addition, the study unraveled the political, motivational and structural reasons constraining the Malawian Public Service HRM effectiveness in national development implementation. In an attempt towards the minimization of the impact of the constraining factors for the Malawian Public Service HRM effectiveness in national development implementation, the thesis has proposed a framework which is principally a recommendation to return to the basics in as far as human resources management practices in government are concerned. The human resources management practices which are referred to as the bundle of HRM practices in literature including training and development, contingent pay and reward schemes, performance management (including appraisal), promotions, and careful recruitment and selection of new personnel. In the present study, the developed framework has the bundle of HRM practices together with diverse motivation strategies as independent variables on one hand and effective national development implementation indicators like responsiveness, productivity, compliance and commitment to duty as dependent variables on the other hand. The thesis has shown that these indicators of effective national development implementation would only be bolstered when the highlighted bundle of HRM practices that include training and development, competitive compensation and wages, promotions, performance management and appraisal, careful recruitment and selection of new personnel are effectively managed.

As will be observed from the summary of the central focus of the study and the key findings above, the overall purpose and specific objectives of the thesis were attained. The attainment of the research main purpose and specific objectives was done through a comprehensive analysis of the data drawn from top officials and street-bureaucrats from the Malawian Public Service. The study sample deliberately comprised public servants at all levels to ensure that there was rich information and experience

gathered through various research techniques deployed in the study. In other words, the thesis has provided answers to the main puzzle encapsulated in the central research question formulated as: ‘Why is the Malawian Public Service HRM in Malawi seemingly struggling to facilitate rapid national development?’

8.3 Recommendations from the Key Findings of the Thesis

Based on the key findings from the thesis which discovered the positive correlation between public service HRM and effective national development implementation, there are several recommendations and implications for development policy in terms of guidance to (1) suggest the mechanisms for public services to obtain maximum contributions from government employees via good HRM practices, (2) ensure that prioritization of compliance with the relevant law and regulations for HRM in government entities is implemented, (3) strengthen the implementation of diverse motivation strategies for improving public sector organizations effectiveness for rapid national development and quality service delivery, and (4) adopt the framework developed in the incumbent thesis for ameliorating the impact that the identified factors constraining public service HRM effectiveness has on national development. The empirical evidence from the thesis has re-validated the positive correlation between public service HRM and how it boosts national economies located in the central argument in the HRM-performance link for organizations. The thesis key findings in a nutshell underscore the facts raised by other scholars like Tessema et al (2015) that instead of the HRM activities to have a positive impact on the morale and performance of the trained workforce, they could have a negative impact if they are not supplemented with other motivational factors such as proper placement, supervision, performance monitoring and evaluation, equitable pay and benefits and promotion, among others. HRM practices in government certainly have central significance to societies striving to govern well and effectively implement national

development. This is particularly the case in developing countries like Malawi because public services still remain the primary conveyor of national development.

The case of Malawian Public Service, as we have seen, presents an interesting story in that several findings seem to suggest that despite the government system having some observable strengths, there are glaring weaknesses in as far as the management of public servants is concerned. The Public Service in Malawi is well guided by procedures and policies which are comprehensively articulated in the MPSR. The guidance provided therein relate to the manner in which new personnel should be identified and placed in their roles, promotions should be conducted with the provision of a minimum of 4 years as due time for promotion for anyone in the service, disciplinary administration should be done and how training and development of public servants should be conducted, among other things.

The weaknesses associated with the management of public servants in MDAs as revealed in this study have adversely affected the morale and motivation of public servants leading to frustrations and disappointments among them. The net effect of these weaknesses is that there is ineffectiveness national development implementation in Malawi due to poor HRM practices in MDAs.

8.4 Future Research Agenda

This section highlights theoretical issues from which recommendations for further research are made.

Integration of HRM Managers into Strategic National Development Implementation in public services

This thesis proposes that maximization of public servants' contributions to national development implementation is achieved when there are good HRM practices that are effectively managed and prioritized in MDAs. However, this positive correlation is only possible when good HRM practices are

integrated and championed at the highest level. The challenges concerning the management of HRM practices like promotions, compensation and wages, and lack of performance management were mainly caused by weak links and disinterest by those responsible for human resource management activities. Future research would be relevant to suggest the modalities of ensuring that good HRM practices are still achieved in public sector organizations despite the shortage of human resources management gurus. For example, one is to think of strengthening the capabilities of line managers and supervisors by inculcating a positive mindset for good HRM practices.

Strengthening Coordinated Supervision in the Malawian Public Service

One of the identified weaknesses in government MDAs related to lack of supervision particularly at lower levels. Despite the fact that public servants have enormous discretion on a day-to-day basis, it was discovered that some officers who were answering to disciplinary matters ended up being promoted because there was no coordination on supervision. Worse still, it was not uncommon to hear during interviews with respondents about so many people with poor performance who ended up being promoted several times in complete disregard to the disciplinary cases hanging around them. At the moment, there is decentralization policy being implemented in the country. This involves management of public servants by the local district authorities at the same time Ministry headquarters bear some functions relating to the management of public servants like implementation of promotions. According to Tambulasi (2010), the lack of coordinated supervision in district councils has also read to corruption and grave mismanagement of human resources at that level. Further research in this area would help with recommendations in terms of how coordinated supervision in the face of decentralization could be effectively implemented.

One common constraining factor running through the effective management of the bundle of HRM practices in government MDAs is political interference. This present study revealed intense political interference almost in all human resources management activities particularly when it comes to decision-making. Although many attempts have already been conducted to make the public service as professional as it can possibly be, political interference continues to be the central influence in as far as HRM practices are concerned. This calls for research in how and which mechanisms could effectively allow HRM practices to be freely and professionally conducted. Currently, political interference has been noted to be an invisible hand at the center of every decision-making relating to major human resources management activities in government system. It is important that the basics of human resources management are duly conducted to solicit optimal contributions for deserving and motivate personnel.

8.5 Contributions to the Research Objectives

This thesis study's major contribution is that it has added value to the HRM-Performance link in public organizations by re-validating the relevance of human resource management in national development discourse and debates. It is clear the major HRM practices in organizations effectively contribute towards increase in national economies via improvement in terms of performance by government employees. The national economies of developing countries in particular tend to increase because important indicators like responsiveness, compliance, productivity and commitment to development by public servants are bolstered. In a nutshell, all the study's specific objectives were adequately achieved

and the thesis has made substantial knowledge contributions towards the identification of mechanisms for strengthening the public service HRM-performance nexus as well as the public service effectiveness in national development implementation and quality service delivery.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Request for Consent to participate in the study

Maxwell Chimkokomo
C/O Allied Freight Agencies
P.O. Box 40423
Lilongwe 4
Email: m.chimkokomo@gmail.com

30th June, 2021

TO:
.....

Dear Sir/Madam

CONSENT REQUEST FOR AN ACADEMIC STUDY ON THE ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT: CASE OF MALAWIAN PUBLIC SERVICE

I hereby wish to request if you could spare a few minutes to complete the attached questionnaire.

I am undertaking a thesis study as a partial fulfillment of the admission requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Development Studies with the University of Malawi.

The questionnaire is estimated to take 20 minutes and your kind support in providing comprehensive responses to the questions is critical to the success of this research. Please take note that your responses will be treated with highest confidentiality.

Kindly return the completed questionnaire to me through the e-mail provided above.

I shall appreciate your kind cooperation and support on the study.

Yours faithfully,

Maxwell Chimkokomo

RESPONDENT SIGNATURE

I have read and understood the contents of this letter and that the responses provided shall solely be used for the research project.

I Signature: Date.....

ANNEX 2: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

COVERING LETTER FOR SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Title of Questionnaire: PUBLIC SERVICE HRM AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN MALAWI

Dear RESPONDENT

This questionnaire forms part of my research project entitled “Public Service Human Resource Management and National Development in Malawi” for a PhD degree at Chancellor College, University of Malawi. You have been selected by a sampling strategy from the population of the case studies of national programmes of the country. Hence, I invite you to take part in this survey.

The purpose of this study is to seek a deeper understanding of the linkage between public service human resources management and national development. The findings of this study will be used to demonstrate whether or not public service human resource management influences national development.

You are kindly requested to complete this survey questionnaire, comprising 3 sections as frankly as possible and according to your personal views and experience. No foreseeable risks are associated with the completion of the questionnaire, which is for academic research purposes only. The questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

It is not a requirement to indicate your name or organisation and your anonymity shall be guaranteed. However, indication of your age, gender, occupation position et cetera will contribute to thorough analysis. Data solicited through the questionnaire will be used for research purposes only and will remain confidential. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and you have the right to omit any question if so desired, or to withdraw from answering this survey without penalty at any stage.

Permission to undertake this survey has been granted by Chancellor College, University of Malawi and the Directors of Administration and Agriculture Extension Services in the Ministry of Agriculture, Director of Preventive Services in the Ministry of Health and Secretary for DHRM&D,. My contact details are +265 999 363 798, and e-mail: m.chimkokomo@gmail.com.

Please return the completed questionnaire to m.chimkokomo@gmail.com before 30th June, 2021.

Survey Questionnaire

Age

Academic Qualification

Gender

Male

Female

Tick Appropriate Category Position

#	Rank	Tick
1	Director/Deputy Director	
2	Chief Officer	
3	Administrative	
4	Technical	
5	Other	
6	Number of years of service with MDA	

SECTION 1: HRM practices

1. Do you consider your MDA to be an employer of choice?

YES

NO

2. (a) Do you find the human resources management practices in your MDA conducive?

YES

NO

(b) Can you justify your answer?

3. (a) How would you assess the importance of HRM practices towards your career progression?

1 Not Important

2 Slightly Important

3 Fairly Important

4 Important

5 Very Important

(b) Can you justify your answer?

4. (a) Do you think that government HRM practices in general are effective in motivating civil servants?

YES

NO

(b) If Yes, can you provide the reasons?

5. (a) Do you think the HRM practices can sustain your commitment to national development in Malawi?

YES

NO

(b) Can you elaborate on your answer? _____

SECTION 2: Administrative Compliance

6. (a) Does your MDA adhere to the laid down procedures in recruitment and promotion of officers?

YES

NO

(b) Would you share some examples?

7. (a) How do you evaluate your MDA's compliance to the relevant law in undertaking HRM activities?

1 Not compliant 2 Slightly compliant 3 Fairly compliant 4 Compliant 5 Very compliant

(b) Can you elaborate on this point?

8. (a) Are you aware of any instances of non-compliance to the laid down procedures in the recruitment and promotion of officers in your MDA?

YES

NO

(b) If your answer is yes, can you explain how this affected your commitment to duty?

9. (a) Do you think that the HRM practitioners in your MDA have the necessary competencies?

YES

NO

(b) If NO can you provide the reasons? _____

10. (a) How can you rate compliance to the laid down procedures as a priority in your MDA?

1 Not Important 2 Slightly Important 3 Fairly Important 4 Important 5 Very Important

(b) Can you explain your answer?

11. Does your MDA develop a Training Plan annually?

YES

NO

12. Can you briefly explain the procedure followed for officers to be included in the training plan in 11?

13. (a) Did you ever get promoted by government over the past 5years?

YES

NO

(b) If yes, please explain the procedure followed for your promotion?

14. What do you think demotivates you in your current position with the government MDA?

Tick the most three crucial factors

Serial # Demotivating factor Tick (v)

1 Low salary

- 2 Poor supervision
- 3 Lack of promotion
- 4 Too much workload
- 5 Poor relationship with supervisors
- 6 Others (Specify)

15. Do you consider the Government of Malawi to have adequate mechanisms for motivating its employees?

YES

NO

Section 3: Effectiveness of Public Service HRM in National Development

16. (a) If the Government of Malawi has adequate strategies for employees' motivation, do you think that these strategies are effectively implemented?

YES

NO

(b) If NO what do you think is the reason and what is missing?

17. The public service is regarded as the engine for national development in Malawi. Do you agree with this statement?

1 Don't agree 2 Partially agree 3 Somehow agree 4 Agree 5 Totally agree

18. What makes you think that the public service should be regarded the engine for national development in the country?

19. Are you aware of any factors that constrains the public service from implementing public policies and programmes in Malawi?

	YES	NO

YES

NO

20. Give any 3 critical factors that you think prevent public service HR from implementing national development in Malawi.

21. Do you think public servants like you can trust HRM related decisions to be based on policy and law?

YES

NO

22. Can you justify your answer in 21 above?

23. Do you believe that HR policies, procedures and processes meet the need for equitable employment practices in your MDA?

YES

NO

24. Would you give the reasons for your answer in 23 above?

25. (a) Have you ever been objectively assessed in your job performance during your employment with the Government of Malawi?

YES

NO

(b) If no, what could be the reasons for your answer?

26. If you answered yes to question 25 (a) above, what were the consequences of your performance appraisal? Give any three

27. (a) How would you rate the amount of discretion in performing your duties on a daily basis?

1 Not Important

2 Slightly Important

3 Fairly Important

4 Important

5 Very Important

(b) Can you justify your answer

28. (a) Do you know about any colleague who resigned from the positions in Government?

YES

NO

(b) If YES, what do you think are the reasons for their resignation?

29. What would you recommend to the Government for successful national development implementation?

30. How would you describe your involvement in national development program implementation in the country?

Annex 3: Semi- Structured Interview Guide (DHRMD Fieldwork) #_____

Introduction

This research is being conducted to investigate the linkage between Public Service HRM and the implementation of national development in Malawi. I am conducting this research for my PhD studies at the University of Malawi. Specifically, I am interested with the opinions of the decision makers and high-level officials on public service HRM and national development, and I will be interviewing other officials as well. The questions I would like to ask you relate to how human resource management in the public sector impacts national development implementation in Malawi. Everything you tell me will only be used for this research project and will not be shared with anyone. Also, unless you give me your express consent, your name will not be used, and you will not be identified with any answers you give. You have already consented to the interview in the consent form. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Opening Questions

1. Can you tell me whether the Malawian Public Service is an employer of choice?
2. How does the Malawian Public Service identify different categories of its staff?

3. What would you say are the major challenges relating to human resource management in government MDAs?
4. In your view, what would you say are the main causes of the challenges mentioned above?
5. What strategies would you recommend for minimizing the impact of the challenges highlighted?

Key questions

6. What HRM practices would you give are crucially important in the Malawian Public Service?
7. What were the shortfalls observed with the HRM practices in the Malawian Public Service?
8. How are human resource management decisions made in the Malawian Public Service?
9. Would you say there is compliance with the relevant laws and regulations in HRM decisions in the Malawian Public Service?
10. What is your perception of the HRM leadership and coordination in the Malawian Public service?

Closing questions

11. What do you think are the solutions for improving HRM in the Malawian Public Service?
14. What do you specifically think should be done to address coordination of HRM activities?
15. What are your hopes for rapid national development for human resource capacity utilization?

Concluding Remarks

Thank you for your willingness to help in this research project. Your participation is a significant part of my studies. Once again, I really appreciate your time.

Annex 4: Semi- Structured Interview Guide (MoA Fieldwork) #_____

Introduction

This research is being conducted to investigate the linkage between Public Service HRM and the implementation of national development in Malawi. I am conducting this research for my PhD studies at the University of Malawi. Specifically, I am interested with the opinions of the decision makers and high-level officials on public service HRM and national development, and I will be interviewing other officials as well. The questions I would like to ask you relate to how human resource management in the public sector impacts national development implementation in Malawi. Everything you tell me will only be used for this research project and will not be shared with anyone outside. Also, unless you give me your express consent, your name will not be used, and you will not be identified with any answers you give. You have already consented to the interview with the consent form. Do you have any questions before we begin?

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4. In your view, what would you say are the main causes of the challenges mentioned above?
5. What strategies would you recommend for minimizing the impact of the challenges highlighted?

Key questions

6. What HRM practices would you give are crucially important in the Malawian Public Service?
7. What were the shortfalls observed with the HRM practices in the Malawian Public Service?
8. How are human resource management decisions made in the Malawian Public Service?
9. Would you say there is compliance with the relevant laws and regulations in HRM decisions in the Malawian Public Service?
10. What is your perception of the HRM leadership and coordination in the Malawian Public service?

Closing questions

11. What do you think are the solutions for improving HRM in the Malawian Public Service?
14. What do you specifically think should be done to address coordination of HRM activities?
15. What are your hopes for rapid national development for human resource capacity utilization?

Concluding Remarks

Thank you for your willingness to help in this research project. Your participation is a significant part of my studies. Once again, I really appreciate your time.

Annex 5: Semi- Structured Interview Guide (MoH Fieldwork) #_____

Introduction

This research is being conducted to investigate the linkage between Public Service HRM and the implementation of national development in Malawi. I am conducting this research for my PhD studies at the University of Malawi. Specifically, I am interested with the opinions of the decision makers and high-level officials on public service HRM and national development, and I will be interviewing other officials as well. The questions I would like to ask you relate to how human resource management in the public sector impacts national development implementation in Malawi. Everything you tell me will only be used for this research project and will not be shared with anyone outside. Also, unless you give me your express consent, your name will not be used, and you will not be identified with any answers you give. You have already consented to the interview in the consent form. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Opening Questions

1. Can you tell me whether the Malawian Public Service is an employer of choice?
2. How does the Malawian Public Service identify different categories of its staff?

3. What would you say are the major challenges relating to human resource management in government MDAs?
4. In your view, what would you say are the main causes of the challenges mentioned above?
5. What strategies would you recommend for minimizing the impact of the challenges highlighted?

Key questions

6. What HRM practices would you give are crucially important in the Malawian Public Service?
7. What were the shortfalls observed with the HRM practices in the Malawian Public Service?
8. How are human resource management decisions made in the Malawian Public Service?
9. Would you say there is compliance with the relevant laws and regulations in HRM decisions in the Malawian Public Service?
10. What is your perception of the HRM leadership and coordination in the Malawian Public service?

Closing questions

11. What do you think are the solutions for improving HRM in the Malawian Public Service?
14. What do you specifically think should be done to address coordination of HRM activities?
15. What are your hopes for rapid national development for human resource capacity utilization?

Concluding Remarks

Thank you for your willingness to help in this research project. Your participation is a significant part of my studies. Once again, I really appreciate your time.

APPENDIX: Authorisation letter from the University of Malawi to conduct research