HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DECENTRALIZATION IN BOTSWANA AND SOUTH AFRICA

by:

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

November 2009

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to understand the relationship between decentralisation and human resource management in Botswana and South Africa. The study is situated within the context of the New Public Management (NPM) that has influenced the Human Resource Management reforms that the two countries aspire to adopt. This study's main finding is that although strategic human resource management (SHRM) and decentralisation are frequently assumed to go together and are both advocated by the BrettonWoods institutions, in the cases researched SHRM reforms have been accompanied by a tendency towards centralisation. This implies a trade-off between SHRM and decentralisation in Botswana and South Africa.

The study used a mixed methods approach consisting of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, applied to a sample of local authorities in Botswana and the neighbouring North West province of South Africa.

In both countries the implementation of HRM reforms in local government has been slow due to other considerations – political factors in the case of South Africa and professional bureaucratic issues in Botswana, reflecting the different path dependencies of the two countries. This study argues that from the cases studied even though developing countries may implement similar reforms based on similar policy advice or prescription, a combination of factors such as social and organisational culture that are not transferable between countries account for the difference in outcomes.

DEDICATION

To my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ACR   Annual Confidential Report

ALGMWU   Amalgamated Local and Central Government Manual Workers Union

ANC   African National Congress

APPs   Annual Performance Plans

ARVs   Anti-retroviral Drugs

BDP   Botswana Democratic Party

BIDPA   Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis

BNPC   Botswana National Productivity Centre

BOPA   Botswana Press Agency

BULGSA   Botswana Unified Local Government Association

CAF   Common Assessment Framework

CDC   Central District Council

CBD   Central Business District

CEO   Chief Executive Officer

COSATU   Congress of South African Trade unions

CPI   Corruption Perception Index

CPMS   Computerised Personnel management System

CS   Council Secretary

DA   Democratic Alliance

DC   District Commissioner

DDC   District Development Committee

DDP   District Development Plan

DGD   Decentralised Governance for Development

DGLSM   Department of Local Government Service Management

DLG&H	Department of Developmental Local Government and Housing
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
DPSM	Directorate of Public Service Management
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
ES	Establishment Secretary
FOFATUSA	Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa
FPTP	First Past The Post
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoB	Government of Botswana
HR(s)	Human Resource(s)
HRM	Human Resource Management
HRP	Human Resource Plans
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IMATU	Independent Municipal and Allied Trade Union
IHRM	International Human Resource Management
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IT	Information Technology
KPI	Key performance Indicators
KRA	Key Result Areas
LAs	Local Authorities
LAC	Livestock Advisory Centre
LAJCC	Local Authorities Joint Consultative Council
LED	Local Economic Development
LGWSETA	Local Government Water Sector Education and Training Authority

MbO	Management by Objectives
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEC	Member of Executive Council
MULTA	Municipal Leadership Training Authority
MIG	Municipal Infrastructure Grant
NACA	National AIDS Coordinating Agency
NALCGPMWU	National Amalgamated Local and Central Government, and Parastatal Manual Workers' Union
NDP	National Development Plan
NEMIC	National Employment, Manpower and Incomes Council
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPM	New Public Management
O&M	Organisation and Methods Review
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAC	Pan African Congress
PBRS	Performance Based Reward System
PIC	Performance improvement Coordinator
PMS	Performance Management Systems
PPS	Population Proportionate to Size
PRP	Performance Related Pay
PS	Permanent Secretary
PSP	Permanent Secretary to the President
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACTU	South African Congress of Trade Unions

SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SALGBC	South African Local Government Bargaining Council
SAMWU	South African Municipal Workers Union
SATLC	South African Trades and Labour Council
SATUC	South African Trades Union Council
SETA	Sector for Education and Training Authority
SHRM	Strategic Human Resource Management
SIPU	SIPU International (a Swedish consultancy and training organisation)
SMME	Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Programme for Social Sciences
TSM	Teaching Service Management
UB	University of Botswana
UDF	United Democratic Front
UDP	Urban Development Plan
UK	United Kingdom
ULGS	Unified Local Government Service
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WHO	World Health Organisation
WITS	Work Improvement Teams

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This study seeks to understand more about the relationship between human resource management (HRM) and decentralisation in developing countries, specifically Africa. Recognising that service delivery is at the core of local governance, many developing nations have responded in different ways to enhancing the capacity of their local governments. Almost all African countries have addressed this issue by establishing HRM mechanisms that largely reflect the prevailing decentralisation policies. It is generally agreed that decentralisation and its outcomes are country specific. Beyond this national specificity are regional patterns. In Central and Eastern Europe, for instance, decentralisation has been associated with 'local identity, local representation, and local decision-making', whereas in most other developing countries decentralisation was inspired by instrumentalist perspectives, from the World Bank and other donor agencies, of improving service delivery, poverty reduction and prevention of corruption (Devas and Delay, 2006). Other authors also share the same opinion on the latter observation (see Smoke, 2003). But why should these factors be improved by decentralisation?

The reasons for decentralisation are varied and may include; demand for local level democratic control and autonomy, the perceived economic, administrative and political advantages of decentralisation, post conflict reconstruction, interests of local and national political elites, and demand from the World Bank and other donor agencies (Devas and Delay, 2006: 678-79). Popular participation in the development

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process and decision-making has been cited as one of the main reasons for decentralisation (Mawhood, 1983). Whatever the reason(s) for decentralisation and the form (e.g. devolution or deconcentration) it may take, the main point is to provide efficient and effective local services for human development.

Decentralisation is a complex process and it is a product of the context within which it is taking place (Smoke, 2003). In Africa there are many hurdles against meaningful decentralization, but quite often it is the legal and institutional aspects that influence the eventual outcome of decentralization (Wunsch, 2001). The situation has been exacerbated by the weakly conceived decentralization legislation, poorly trained local personnel, poorly designed local institutions and limited financial resources (Mawhood, 1983; Wunsch, 2001; Olowu and Wunsch 2004). Lately the blame has been targeted at the overemphasis of the structural issues to the neglect of human resource capacity as the key problem to efficiency and poor performance in service delivery (Hussein, 2003). Where studies have been done on HRM in local government, it would invariably show that in Africa human resources (HRs) remain largely centralized and weak (Wunsch, 2001; Olowu, 2003; Mawhood, 1983). The key feature of centralised HRM is the existence of departments in central government that manage local authorities' human resources (HRs) in terms of: appointments, promotion, transfers, compensation, and so on. Therefore, the main problem associated with poor service delivery and poor performance at local government is, but not limited to, the nature of the institutional and policy frameworks in place.

The appreciation of human resources as a key factor in ensuring gains in efficiency, effectiveness and economy in service provision has almost become universal. Not

only should the numbers of personnel be sufficient but they should also be appropriately trained and developed (Hussein, 2003: 11). Globally, the adoption of 'Western ideas on "public management" are embraced as instruments for improving human resources management' (Soeters and Tessema, 2003: 624), including in many African countries. HRM, and especially Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM), is strongly linked to the New Public Management (NPM), (see Chapter II), and NPM-type reforms associated with 'new approaches to service delivery' have been attempted also in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) as well as other developing regions of the world - South Asia and South America (Manning, 2001: 301; McCourt, 2001). These reforms are more often than not imposed on the developing countries by lending and donor institutions (see Adamolekun, 2005; McCourt, 2002).

Managerial decentralisation may be seen as pivotal to the NPM approach. However, the extent of decentralisation of HRM responsibilities varies from one country to another. Shim (2001) categorised some of the developed nations into three groups denoting the level of devolution of HRM responsibilities to line departments and/or managers, and these are:

- Those with more extensive devolution of HRM responsibilities such as New Zealand, Australia and Sweden where central involvement in HRM activities of departments and agencies has been limited.

- Those that have significant devolution, e.g. Denmark, UK and the Netherlands that have been more circumspect than the other three mentioned above.

- Countries where decentralisation and devolution are not a priority, such as Japan, Greece, Portugal and Turkey.

The extent of the decentralisation of HRM in the developed countries is evidently varied. However, within this variation in developed countries there is some commonality in that they are all at a stage where their HRM systems have matured and their main concern is with the refinement of how these systems work. This contrasts with the practice in developing countries, a number of which are still considered to be in the pre-Weberian stage of public administration, although others are perceived as committed reformers. Thus there are substantial differences in the context of HRM in developed and developing countries, although there is also a significant variation also within these categories.

Although virtually all sub-Saharan African countries have some form of local governance and service delivery is relatively decentralised, HRM responsibilities remain largely centralised. Public sector reforms aimed at improving capacity for the efficient and effective delivery of services have been undertaken in many African countries, but HRM as such has been neglected. This is highlighted in Section 1.2 that states the problem that this study seeks to explore.

1.2 The Problem

While the decentralization of service delivery among developing countries is seen as a possible solution to some of the developmental problems, it is doubtful if decentralization alone would be adequate. Decentralisation is not a new phenomenon in Africa although its history has not been successful. But as interest in Africa on decentralization has rebounded it is coming at a time when many African countries are undertaking the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposed public sector reforms and Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). According to the World Bank and/or IMF funding conditionalities, managerial decentralisation is

one of the reforms which countries have to adopt irrespective of their prevailing circumstances. But as illustrated in Section 1.4 and also in Table 1.1 below, the context within which managerial concepts are applied stands at the core of the success of reform. Many of the sub-Saharan Africa countries have adopted NPM-style reforms and some are extending these reforms to their local authorities, in particular South Africa and Botswana. Given that there are environmental factors that give developing countries their own distinctive context, it is worth investigating the implications of these reforms in particular in terms of flexibility in HRM.

Local governments in most developing countries continue to be faced with the problem of manpower shortage in the professional and technical fields, which inhibit them from adequately meeting the demands for the services they are expected to deliver. Coupled with this, in some countries, are the underlying structural and capacity problems that are linked to the entire public management systems of the developing countries. The efficient and effective delivery of services and programmes remain a major challenge in developing countries. The lack of adequate financial and other material resources are definitely some of the factors contributing to poor service delivery. But these resources, even if they were available, are not enough to solve the problems of service delivery and poor performance.

The problem of poor service delivery is more complex than a mere lack of resources. Decentralisation of service delivery in developing countries is seen as a solution to some of these problems. Some of the factors that prompt developing nations to adopt decentralisation are the anticipated 'improved efficiency, improved governance, improved equity and improved development and poverty reduction' (Smoke, 2003: 9,

10). The predominant theoretical orientation concerning decentralisation has been premised on the notion that service delivery decisions are made at, or closer to, the point of delivery. However, with regard to the management of the HRs that deliver the services, many African countries have retained centralised HRM systems. The centralisation/decentralisation debate has been raging on for years. While the ideals of decentralization may be appealing it is also known that the results may not always be what were expected as it can simply spread some of the problems around, for instance corruption (see Devas and Delay, 2006). The section below presents the focus of the study.

1.3 Focus of the Study

Most studies on decentralization focus on fiscal, institutional (with limited reference to human resource management) and political decentralization. Apparently consideration of institutional capacity does not usually deal profoundly with human resource capacity solutions. Several scholars have also noted that research in HRM in developing countries is scanty (Jackson, 2002; Budhwar and Debrah, 2003). It is even more so with research in HRM in local government in developing countries. This study is to some degree pioneering the study of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and decentralisation in developing countries.

This study takes as its starting point McCourt and Ramgutty-Wong's (2002) conclusion that strategic human resource management (SHRM) was neither applicable nor feasible in Mauritius (and therefore the African context). Their views were based on a case study they conducted in Mauritius in which they found that SHRM was not applicable because it was not known, there was no strategic management framework,

staff management was centralised and political will to support reform was lacking. However, McCourt (2006) later found that with the 'new' government in Mauritius the situation had changed dramatically from lack of commitment to sustained political commitment. This points to the effect that contingent factors (e.g. politics, economy, etc.) can have on the HRM system of a country. Nevertheless, McCourt (2006: 66-67) found that full-blown HRM had not been achieved but instead a modulated approach with a mix of emerging strategic elements and centralisation alongside each other was emerging. But why do developing countries continue to adopt Western style management solutions to their problems? And, are these Western managerial approaches applicable in the African context? These are some of the issues that this study looks at in the attempt to answer the main research questions. McCourt and Ramgutty-Wong used economic growth as the key variable that influenced the viability of the application or feasibility of SHRM. Instead this study uses more elements such as politics, economy, labour market, social culture, unionisation, decentralisation, organisational culture and internal strengths/weaknesses to help understand the broader context that influences HRM. What is important to this study is to understand how the adoption of SHRM (Western management ideals) affects decentralisation or local democracy in developing countries. Also, there is a need to comprehend the dynamics of local governance and how its human resources are managed in Africa. And lastly, it is demonstrated in Section 1.4 and Chapter II that the NPM-style reforms have largely been introduced in developing countries as policy advice from the Bretton Woods institutions, donors and international consultants. But why would different countries adopting similar policy advice result with different outcomes? Before going any further, a brief description of SHRM is presented.

SHRM is involved with ensuring that there is congruence between HR strategy and organisational strategy (vertical integration/external fit) and also that HR strategies are integrated horizontally (internal fit). Armstrong (2006: 29, 30) states that SHRM is based on three key points: 'that human capital is a major source of competitive advantage' and 'that it is people who implement the strategic plan', and lastly 'that a systematic approach should be adopted to defining where the organisation wants to go and how it should get there'. This approach presupposes that employees have a direct impact on the outcomes of an organisation's strategic plan, and also that they are affected by it. SHRM promises better results over other HR approaches by claiming to enable organisations to acquire 'skilled, committed and well-motivated employees it needs to achieve sustainable competitive advantage' (ibid).

The ideals of SHRM sound appealing but in practice the results have not been as easy as it appears in the textbooks. Even among the OECD Member countries the decentralisation of HRM responsibilities was found not to necessarily guarantee the flexibility of human resource management as even where HR authorities were delegated to agencies most lacked flexibility as a result of adhering to the same old practices (Shim, 2001; 330). The experience of the developed countries with the decentralisation of HRM responsibilities indicates the complexity of flexibility in HRM. Perhaps this points to a more complex relationship between HRM and decentralisation in developing countries given the context in which management occurs in these countries.

There is a complication here in that it depends on what is meant by decentralisation – bearing in mind the distinction between political decentralisation i.e. the exercise of

powers by a local authority and managerial decentralisation i.e. the exercise of powers by a local agency of central government. It could be argued that SHRM and NPM imply the second type of decentralisation rather than the first. However, in this thesis we are not primarily concerned with the issue of local versus central government competences but rather with the hierarchical level at which a decision is made i.e. how far in organizational terms from the point of service delivery a decision is made. In countries where there is a developed system of local state administration in addition to elected local authorities this issue would be more complicated. However in the countries concerned in this study it could be argued that the distinction between political and managerial centralisation is not so significant – centralisation here implies taking a decision further up the hierarchy into central government, it does usually mean transferring the decision to a territorial state body. In other words, if decentralisation is taken to be an increase in line manager ownership, in this study this would also coincide with an increase in local government ownership and centralisation would involve a reduction in both line management ownership and local government ownership. It is appreciated that in other contexts SHRM would be compatible with managerial decentralisation even if this were accompanied by political centralisation. However, in the context of this study the distinction between managerial and political decentralisation does not appear to be significant.

This thesis adopts a case study approach and applies the conceptual framework of SHRM and decentralisation to analyse the HRM practice in the local governments of two African countries, Botswana and South Africa. The SHRM framework consists of two parts/phases, first the environment (consisting of both the internal and external elements) and its relationship with the HRM philosophy (i.e. the strategy formulation

phase). The second part (i.e. the strategy implementation phase) refers to the application of the HRM practices, performance management and how information on performance outcomes is used. HRM in this study refers to the generic practice of employee management, whereas SHRM means a particular practice of HRM distinct from traditional personnel management (see Section 2.4.2. for further explanation).

This study seeks to overcome some of the limitations of the other studies by focusing on the strategies of how people are employed and managed, assessing how these are performed and linked to organisational strategy in the context of local authorities in developing countries. Adopting a conceptual framework based on the contingency model, the Resource Based View and path dependence (see Section 2.5) to analyse HRM at local level. Furthermore, the study examined the local government institutional and policy framework for managing human resources, as well as the decentralisation systems of the two countries. The next Section explains why Botswana and South Africa were selected for this study from among many African countries.

1.4 The Study Area/Countries

Both Botswana and South Africa are middle-income countries, and this should put them in a better position to afford the often costly NPM reforms. It will be shown briefly in this Section and in Chapter II that resource availability is one of the contributory factors to the success or failure of public sector reforms. Botswana is known for its exceptionality in Africa and the developing world for its long tradition of local democratic governance and local government's exceptionality in service delivery and performance (Olowu and Wunsch, 2004). However, within this

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exceptionality, weaknesses in human resource management remain (Reilly, 1983; Tsie *et al*, 1998; Phirinyane and Kaboyakgosi, 2001; Olowu and Wunsch, 2004). South Africa on the other hand is a country in transition from apartheid to democratic governance, with a local government that is perceived to have failed historically to fulfil its mandate of service delivery (Pycroft, 1999). South Africa, known as the most developed and richest country in Sub-Saharan Africa (see Appendix 7), is peculiar in that the Government of National Unity in 1994 inherited a flawed, inefficient and ineffective organization (Harrison-Rockey, 1999). In spite of the inherited weaknesses in South Africa's public management system there are significant advantages as well, in particular the strength of the economy. Economic advantages perhaps are what sets South Africa apart from other countries in Africa, in as far as public sector reforms and civil service reforms are concerned. The rest of the discussion focuses on these differences and the implications these have for reform.

Each of the 54 African countries have their own unique historical and political experiences. These experiences have to varying degrees influenced their public management approaches. The variance in public management between some African countries is illustrated in Table 1.1 in which they are placed in columns denoting levels of reform and also showing their placements in a public management reform continuum.

Table 1.1: Classification of Countries by Levels of Civil Service Rehabilitation Efforts

A. ADVANCED REFORMERS ("**VIRTUOUS CYCLE**")	B. COMMITTED REFORMERS	C. HESITANT REFORMERS	D. BEGINNERS AND NON-STARTERS ("**VICIOUS CYCLE**")
Botswana	Benin	Cote d'Ivoire	Democratic Republic of Congo
Mauritius	Burkina Faso	Gabon	Burundi
Namibia	Ethiopia	Guinea	Central African Republic
South Africa	Ghana	Nigeria	Liberia
	Kenya	Togo	Sierra Leone
	Mali	Zimbabwe	Somalia
	Mauritania		Sudan
	Rwanda		
	Senegal		
	Tanzania		
	Uganda		
	Zambia		

Public Management Reform Continuum

Virtuous   ———————————————————   Vicious
cycle   cycle

Source: Adamolekun (2005).

However, one should note that some of Adamolekun's observations are overtaken by developments such as the deterioration of the governance situation in Zimbabwe and the significant progress in the Sierra Leonean public service reform. Zimbabwe may now be classified under 'Beginners and Non-starters' and Sierra Leone under 'Committed Reformers'. Notwithstanding the changes that may have taken place in some of the countries there have not been any significant movements across country classifications that could nullify its usefulness.

Adamolekun observed that the advanced reformers, in Group A (i.e. Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa), are those countries that had maintained a viable public administration system and nurtured the merit-based and apolitical civil service systems that they inherited from the colonial governments. Also, he observes

that these countries have achieved significant progress in their socio-economic development and have therefore been able to finance the reforms. Furthermore, the Advanced Reformers entrenched the rule of law and a democratic political culture in their governance systems, enabling them to attract both local and foreign direct investment. Adamolekun characterised these developments as the 'virtuous cycle'[1].

Group B countries are those that experienced setbacks with their public administration systems but recommitted to rehabilitating their systems in the early 1990s and also democratised. These included: Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. These countries also experienced, albeit to varying degrees, some economic difficulties in the 1970s and 1980s that led to bilateral and multilateral donors demanding the implementation of structural adjustment programmes (SAPS). The SAPS mainly involved: 'civil service staff reduction, freezing of new recruitments, and removal of ghost workers with a view to reducing the size of the civil service wage bill' (ibid, 7).

The third and fourth groups have also attempted the reforms that Group B countries adopted but with very limited success. The countries in Groups C and D experienced debilitating civil strife, failing economies and failing or failed states. Adamolekun places Group D countries at the extreme end of the public management reform continuum, 'vicious cycle', because of the protracted civil wars that they experienced.

Although many African governments were still struggling to get a foothold on a firm reform agenda there were already notable successes in Group A. In spite of challenges

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[1] Namibia and South Africa were regarded as virtuous only after the attainment of majority rule. Both countries were ruled by the former apartheid regime in Pretoria.

experienced in the adoption of the NPM reforms there are at least four cases that indicate serious attempts at the adoption of NPM reforms in Africa. However, among these four countries, SHRM has been studied at the national level but not how it is applied in local government. From the mid-1990s and early 2000s it was Botswana and South Africa that showed a keen interest and commitment in rolling out a performance management systems (PMS) to local authorities and this makes them the most suitable candidates for this study. How PMS and SHRM are related is explained in Chapter II where it is also shown that the adoption of a particular public management system engenders a particular human resource management system. Section 1.5 presents the aim of the study, the research questions and hypotheses.

1.5 Aim of the Study, Research Questions and Hypotheses

The aim of the study is to understand the relationship between decentralisation and HRM in developing countries, in particular Sub-Saharan Africa. The research questions that this study seeks to answer are as follows:

The primary research question is:

- *Is there a trade-off (in the sense of an inverse or zero-sum relationship) between SHRM and decentralization or local democracy in Botswana and South Africa? This is important because there is a perception in the countries concerned that international best practice incorporates both decentralisation and SHRM. If these two principles are shown to be incompatible these raises a fundamental dilemma for policymakers.*

Secondary Questions:

- *What are the main factors/elements that influence the management of human resources in local government in Botswana and South Africa?*

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- *Why do countries adopting similar policy advice end up with different outcomes?*

In the attempt to answer these questions, the study focused first on the concepts of SHRM, and its application in developing countries. Secondly, the study examined the decentralisation and human resource management policies of the two countries and their current HRM practices. Thirdly, the study focused on local government structures and the centre-local relationships of the two countries. Fourth, the extent to which central government is involved in local government HRM, and its impact on local government capacity to execute its HRM responsibilities was analyzed.

In the attempt to answer the research questions above the study examined the following hypotheses through the use of the two-country case studies:

- *The adoption of SHRM reforms is likely to be driven by the centre rather than by local authorities themselves.*
- *External contingencies such as wider governmental priorities (for example a policy of centralisation) or international donor agendas have a more decisive influence on HRM policy in local government than local factors or perceived HRM best practice.*
- *The 'inimitable and immobile resources' (Barney, 1991, 1999) of institutions lead to different approaches to the management of human resources in those institutions.*

To address these hypotheses this study has examined how employees are managed in the local government systems of Botswana and South Africa and has also analysed

what determines HRM in the two countries. The structure of the thesis is outlined in Section 1.6 below.

1.6 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapter I presents the general introduction and outlines the background to the problem and discusses the statement of the problem. The chapter further presents the aim of the study, research questions, the hypotheses, the study area/countries, and the focus and justification for the study.

Chapter II presents the decentralisation concept and illustrates how the different public management models influence HRM. The discussion covers key characteristics of HRM and decentralisation. The chapter has five sections dealing with decentralisation, HRM, the conceptual framework and the analytical framework. Related to the analytical framework the Chapter discusses the decentralisation/HRM framework which serves as a tool for categorising countries' HRM systems.

Chapter III presents the methodology, the study design, data collection, sample design, data processing and analysis as well as the limitations. The research, as already mentioned, adopted a case study approach. The study used a mixed methods approach, with emphasis on the qualitative research methods supported by quantitative methods, and document research methods. Chapters IV and V present the background information about Botswana and South Africa (the North West province) respectively. The chapters give detailed and necessary background about each of the two countries, discussing their decentralisation and HRM frameworks. However, these do not directly answer the research questions. Factors that influence both

decentralisation and HRM are discussed, the concept of HRM, HRM practices and performance management and reporting mechanisms. The background information discusses the elements of the conceptual framework and shows that not all of them are relevant to the two case studies, particularly donor role. In both countries donors play a limited or negligible role on influencing government policies, perhaps owing to the relative strengths of the two countries' economies compared to other sub-Saharan African countries.

Chapters VI and VII present the empirical data, analysis and interpretation of the research carried out in Botswana and South Africa respectively. The concluding Chapter VIII presents a summary of the findings, analysis, and draws conclusions.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND, THEORY AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented the introduction to the study and the research questions and hypotheses. This chapter reviews the literature on the key concepts of decentralisation, new public management (NPM), and strategic human resource management, and attempts to clarify the possible linkages between these. Whilst it might be an exaggeration to argue that NPM is automatically associated with decentralisation, centralisation is often considered antithetical to NPM (see Mosley, 2008; Levy, 2002). However, as this chapter demonstrates, the experience of decentralisation in Sub-Saharan Africa has had very mixed results, the implication being that NPM reforms in this context might require centralisation rather than decentralisation if they are to be implemented successfully.

2.2. The Rationale for Decentralisation

Decentralisation, in its various forms, has been pursued by both developed and developing countries alike as a central public sector reform strategy. For developing countries decentralisation is not only a reform strategy but it is increasingly seen as an integral part or a *sine qua non* of the development process. Although political or fiscal decentralisation is not necessarily associated with New Public Management, managerial decentralisation is, and NPM and decentralisation tend both to feature on any notional list of the reform agenda for the public services of developing countries. From this it might be assumed that the two, whilst by no means inseparable, are

closely related – although as the present study will demonstrate this relationship is far from simple.

Bardhan (2002) notes that decentralisation has for many decades been seen as a public sector reform necessary for invigorating the state. The apparent global popularity of decentralisation may be attributed to the perceived failure of centralisation. Some of the factors that prompt nations to adopt decentralisation are the anticipated 'improved efficiency, improved governance, improved equity and improved development and poverty reduction' (Smoke, 2003: 9, 10). In Mawhood's words decentralisation '… suggests the hope of cracking open the blockages of an inert bureaucracy', and 'curing managerial constipation…' (1983: 1). Advocacy of decentralisation as a cure for bureaucracy's ills thus predates New Public Management. However, the association between the two concepts may be seen as a result of the emergence of privatisation arguably the defining component of NPM, as one of four types of decentralisation, according to Lister and Betley's classification. The four types of decentralisation suggested by Lister and Betley (1999) and UNDP (2004) are stated below;

1. Deconcentration: referring to the dispersal of administrative responsibilities from the centre to field offices and/or local authorities. The central government remains with supervisory responsibilities to ensure accountability to higher levels of government.

2. Delegation: decision-making responsibilities being transferred to semi-autonomous institutions such as boards and public corporations. These entities would usually enjoy less constraining conditions unlike in the civil service. But they are nevertheless accountable to central government.

3. Devolution: through which both administrative and political powers are transferred to independent local level entities that, on account of their legal status, have jurisdiction to exercise authority over a specified geographical area. A municipality or local council with devolved powers will be able to raise its own revenue, have legislative powers, decide on policy, and investment within the scope of their statutory rights.

4. Privatisation: referring to a situation whereby responsibility is transferred to a private or not-for-profit entity. Privatisation is usually pursued with the objective of rolling back the state and ushering the supposedly efficient private sector as a service provider. This form of decentralisation might also take less radical forms such as contracting for public services where the provider may still be in-house but is subject to competition and commercial imperatives, and the use of decentralised budgets to encourage front-line service units to operate more in the style of private firms. This form is strongly associated with New Public Management and decentralised management (or administration) in public organisations.

Smoke (2003; 8) observes however that decentralisation is 'invariably complex' and 'has several dimensions' that 'are integrated and must be considered together'. '[T]he fact of decentralization does not constitute local governance' (Olowu and Wunsch, 2004: 39). Inversely, local governance is understood to work within the framework of decentralisation. This study is principally interested in the devolution type of decentralisation as it is the one that is usually applied in the creation of local government and also in the transfer of administrative/managerial powers from the centre.

Increasingly, decentralisation has come to be seen as an important aspect of good governance defined as '… respect for human rights, political openness, participation, tolerance, administrative and bureaucratic capacity and efficiency' (Work, 2002: 3). Globalisation (in the sense of the Washington consensus) has increased the pressure to demonstrate good governance, especially with donors' preference for working with NGOs rather than the state (Work, 2002). This increases the pressure for decentralisation, the more so as decentralisation is also seen as pivotal to the achievement of poverty reduction and the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals[2] (MDGs) in developing countries (UNDP, 2004). In practical terms, of course, decentralisation is also very much about the distribution of power as Chapters VII and VIII will illustrate.

These various trends – good governance, New Public Management, globalisation – may be seen as not only coincident but also as mutually reinforcing, and all tend to point towards a greater emphasis on administrative decentralisation. This is not always stated explicitly, but, on the other hand, centralisation, is widely seen as being as antithetical to good governance, New Public Management and globalisation, and it might therefore be assumed that the more decentralisation advances the more this would enable other reforms to follow. Ironically, however, NPM reforms have tended towards centralisation in some cases. For instance, Bach (2000) states that under the Conservative government, the UK adopted, in effect, the model of the multi-divisional company in which strategic policy decisions are made at the centre which also monitors the financial performance and service standards of separate organisational

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[2] MDGs are a set of about eight goals that the United Nations Member States have committed themselves to achieve by the year 2015. These are: reduction of extreme poverty and hunger; achievement of universal primary education; gender equality and empowerment of women; reduction of child mortality; maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; environmental sustainability; and develop a global partnership for development. See http://www.undp.org

units, of which their senior managers are responsible for operational efficiency. In another observation Mosley (2008: 4) stated that '[i]n principle MBO (management by objectives) within a national PES (public employment system) organisation represents not an abandonment of central direction of the PES organisation but rather a refinement.'

There are therefore ambiguities in the conceptualisation as well as the practice of decentralisation; as will be noted in the Botswana and South African case studies below. At this point it is useful to look briefly at the experience of African countries in terms of decentralisation.

2.2.1. Decentralisation in Sub-Saharan Africa

Decentralisation in its present form was introduced in Africa as early as the 1960s but by the 1970s the local institutions were plagued by interference from the top, infighting, and lack of resources and skills leading to widespread failure (Crook and Manor, 1998). In the 1980s interest in decentralisation returned to Africa (Crook and Manor, 1998; Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2006). Nevertheless, in spite of the noble desires of many African governments to decentralise, their reform efforts achieved very limited success. The challenges they experienced persisted for decades even after decentralisation 'accelerated after 1990' (Bardhan and Mookerjee, 2006: 1). The trajectory of decentralisation in Africa has thus been a rather jagged one. Experience varies widely, with some having reversed decentralisation during military coups d'etat only to reintroduce local governance later, others tending towards centralisation, while some are new comers (see Ayee, 2004; Smoke, 2004; Wunsch and Ottemoeller, 2004; Tordoff, 1994).

Olowu and Wunsch (2004: 39) classified African countries into three decentralisation policy systems: labelling them as old, new and mixed - and the examples were presented as:

- Old/deconcentration: Ghana, Cameroon, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia.
- New/devolution: Mauritius, Botswana, Uganda, Nigeria, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania.
- Mixed/partial devolution: (urban areas only) Namibia, Mozambique, Burkina Faso.

One intriguing factor about decentralisation is that it can take place under any form of national governance system, be it democratic or authoritarian. Undemocratic regimes such as those in Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda[3], China, Pakistan, apartheid South Africa and Ghana under Jerry Rawlings' military rule had decentralised governance (Ayee, 2004; Bardhan and Mookerjee, 2006; Crook and Manor, 1998; Smoke, 2004; Olowu and Wunsch, 2004). The broader national political context plays a major role in influencing decentralisation (Olowu and Wunsch, 2004). Often the political motive for decentralisation is specifically to incorporate local interests into national systems of patronage, this is particularly the case in authoritarian regimes. It is also shown in Chapters VI and VII that fairly democratic regimes can apply a similar strategy for self-preservation.

The incorporation of local interests into national systems of patronage could be expressed in a number of ways such as the decentralisation laws, allocation of resources (human and fiscal), and in the centre-local relations. How these factors are configured is important for local governance. Effective decentralisation and service

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[3] There have been some notable improvements in the democratic practice of some countries such as Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda in spite of their democracies being somewhat unusual.

delivery would more specifically be related to '… budgeting and fiscal management, personnel systems and management' (Wunsch, 2001: 277), and efficient central-local relations (Crook, 2003; Smoke, 2003). In many African governments this has been frustrated by the political objectives of the government of the day and the widespread tendency of the centre to intervene in local affairs.

These are matters related broadly to institutional design, which is perceived as one of the crucial aspects of local governance in Africa. Olowu and Wunsch insist that it is necessary to give pre-eminence to institutional design even where the 'national context is supportive and even if intergovernmental relations are effective' (2004: 268). They argue that institutional design is particularly significant in Africa because of the high poverty levels, the nascent development of local governance, and the placing of much emphasis on central government by both scholars and practitioners. Institutions that are poorly designed cannot function efficiently as there will be power asymmetry between the centre and local authorities, as well as between the local level executive and local political leadership.

Tordoff, (1994) observed about two decades ago that in a number of countries there have been tendencies towards centralisation , such as in Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, and Botswana. Some of these countries have attempted decentralisation but in practice their systems remain largely centralised. Clearly there was no simple relationship between democratisation and decentralisation in these countries. Bach (2000: 14) argues that immediately after independence centralisation was continued due to concerns about 'poor infrastructure, an underdeveloped private sector and widespread poverty,' and that 'the State in large parts of Africa and elsewhere needed to take on

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the task of guiding the economy and establishing public service provision'. Similar development problems prevailed even in the 1980s and after, especially where there have been wars and other governance problems.

Lack of financial resources as well often proved to be a serious challenge to local government reform as in the case of Zambia under the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) led government (Tordoff, 1994). Elsewhere, as in Botswana and South Africa, the cases being considered here, relative abundance of financial resources has been found to make many things achievable (Olowu and Wunsch, 2004). Nevertheless, sources of revenue for local government in Africa are often limited, with taxes that they can administer often difficult and costly to collect which has lead to overdependence on the centre (Devas, 2005). Fiscal decentralisation has been undertaken in some African countries to address these challenges, but more often than not with donor support such as in Tanzania (Fjeldstad and Semboja, 2000). On the other hand the lack of adequately skilled personnel has led to lack of capacity in local government, adversely affecting service delivery. Some of the areas that have been adversely affected by lack of capacity, for instance, are the collection of taxes (see Fjeldstad and Semboja, 2000; Devas, 2005) and the maintenance of effective accounting systems (Devas, 2005). But successes have been noted elsewhere such as in Botswana, Kenya and South Africa, with Botswana lauded for the adoption of accrual accounting (Adamolekun, 2005).

Resource scarcity problems pervade all areas of local government and are widespread in Africa. As Wunsch (2001) pointed out, decentralisation is more likely to fail where the decentralised institutions experience acute lack of funding and appropriate skills to

the extent they cannot carry out their functions efficiently. The performance of local government is anchored on its ability to acquire and retain well-trained personnel. It is the fact that 'personnel constitute the resource by which inanimate factors of finance, land, property and equipment are converted into the delivery of services' (Fowler, 1995: 2) that makes them critical at every level of government. Various commentators have found human resource constraints to be central to their analysis of the management of local government in Africa, as the next section illustrates.

2.2.2. Decentralisation and Human Resource Management in Africa

Local government in Africa has faced many challenges just as is with its broader public sector in general, but lack of capacity is the most cited problem. Grindle and Hilderbrand, (1995) identified capacity building for public sector performance as essential for an effective development process. Other scholars also share a similar opinion and identify managerial and technical capacity, weak institutional arrangements, and capacity for fiscal management as the key aspects of capacity constraints at local level in Africa (Andrews and Schroeder, 2003: 37; Lister and Betley, 1999: 2). Hussein (2003) singles out human resource constraints as the most predominant capacity constraints at local level.

However, indications are that African governments have been showing some commitment to building local level capacity by increasing both the quality and numerical strengths of local level public employment. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) shows that there were numerical increases in some of the selected countries for which they had data. For instance, Botswana, Mauritius, and Uganda registered positive growth in the number of local government employees while South

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Africa and Zimbabwe registered a reduction but an increase at federal and central levels respectively (ILO, 2001: 85). The proportion of local government employees to general government employment was also significant but low in some: Botswana at 18.4%, South Africa 16.0%, Uganda 12.6%, Zimbabwe 11.2%, Mauritius 9.3% and the Gambia 4.1% (ibid, p84). However, it is not only the numbers that matter but the whole way in which the human resources are managed. In local government human resources management takes place 'within highly structured and complex set of procedures and mechanisms' (Fowler, 1995: 129), and as for Africa and other developing countries in increasingly unpredictable conditions coupled with severe resource constraints. In many developing countries local government employment is used for patronage purposes than functionality.

The nexus between decentralisation and HRM is in the various human resource management systems commonly applied in local government. These are the; integrated, separated and unified models (Olowu, 2003; Mawhood, 1983). The integrated model is characterised by the deployment of central government officials over local governments. Under the separated model local governments are able to hire and fire their own staff, as opposed to the unified model in which there is a common civil service across local authorities. Olowu (2003) observes that the unified model is increasingly becoming popular and it allows local governments to manage their own staff with less dependence on central government. Integrated and unified systems are found where the centre does not trust local governments to employ strategically rather than as patronage (in the case of the unified system, state control is only at the appointment stage). These institutional arrangements represent the context within which HRM takes place in local government.

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The ILO (2001) found several challenges facing local government in developing countries. One is that responsibilities are decentralised without corresponding resources to local authorities, in what is referred to in South Africa as unfunded mandates, as well as the reluctance to decentralise staff to manage these responsibilities. Another challenge is associated with lack of adequately trained staff to perform requisite financial and personnel responsibilities, thereby opening opportunities for corruption and nepotism. These challenges point to the fact that the action environment in which human resources operate may exert considerable influence on the performance of employees as its impact may be beyond the scope of the institutions in which they are employed.

Attempts to improve the functioning of local government have to be seen in the light of the above challenges. Is it possible, for instance to improve performance through the introduction of modern management practices, such as Performance Management (PM)? PM is an important area of HRM. Performance management and performance appraisal are different but bound together. Performance management is broader and involves, among other things, the measurement of both organisational and individual performance in relation to the performance standards tied to the organisation's mission. Performance appraisal on the other hand is limited to the assessment or evaluation of individual employee's performance in relation to the job description and performance goals.

However, performance appraisal in the African public services is not universalistic in principle as it should be but rather it is based '... on rule following, smooth

interpersonal relations, and particularistic exchanges rather than goal-directed performance' (Blunt and Popoola, 1985: 109). Some of these factors are still prevalent even among Africa's leading reformers. For instance, the failure of performance management schemes in Mauritius and Namibia is blamed on particularistic tendencies (McCourt, 2006).

In the pursuit of durable solutions to development challenges African countries have joined other countries across the globe in attempting to reform their public services. But how far these reforms have penetrated local government is another question which can usefully be considered in relation to the particular public management reforms that have been adopted. Globally, public management reforms have been performed within particular public management models which vary from region to region and country to country. The next section reviews current concepts of public management and looks at how these have influenced HRM both in Africa and globally.

2.3. Public Management Models and their Implications for HRM

This section sets out current public management models and trends as they apply in developing countries and Africa in particular, to assess if there is a shift from public administration (PA) to new public management (NPM). To do so it is necessary to analyse NPM, in comparison to Public Administration, and to examine its application globally and in Africa. These public management models are discussed in this chapter to set the framework within which HRM may be understood as HRM approaches are influenced by the public management models applied in each country.

The distinctions between the public management models and how these are applied in each country will be useful in the later chapters in enabling an understanding of the factors that bear upon or influence HRM systems. The following subsection presents the public management models.

2.3.1. Public Administration, the Washington Model and New Public Management

There is much debate as to what public management approaches developing countries are practising; that is whether they are practising PA, NPM or the Washington Model. The impression is given that OECD countries have over recent decades made a wholesale shift from PA to NPM. Developing countries have also shown interest and some trends in the direction of NPM (Adamolekun, 2005; Hope, 2002; Olowu, 2002; Manning, 2001). However, not only is there a danger of exaggerating the degree of the shift away from PA in OECD countries, there are many unresolved issues about the appropriateness of these models to the pre-Weberian context of some developing countries, where PA may still be essential.

In an African Development Bank (ADB) funded study Adamolekun (2005) found that in Africa there are two contrasting types of state development, one consisting of countries that were democratising and liberalising their economies and another made up of failed and/or failing states. Soeters and Tessema (2004) take a radical view that some developing countries are in the pre-Weberian stage of public management in which 'who you know' matters the most as opposed to 'what you know'. Because of this, many scholars feel there is a need in Africa to re-establish basic governance institutions and that elements of PA are still essential to many countries' public

management systems and stratagems (Adamolekun, 2005; Sindane, 2004; Soeters and Tessema, 2004; McCourt, 2002). HRM under PA was denoted by 'devotion to public office' which includes 'lifelong employment and stable and certain career progression' (Beattie and Waterhouse, 2007: 5, 6).

The other side of the argument sees these practices, inspired by bureaucratic organisational theory, as leading to oversized and inefficient public management system. The 'failure' of PA ignited the search for alternative approaches to public management. Public choice theorists posit that public sector employees are motivated by self-interest in their behaviour towards others but not only the good of the public as previously thought. Buchanan (1978) argued for the reform of institutions to match man's moral limitations. As a result of the adoption of these ideas '[m]anagement processes and human resource management practices were re-aligned based on the assumption of an individualistic, self-interest motive to job performance' (Beattie and Waterhouse, 2007: 6). NPM reforms started in the West spread to the rest of the world including developing countries.

Influenced by these examples and in the new international atmosphere created after the collapse of communism and the pressure from globalisation many developing countries have moved or are attempting to move away from PA (Soeters and Tessema, 2004) albeit slowly (McCourt, 2002). This trend is generally acknowledged but the outcome in terms of the resultant direction they are moving in is disputed. Some writers (e.g. Hope, 2002; Manning, 2001) identified some NPM-like reforms that have been adopted. On the other hand McCourt (2002) referred to this move as the adoption of what he calls the Washington model. The model refers to the civil

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service reforms instigated by the World Bank and IMF as conditionality for their loans. These include cutbacks on the number of staff, salary decompression, reduction of corruption, merit-based staffing practices, and generally rectifying their administrative fundamentals before moving onto issues of service quality (McCourt, 2002: 236). This results in a two-phase reform, with the Washington model constituting Phase 1 and NPM making Phase 2, in which countries cannot move from Phase 1 to 2 without having fulfilled the requirements of the first phase (ibid). McCourt identified other public management concerns, the poverty agenda and other domestic imperatives that developing countries are still grappling with and find them to be more pertinent to deal with than the pursuit of NPM. The Washington Model could therefore be seen as a transitory stage from PA to NPM for many developing countries, or even an acceptable end stage.

Contrary to PA, NPM distinctly focuses on results, mission, cost cutting, privatisation, and decentralisation, with HRM at the core of public management reforms (see Hughes, 1998; Shim, 2001; Soeters and Tessema, 2004). NPM has been regarded by a significant number of scholars as a new paradigm different from PA and other disciplines such as public policy and business management (Gow and Dufour, 2000). The shift from PA to NPM is regarded as irreversible and distinctly managerial (Hughes, 1998). NPM is discussed in section 2.3.2 below.

2.3.2. New Public Management

The NPM framework in the public sector is attributed to the adoption of the neo-classical economic approach to the business of government (Johnston 1998; 195), and is advanced as a new approach to managing public sector organisations (Gow and

Dufour 2000). This approach presupposes efficient and effective service delivery (Johnston, 1998; Daley, 2002) in an economic manner (Campbell, 1998). These private sector management techniques have been adopted, and have penetrated deep into public sector organisations (de Bruijn, 2001; Batley and Larbi, 2004). In this sense, NPM is much more than a public sector reform but a transformation of the public sector (Hughes, 1998; 59). Although NPM borrows from the private sector management approach it remains different 'because it is *public.'* And '[i]ts political dimension makes it unique and not assimilated to business management' (Gow and Dufour, 2000: 578). There are key aspects that set NPM apart as a new paradigm (Hood, 1991 cited in Hughes, 1998; 61-65) and these are:

1. Hands on professional management
2. Explicit standards and measures of performance
3. Greater emphasis on output controls
4. A shift to disaggregation of units in the public sector
5. A shift to greater competition in public sector provision
6. A stress on private sector styles of management practice
7. A stress on greater discipline and parsimony in resource use

These reforms had far reaching implications for the public sector values and how the sector operates. Governments became more concerned about increasing productivity and making the public service more customer-oriented (Shim, 2001). There were profound implications for HRM also. Shim (2001: p. 323) identifies four:

- HR management in the public sector became similar to its private sector counterparts. Economic efficiency was one of the most important standards for reforms, for instance, by reducing the size of the public sector.
- Many efforts were made to give line ministries and/or line managers greater flexibility and freedom in HR management through various decentralization and devolution policies.
- In return for providing greater flexibility and freedom to agencies, governments tried to secure accountability of line ministries and/or line managers in HR management, by stressing performance and ethics of civil service.
- On the other hand, governments also made it their priority to become the model of good employer.

These reforms meant a move away from focusing on inputs to outputs; a focus on performance measurement through the use of performance indicators and standards; a shift from hierarchical bureaucracies to marketisation of public services and a shift from personnel management values to efficiency and individualism (Beattie and Waterhouse, 2007).

How NPM reforms have been applied globally, especially in the OECD countries, is well documented. However, a number of African countries as well have adopted some of the strategies aimed at performance management and productivity enhancement. Some of these strategies are the Work Improvement Teams (WITS) in Botswana and quality circles in Mauritius that are fashioned along the Japanese Quality Control Circles (Hope, 2002: 221). Performance management systems (PMS) has been tried in a number of African countries such as Uganda, South Africa, Ghana, Senegal and Botswana (ibid). PMS involves the use of performance contracts for individuals and departments. However, its success has been limited. For instance, in Mauritius its implementation has failed due to the fear of its relationship with performance-related pay (McCourt, 2006). But failed implementation of reforms is not an end in itself as public sector reforms are a continual and an unending process, that can be fine tuned on the basis of experience.

Hughes (1998) limits his view of disaggregation to the creation of executive agencies. Hope (2002) instead looks at the broader concept of decentralisation within the context of NPM, linking all the four modes of decentralisation to NPM. He argues that centralisation in Africa has failed and argues that the service delivery modes in Africa that are based on decentralisation have led to better governance. Elsewhere,

NPM has been proven to profoundly affect service delivery in local government, as in the case of New Zealand (see McCourt, 2001: 110). However, the creation of local government is not necessarily part of NPM reforms, rather it is the management approach applied within these entities that may take the NPM style.

Privatisation has caught up in Africa as well, and has taken various forms. These include: 'commercialisation'; 'joint ventures'; 'the sale of some government services or functions'; 'management contracts for government services; the leasing of government assets or the granting of concessions to private entities to operate and finance some public services delivery' (Hope, 2002: 217). The commercialisation of the Ethiopian Airlines is cited as one of the successful commercialisation attempts in Africa (UNECA, 2004).

The adoption of private sector styles of management is widespread under NPM. The management of performance is important and ensuring that pay is related to performance. In this approach appointments are made on contract with direct appointments to top positions common, and poor performers can be easily fired. Several African governments have implemented pay and grading reforms in their public services: such as Ghana, Mozambique, Guinea, Gambia and Uganda (Hope, 2002). Hope notes that the pay and grading reforms introduced salary decompression for the top echelons and real pay improved phenomenally, making top civil service posts attractive. The Botswana government introduced a performance based pay system for top bureaucrats in 2004 and extend it to local government in 2006, while South Africa introduced it much earlier at all government levels.

These public sector reforms usually coincide with a shift away from centralisation towards decentralised governance (or at least decentralised administration), accompanied by an aspiration towards efficiency, economy and effectiveness in service delivery (Hope, 2002). NPM and decentralisation share a common goal of achieving the three Es in service delivery including a fourth E, 'participation and empowerment' (ibid, 219) and as a result they are mutually reinforcing. Hope provides strong evidence for the growing trend in Africa in which decentralisation is being increasingly used 'as an instrument of NPM reforms' and commitment to this demonstrated in some countries, such as Ethiopia and South Africa, by including it in their constitutions (2002: 219). However, as for NPM, Sindane (2004) argues that it has not been included in the South African constitution directly. But surely elements of it, especially PMS, have been incorporated in some legislation such as the Public Service Act, 1994; the Public Service Regulations, 1999/2001; and the Municipal Systems Act (see Chapter VI of this thesis).

In spite of the failings of the majority of African countries to reform their public management systems there are exceptions. There are also indications are that the reform agenda in Africa, mostly with donor assistance and a few own initiatives, will continue to move on. Most of these reforms are targeted at the civil service with particular emphasis on human resource management. But there are inter and intra variances between and among the developed and developing nations on the implementation of NPM and other public sector reforms. At this juncture the discussion examines HRM and its underlying concepts.

2.4. Human Resource Management

The origins of HRM, its main sources and advocacy, are American (Guest, 1987) but have been adopted in the Anglo-Saxon world and Western Europe. HRM was developed in the Western private sector to address challenges in that context (see Purcell and Ahlstrand, 1994; McCourt and Ramgutty-Wong, 2002). The managerialist views of public sector reforms in the Anglo-American systems emerged in the early 1980s in the same time frame with the development of the concept of HRM (Campbell, 1998; Johnston, 1998). The HRM concept was to prove radically different from the traditional personnel management in a number of ways. The following section highlights some of the differences between HRM and personnel management.

2.4.1. The Distinction between Personnel Management and HRM

The distinction between personnel management and HRM is in the underlying public management concepts from which they originate. Table 2.3 below summarises some of the differences between HRM and personnel management as understood by Guest (1987). The characteristics of personnel management, as indicated in Table 2.3 are associated with public administration. On the other hand HRM features are derived from HRM's association with NPM. Personnel management is perceived to be characteristically bureaucratic with its tall structures and routine personnel functions of supplying labour to the organization (Purcell and Ahlstrand, 1994).

Table 2.1: The Distinction between HRM and Personnel Management

	PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT	HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Time and planning perspective	Short-term
	    Reactive
	    ad hoc
	    marginal
		Long-term
		    Proactive
		    Strategic
		    Integrated

Psychological contract	Compliance	Commitment
Control systems	External controls	Internal controls

Employee relations perspective	Pluralist
	    Collective
	    Low trust
		Unitarist
		    Individual
		    High trust

Preferred structures/systems	Bureaucratic/mechanistic
	    Centralized
	    Formal defined roles
		Organic
		    Devolved
		    Flexible roles

Roles	Specialist/professional	Largely integrated into line management
Evaluation criteria	Cost minimization	Maximum utilization (human asset accounting)

Source: Guest, 1987.

The generally agreed principles of human resource management that set it apart from traditional personnel administration have been identified as; integration, employee commitment, flexibility and adaptability, and quality (Fowler, 1988; Guest 1987; Purcell and Ahlstrand, 1994; Storey, 1995; Taylor, 2001). It could be argued, therefore, that HRM represents a paradigm shift from traditional personnel administration, which is perceived to be bureaucratic and not linked to organisational strategy (Storey, 1995). Daley (2002), for instance, opines that it is through the strategic approach and its linkage with HR that personnel administration has been transformed into SHRM. More similarities and differences between personnel management and HRM are presented in Appendix 15.

While the move from personnel management to HRM was a significant step in employee management in the 1980s and is generally agreed, the meaning of HRM remains somewhat confusing. There is a debate as to whether HRM and SHRM mean the same or different things. This debate is discussed in Sub-section 2.4.2 below.

2.4.2. Distinguishing HRM and Strategic Human Resource Management

This study sees HRM as a distinct term different from strategic human resource management. Price (2003; 1997), states that HRM is seen as an all-embracing term that refers to a number of distinctive approaches to people management. HRM is viewed as a generic term that refers to the broader employee management, while the SHRM model is a distinctive approach different from the mere modernisation of personnel management. The theory is premised on the assumption that personnel decisions are most effective when linked strategically to the organisation's mission and strategy (McCourt and Ramgutty-Wong, 2002; Freyss, 1999; Wright and McMahan, 1992; and Fombrun, *et al*, 1984). SHRM has emerged in the private sector as a paradigm for two main reasons: growing 'global competition and the corresponding search for sources of sustainable competitive advantage' (Dyer and Reeves, 1995: 656). The popularity of SHRM results from the belief that HRs can contribute to, and create sustainable competitive advantage (Becker and Gerhart, 1996; Wright and McMahan, 1992; Lado and Wilson, 1994). However, 'achieving competitive advantage through human resources requires that … activities be managed from a strategic perspective' (Lengnick-Hall and Lengnick-Hall, 1999: 29).

But since these are private sector concepts it would be worthwhile considering how these ideas came to be practiced in the public sector.

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2.5. The Strategic Human Resource Management Concept in the Public Sector

The development of the SHRM concept is linked with the emergence of NPM. Taylor (2001; 179) observes that HRM principles correspond in a significant manner with the new public management model with regard to their practices and values, and together they provide a coherent set of principles. Taylor outlines the key elements of both models as follows:

- Importance of line manager;
- Emphasis on performance and its measurement;
- Employee commitment through individualization/incentivization;
- Strategic integration; and
- Flexibility.

It is to the linkages of public sector managerialism and the origins of strategic management that the introduction of HRM in the public sector can be traced. It should be noted that the term HRM as applied by Taylor approximates to the term SHRM as used by many other authors cited. Under NPM human resource management is usually applied within the framework of management by objectives (MBO), which according to Mosley (2008) entails:

- The definition of a limited number of organisational goals and corresponding performance indicators;
- Delegation of performance targets to subordinate levels of the organisation;
- Flexibility in the sense of low density of generally binding bureaucratic rules and procedures. Managers and operating units at regional and local levels are relatively free in their choice of strategies and programmes to achieve the agreed performance targets for their units; and
- Monitoring and controlling of performance against targets. In contrast to traditional bureaucratic administration, the emphasis is on outputs/outcomes against targets rather than on controlling inputs and adherence to detailed regulations.

The introduction of NPM reforms has led to more commonalities emerging between governments. Mosley (2008) indicates that in OECD countries common national frameworks continue to play an important role in the decentralisation of labour market policy for instance. Although Mosley attributes these conditions to administrative decentralisation, evidence would show that even under political decentralisation, organisational goals and performance targets may be used as instruments of control (see chapters VII, VIII and IX). And the use of these controls as shown in Section 2.2 inadvertently ushers in centralisation. In a similar but yet slightly different way Mintzberg (1983: 99) applies the term decentralisation to mean three things: vertical decentralisation; horizontal decentralisation; and geographical decentralisation or deconcentration. Mintzberg applied these concepts of decentralisation to the coordination of decision making within the divisionalized firm. As it has been shown earlier in this chapter, this decentralised form has been applied in the public sector, such as in the UK. Vertical decentralisation refers to the dispersal of formal power down the chain of command, while horizontal decentralisation refers to the dispersal of power to non-managers (ibid).

 It is within the scope of the principles outlined by Taylor (2001) and Mosley (2008) that HRM policies and practice have to be developed if human resources (HRs) are to integrate with public sector organizational strategy. However, the picture portrayed about SHRM in developing countries is not positive (McCourt, 2006; Taylor, 2001; McCourt and Ramgutty-Wong, 2002; McCourt and Minogue, 2001). Taylor (2001; 182-187) gives the major limitations of the applicability of HRM in developing countries as:

- The weak market mechanisms and contractual relationships that do not auger well for employee commitment to the organization, particularly in settings where ethnic cleavages are stronger than national loyalty;
- Underdeveloped labour markets due to shortages of skilled labour. Such a situation undermines the flexibility and adaptability that is required;
- Economic difficulties that render long term planning unrealistic. Low salaries that may dampen employee loyalty to the organization;
- Foreign intervention in the form of Structural Adjustment Programmes and donor interventions that do not take local conditions into consideration may create a lack of ownership to reforms.

However, the case study countries are considered be somewhat different from the above description given by Taylor (2001). Taylor's (2001) and Mosley's (2008) elements that define SHRM have been summed up below to develop criteria to determine whether there is a move, or not, to adopt SHRM in the case study countries. These are:

- Strategic integration – guided by, or premised on, organisational vision, mission and values;
- Performance and its measurement (based on performance goals and indicators and/or systems and structures for monitoring);
- Flexibility – for example; decentralisation of decision-making in relation to the choice of strategies and programmes;
- Individualisation/incentivisation – as in performance contracts and bonuses/rewards for managers.
- Importance of line manager

From this definition it can be seen that there is a degree of overlap between SHRM and NPM. Whilst not identified as a core element of NPM as such, SHRM in the public sector could be regarded either as a vehicle for NPM implementation, or at least a by-product of NPM reforms.

Although failures of the SHRM model in Africa are noted, including in some of the leading reformers such as Mauritius and Namibia (see McCourt, 2006), data in Chapters IV, V, VI and VII indicate that Botswana and South Africa's civil services have shown tendencies towards the adoption of SHRM. SHRM can only be

meaningfully understood in the context of the environment in which it is applied. The inapplicability of the Euro-centric and Anglo-Saxon HRM approaches universally is well noted by several scholars (Kamoche, 2001; McCourt and Ramgutty-Wong, 2002; Budhwar and Debrah, 2001; Jackson and Schuler, 1999). Contextualising HRM helps explain the 'applicability of HRM approaches in different regions' of the world (Budhwar and Debrah, 2001: 498).

Countries have responded in various ways to this challenge. Ralston, *et al*. (1997) argue that the national economy rather than politics plays an important role in the management culture of a people, therefore making culture a critical factor in influencing the concept of HRM in any given country. This is going to be found to be important in both of the case studies in this thesis. Organisational culture, which according to the resource-based view is an internal resource, gains a pivotal position in HRM through its interrelationship with societal culture and the economy (which are themselves external factors to local government). This leads to the question: 'why does the management of human resources in local government vary among countries of the same region?'

Although no longer coercively imposed, western culture masquerading under the cloak of globalisation is transmitted through the 'media in the form of pop cultural exports' (Berenson and Cogburn, 2000: 3). However, developing countries have not totally abandoned their cultures but rather they have been able to glean out that which is not appropriate for them from Western culture and adapt in an assimilatory manner that which corresponds to their cultural identity (ibid). Previously, colonialism helped transmit Western culture to developing nations by way of bequeathing to them their

administrative systems and political institutions. In modern days Western culture is transmitted through management ideas by consultants and the demands imposed by donors (see Subsection 2.3.1 above). This is evident in the case studies in chapters IV and V which show that both countries are former colonies of Britain and that they have adopted new management ideas from consultants and technical advice from the World Bank at various times in their history.

To understand what is or is not being applied in Botswana and South Africa it is necessary to review some prevailing ideas about how human resource management practices and strategies can be expected to be appropriate or relevant in different contexts. There are various definitions and theoretical models of SHRM (Budhwar and Debrah, 2001; Mabey, et al., 1998; Boxall, 1999). However, there are two broad models: the universalistic perspective known as the best practices approach and the contingency perspective known as best-fit. According to Armstrong and Baron (2002) there is a second category of models that prescribe particular approaches to the practice of SHRM, and these are, resource capability, high performance management, high commitment management and high involvement management.

Having discussed HRM and its application across cultures, the next discussion focuses on the SHRM models. The two basic models are presented below.

2.5.1. The Universalistic/Matching Model and Contingency/Best Fit Model

The universalistic perspective is based on the assumption that adopting particular HR practices and approaches will result in improved organisational performance and

competitive advantage (Armstrong and Baron 2002; Golding, 2004). This leads to the idea that there is therefore one best way of carrying out HR activities that is universally applicable (Torrington, *et al.*, 2002: 26). The universalistic perspective is associated with several other approaches such as the high-performance model (Armstrong and Baron, 2002), high-commitment models, and high-involvement practices (Golding, 2004). Delery and Doty (1996) and Guest (1997) point out that, of all the universalistic approaches the most widely tested and popular model is the best-practices, which posits that there are HR practices that are strategic and those that are not strategic to organisational performance. However, there are various best-practices of HRM proposed by different writers, but Pfeffer's (1994) model of competitive advantage gained in putting people first is the most widely known and cited approach in this area (Golding, 2004).

The best practice approach has been criticised by a number of scholars for various deficiencies, one of them being the vast differences in what constitutes best practices and in their relationship to organisational performance (Golding, 2004: 57-58). Another criticism is that according to contingency theory the concept of universal best-practice is unthinkable, and also that HR practices are idiosyncratic in which case what works for one organisation does not necessarily work for another (Armstrong and Baron, 2002: 70). The model is also criticised for being prescriptive with its idea of a one way, or universal way, of carrying out HRM activities (Purcell, 1999). The contingency model has been seen as a viable alternative to the universalistic perspective.

The strength of the contingency models lies in their attempt to 'link HR policies to the particular circumstances of the organisation' (Bach, 2001). The contingency model is seen as emphasising the linkages between HR strategy and the external environment. The critical point in best fit is that a bundle of HR practices works well for a particular organisation in the context of its culture, structure, history and traditions, technology and processes (Miles and Snow, 1984; Armstrong and Baron, 2002; Dolan, et al, 2005). This is particularly so for public institutions as they are predisposed to influence from politics, social culture, economy, labour unions and public law. Perhaps this is so because of their nature of 'publicness'. Dolan, et al, (2005) observe that there is a general perception that the absence of a fit between HR strategy and the external environment in which the organisation operates would lead to suboptimal performance. External fit seeks to establish the extent to which there is vertical integration between HR strategy and organisational strategy (Torrington, *et al*, 2002; Guest, 1997), while internal fit aims at ensuring a fit between individual HR practices and policies (Delery and Doty, 1996; Torrington, *et al*, 2002; Armstrong and Baron, 2002). The key approach in vertical integration is to link organisational goals with individual objective setting, to the measurement and rewarding of that organisational goal (Golding, 2004: 42).

However, the contingency model has been criticised for some inadequacies. Purcell (1999) notes that the main problem with the contingency model arises from the difficulty of showing how the factors are interconnected and how changes in one affect the others. The interconnections between the contingent factors, that make for the unique experience of each organisation, are numerous, subtle and often hidden (ibid). This leads to what Purcell (1999) refers to as 'idiosyncrantic contingency'

which indicates that there is no one best path of HR system but that each organisation develops its own best approach. This is in congruence with evidence in chapters V and IV as, for instance, environmental factors in the two case studies interacted in unique ways and affected HRM in different ways. However, in spite of the weaknesses there are certain aspects of the contingency model that apply to public sector institutions. As indicated in Section 2.2, local government objectives (like any other public sector organisation) are multiple and these external factors significantly affect how HRs are managed. The main weakness of the contingency model is its overemphasis of the external factors while paying minimal attention to the internal factors. Internal factors are crucial in understanding how HRM is applied in the public sector. For instance, chapters V and IV indicate that even though the government may attempt to create a supportive environment for the adoption of public sector reforms, the degree of success is dependent on, among other factors, the capacity of public organisations to implement such reforms and also their organisational culture.

However, the contingency model overlooks these internal characteristics of organisations. The resource-based view concept has been increasingly proffered as an alternative to both the universalistic and contingency models because of its focus on the significance of the internal resources as critical to the success of organisations. However, the resource-based view too will be shown to be inadequate on its own to explain why certain things happen the way they do in public sector institutions. The Section below discusses the resource-based view approach.

2.5.2. The Resource-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-Based View developed as a result of dissatisfaction with the contingency approach of the industrial organisation strategists' view that relied on the external factors of the organisation as sources of competitive advantage, the SWOT framework based on the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Barney, 1999, 1991; Carmeli and Cohen, 2005; Kamoche, 2001; Wright and McMahan, 1999). Strategic management was initially influenced by industrial organisation perspective that influenced the matching model of SHRM (Kamoche, 2001). The difference with the RBV is on its focus on the internal resources of the organisation as the source of competitive advantage (or, in the case of the public sector, a source of greater efficiency and effectiveness) and the linkage of these with organisational strategy (Wright and McMahan, 1999).

The resource-based view assumes strategy as pivotal for management to be able to identify, develop and deploy resources to maximise returns. Resources mean assets (tangible and intangible) that are tied to the organisation (Wernerfelt, 1984). Not all resources are believed to create a sustained competitive advantage (or sustained efficiency and effectiveness) for organisations. It is only those resources that are heterogeneous and immobile that would create the potential for sustained competitive advantage. Barney (1991; 1999) suggested that the organisational resources that can be the sources of sustained competitive advantage are those that are:

- *Valuable* – important resources that enable an organisation to develop strategies that enhance its efficiency and effectiveness;
- *Rare* – unique resources that cannot be easily attained by competitors;
- *Imperfectly imitable* – resources that are the sources of competitive advantage are those that cannot be obtained by other organisations (i.e. inimitable). The unique historical conditions, importance of small events and socially complex resources (explained below) make imitability difficult; and

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- *Non-substitutable* – there must be no alternative resources that are either not rare or imitable.

Unique Historical Conditions

History is important in creating sources of sustained competitive advantage for organisations through the organisation's evolutionary development of skills, abilities and unique resources (Barney, 1999). 'These resources and capabilities reflect the unique personalities, experiences, and relationships' that exist in only one organisation (ibid; 132). Governments as well have unique characteristics acquired through their political and cultural histories that others cannot copy. HRM is applied within these unique conditions that influence it variously as chapters IV – VII show. The Importance of Small Events also highlighted by Barney (1999) who stated that big events do matter in creating a firm's [and by implication public agency's] competitive advantage, but adds that more often a outfit's competitive advantage comes from the cumulative effect of small decisions through which resources and capabilities are developed and exploited. Path dependency theory (see Subsection 2.5.3 below) points in the same direction. However, the RBV cannot explain factors of a political nature and this is where path dependence plays a significant and complementary role.

By looking at unique organisational circumstances the importance of socially complex resources can also be noted. An organisation would usually have a combination of various forms of resources such as the tangible and the intangible assets. Some of the tangible or physical resources such as machinery can easily be imitated or substituted. However, intangible resources such as reputation, trust, friendship, teamwork and culture are not patentable but yet difficult to imitate (Barney 1999; 1991). Tangible

resources can be easily copied but it will be almost impossible to imitate the socially complex processes through which these physical resources are converted into resources of sustainable and competitive advantage. Culture is subject to the conditions (value, rarity, inimitability and non-substitutability) that characterise other resources that are sources of sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). The significance of particular resources, their availability and specificity to the success or otherwise of organisations is seen by several public management writers as central to an understanding of developments in any one country. This is clearly the case in the country studies of Botswana and South Africa that are presented here. However, the processes involved in these are best explained through the use of path dependency concept, and it is discussed below.

2.5.3. Path Dependency Theory

The concept of path dependence will be used in this study to help explain aspects of the particular trajectory of local governance development in the two Southern African countries under examination. The notion was originally conceived in the field of economics and has, as well, been adopted in public policy and political studies. The father of path dependency theory, Paul A. David, based his original idea on the technological development of the QWERTY typewriter keyboard; a technology that had particular relevance in an age of copy-typing but survives in an age when finger speed is no longer the main criterion in word-processing. David observed that economic changes follow '[a] path dependent sequence …' that '… takes on an essentially historical character' (1985: 332).

The concept of path dependence emphasises that 'initial moves in one direction elicit further moves in that same direction' (Kay, 2003: 406). The concept explains that '[a] path-dependent economic process is one in which specific contingent events – and not just fundamental determinative factors like technology, preferences, factor endowments, and institutions - have a persistent effect on the subsequent course of allocation' (Puffert 2002: 282).

The import of path dependency theory into political studies came along with the adaptation of its underpinning concept in economic history, increasing returns. (Thelen, 1999). Pierson (2000a: 263) identifies four key characteristics of political life that are a function of increasing returns or path dependent processes;

1. *Multiple equilibria.* Under a set of initial conditions conducive to increasing returns, a number of outcomes – perhaps a wide range – are generally possible.
2. *Contingency.* Relatively small events, if they occur at the right moment, can have large and enduring consequences.
3. *A critical role for timing and sequence.* In increasing returns processes, when an event occurs may be crucial. Because earlier parts of a sequence matter much more than later parts, an event that happens "too late" may have no effect, although it might have been of great consequence if the timing had been different.
4. *Inertia.* Once an increasing returns process is established, positive feedback may lead to a single equilibrium. This equilibrium will in turn be resistant to change.

In politics increasing returns processes are characterised by self-reinforcing mechanisms or positive feedback processes (see Pierson, 2000a, 2000b; Kay, 2003). That is, initial choices made would influence later decisions or choices to be made along the same path. In Pierson's words 'over time "the road not chosen" becomes increasingly distant, increasingly unreachable alternative'. In economics this invokes the idea of 'lock in', a process that Thelen (1999) and Kay (2005) perceive as being deterministic.

Political scientists emphasise the idea that path dependence is not equivalent to historical determinism (Pierson, 2000b; Rose and Davies, 1994; Wilsford, 1994). In politics once path dependent processes have reached the lock-in stage change becomes difficult, but not impossible. As Rose and Davies (1994: 15) observed, '[t]he inheritance of the past is not a dead hand; it is the starting point for action by the current administration'. Change still happens but incrementally (Wilsford, 1994). Incrementalism in public policy making is similar to inheritance through political inertia (Rose and Davies, 1994). Political inertia is a consequence of the persistence of incremental additions that are made to public policy (ibid). Change will continue to happen but options will be constrained or proscribed by history and therefore leading to the stability of political processes. These 'patterns of politics persist and indeed reproduce themselves over time' (Thelen, 1999: 396). Mahoney (2003: 53) sums this into three stages: 'an initial set of causal forces' or critical junctures; the set in of 'increasing returns' and continuation in the same direction; and lastly 'stabilize around enduring equilibrium points'.

Once a path has been set, self-reinforcing processes tend 'to consolidation or institutionalization. Critical junctures generate persistent paths of political development' (Pierson, 2000b). 'Critical junctures' is a concept developed by Collier and Collier (1991) to explain the trajectory of economic development in Latin America. The concept posits that specific events in a sequence will place particular political aspects on a distinct path out of several choices, which will then be reinforced over time. Pierson (2000b: 75) states in the footnote that 'what makes a particular juncture "critical" is that it triggers a process of positive feedback'. This is

irrespective of whether the juncture is a big or small event. Several scholars have applied path dependency theory to the analysis of public policy and/or reform (see Gains, et al, 2005; Kay 2005; McCourt, 2005; and Wilsford, 1994). However, McCourt (2005) applied 'Braudelian history' which unlike path dependency is less deterministic and rejects single cause explanations. Nevertheless, path dependency when applied within an historical institutionalist perspective is also known to obviate some of the concerns raised against path dependency as the rest of this section demonstrates.

There are three so-called 'new institutionalisms' – rationale choice institutionalism, sociological/normative institutionalism and historical institutionalism. The different characteristics and comparisons of institutional analysis are explored in detail by Thelen (1999) and Hall & Taylor (1996). The large body of literature on path dependence shows that it is anchored on historical institutionalism. Kay (2003) argues that the application of path dependency within political science has been exclusively within an institutionalist framework. Institutionalism is based on the idea that institutions are the structures and mechanisms through which the behaviour of society and individuals is influenced. This could be achieved through formal and/or informal rules, norms and other ways. That is through organisations, and culture and customs respectively.

Historical institutionalism, a term associated with Sven Steinmo, originated out of a group of political science theories of politics and structural functionalism prevalent between the 1960s and 1970s (Hall and Taylor, 1996). Historical institutionalists view institutions as some of, but not the only, important variables influencing political

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outcomes (Boychuk, 2006). However, institutions are seen as the arena within which battles are fought (ibid), and that they structure these battles or behaviour as well as being interested in the understanding of the context within which things happen (Steinmo, 2007; Boychuk, 2006; Thelen, 1999; Hall and Taylor, 1996). Historical institutionalism adopts an inductive approach in its application, meaning they go out to test a theory against the outcomes they have observed (Boychuk, 2006: 3). Its fundamental approach to path dependency is its emphasis on critical junctures and developmental paths, self-reproduction, policy feedbacks and evolutionary change (Thelen, 1999). Notably it is the characterisation of historical institutionalism by works on critical junctures, policy feedbacks, institutional evolution and path dependency that set it apart and instead of proposing stability suggests institutional change (ibid). This approach has been found to be particularly useful in analysing the case material presented in later chapters.

The rational choice approach to institutionalism on the other hand, is characterised by four key features: first is that actors behave in an instrumentalist and rational way to maximise on their fixed preferences or tastes, doing so in a calculated way; second politics is perceived as a collective action of dilemmas in which actors may make a sub-optimal choice; third, the importance given to the assumption that an actor's behaviour is influenced by a strategic calculus which in turn is affected by the actor's expectation of the others likely behaviour; and finally, the rational choice institutionalists' explanation of how institutions originate is distinctive in its use of deduction to reach conclusions (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 944-45). The rational choice institutionalists focus on locating the 'Laws of political behavior and action' (Boychuk, 2007: 2). After that they seek to develop models that can be used to explain

and 'predict political behaviour' (op cit). In essence the rational choice instituionalists' analytical approach to social science is deductive (Boychuk, 2006; Hall and Taylor, 1996). While this approach may be useful in seeking to explain particular decisions in particular situations it would be less useful in this study in seeking explanations of broad trends. Lastly we discuss sociological institutionalism.

Sociological institutionalism is premised on the idea that culture underpins organisational form and performance. Derived from organisational theory, sociological institutionalism was aimed at consolidating what was hitherto seen as a dichotomy between the 'formal means-ends rationality' and aspects of the 'social world said to display a diverse set of practices associated with culture' (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 946). Sociological institutionalism differs from other institutionalisms in the following three ways: institutions are perceived as more than just formal rules, norms or procedures but a means to transmit cultural practices; institutions affect the behaviour of actors through socialization into particular roles, in turn internalising the norms associated with those roles; and lastly, the adoption of institutional forms or practices is perceived not to be based on rational choices like 'means-ends of the organisation' but because they are widely accepted in the 'broader cultural environment' (ibid). This approach has a bearing on the present study.

Although the institutionalisms are founded on distinct approaches, there are commonalities between them. The distinctions are reduced by the wide spread borrowing from across the fence by scholars from each of the schools to address particular empirical questions (Thelen, 1998). From the above discussion it can be seen that no one set of concepts will suffice to provide an analytical framework.

However, because of the advantages that historical institutionalism possesses, that is borrowing from the other two institutionalisms, this study adopted an approach that situates institutional actors within an historical framework - path dependent - of the present study.

Path dependency has critics, and some (for instance Gains, et al, (2005)), criticise the idea of increasing returns for policy in path dependency as found in Pierson's writings. The criticism is aimed at the suggestion that increasing returns keeps actors 'locked in' to an initial path and that path dependency overlooks change. Instead they argue that policy and institutions change in a way that path dependency fails to capture well. Gains, et al, seek to illustrate that increasing returns can foster change in a way previously not perceived by path dependency scholars. They further suggest that increasing returns does not necessarily lead to a 'lock in' and eventual equilibrium but that change continues in some places leading to a 'rapid adoption of new institutional practices and forms once a tipping point has been reached' (2005: 26). However, not all historical institutionalists subscribe to the idea that once a policy decision has been made and 'locked in' it will reach equilibrium. Thelen (1996: 386) for instance, argues that institutions continue to evolve in line with their environmental conditions and political circumstances but in ways that are constrained by previous choices. Therefore, Gains, et al, criticism falls away.

Greener (2005) also adds his voice to that of the critics. He lays the blame for the weaknesses in path dependence on its reliance on historical institutionalism. Greener (2005) raises four issues in his criticism: First, he finds fault with path dependence's heavy reliance on critical junctures as the source of change in political processes and

its assumption that the sources of change are exogenous; Second, he questions the use of ideas in path dependence, arguing that ideas are being used merely to sustain institutionalist research agenda; Third, he queries whether the feedback mechanism that locks in political processes and thereby prevent change are subject to increasing returns and positive feedback. He wonders whether negative feedback should be included as part of the concept; Last, citing Pierson, Greener alludes to the wide variety of writings around path dependence as threatening to render the concept obsolete. Greener proceeds to suggest, instead of institutionalism, a morphogenetic social theory that he argues has more analytical power. On the contrary Muukkonen (2005) contends that Greener's alternative theory adds little value to the path dependency theory. In spite of its limitations, which all theoretical concepts have, path dependence has been proven to be a 'valid and useful concept for policy studies' (Kay, 2005: 553).

However, to be applicable in this study the issue of equilibrium or resistance to change has not been adopted in this study but rather the study adopted the idea of incremental change. The study adopted the path dependence concept that emphasises multiple equilibria, contingency, timing, and evolutionary change based on policy feedback.

Having reviewed a number of concepts in public management and approaches to understanding their relevance in different contexts it is now possible to develop a conceptual framework that will illuminate the case material that is presented in later chapters.

2.6. The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework bundles together the HRM concepts of contingency and RBV models and path dependence concept from which an analytical framework could later be developed. This study adapted Kamoche's (2001) and Jackson & Schuler's (1999) frameworks that took into account the external context of the organisation as well as the SWOT approach. The RBV adds another dimension by emphasising the importance of the internal resources, which the SWOT analysis does not do adequately. Combined together these address both the external and internal environments, giving them equal significance. The diagrams in Appendix 1 and 2 attempt to summarise both Kamoche's (2001) and Jackson and Schuler's approaches.

Kamoche (2001) applied the processual approach to HRM in Kenya, where he found out that the HRM approaches were largely found in the multinational companies, not the public sector. This is not surprising considering that it is easier to effect change in the private sector than it is in the public sector simply because of the nature of the public sector. Also, these multinationals have a history of particular managerial practices in the countries from which they originate that they transfer to the host country. Besides that the external environments of public agencies are often complex, dynamic and are always political (Nigro and Nigro, 1986: 31). Public organisations are by nature political institutions and are a creation of government (Farnham and Horton, 1996). The public sector environment differs from that of the private sector in three aspects, the legal, political and economic spheres (Daley, 2002). Their activities and objectives are strictly governed by legislation that established them, and they are funded from public funds. As such there is a strong element of public accountability, which subjects their actions to more public scrutiny. Public organisations basically

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constitute the administrative arm of government and must be managed in such a way as to benefit the citizens. Because of this arrangement public sector institutions' objectives are always complex, vague and in conflict (Farnham and Horton, 1996: 8). Also, public organisations are characteristically large, bureaucratic and more complex because of the need to ameliorate the multifarious demands emanating from their customers.

The 'processual' model emphasised a phased approach to the understanding of the HRM integration in organisational strategy is interesting and relevant to the present study framework to help understand how environmental factors influence HRM policy, practices and outcomes. The process based model that Kamoche applied took into account the contextual and national factors that influence HRM in Kenya. Kamoche's (2001; 1997) processual model and Jackson and Schuler's (1999) integrative framework/model have a lot in common, in that they both give importance to the role of the environmental context on HRM.

Although they do not suggest literally the same elements in their models, there is some convergence on their broader perspectives. While Kamoche unbundles some of the elements of his model under 'strategy implementation' outside of the 'internal context', Jackson and Schuler have included the same as subsets under the 'internal context'. While Kamoche (2001) appears to give both the internal and external context more or less equal significance on the influence they have on HRM approaches, Jackson and Schuler (1999) see the external environmental context as having the overarching influence on the entire process.

According to Jackson and Schuler's model the external environment influences the internal context consisting of technology, size, structure, life cycle stage and strategy. These in turn bear on the type of decisions to be made whether formal or informal that influence HRM activities that eventually lead to outcomes depending on how HRM has been integrated in organisational strategy. While Kamoche limits the application of his model to Africa, and indeed incorporates some factors commonly found in African organisations such as political manipulation, corporate welfarism, and community spirit, Jackson and Schuler's model is presented as generic, but the two are not contradictory but may in fact be complementary. In the public sector political manipulation comes in the form of patronage and this factor is widespread in Africa.

Although it is undeniably important as Kamoche (2001; 1997) observed that external factors impact upon HRM policies and practices, and understanding them is critical for comprehending the circumstances that influence HRM, it is equally important to understand how internal resources also play a role in HRM. This study adapted both Kamoche's and Jackson and Schuler's approaches. These models do not explain the mutual interaction between factors of the internal and external environments. This study attempted to address this in the analytical framework presented in Section 2.7 below. In addition to that the models do not address the internal resources adequately nor take into consideration factors of a historical nature. The discussion below presents how the RBV and path dependence were introduced as a way of enhancing these models for adaptation.

The resource-based view model has been applied to the public sector by other scholars. A few examples are; Carmeli and Cohen (2001), Daley and Vasu (2005),

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Matthews and Shulman, (2005). Carmeli and Cohen (2001) applied the RBV in their study of the financial crisis of the local authorities in Israel. More specifically, Daley and Vasu (2005) used the SHRM framework to understand the impact of personnel practices on the achievement of organisational goals in county social services departments in North Carolina. Daley and Vasu (2005) alluded to the idea that the resource-based view of the organisation emphasises the value of human capital on improving organisational effectiveness. Daley and Vasu (2005) found, when considering these private sector ideas in a public sector context concluded that perhaps the public sector is not adept at private sector practices, and that the challenges may be reflecting the private-public differences. These limitations in the applicability of private sector practices in the public sector influence the choice for a multi-theory approach that attempts to address the overlapping aspects of the public sector that may not be adequately addressed by applying pure private sector concepts.

It has to be acknowledged that the application of the SHRM concepts in the public sector is fraught with difficulties and limitations. In particular there are limitations in explaining phenomenon of a non-economic nature such as political choices (e.g. affirmative action) (Rose and Davies, 1994). But of equal significance are factors that may affect an organisation's performance that are a product of some unique historical circumstances that could be best explained through path dependent models (Barney, 1991). One particular aspect that path dependence will be able to help explain is decentralisation. The HRM models cannot explain the dynamics of decentralisation, but these may be understood better within the context of institutionalism. Public policies are themselves historical and hereditary, that is even though governments generate new policies some will be inherited from previous governments (Rose and

Davies, 1994). In developing countries inheritance more often than not goes beyond the post independence era to stretch as far back as during the colonial and sometimes pre-colonial periods. The relevance of path dependence comes from the idea that contemporary management ideas are applied in contexts where there is history and entrenched institutional factors. The next section considers the analytical framework that has been drawn from the concepts discussed above.

2.7. The Analytical Framework

This study adopted an analytical framework anchored on a multi-theory approach that integrates the contingency and resource-based view models for synergy between the two and augments them with the path dependency theory to plug the gaps they leave behind on matters beyond HR processes and values. This is borne out of the fact that the public sector by nature has multiple objectives that more often than not can not be explained through the application of a single theory. The main argument, for example, is that strategic planning and management on which SHRM is based, attempts to bypass or do away with decision making that is anchored on how things have always been done and focus on objective strategies that can lead to the achievement of organisational goals and objectives. Yet on the other hand in the public sector this has to be reconciled with the contradictory approaches of public policy-making that are often influenced by past experiences and institutions.

Figure 2.1 below summarises the analytical framework. The framework consists of two phases, the strategy formulation (in which path dependency is integrated) and the strategy implementation. The first phase involves exploring the external and internal environmental contexts of the organisation, paying particular attention to the

dynamics of the environmental factors within an institutional framework. This part of

the analytical framework helps explain the context within which decentralisation and

HRM processes take place and as such addresses the principal research question that

seeks to understand whether there is a trade-off between SHRM and decentralisation

in developing countries. For example, questions 3 and 14 in the survey instrument that

seek to understand if 'Mechanisms to ensure the autonomy of local

government/administration are efficient and effective' and 'To what level have the

human resource management responsibilities been decentralised to your

organisation?' respectively, are some of the questions that seek help to answer the

main research question. This part of the framework seeks to identify the factors that

characterise HRM and decentralisation in these countries and understand the

dynamics within the context of these countries. This section of the framework also

partially answers the secondary research questions. It looks more at 'the what and

why' questions. The second phase of the framework involves the assessment of how

the HRM practices were carried out in the two case studies and while addressing the

main research question it is also directed at addressing the two secondary questions

that look at the way things happen in these countries. For instance, the question that

asks 'Does the socio-political environment provide supportive environment for the

efficient functioning of your organisation?' is one of those aimed at addressing the

research question that seeks to identify factors influencing HRM in local government.

On the other hand the question that seeks to understand 'How often is performance

appraisal performed annually' belongs to a group of questions that want to explain

what countries do and how they do it, that perhaps may identify the differences in

practices and outcomes. The part of the survey research questions that fall under the

sections titled HRM Policy, HRM Practices and Performance Management are those

that attempt to address the two minor research questions. However, there are some overlaps as these also address the main research question in one way or another. The analytical model is presented below in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: A Strategic HRM model for Local Government
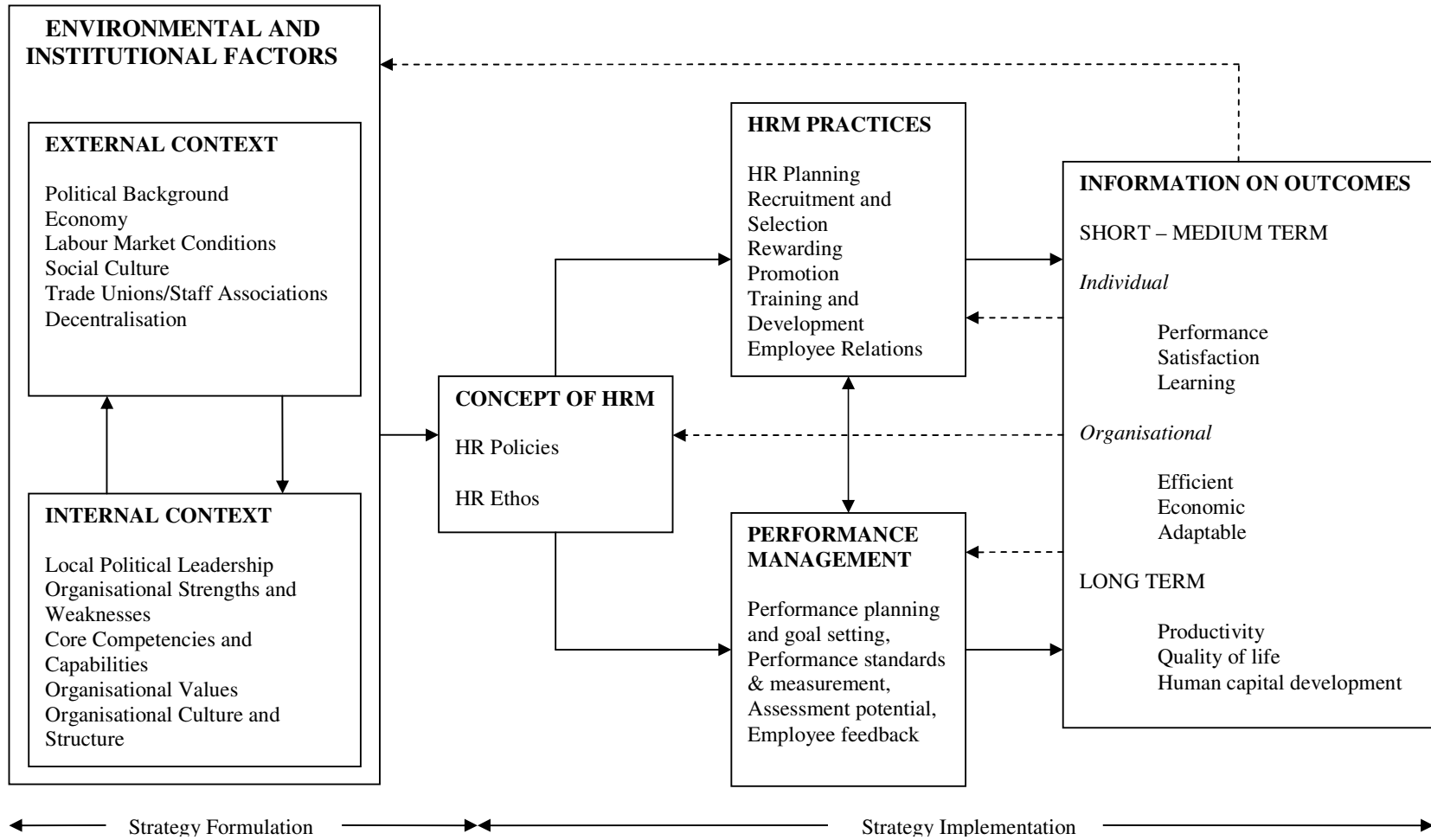
Source: Adapted from Jackson and Schuler, 1999; and Kamoche, 2001.

2.7.1 Strategy Formulation Phase

Strategy formulation involves what in strategic management is commonly known as environmental scanning. This begins with the internal and then external environmental scanning, assessing the conditions under which the organisation exists and operates. The factors considered in the model are those that have been identified by Kamoche (2001) and Jackson and Schuler, (1999) and elsewhere in this chapter as factors that are important to local government and HRM.

Other factors are due to Africa's peculiar experience, for instance, entrenched labour union recognition is due to the involvement of labour unions in the liberation struggle in some countries (though not Botswana) and also to the industrial relations role they played after independence (Kamoche, 1993). However, in post independence Africa, labour unions have existed in a hostile environment in which their role has been curtailed by laws aimed at preventing strikes to minimise industrial disruptions which politicians fear could derail the much needed economic growth (ibid). Another factor considered in the external environment is decentralisation.

Local government exists within a peculiar environment characterised by central-local relations and operate within the confines of the laws establishing them. They also exist within particular political, economic and social contexts that impact either positively or negatively on their human resource management philosophy and policies. These environments determine to a greater extent the local authorities' access to resources, both material and human. The resources at the disposal of the local authorities determine significantly as to whether or not they are able to compete effectively in the labour markets: that is get well-qualified human resources who will

perform in an efficient and effective manner. Local government typically faces a number of dilemmas. These dilemmas arise from the following factors: legitimacy that arises from elections between the centre and local government, different views of policy and different policy choices, constrained choice due to legal framework made by Parliament and usually initiated by central government, and controls imposed by the centre through policy instruments and some forms of direct controls (Stewart, 1985: 23-26). These challenges have an impact on the management of local authorities. Of interest to this study is the effect of these on HRM.

 SHRM tends to be associated with managerial decentralisation and line management. Under the bureaucratic system personnel management tends towards centralisation and control through both organisational and group rules (Beattie and Waterhouse, 2007). Bach (2000: 17) notes some decentralisation implications for HRM, that: due to existing centre-local power relations there can be staffing problems; there are issues of personnel capacity and capability; increased concerns for transaction costs may trigger increased coordination and recentralisation, and; increased workload among line managers may lead to reluctance to take further responsibilities. In this context, to what extent are local authorities free to perform HRM functions without excessive interference from the top? As it is shown in Chapter IV, for instance, in Botswana the government has been reluctant to decentralise claiming they do not want to mix politics with administration in order to avoid politicisation of the administration by local level politicians.

Path dependency, within a historical institutionalist perspective, coupled with the resource-based view approach was applied to explain the context within which HRM

and decentralisation processes are situated, and the factors they are influenced by. Path dependency theory enables one to identify the key factors and/or key stages in the processes, such as: critical junctures or initial forces; contingency; timing and sequencing; and incrementalism within the historical or political contexts under examination. All elements in the two environmental contexts are intricately interwoven in each country's experience and have shaped or influenced their HRM systems and nature of decentralisation respectively. How these concepts are melded together into an analytical framework is illustrated in Figure 2.1 and represented as the Environmental and Institutional Factors on the extreme left hand side box in which two other smaller boxes (external and internal contexts) are enclosed.

The socio-cultural environment is another major factor that influences HRM. The socio-cultural environment may be defined as a society's '… collective norms and values, and individual beliefs, attitudes, and action preferences' (Kanungo and Jaeger, 1990: 5). Jackson (2002: 2) notes that '… contained within any managerial decision making are attitudinal values that can determine the outcome of decisions.' National culture and institutions have been found to form the basis for HR in any country (Budhwar and Debrah, 2003; and Kanungo and Jaeger, 1990). Culture, customs, habits, norms, values, etc., are important institutional factors that influence organisational culture in a significant way.

In the internal environmental scan the organisation takes stock of itself, internal weaknesses and strengths. All this is assessed against the background of the mission and objectives the organisation has set for itself (Daley 2002) in relation to its

resources. This analysis of organisational strengths and weaknesses also involves the assessment of the state of the human resources, their skills and capabilities. Over time organisations develop particular practices and ways of going about their business. Once these practices have been sustained over time they are known as organisational values. Organisational values are grounded on ethics the organisation perceives as important in its drive to achieving its mission and objectives. Government laws and regulations, customer standards and values, and professional associations are key factors in influencing organisational ethics[4]. Organisational values come to define employee behaviour in the conduct of business and also define the type of conduct customers should expect when doing business with the organisation (ibid).

Associated with organisational values is organisational culture. 'Organisational culture is a system of values and beliefs that forms the foundation of an organisation's management practices and behaviours' (Denison, 1990, cited in Cseh, et al., 2004: 13). Organisational culture is built on 'assumptions about human behaviour and the causal relationships of how things work with a set of philosophical, societal, and ideological values as to what should be done' (Daley, 2002: 23). Daley highlights the importance of organisational culture that it defines what the organisation wants to be, its vision and mission and what it wants to achieve. Of all the internal environmental factors, organisational culture is the most important because it determines what 'type of people are employed, their career aspirations, their educational backgrounds, their status in society' and '[t]he culture of the organisation may embrace them' or '[i]t may reject them' (Jarvis, 2003: 2). In the public sector organisational culture is largely influenced by 'regime values' and 'a distinctive public administration ethos'

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[4] http://toolbox.tafe.vu.edu.au/telecommunications/ip/ip_c16.html accessed 3rd April, 2005.

that emphasises an optimum balance for 'efficiency, equity and responsiveness … [n]otions of public interest … and real considerations for public employees' (Daley, 2002: 23). Because organisational culture varies from one organisation to the other it becomes an important internal resource considered in this study.

The mutual interaction between the external and internal environmental factors has a direct bearing on the concept of HRM (i.e. HRM philosophy and policies). The appropriate philosophy and policies of SHRM should be applied in a way that enables an organisation to achieve its objectives through the proper application of the HRM practices. The implementation of HRM practices and performance management fall under the strategy implementation phase and are discussed in Subsection 2.7.2 below.

2.7.2. Strategy Implementation Phase

Public sector organisations in most plural societies are governed by a democratic ethos. There is a public service ethos that includes key principles of: 'political neutrality, loyalty, probity, honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, incorruptibility, and serving the public' (Farnham and Horton, 1996: 20). It is at this point that the integration of organisational and HRM strategies takes place. Mabey, et al., (1998) note that this integration takes two forms. One is the integration of the various HRM Practices to the extent they are mutually supportive, and the second is the coherence of SHRM policies and practices with the organisation's strategy (ibid). This can only be achieved if the concept of HRM can be integrated with organisational business needs. This integration can be understood within the context of Schuler's (1992) 5-P Model of defining SHRM activities. The 5-Ps are: philosophy, policies, programmes, practices, and processes. Schuler's framework for the translation of an organisation's

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mission and vision statements into SHRM activities that facilitate the achievement of organisational strategy and objectives is important to this study's analytical framework. This is depicted as strategy implementation phase in Figure 2.1 above. This phase or part of the framework assists in the analysis of the processes involved in the implementation of HRM practices and performance management.

Strategy implementation may bring about HR issues that may need to be coordinated so that the implementation of the strategic changes prompted by the organisational strategy needs goes on smoothly (Schuler, 1992). HR Programmes result from these coordinated HR efforts, which Schuler states are influenced by HR policies. This phase unravels how HRM philosophy and policies affect the practices and performance management and seeks to explain how information on outcomes and feedback is utilised.

HRM practices in both personnel management and SHRM are the same. SHRM does not necessarily invent new practices but utilises the good ones that already exist to achieve organisational goals (Daley and Vasu, 2005). This study examines how these are applied in the case study countries.

Performance management is not useful without feedback on outcomes both at individual and organisational levels. This relates to the performance cycle. Employees need information on their performance reviews for them to be able to improve and/or accentuate the good traits they have. Also, organisations need to know how they are performing on the individual and overall HRM practices so that they can improve where necessary. This feedback loop is represented on Figure 2.1 by an arrow that

links HRM practices and performance management together. How employee performance impacts organisational performance and overall national economy is of great importance in the public sector. But HRM practices and processes in local government can only be understood within the context of decentralisation. Subsection 2.7.3 below illustrates how decentralisation and HRM will be applied to categorise and explain the results that come out of the analytical framework above.

2.7.3. The Decentralisation and HRM Framework

This subsection seeks to illustrate the relationship between centralisation/decentralisation and HRM in relation to the public management model adopted. In order to understand the extent of decentralisation and nature of HRM and the relationship between these variables in the cases being studied, a decentralisation/HRM matrix is introduced (see Figure 2.2 below). The decentralisation/HRM matrix relates to the extent with which local authorities are responsible for the management of their human resources. This relates to the flexibility in HRM with which organisations are able to make decisions and implement them. Flexibility in HRM at local government level is constrained by the type of HRM system adopted in a particular country (i.e. be it separated, integrated or unified - see Subsection 2.2.2 in this Chapter). This can happen either in a public administration or NPM system.

The decentralisation/HRM matrix is introduced as a guide to the starting point from which HRM systems in different countries occur. The matrix indicates where the systems are and the direction they might move to. However, this does not explain the factors that propel them in any of the directions indicated by the arrows.

Figure 2.2: The Decentralisation/Centralisation and Personnel Management/SHRM Matrix

Centralisation

Personnel Management
Centralised

SHRM
Centralised

**Personnel
Management
(PA)**

SHRM (NPM)

Personnel Management
Decentralised

SHRM
Decentralised

Decentralisation

Key:

⬭   Possible HRM system position

⟶   Probable direction HRM system may move
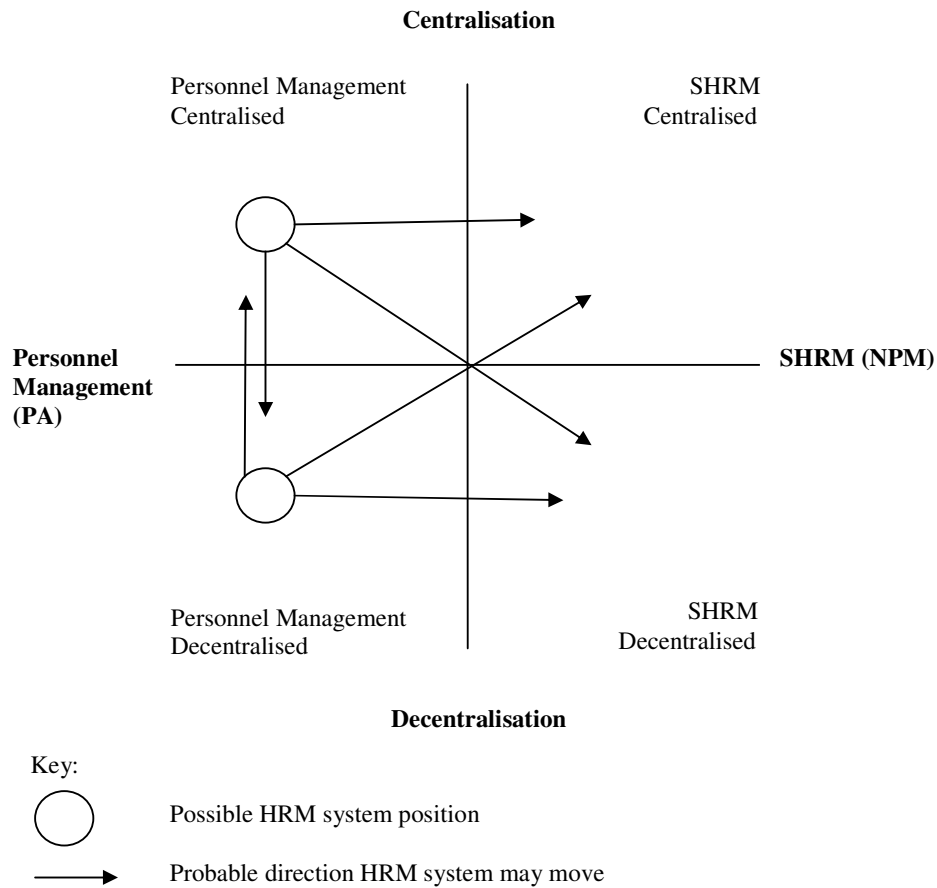
Source: Author's Own Construct

The circles suggest the possible types of HRM systems and the extent of decentralisation/centralisation, before or at the start of the reforms. The arrows indicate the intended and/or possible direction the HRM system may move towards, which depends on a number of contingent factors. These contingencies could be factors such as politics, history (path dependency), current management ideas or philosophy and issues arising out of current municipal capacity. Depending on the public management and HRM models adopted and whether the system is centralised or decentralised, countries can be placed in any one of the quadrants in Figure 2.2. If

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the coordination mechanism is centralised the HRM system would be in either the upper left hand side or upper right hand side quadrants of the matrix depending on the public management system; that is either centralised under a personnel management system or centralised under a SHRM system. What would make a HRM system to be perceived as the old personnel management (PM) system or SHRM would be the public management system adopted.

In the matrix above a country with a public administration system and practising the personnel management type of HRM would be placed in any of the two left hand side quadrants. On the other hand a country's HRM system would be considered to be SHRM if its HRM system operates within the framework of NPM (any of the right hand side quadrants). The circles in Figure 2.2 are placed on the left hand side quadrants (PA) due to the fact that countries reforming their management systems usually shift from public administration to NPM and not vice-versa.

Mosley (2008) identifies the following aspects: goals and performance management; organisation of service delivery; integration of strategies; financing; and personnel, as important for consideration in order to assess the degree of decentralisation in labour market policy. In addition to these Mosley raises the issue of 'trade-offs between decentralisation and accountability', local flexibility in terms of budgeting, programmes, performance management (with flexibility depending on the types of targets set by the centre), and local policy coordination. Capacity and capability at sub-national level are also considered important in the decentralisation process (Mosley 2008; Robinson, 2003; Bach, 2000). Capacity building is intended to ascertain minimum quality standards and standardisation of services, to ensure

accountability, coordinating mechanisms and retain overall policy framework (Mosley, 2008). The manner in which the coordination mechanism is instituted as well as the extent/degree of standardisation would determine the extent of centralisation/decentralisation in the HRM system. These factors that Mosley and others have highlighted are considered throughout this thesis as they constitute the factors that make the HRM systems move between categories.

On the matrix, a separated HRM system operating under a public administration system would be in the lower left hand side quadrant – a decentralised personnel management system. While on the other hand unified as well as integrated HRM systems often imply significant measure (though to varying extent) of central involvement and therefore centralised HRM systems. This would position the HRM system on the upper left hand quadrant as centralised personnel management systems.

For the HRM system to move over from the left (PA/personnel management) to the right hand side of the matrix (NPM/SHRM), the country and its local government would need to have adopted NPM reforms. However, reforms may have unintended outcomes. Although a country may have adopted NPM reforms the HRM system at local government may still be the personnel management type as a result of the reforms having not been implemented at local level. Even under the NPM/SHRM framework an HRM system could either be centralised or decentralised. As earlier alluded to by Mosley (2008) and Bach (2007) the extent of central involvement and intervention would be dependent on the degree of standardisation and/or coordination applied. The lower right hand side quadrant represents a decentralised system

possible, while the upper right hand side quadrant reflects a centralised SHRM approach.

This framework proved to be useful to this study as it enabled us to classify different relationships between HRM/SHRM and different degrees of centralisation/decentralisation. The framework's significance is also due to the fact that countries' institutional resources/path dependencies dispose them to different degrees of centralisation. The framework allows us to investigate as to whether once a country has been predisposed to greater centralisation under PM cannot move to SHRM. The framework does allow for centralised SHRM, implying it will not be strange to find that in the findings. This framework enables us to understand how S/HRM is practiced in the case study countries.

2.8. Summary

This chapter has discussed the relationship between decentralisation and HRM, in the context of different public management models. The discussion has also looked at public management in Africa in the context of wider global trends in the direction of NPM-related reforms. Clearly there have been disparate degrees of success and failure in introducing NPM and decentralisation. Many factors may influence this, but the resource-based view, complemented by the path dependency theory offer a better prospect for the development of a conceptual framework that can facilitate a better understanding of this phenomenon. Given that there is a complex relationship between decentralisation and HRM, which may complicate any attempt to reform the system of HRM, we have introduced an analytical framework to identify and explain

different factors that influence decentralisation/HRM as well as a framework that identifies the decentralisation/HRM typologies.

This chapter is followed by Chapter III which presents the research methods. The research methods map out the strategies adopted in the collection of data and its analysis. The chapter establishes linkages between the analytical framework and the methods of study.

CHAPTER III

METHODS OF THE STUDY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the background, theories relevant to this study, and the analytical framework. The purpose of this chapter is to indicate how the research questions will be answered and also present the approach and methodology used in addressing them. The premise of this study is based on the ontological assumption that HRM is influenced by each nation's economic, cultural and political idiosyncrancies thereby making each country's HRM character distinct. I use the interpretive approach to studying the phenomenon of human resource management in local government. An interpretive approach allows the researcher to come-up with different meanings to the experience of a phenomenon (Neuman, 2003: 77). As already discussed in Chapter II there are many variables, especially those found in both the internal and external environments of an organization, that affect each country's practice of HRM. As these factors are known to be nation specific, an interpretive approach melds well into this study.

This approach runs counter to the positivist approach that assumes a single answer to all human behaviour (Neuman, 2003). And culture is known to vary across the world and influence management in such a way that it becomes customized to a particular country or region. This leads us to the epistemological position that the meaning of social action is subjective (Bryman, 2001) and therefore the researcher should adopt a research methodology suitable for the interpretation of social action. The qualitative approach is known to be the most suitable for interpreting social action and giving meaning to social action that is peculiar

to a particular environment. An interpretive approach is associated with qualitative research (Neuman, 2003; Grix, 2001), hence more weight was given to the qualitative than quantitative data. This factor is discussed further in Section 3.8 on Data Analysis and Interpretation.

Here is how this chapter is organized. The chapter discusses the case study research method, mixed methods approach, validity and reliability, data collection procedures, and the data analysis and interpretation.

3.2 The Case Study Approach

In view of the fact that this study will involve an analysis of the human resource management processes, approaches, administrative structures and assess systems in place, there is a need to employ a research strategy that can be flexible to allow for a multifaceted approach. Some scholars (Verschuren 2003; Stoecker 1991) have identified the case study research strategy as possessing this quality.

However, the definition and use of case study varies according to discipline (Maan en, *et al*, 1993: v), but a look at literature would suggest that a commonality of definition in the social sciences is developing. That a case study has to be a profound and holistic analysis of the phenomena is being generally agreed. Stoecker (1991: 98) defines case study as 'research …, which attempt to explain holistically the dynamics of a certain historical period of a particular social unit'. Hamel, *et al*, (1993; 1) define a case study as 'an in-depth study of the cases under consideration …' The case study approach is best suited in that it is known to be best in studying process (Becker 1966 cited in Stoecker, 1991). Stoecker (1991: 94) emphasizes that process is both historical and idiosyncratic, and that the case study approach

derives its strength over other methodologies in its ability to explain the idiosyncrancies, which make up the unexplained variance. The emphasis of history in case study methodology corresponds with the application of the path dependency concept. Together the two approaches enable us to explain holistically the processes, structures, systems and the history behind the phenomenon we are studying, and these are indiosyncratic to each country. Idiosyncracies may point to the exceptionality of particular cases. In public management, and with specific reference to this study, the idiosyncrasies could be associated with the peculiarities of a country's culture, politics, economic and administrative experiences and environments that may shape its human resources management approach and policies. On the other hand the case study is known for enabling the 'observation of patterns, structures, mechanisms, types, profiles, and configurations instead of variables' (Verschuren, 2003: 129). This includes looking at 'processes, dynamics and developments instead of the status quo as is the case in most quantitative … research' (ibid). Section 3.3 presents

3.3. Selection of the Cases

The study is premised on the assumption that public management approaches in Botswana and South Africa are distinctive and do not necessarily follow sub-Saharan African trends, and this has been argued in Chapter II above. Stoecker (1991: 94) in his defence of the case study research as the most relevant approach to studying exceptionalities argued that 'the case study provides evidence to show how both the rule and its exceptions operate'. The exceptionality of these two countries can be explained from their political histories, culture, economic management, and administrative structures and processes, leading to distinctive paths of institutional development and managerial practice.

Botswana and South Africa are among sub-Saharan Africa's most successful economies and also are politically stable. These conditions create conducive environments for decentralisation and their contexts are suitable for addressing the research questions. However, within South Africa I chose the North West Province as South Africa is a much larger country than Botswana. Its demographics and economy account for much of the differences. However, the North West province bears more commonalities with Botswana than any of South Africa's nine provinces.

The North West Province has more or less similar demographic characteristics to those prevailing in Botswana. The people are ethnically of the same stock, predominantly the Tswana speakers. Also the Province is among the least developed in South Africa and in a way not very different from Botswana as Botswana is less developed than South Africa generally. Botswana and the North West Province share a common border and among the South African provinces, with the exception of Gauteng, the North West shares stronger economic links with Botswana than any other province. Also, the Gaborone City Council and the Mafikeng Local Municipality have a twinning relationship, which indicates the sharing of ideas and perhaps cultural ties. Below we discuss the methods that were used for data collection from the cases identified above.

3.4 Mixed Methods Approach

The study adopted a mixed methods approach otherwise known as triangulation, which is a combination of the qualitative and quantitative research methods. Data collection using the two approaches, otherwise known as The Concurrent Triangulation Strategy (Creswell, 2003), took place in the same phase of the research. This approach proved to be advantageous over the sequential approaches in terms of shorter field work particularly for studies with a

limited time frame and resources as this one. Although the traditional approach of quantitative methods is renowned for methodological rigour, it is perceived to be limited in capturing the 'fabric of global phenomena that include complex interactions of culture, institutions, societal norms and government regulations, among a few concerns' (Kiessling and Harvey, 2005: 22) hence it was applied in concert with the qualitative method. Culture, societal norms, economy, politics, etc., are idiosyncratic variables that also interact intricately to impact on human resource management systems across nations and can only be captured through mixed methods that have the flexibility and depth of capturing this 'fabric' (ibid). Applying a mixed method approach had the advantage of the complementarity of the two methods and 'maintain methodological rigour as well as measures for reliability and validity' (Kiessling and Harvey, 2005: 22; Creswell, 2003: 217).

Having adopted a mixed methods approach and the case study method, one may opt for a deductive or inductive approach. This study adopted the inductive approach, in which as Neuman (2003: 79) argues, 'theory and evidence are interwoven to create a unified whole; and the concepts and generalisations are wedded to their context'. On the contrary quantitative techniques are good for theory testing or verification and hypothesis testing (Creswell, 2003; Montiel, 1998). Quantitative methods assume a 'universalist paradigm' that 'uses evidence to test generalisations of an abstract and law-like character and tends towards acceptance of convergence' (Kiessling and Harvey 2005: 30). This approach is known as positivism and is deductive. The positivist approach would be limited in the face of the interpretive as the interpretive is 'sensitive to context' (Neuman, 2003: 80). Since the interpretive social science is sensitive to context, it therefore has 'limited generalisations' (ibid; 78).

However, quantitative data and its analysis are useful to case studies only in as far as they are 'not too complex' (Gillham, 2000: 80). In this case descriptive statistics, that is averages, totals, ranges, etc., are more relevant as opposed to inferential statistics that deal with correlations (Kiessling and Harvey, 2005). Qualitative research on the other hand would add value by capturing 'cultural values, people's experiences, and gives meaning to events, processes and the environment of their normal setting' (ibid: 30) that quantitative methods may miss out. Also, triangulation becomes advantageous over both methods than they would if applied individually as it offers complementarity and takes advantage of the best in both methods. Section 3.5 presents the sampling techniques applied in both the qualitative and the quantitative methods.

3.5. Sampling

3.5.1 The Survey Sample Frame

The survey research sought to establish perceptions and opinions of the human resource personnel in local authorities. These are people who have the practical experience of what really works and what does not, as well as how they have been doing things on the ground and why. In Botswana the sample frame consisted of an establishment of 102 HR personnel posts. These consist of 30 officers in the urban councils and 72 in the district councils. Appendix 6 presents the categorised councils in Botswana. The total HR personnel establishment in the North West province municipalities was 111 staffs. Of these 63 were from the Mayoral Executive System, 42 from the Collective Executive System and six from the Plenary Executive. The categorisation of municipalities in South Africa's North West province followed the categories stipulated in the Municipal Structures Act. However, all of the North West Province municipalities fall within category B and C (see Appendix 7).

Within each of the categories of municipalities there are three basic types of municipal systems. These are the Mayoral Executive System, Collective Executive System and the Plenary Executive System. In relation to each other the Mayoral Executive System municipalities are the largest followed by the Collective Executive and the Plenary Executive is the smallest. The sample frame in the North West province was clustered according to these three basic types of municipalities which also reflect the different sizes of the municipalities, while in Botswana it was according to the urban and district councils. The sample frames in the two countries were smaller than expected. However, the sample had to satisfy the minimum requirements for a statistically acceptable sample size which is suggested to be at least 30 respondents (Alreck and Settle, 1995: 62).

When considering the issues of service delivery and the ability of a local authority to be able to attract and retain desirable human resources, the type of a local authority and its distance from the capital city of the country and/or province are likely to have a differential impact on its human resources. It is on these grounds that the population is clustered by council or municipal type. In Botswana we knew how each of the HR job posts are distributed over the councils as the data was centralised. However, in the North West province municipalities it was difficult to know the distribution of job posts before the fieldwork commenced. This factor compounded with limited funding affected the sampling technique used for the selection of the respondents.

3.5.2. The Sampling Technique

In view of the above the study adopted a multi-stage sampling technique known as a two-stage sampling design to select the sample. The multi-stage sampling technique has been applied widely before and also by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

(UNECA) in 2001 for their Africa wide study on the 'State of Governance in Africa'. UNECA applied the multi-stage sampling approach within a stratified random sampling technique. This thesis adopted a multi-stage sampling approach but using the cluster sampling technique, there by varying the methodology in accordance with the prevailing conditions, particularly those of a small sample size that this study dealt with. The variation mentioned above applied to Stage II of the method. The selection of respondents at that stage was not random but based on clusters, due to the smallness of the sample frame, but all officers in the selected local authority were interviewed as random sampling at that level was not feasible as initially intended. In addition to that cluster sampling is known to alleviate budgetary problems that many a student encounter in their research. Sampling is an art, and as such special sampling designs or variations are acceptable as long as they do not increase sampling error and bias (Alreck and Settle, 2004; 78). The discussion below presents the sampling procedure.

Stage I: This stage involved the selection of local authorities as primary sampling units (PSUs). This first step involved the grouping of the local authorities or municipalities according to clusters appropriate for the conditions in each country. In Botswana the local authorities were clustered according to urban and district councils. In the North West province the clusters were based on the types of municipalities. That is Mayoral Executive System, Collective Executive System, and Plenary Executive System. These were selected using the probability proportional to size (PPS) selection method. In this case size was determined by the number of local authorities in a given municipal cluster (i.e. category/type). Presented below is the description of the sample selection:

- List all local authorities (in Botswana all sub-districts are listed so that they are not omitted from the sampling)

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- List the cumulative numbers of job posts

- Find the sampling interval where

$$sampling\ \mathrm{int}erval = \frac{Total\ number\ of\ job\ posts}{number\ of\ LAs\ to\ be\ sampled}$$

- Choose a random number between 1 and the sampling interval

- This random number identified the first local authority on the list that is to be included in the sample.

- Add the sampling interval to the random number chosen above. The resulting number identifies second local authority on the list to be included in the sample

- The remaining local authorities are selected by successive addition of the sampling interval to the number used to identify the second local authority

Stage II: At this stage, job posts were supposed to be selected systematically from a fresh list of occupied posts prepared at the beginning of the survey fieldwork for the selected local authorities. However, due to difficulties in acquiring the data and also due to the smallness of the sample sizes dealt with, stage two was modified. Instead there was no sampling for individual job posts at this stage and HRM staff from all the selected local authorities were interviewed.

3.5.3. Determination of Sample Size

In a multi-stage sample, for one to estimate the required sample size estimates of variances between and within the first-stage units should be made. However, because of the application of random sampling to the selection of clusters there is no need to make any adjustments to determine the sample size. The notation for the calculation of the sampling interval is given below:

If X units in a population of N possess some attribute, and that x units in a sample of size n possess the same attribute. Then, the proportion of units in the population that possess the attribute is given by

$$\Pi = \frac{X}{N}.$$

And the proportion of units in the sample that possess the attribute is given by

$$p = \frac{x}{n}.$$

It can be shown that the sample proportion p is an unbiased estimate of population proportion Π.

Sample Selection for Botswana

Stage I

The following is a calculation of the sampling interval for Botswana.

$$\frac{102}{26} = 3.92$$

$\therefore$ round off to the nearest one, hence the sampling interval = 4.

Stage II

Due to limitations related to unavailability of data in the North West province at the time of sampling in Botswana (and for purposes of consistency across the countries) as well as resource limitations, there was no direct sampling of respondents. Rather, all the job posts in the selected councils were eligible for interviews. The total number of job posts selected for interviews was 35. This satisfies the minimum statistically acceptable sample size for quantitative studies, which is 30 respondents.

Sample Selection for the North West Province

Stage I

The following is a calculation of the sampling interval for the North West Province.

$$\frac{111}{21} = 5.28$$

$\therefore$ we round off to the nearest whole number, hence the sampling interval = 5.

This sampling interval was used to select the municipalities from categorised list.

Stage II

Due to the unavailability of accessible data at the sampling stage and problems experienced in communication, direct sampling of the respondents could not be undertaken. Instead municipalities sampled in the first stage produced the respondents for stage two. The total number of those sampled in this way came to 42.

3.6. The Qualitative Interview Sample

The respondents for the face-to-face interviews were selected through purposive sampling. These were drawn from the top echelons of the local authorities and ministries and/or departments and other government agencies responsible for HRM at local government level and/or responsible for managing the general decentralisation policy. Most of these people, particularly in Botswana, have served in various capacities in the local authorities and rose through the ranks to senior positions and therefore have a deeper understanding of the workings of the systems and would be in a better position than anybody else to provide more useful data. Some of the respondents were academics and members of non-governmental organisations associated with local authorities and they too have been helpful in finding explanations for the research questions. Even though some notable scholars such as Moser and Kalton (1971: 54) argue that purposive sampling lacks the rigour demanded by theory, it

is nevertheless the most appropriate for the selection of respondents with special qualities that may not be adequately captured if the selection is subjected to random sampling. Although there is no set size of a sample for qualitative studies, twenty respondents are generally regarded as reasonable or whenever there is no longer any new information being added by interviewing any more respondents. In this study 18 respondents were interviewed in Botswana, and 13 in the North West Province (see Appendices 11 and 12).

3.7. Data Collection

The data collection procedures involved a multilevel approach that consisted of a survey among human resource management officers and interviews with top management. This involved a survey, in-depth qualitative interviews with key informants, and desk/document research.

The interviews consisted of open-ended questions. These consisted of face to face interviews with the top management of the local authorities and other government departments. Verbal or face to face interviews are known to allow for opportunities to raise issues or topics that the interviewer may never have thought of (Bailey, 1987: 189). Interviews have several other advantages that alternative methods of data collection such as mailed questionnaires may lack. Some of the advantages of interviews are flexibility, a high response rate, spontaneity and completeness (ibid: 174) and probing. The key informants consisted of the human resource management personnel of the councils/municipalities, heads of departments, as well as the top management of the local authorities. Also interviewed were the leadership of the staff associations, and the staff members of the central government agencies (both national and provincial departments in South Africa) who are involved in local government and/or HR matters of the local authorities of the two case study countries. These groups could be

involved with staff matters both at policy level and at a technical level and ideally they understand local government matters better than most other government employees.

Data collection during the survey was conducted through the use of structured questionnaire instrument with pre-coded alternative answers for each question. Questionnaires were self-administered and in order to cut down on costs were mailed to potential respondents. Mailed questionnaires have the advantage of eliminating interviewer errors, and also are reputed to be suitable in dealing with questions that demand a considered answer (Moser and Kalton, 1971: 258). Non-contact is another problem that mailed-questionnaires address. This is particularly important in my case where resources were limited.

The desk research was based on written reports such as HR policy documents, laws, regulations, official and non-official publications, and scholarly publications such as relevant academic journals and books. This enabled us to assess the local authorities' approaches to the management of human resources as well as assessing their overall human resource management strategies. How the collected data was analysed is discussed below.

3.8. Data Analysis and Interpretation

During the interpretation of the data more emphasis was given to the qualitative interviews as these were conducted among the most experienced and mostly senior officials. These were senior government officers who deal mostly with policy issues and also are more knowledgeable and experienced than the operational officers in the municipalities.

After the survey, quantitative data was cleaned and entered into data files, with data entry errors and inconsistencies checked and corrected where necessary. The Statistical Package for

the Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 13.0) was used for this purpose. The software was used to generate descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequency counts and tabulations. The statistical data was analysed separately from the qualitative data but integrated at the interpretation stage.

The qualitative data was analysed by way of placing it into categories and manipulated in order to identify patterns, themes and concepts (Neuman, 2003). Thereafter the data was coded for easier analysis and interpretation. As an analytic strategy, I adopted the 'Ideal Types' approach, which is commonly used in qualitative research to 'contrast contexts' and/or to draw 'analogies' (ibid: 450). Since this study is largely interpretive it was expedient to employ the Contrast Contexts approach. The Contrast Contexts approach is known to be sensitive to peculiarities of specific contexts, especially capturing important societal aspects such as culture. Neuman (2003: 450) states categorically:

> Thus, one use of the ideal type is to show how specific circumstances, cultural meanings, and the perspectives of specific individuals are central for understanding a social setting or process. The ideal type becomes a foil against which unique contextual features can be more easily seen.

This analytic strategy becomes more relevant for this case study of Botswana and South Africa. Through it the study identified unique characteristics that emerged in the HRM of the two countries' local governments.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the data, the survey instrument was pre-tested and changes made to the instrument before the questionnaires were administered. This was done to ensure consistency during the survey by avoiding changes to the instrument during the data collection exercise. Also, the triangulation approach was applied in which interviews, the survey and literature were applied in concert and consistency ensured through this

method. However, it will be noted that the survey respondents and the interview respondents seemed to say the same things or hold similar views (see chapters VI and VII). One of the reasons, in the Botswana case as already alluded to in Chapter IV was the fact that the government had started in 2004 to implement some of the recommendations of the Presidential Commission on Local Government Structure. Also, the roll-out of performance management systems had just started and most government officials had been drilled through the PMS concept in workshops and seminars. Most likely as the euphoria wears thin with time and the reality becomes clearer, differences of opinion between the different ranks are likely to appear. Similarly in South Africa the reforms were still being implemented as Chapter VII indicates and also everybody had great anticipation of what the new dispensation was about to bring. This is particularly manifest in the South African officials' frequent reference to the legal documents in their interview responses (see Chapter VII). This contrasts with the Botswana case where respondents mostly referred to what the practice was as it seemed they relied more on what worked but not necessarily what the law stipulated. The limitations for this study are presented in Section 3.10 below.

3.10. Limitations

The fieldwork preparations started mid-September 2005 and the data collection was completed in early March 2006. The actual data collection was run concurrently from January 2006 in both countries. In October and November I was actively establishing contacts and learning more about the South African local government system. At first it was not easy contacting municipalities in South Africa as it took me more than a month and a half to access the contact details of all the North West municipalities. It also took me weeks (after running between my office and the South African Embassy in Gaborone) to get to know that one does not need a research permit to do academic research in South Africa. By the time I

was familiar with the municipalities in the North West province it was almost December 2005. Because of the coming Christmas holidays, I decided to shelve the interviews and start when everybody comes back early January. The data collection was conducted between January and March 2006.

The data in this study should be treated with caution because of its smallness as it may not be as representative of the entire study population but reflects the views of the respondents who were interviewed.

CHAPTER IV

BACKGROUND TO BOTSWANA

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented the research methods and how the research questions will be answered. This chapter presents and analyses background data on Botswana that helps in the understanding of the context of decentralisation and HRM. The overview attempts to explain how the environmental and institutional factors influence decentralisation, HRM policy and practice. To do this the study applied the contingency, the RBV and path dependency concepts and how they relate to decentralisation and HRM, the HRM philosophy, HRM practices and performance management. The chapter partially answers the research questions but most importantly presents the necessary background that contextualises the HRM situation in Botswana. The chapter maps the development of HRM in local government and its relationship with decentralization or local democracy in Botswana. The chapter further explores in detail the main factors/elements that influence the management of human resources in local government in Botswana as well as trying to show how the country's decentralisation system and its approach to HRM differs from most of SSA countries. The discussions begin by outlining the environmental and institutional factors.

4.2. The Environmental and Institutional Factors

This section discusses Botswana's background focusing on both the external and internal environmental factors as indicated in the analytical framework in Chapter II.

4.2.1 External Environment

The external environment focuses on the following factors: politics, national economy, social culture, laws, the labour market, unionisation, and decentralisation, indicating how these may have impacted on HRM.

Political Background

Botswana is situated in the Southern Africa region, between Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe (see Appendix 3). Geographically the country measures about 582 000 km² and has a small sparse population of about 1.7 million (GoB, 2001) mainly concentrated in the south and the east where the soils are relatively fertile and rainfall is more frequent. Before 1966 Botswana was a British Protectorate with the capital located outside the territory, in Mafikeng (present day capital of the North West Province), South Africa. It is widely understood in Botswana that it was the three chiefs of Bakwena, Bamangwato and Bangwaketse who asked for British protection against the advancing Boers from the south and the Germans in the west. These three were originally one tribe, the Bakwena, but broke up due to sibling rivalry. Later the Bamangwato broke into two when the Batawana left in discontent. Botswana was declared a protectorate in 1887 and was known as the Bechuanaland Protectorate. However, that came with a conditionality that the Tswana tribes should cease infighting that had hitherto characterised their fragmentary polity (Morton and Ramsay, 1987). This could be seen as a critical juncture that ushered in political stability in Bechuanaland and later Botswana, which was never to change ever since. In 1966 Botswana gained independence from British rule and has been a stable democracy ever since. One significant factor to note is that at independence in 1966, Botswana existed within a region that was characterised by one party states and dictatorships such as Malawi, Tanzania, the then Zaire, and Zambia. The closest neighbours, South Africa, South West Africa (Namibia)

and Zimbabwe were ruled by racist regimes while Angola and Mozambique were still under colonial rule. The ruling parties in most of the independent countries in the region were socialist including the liberation movements in the then yet-to-be independent countries. However, Botswana's leadership chose a democratic governance system that has since reached a stage of lock-in in which a reversal will be difficult. This has also been achieved because the Tswana traditionally espouse consultation and consensus making as one of the important tenets of their traditional governance system. Free and fair elections are held every five years. The judiciary is one of the most independent in Africa, and the public service has continued to be apolitical and meritocratic.

Botswana is one of the few African countries that have achieved political and social stability prior to and after independence. This is due to Botswana's colonial history and traditional polity. Botswana's traditional polity is noted for its being developmental in nature (Maundeni, 2001), and the modern government has been credited for successfully blending both the traditional and modern elements of governance (Good, 1992). This has created a suitable environment for the entrenchment of democratic governance and the development and implementation of sound social and economic policies. However, the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has been in power since independence, albeit with a gradually declining electoral support. The distortionary effect of the First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) electoral system, that has apparently disadvantaged smaller parties, has enhanced the BDP's strength in parliament. Coupled with this has been a weak civil society and fragmentary opposition parties (Forster-Seba, 2003). This has led to the entrenchment of a one-party dominant system. And yet on the other hand, these factors have enabled the BDP to form strong successive governments, after every election, that have been able to push through public policies and programmes with negligible opposition. However, in the late 1990s the

governing party experienced some factionalism that threatened the stability of the party. But after the state president appointed some of the members of one of the factions that felt sidelined to cabinet, factionalism has since abated.

As one of the leading liberal democracies in Africa and perhaps in the developing world, Botswana has continued to deepen its social and political reforms. This is both as an incremental improvement to its democracy and also resulting from attempts to address emergent challenges. But some of Botswana's notable endeavours are its commitment to public sector reforms aimed at improving productivity through the enhancement of performance management.

The government realised that to improve performance more comprehensive strategies were needed. The process to develop a strategic framework was initiated with the appointment of a Presidential Task Force in 1997 to consult with the public and develop a national vision to guide national development planning (UNECA, 2003). This vision which came to be known as 'Vision 2016 A Long Term Vision for Botswana: Towards Prosperity for All' developed a set of aspirations to be achieved by 2016. These are:

- An educated and informed nation;
- A prosperous, productive and innovative nation;
- A compassionate, just and caring nation;
- A safe and secure nation;
- An open, democratic and accountable nation;
- A moral and tolerant nation, and;
- A united nation.

Each stakeholder (including the public sector) in the economy is to identify which of the aspirations they could contribute to and identify strategies of how they can participate in the realisation of the identified national aspiration/s. Vision 2016 establishes a strategic framework upon which the Performance Management System is based (ibid). PMS has fully

been implemented in central government but has rather taken longer to be implemented in local government. In central government the HRM responsibilities of the Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM) have been devolved to Ministries and Departments. HRM responsibilities have been devolved to line managers, who can hire and fire employees with the exception of the post of Permanent Secretaries who are appointed by the President with advice from the Permanent Secretary to the President. Managers in Departments and Ministries play a major role in the recruitment process and other HRM responsibilities. Most of the HRM tasks, such as recruitment and promotions, are handled by committees in which the DPSM sits to advice and ensure consistency and transparency. Turning to another factor, civil service reforms are implemented within particular social context that affect the way they turn out to be in practice. Below the discussion presents the social culture of Botswana.

Social Culture

The social culture in Botswana has not changed dramatically from what it was before and during colonialism, and immediately after independence. It has been observed that Tswana society is the most 'highly stratified' and 'sharply hierarchical' of any in Southern Africa (Good, 1992: 69). This stratification is hierarchical with the elite (the chief and his inner core of advisors) at the top, and then the commoners and the serfs at the lower rung. The *kgotla* (a traditional political institution for consensus making) continues to play an important role in Tswana society as an institution for consultation between the society and its political leaders. The *kgotla* was '… essentially operated to facilitate social control by the leadership' (ibid: 70) and '… were in fact highly centralised institutions' (Maundeni, 2001: 114). Maundeni (2001: 109) observed that 'The Tswana had a state culture that promoted the centrality of the state'. However, the Tswana state did not have bureaucratic structures or systems as modern governments do (ibid). Modern administrative structures and management systems (although

now reformed) have been inherited from the colonial administration. The Tswana polity has bequeathed the *kgotla* to the post-independence government, which continues to use it more or less in the same way it was utilised by the chiefs in the pre-independence era (Maundeni, 2001).

The pre-colonial Tswana politics 'emphasised control, continuity and quiescence of the bulk of the population of commoners and serfs' (Picard and Morgan, 1985 in Good, 1992: 71). Effectively, 'pre-colonial Tswana politics subordinated civil institutions to the states' (Maundeni, 2001: 110). This characteristic of the state culture was to be continued in the post-independence era wherein state power was centralised in the presidency. The top bureaucrats in Botswana are known to have instituted measures that subordinated civil society to the government. Civil society, especially trade unions and staff associations, were strictly controlled by legislation until recently. However, there has been a shift from the control of, to collaboration with, civil society organisations. This factor is well noted by BIDPA (2005: 194-96) and Maundeni (2005a: 189) who mentions that there have been limited confrontation among civic organisations as well as between them and the state. The war that characterise state-NGO relations in most of Africa is absent in Botswana and instead NGOs are seen as development partners by the Botswana government (Maundeni 2005a).

The other major characteristic of Tswana society is the absence of militancy, which is attested to by many. Instead Tswana culture espouses dialogue. In fact there is a Tswana saying '*ntwa kgolo ke ya molomo,'* which means 'the grand battle is fought by word of mouth'. Reilly (1983: 144) notes the peaceful nature and docility of Batswana. Mackenzie (1884: 221 cited in Maundeni, 2001: 115) sums it up succinctly when he said 'But while the Tswana sometimes fight with their spears, they decidedly prefer to do so with their tongues,

and are indeed much better qualified for the latter warfare than for the former. And so diplomacy played a prominent part in public business in each little court, without letters and without secret cipher'. The age old tradition of non-aggression has been practised for ages and adopted by civil society to the extent 'Civic organisations' in Botswana will only 'engage in mass action as a last resort' (Maundeni, 2005a: 189).

Most researchers observe that when the Botswana public service was relatively new after independence, the public officers served with zeal and self-sacrifice. They and the political elites won the government international acclaim 'as a stable democracy with sound and prudent development management and an efficient and accountable public bureaucracy' (Hope, 1995: 42). Mueller (1983) found out that although personal reward was the source of motivation among local government employees in Botswana, 'altruistic goals' were the most prominent in a period when resources were scanty. However, as time went by and new economic challenges emerged attitudes also changed triggering some concerns within government. The public service performance declined and drifted away 'from the principles of honesty and integrity that had set it apart from the public services in other developing countries and those in most of Africa in particular' (Hope, 1995: 42). As Hope (1995) observed the government's concerns were translated into a number of public sector reforms such as Work Improvement Teams and Performance Management Systems, to recapture the lost post-independence spirit. The ability of the state to control civil society organisations and the public sector is related to Tswana social culture in which civil society has traditionally been dominated by the state and there was a strong tendency towards centralisation. These factors predate both the colonial and post-independence eras.

Economic Background

Botswana has had the best economic performance of any developing country in the world for over three decades (Acemoglu, et al, 2001). Botswana started off at independence in 1966 as one of the poorest countries in the world. However, this was to change radically after the discovery of diamonds in the late 1960s. To date the World Bank ranks Botswana as an upper middle-income country. 'Between 1966 and 1980, Botswana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew at an annual rate of 14.5 per cent, and was for a long time one of the fastest growing economies in the world', and 'the per capita GDP quintupled over the first 20years of independence' (Forster-Seba, 2003: 54). Botswana's GDP growth rates slowed to just under 10 per cent per annum in the 1990s. In 2001/02 the growth slumped to 2.3 per cent from 8.4 per cent achieved in 2000/01 (ibid) before rebounding to 7.8 per cent in 2002/03 (GoB, 2005; 4). In 2003/04 real growth rate slipped lower to 5.7 per cent, and was expected to further slow down to between 4 and 5 per cent in 2004/05 and 2005/06 owing to a slack performance in the mining and non-mining sectors (ibid; 4). In spite of this slackening performance Botswana has performed better on most key development indicators than the average of Sub-Saharan Africa (see Table 4.1 below). Botswana's growth has always been mineral led. Diamonds have been the single largest contributor to the government's output at 40 per cent (Acemoglu, et al, 2001: 1), and mineral revenues accounted for around 45 per cent of total revenues for 2004/05 (GoB, 2005; 21).

Minerals alone fall short of explaining Botswana's economic success (Foster-Seba, 2003; Acemoglu, et al, 2001; World Bank 2000; Nordås, et al, 1998; Good, 1992). A mixture of variables especially fiscal discipline (Nordås, et al, 1998), good policy choice (Harvey and Lewis, 1990) and political stability have been advanced as some of the factors that contributed to Botswana's success. Also, Botswana has had a remarkable approach of dealing

with donors. The Government has always resisted aid that could not be integrated into the national budgeting system (Nordås, et al, 1998). Fiscal discipline, that borders on conservatism, and cautious policy choice were paths that were chosen at independence, and institutions (rules/norms) developed around them, as a result of the continuity of one political party in government, have been maintained uninterruptedly since independence.

One other factor that augurs well for Botswana's prudent economic management is the low levels of corruption. Unlike many other African countries, there is negligible nepotism and corruption is not institutionalised or part of the administrative routine in Botswana (Hope, 1995). In fact Botswana has for many years been ranked by Transparency International (TI) as the least corrupt country in Sub-Saharan Africa with a Corruption Perception Index ranging between 6.0 in 2004 to 5.8 in 2008 but with some fluctuations in between (see Appendix 13[5]). Neither is the country heavily indebted nor ever served any SAPS. All these can be credited to the choices that the leaders made at independence.

Oluwu and Wunsch (2004: 92) note that Botswana's highest growth rate among developing countries 'offered an environment that was to prove supportive for local and democratic governance'. Furthermore, while local governments in Botswana have more resources than their counterparts in most of Africa, their local revenue sources remained very limited (ibid). Local priorities and policy choice have been undermined due to the over-dependence on central government funding resulting in a pattern that is common across Africa (Oluwu and Wunsch, 2004; Brown, 1999; Sharma, 1997; Picard, 1987). Decision making related to district level development planning remains top-down in spite of the spelt out intentions of it being bottom-up (Sharma, 1997: 65).

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[5] Appendix 13 presents the CPI score of four of the least corrupt countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. These countries are mentioned in Chapter II as the leading reformers in SSA.

Whereas there may be questions as to whether the '… achievement of greater local autonomy ha[s] led to greater efficiency in delivering services and/or greater democracy' (Brown, 1999: 4), it is also important to consider whether the centralisation of resources has led to economic efficiency and also improved the management of human resources. The centralised control of economic resources and state power in Botswana is entrenched in Tswana state culture and predates colonial rule and modern governance as stated above. Although the reversal of some decentralisation initiatives in the 1970s were largely due to concerns over the lack of capacity by councils (Picard, 1987), the political elites and top bureaucrats in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning also found it expedient to continue with it for the better management of scarce resources. Even when resources increased it has not been easy to let go simply because the path not chosen has become distant. Economic management in Botswana is entrenched in history and shows to have reached a stage of inertia in which change has been difficult to bring about. However, opportunities for change seem plausible as consideration for broadening local government sources of revenue such as the introduction of property tax, reintroduction of local government tax, for example, has been going on for almost a decade (see Hope, 2000). This points to an evolutionary change. Perhaps the many years it is taking to implement these reforms shows how entrenched institutions affect local government and also how difficult (but not impossible) it is to effect change there.

Labour Market

At independence Botswana barely had any tertiary education institutions and very few educated citizens. The use of expatriate labour in Botswana to compensate for what was not available locally has been a long term strategy adopted immediately after independence (Picard, 1987). The Botswana government resisted the temptation to localise for the sake of

localisation immediately after independence, putting merit and ability first (ibid). This marked a critical juncture in the creation of merit-based recruitment in the public service. Expatriate labour has played a very significant role in Botswana than in any other country in Africa (Picard, 1987: 203; Hope, 1995: 43). This was due to the underdeveloped colonial educational and training capacity, which differed from other African country experiences (Picard, 1987). It was also adopted as a deliberate strategy 'to aid in its post-independence development management effort' as well as being 'borne out by the post-independence development results' of using expatriate labour (Hope, 1995: 43). The continued reliance on expatriate labour in Botswana has been a result of the labour market that remains underdeveloped due to limited supply of technical skills, lack of adequate training institutions, and the cost of training abroad. The poor conditions of service in local government worked to its disadvantage as more educated and capable people joined the central government where the conditions of service and pay were better and the local authorities could hardly attract any highly educated staff (Picard, 1987).

The major challenge for LAs is attracting and retaining skilled manpower. Incentives in the local authorities have long been noted to be inadequate (Sharma, 1997; Picard, 1987; Reilly, 1983). But lately jobs are hard to come by as the central government has frozen the creation of new posts and some of the big private sector companies such as Volvo, Hyundai and Owens Corning have relocated to South Africa, and economic diversification proved elusive (Mmegi, 2005; Good and Hughes, 2002). But this could be a temporary phenomenon as the economy has recently rebounded led by the mining sector and this requires lasting strategies to be put in place for local authorities to be competitive.

Many researchers have noted this weakness in the local authorities' human resource management structures. Some perceive these weaknesses to have been a deliberate strategy to keep local governments weak (Reilly, 1983; Picard, 1987). Picard (1987: 227) observed that '[a]t least until 1982, central government policy makers were not willing to increase the capacity of the local level institutions'. He further argued that the HRM policies are linked to the 'political and socio-economic context of rural development policy', that seeks to maintain the predominance of central authority over local-level political activity. And also to pursue a policy '… that is conducive to existing political interests' which are limited to the '… expansion of existing areas of economic activity …' (ibid: 227-228).

Employee Relations

The labour movement in the local authorities of Botswana consisted of two main players only. There is the Botswana Unified Local Government Service Association (BULGSA) that represents professional employees and the National Amalgamated Local and Central Government and Parastatal Manual Workers Union (NALCGPMWU) representing the industrial/manual workers. Industrial employees have always been allowed by law to unionise whereas white collar employees have all along not been allowed to. The government of Botswana has established parallel consultative machineries through which both the NALCGPMWU and BULGSA participate. These are the Local Works Committees which addresses matters pertaining to industrial class employees and the Local Authorities Joint Staff Consultative Council in which BULGSA sits. Both BULGSA and the NALCGPMWU have participated in public service wage and salary negotiations through the high profile National Employment, Manpower and Incomes Council (NEMIC). NEMIC is a tripartite consultative body in which government, employers and labour are represented and usually advices government, among others, on recommended annual salary increases. Labour

movements have always felt dissatisfied with the decisions of NEMIC arguing that they are always underrepresented and outvoted in the forum. In 1992 NALCGPMWU staged a nationwide strike in protest against what they perceived to be inadequate wage increase. The government responded strongly to the strike, dismissing its employees who were involved and insisting the wage increase was justified. The tough response shows the control government placed over labour movements in its attempt to instil stability.

BULGSA was in the process of unionising at the time the study was conducted. They still operated as a staff association and according to the labour laws of Botswana they are not allowed to strike while still operating under that framework, so they usually resort to sit-ins. However, the government has ratified International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 151 which allows the public service to unionise (GoB: 2003a: 386). Other Acts such as the Employment and Trade and Disputes Acts and the Public Service Act are being reviewed to harmonise them with these changes (ibid).

Decentralisation

During the colonial era local government in Botswana was part of tribal administration under the local chiefs. After independence the traditional chiefs were stripped of most of their powers when these were transferred to elected (and a few appointed) councillors. However, the chiefs were made the ex-officio non-voting members of the councils. The chiefs still commanded some influence, even though the governing party was determined to realign state power at all levels away from the chiefs to democratically elected bodies. Olowu and Wunsch (2004) and Hope (2000) make a factual error that chiefs are members of local councils in Botswana, overlooking the fact that the chiefs' residual powers and influence in the councils were dealt a heavy blow in 1981 after the Local Government Structure Commission of 1979

recommended their removal from the councils. A study carried out in Botswana in the late 1980s showed that councillors were the most preferred point of contact than chiefs on community matters relating to local affairs and even on matters of a personal nature (Lekorwe, 1989).

The local authorities in Botswana are a creation of parliamentary legislation. The Townships Act (as amended) 1955 and the Local Government (District Councils) Act (as amended) 1965 established the urban and district councils respectively and define their powers, responsibilities and jurisdictions. Besides the general duties of promoting and maintaining good governance as stated in the above laws, the First, Second and Third Schedules of the same specify the responsibilities of the councils as:

- Education – provision of primary school facilities and other primary education services (e.g. books, stationery, feeding, etc.);
- Health and sanitation – provision of primary health care services, sanitation and public lavatories;
- Water – provision of public water supplies where there is no water authority assigned the task;
- Communications – construction and maintenance of public roads excluding those under the authority of central government;
- General administration – establishment and control of markets, recreational parks and other public places, cemeteries and burial grounds, stadia, assist in disaster management, assist sport associations and those dealing with children's and other vulnerable people's welfare;
- Regulation and licensing – the regulation and licensing of donkey carts, bicycles, herbalists and brick-makers. (But these have been extended to include licensing of businesses);
- Abattoirs – to establish and operate abattoirs, charge user fees, inspect carcasses;
- Beer depots and beer halls – establish, maintain and operate beer halls where traditional beer is sold and consumed off premises and on premises respectively;
- Implementation of bye-laws – implement bye-laws made by the council;
- Commercial – enter into contracts for the sale of land or premises;
- Council staff – to ensure proper working of the council and welfare of its staff;
- Land – acquire land for development and sell such land in serviced lots;
- Electricity – public electricity supply.

However, some of the statutory responsibilities of the councils have been centralised or allocated to other authorities. The supply of water in the urban areas and electricity in the whole country has been delegated to parastatal organisations, the Water Utilities Corporation and the Botswana Power Corporation respectively which deal directly with consumers. In the major villages water is supplied by the Department of Water Affairs under the Ministry of Minerals, Energy and Water Resources. The construction, operation and maintenance of stadiums is the responsibility of the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture. Fire fighting and housing have not been listed on any of the schedules but are provided by all urban municipalities. However, housing which involves the provision of loans for low income groups through the Self Help Housing Agency (SHHA) programme is being extended to district councils as well.

The government of Botswana has adopted the position that 'decentralisation is not a means in itself' but that it can only be valued 'in terms of other desired objectives to which it contributes' (GoB, 2003a: 400). The government has determined that its decentralisation policy objectives are to:

1. Facilitate and enhance control and coordination of planning and implementation capacity in the execution of development policies, programmes and projects;
2. Enhance local popular participation in decision making;
3. Ensure and facilitate sustainable service delivery to communities;
4. Develop systems for local governance and development;
5. Promote democracy and governance; and
6. Promote social and economic development (ibid).

The transfer of responsibilities and power and authority to the local authorities has been more consistent in Botswana than in any other African country (Reilly, 1983: 171) where immediately after independence there was recentralisation. Although Botswana has offered a supportive environment for decentralisation (Olowu and Wunsch, 2004), limitations due to the nature of Botswana's democracy and resource limitations have been noted (Reilly, 1983;

Picard; 1987; Sharma, 1997; BIDPA, 2004). The government of Botswana was cautious not to create a strong local government system that could eventually pose a threat to the state (Picard, 1987). It was this overcautious approach that eventually left a legacy of a 'dominant centre with limited autonomy for local government' (Sharma, 1997: 75). It is apparent that there was some rationale behind the underdevelopment of local government in Botswana. Perhaps having developed its local government in a region and time characterised by political instability and overt pro-socialist/communist liberation movements, Botswana as the only pro-West government besides the racist regimes in the region may have been overcautious not to allow local government politicians too much freedom lest they become powerful and foment dissent in their areas. But having benefited politically from these controls it proves difficult for the governing party to let go. These are the feedback loops that reinforce movement in one direction or say path dependent choices that are also based on self-preservation by the ruling elite.

However, within these widely acknowledged limitations, decentralisation in Botswana has been more substantive and has evolved over a longer period of time than in most of Africa (Olowu and Wunsch, 2004; Brown 1999; Sharma, 1997; Tordoff, 1988; Picard, 1987; Reilly, 1983). Furthermore, local government in Botswana has a track record of good performance, effective provision of service delivery and political viability better than any in Africa and perhaps most of the developing world (Olowu and Wunsch, 2004: 92, 102).

However, the government has acknowledged that there are serious limitations with its decentralisation strategy and has resorted to continual improvement. In recognition of the need to further strengthen local level institutions and fine tune the service delivery systems the government has committed to a number of reforms involving the 'functional and

organisational structure for the formulation, management and coordination of decentralised activities at the local level' (GoB, 2003a: 400). Radical changes have been deliberately avoided instead choosing a gradualist or incremental approach. The most significant changes have been derived from the two Local Government Structure Commissions (the Presidential Commission on Local Government Structure in Botswana 1979, and the Second Presidential Commission on Local Government Structure in Botswana 2001) as well as from the PMS Programme and the Organisation and Methods reviews (O & M). The said Presidential Commissions have had profound effect on the structure of local government. The 1979 Commission recommended the separation of the Land Boards and the removal of chiefs from the councils. The Second Presidential Commission on Local Government Structure in Botswana, which was chaired by the former Permanent Secretary (PS) of the then Ministry of Local Government, Lands and Housing and now a Minister in the Ministry of Communications, Science and Technology, Pelonomi Venson-Moitoi, hereinafter referred to as the Venson Commission Report after its Chairperson has been widely seen by many observers as more radical and innovative. It is worthy at this juncture to comment on Venson-Moitoi's role in the development of local government in Botswana as her influence will be evident in the background and analytical chapters on Botswana.

In 1992 during Pelonomi Venson-Moitoi's tenure as PS in the then Ministry of Local Government, Lands and Housing there was a major corruption scandal relating to the Botswana Housing Corporation in which top politicians were implicated. A commission of inquiry was established by the President to investigate the saga. The Commissioners held the then Vice President and Minister of Local Government, Lands and Housing politically responsible while Venson-Moitoi was held administratively responsible, and both lost their jobs. Venson-Moitoi then moved to Western Cape in South Africa, in 1993, where she

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became a consultant on local government until 1998 when she returned to Botswana and got a job as the Acting Executive Secretary of the ruling Botswana Democratic Party. In 1999 she joined active politics, first losing the primary elections but bouncing back as a Specially Elected Member of Parliament the same year. Since 2001 she has held a number of ministerial posts in government.

As Chairperson of the Commission, Venson-Moitoi, seemed to have significant influence on the outcome of the Commissioners' report as it had some of the recommendations that veered towards a more or less similar local government model to that in South Africa. For instance, the recommendations to introduce a mayoral system in which politicians have executive functions and decentralising more decision-making powers to local authorities. Because of the novelty associated with the Report and its recommendations, also bearing in mind that at the time of collecting data many of the recommendations were still being implemented and much talked about in government circles, the respondents in this study (as it will be shown in Chapter VI) tended to share similar opinions. Venson-Moitoi's four year consultancy work in South Africa indicates the sharing of ideas between the two countries. Besides borrowing from the South African experience during her role as Chairperson of the Commission, and her work in Cape Town, she influenced both budding scholars and practitioners as a Part-time Lecturer on MPhil programme on Development Processes at the University of the Western Cape, a role she held from 1994 -1996.

Among some of the significant recommendations the Venson Commission Report recommended the establishment of additional Sub-Districts, Administrative Authorities and Service Centres (GoB, 2001, 126) and the government accepted the recommendations (see GoB, 2004: 53). These structures are meant to improve service delivery at local level. All of

the large district councils and some small ones have established subordinate district councils, known as sub-district councils, to which they have decentralised some of their own responsibilities. The Central District Council (CDC), the largest district council in the country, developed its own policy on decentralisation in 1999 and has decentralised some of the functions that have all along been performed at the District Headquarters to its five Sub-Districts of Mahalapye, Serowe/Palapye, Bobirwa, Tutume and Boteti. The Central District is the only district in Botswana to decentralise more substantive powers to its sub-districts. This is so because it is the largest district both geographically and in population size, covering an area of 147, 740 km² or a third of Botswana's land mass and an estimated population of 501, 378 – almost one third of the national population.

The CDC's decentralisation policy is modelled along the South Somerset District Council in the UK (Meyer-Emerick, *et al*, 2004). The South Somerset decentralisation was described as having devolved decision-making powers and budgeting, and having a culture of flexible and performance oriented organisational structure (ibid; 227). The intended objective of the CDC's decentralisation policy is to 'set a stage for an effective take-off to a decentralisation process' (CDC, 1999: 2). This decentralisation process is additional to the process that started way back when Sub-Districts were 'established in the early 1980s' (Meyer, et al, 2004: 228). And the reasons for decentralisation remain the same, the main objective being 'to enhance and foster the delivery of service to the rural populace' and also because of the large number of councillors 'it has become increasingly difficult to meet as a council and deliberate fruitfully on development issues without compromising service delivery' (CDC, 1999: 2). The strategy enjoyed support from the Office of the President and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Local Government. A Presidential Directive CAB 10/99 of 28 April 1999 and a Savingram from the Permanent Secretary directed the establishment of two additional

committees for each of the larger sub-districts (Mahalapye, Serowe/Palapye and Tutume) and one for each of the smaller sub-districts (Bobirwa and Boteti). The two committees in larger sub-districts were known as Finance, Planning, and Development Committee, and another known as the Health, Education and Social Services Committee. These were in addition to a committee that was already in existence in all the sub-districts, known as Trade and Licensing Committee. These were responsible for the statutory function for council finance, stores, council projects, furniture and the purchasing and maintenance of council mechanical installations and vehicles. The second committee was responsible for statutory functions of health, education, and social welfare programmes. For the smaller sub-districts only one committee was established to deal with all these matters.

Most of the functions of the council would now be conducted at the sub-districts. The statutory functions of the district council were now performed at the sub-districts, closer to the people, and this had HR implications and the organisational structure of the Sub-districts had to change to accommodate the increased responsibilities. The Headquarters remained with two statutory committees Finance and Education, which coordinated the activities of the sub-districts and also handled policy matters. The councils' committees consist of councillors from all political parties that have representation in the local assembly. These also help involve local level politicians in the decision-making process.

A significant improvement has been noted in service delivery as most decisions are made at the sub-districts closer to the clients (Meyer, *et al*, 2004). The Full Council Meetings at the Headquarters also take a shorter time resulting in more savings for the council and to divert such funds into development projects which could otherwise have gone into paying councillors for the trips to the Headquarters to attend meetings (ibid). Meyer, *et al*, also noted

that councillors now have more time to consult with their wards. However, Meyer, *et al*, questioned the sustainability of this reform arguing that Sub-Districts are not legally recognised so the bureaucrats and politicians at the Headquarters may withdraw responsibilities as they wish because the decentralised responsibilities have been deconcentrated but not devolved. However, latest developments would alley any fears as the Venson Commission Report has already recommended that Sub-Districts be established by statute and the government has already accepted that recommendation. Also, there is both the political will and administrative commitment from the Office of the President and the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government, respectively as they support the strategy. In addition, structures have already been created such as Committees and some powers already given to these Committees which may make the reversal of the decision difficult.

The Venson Commission Report made some significant observations concerning decentralisation in Botswana. The commissioners were critical of the government's slow decentralisation process stating that 'the responsibility of government to set up strong local government was delayed and in some cases sidestepped' (GoB, 2001: 4). This attitude towards decentralisation was found to have affected the manner in which resources are allocated to the LAs. The allocation of human resources was found to be 'characterised by inconsistency, no transparency, and unclear and disjointed procedures' as well as poor 'career prospects and incentives' that led to the loss of some of the best personnel to the central government (ibid: 6). The government did accept some of the recommendations from the Venson Commission Report including one on the contractual employment of council Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) with performance targets attached (GoB: 2004: 29). However, a recommendation on making the salaries of council CEOs and top management comparable to

that of their counterparts in central government was refused on the grounds that, according to the Paterson Model, employees at councils are not at policy level but operational level. Also accepted was the recommendation that appointments into the council CEO posts should be advertised instead of moving people between posts. Figure 4.1 illustrates the trajectory of HRM in the Botswana local authorities.

Figure 4.1: The Trajectory of HRM in Botswana's Local Government

Key:

⊕   Position of Botswana Municipalities on the Quadrant

→   Trajectory of HRM
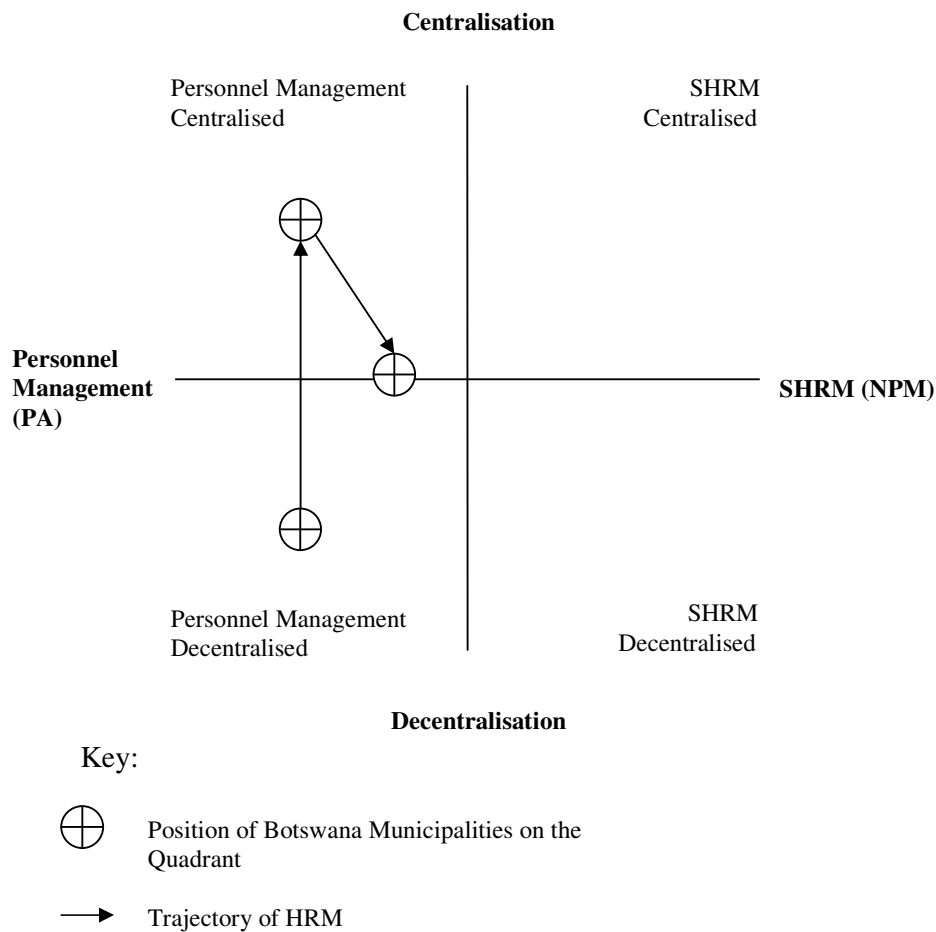
Source: Author's Own Construct (2008)

In fact HRM in local authorities has been recentralised through the Unified Local Government Service (ULGS) Act 1973. The ULGS Act did away with the separated model of

HRM system that was introduced at independence and introduced the unified model in which the centre had a more decisive role.

At independence Botswana adopted a separated HRM system for its local authorities, meaning each could hire and fire its own staff. But shortly after independence it was evident that lack of skilled labour was a major concern for most of the local authorities (as stated earlier by Picard, 1987) and that compromised the standard of services and service delivery. By the early 1970s the government had decided to change to a HRM system that could best serve the national interest. That decision led to the enactment of the ULGS Act of 1973 and the decision moved the HRM system from the decentralised personnel management system to the centralised personnel management system. This is illustrated in Figure 4.1 above.

As it will be demonstrated in Section 4.4 below, through incremental changes to the HRM system responsibility for the management of certain posts up-to middle management level in the local authorities have been decentralised. This factor makes the HRM system to have a combination of both centralised and partially decentralised HRM responsibilities. In Figure 4.1 this movement is represented by the downward pointing arrow, and the position at which the municipalities are perceived to be is represented by the circle with a cross. In the same Figure 4.1 above it shows that the HRM practices are being performed in the personnel management style under a PA system.

4.2.2. The Internal Environment

This section discusses the internal environmental factors raised in the analytical model in Chapter II. These include local political leadership, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and organisational culture and structure.

Local Political Leadership

Politicians at local level in Botswana do not have executive powers. However, they do constitute council committees that do make binding resolutions on various council functions. However, the CEOs (i.e. Council Secretaries, City Clerks and Town Clerks) wield more power, control resources, and command more prestige than the political leaders (i.e. Council Chairpersons and Mayors). This has in a way constrained the accountability of the local political leadership to their electorate. The Venson Commission Report recommended that the position of Executive Mayor be established and also each council should have an Executive Committee to be chaired by the Mayor. The government rejected the recommendation on the grounds that it would compromise the principle of the separation of powers and neutrality of public officers (GoB, 2004: 16). The decision to maintain the status quo was based on past experience or history as local politicians in Botswana have never had executive powers since independence.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Olowu and Wunsch (2004: 93) noted impressive personnel in terms of diversity, professionalism, competency, and paper qualifications. While this may be true, many (especially doctors and engineers) were recruited from other African countries (e.g. Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe) and abroad (e.g. India). The ability to recruit from other countries perhaps lies in Botswana's economic strength (comparatively higher salaries) relative to other African countries. Although coming with some strings attached, as well as limiting policy choices at local level, local government in Botswana enjoys fairly stable and predictable source of revenue and equitable distribution of HRs. There is also political commitment to the latest reforms, in particular the implementation of

PMS in local government, and periodic review and reform of local government through Presidential Commissions.

However, the main threat to local government is the legal framework in which the laws grant the Minister of Local Government the power to dissolve any local council he/she may have to discipline. This clause has never been invoked even when one of the opposition controlled, Jwaneng Town Council, failed to submit their budget proposals in time to be incorporated in the national budget. One important factor considered is organisational culture.

Organisational Culture and Structure

Unlike its neighbours and most developing countries, at independence the colonial government left behind a very limited administrative infrastructure in Botswana. At the time when many African countries were localising their public services Botswana decided to continue the importation of expatriate labour especially former colonial administrators from other former British colonies in East and West Africa (Picard, 1987: 205, 206). The new government of Botswana had rejected a localisation recommendation made by the 1966 Luke Commission calling for the unbridled Africanisation of the public service and 'some lowering of standards' as an 'acceptable price to pay for the creation of a national civil service' (ibid: 205, 206). In 1967 Botswana's first President, Seretse Khama, emphatically rejected the recommendation arguing that, "We would never sacrifice efficiency on the altar of localisation" (President Khama cited in Picard, 1987: 205). This marked a critical juncture in HR policy at all levels of government through which a merit based recruitment system was to be entrenched.

Jones, *et al*, (1996) conducted a study on the perceptions of leadership and management among managers in Botswana's then Ministry of Local Government, Lands and Housing. The study was based on Kotter's (1990) differentiation of a manager and a leader. Kotter's argument is premised on the perception that a manager's and leader's roles are fundamentally different and that the individuals performing these tasks are psychologically different as well (Jones, et al, 1996: 459). In Botswana they found that the interviewees perceived no difference between manager and leader. Furthermore they found the respondents (who themselves were managers) to be concerned about the quality of their relationship with their superiors and that there is significant amount of deference to the superior, also a leader is perceived as supportive and kindly (Jones, et al, 1996: 463). They also found that performance is judged by the reaction of the superior but not any measurable performance criteria (ibid: 464). This suggests that the particularistic tendencies observed by McCourt (2006) in Mauritius and Namibia, and Blunt and Poopola (1985) in several other African countries (see Chapter II, Subsection 2.2.2) are present in the Botswana HRM system. Jones, *et al* concluded that this contrasts with the ideal western organisational leadership and the African organisational leadership mentioned in several other studies.

Batswana have developed a dependency attitude on the state in spite of one of the national mottos being self-reliance. '… Botswana's development strategy has relied largely on government, not only for the provision of services, but also for investment in development activities as well as for the *creation of jobs*'[6] (UNDP, 2001: 4). Public sector jobs provided the most widely available opportunities of employment and a source of livelihood for many. This dependency attitude has translated into organisational culture in which employees have developed a culture of entitlement. This is manifest in the expectation of progression and

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[6] Emphasis added.

promotion based on seniority but not performance and reliance on government training without the employee investing in their own personal development.

The neglect of the HRM function in the local authorities is reflected in the organisational structure of the local authorities in which human resources has always remained as a unit but not a full-fledged department. Picard (1987) and the Venson Commission Report indicate that commitment to proper staffing of local authorities has always been lacking. The Decentralisation in Botswana Policy Paper and Action Plan (1993; 24) recommended the 'strengthening of personnel function in local authorities particularly councils, through the creation of well staffed Personnel Departments/Units'. For a long time HRM functions were performed by a Personnel Unit under the Secretariat Department. As a Unit the pay for the head of personnel is not on par with the other heads of council departments and therefore commands less authority. Obviously, the councils would not be able to attract highly skilled and experienced employees to effectively manage the personnel units.

Besides the anomaly of relegating the personnel division to a unit, other structures were found to be problematic. The Task Force noted that there was uncontrolled growth of LAs as more functions were decentralised and the needs exerted by a growing population increased the demand for services (GoB, 2005a: 16). Together with this was the uncontrolled creation of departments within the councils which are established without any rationalisation or review (ibid: 19). The Task force also found that O & M review was infrequently done to address the problem.

In some of the attempts to address the problem, in 2005 the Department of Local Government Service Management (DLGSM) appointed a Task Force to undertake a comprehensive O &

M review of the local authorities. This was to address organisational structure problems prevailing within the local authorities. Prior to this two O & M studies had been carried out before. The first ever for local authorities was in 1993 carried out by a Swedish company known as SIPU. That study was found to be inadequate as 'it was not closely aligned to the strategy adopted in the Review of Government Ministries' (GoB, 2005a: 1). A review of the SIPU report was undertaken in 1996 to see how best to implement its recommendations but the Report of the Review Committee was never implemented on the grounds that the SIPU study was inherently inadequate (ibid). Instead a comprehensive study was preferred and commissioned in 1999/2001, which was also rejected as it was found to be 'misdirected and completely irrelevant to be implemented' (ibid). Other notable endeavours in addressing local authorities' organisational structure are the 1979 and 2001 Presidential Commissions on Local Government Structure. All these recognised the need to upgrade the personnel unit into a full-fledged department but this recommendation, albeit coming from various sources, was never heeded. However, the 2005 Report of the Task Force on the O & M Study of the Local Authorities has been accepted by Cabinet and a strategy for implementation of the approved structure of local authorities has been developed and its implementation was planned to be carried out from the 18th September 2006 to the 30th April 2007. Notable in this approved structure is the elevation of the personnel unit to a department in the local authorities. This development would place the head of HR on par with other departmental heads. Whether this would lead to the head of HR playing a more significant role in management, or not, is yet to be seen. The next section outlines the concept of HRM in Botswana's local government.

4.3. Concept of Human Resource Management

The local authorities in Botswana do not have a HR policy separate from that of the central government but operate within the HRM policy framework of central government that is set

and managed by the DPSM. There are three main legislations that inform the HRM policy in Botswana, these are: the Public Service Management Act 1998, Unified Local Government Service (ULGS) Act 1973 and Teaching Service Management (TSM) Act. The ULGS Act was enacted after the government realised the shortage of skilled labour in the country and also to control nepotism. However, in practice the Directorate of Local Government Service Management (DLGSM) and Teaching Service Management (TSM) only serve a subservient role to the DPSM. The DPSM is responsible for the supervision of the implementation of HRM policies and for general guidance on other management practices to be used in the daily operations of the respective ministries (GoB, 2003a). Both the DLGSM and TSM are departments within the ministries of Local Government and Education respectively. So they are under the direction of the Permanent Secretaries of the respective Ministries, who in turn derive their HRM policy guidance from DPSM.

The basis for the HRM policies in Botswana's public sector, as stated in NDP 9, is the facilitation of the realisation of the Vision 2016 goals and the efficient and effective delivery of services which includes the application of appropriate management strategies (ibid: 381). It is on the ethos of ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services to the customer that HRM policies at all levels of government are based. This indicates a shift from a public administration ethos to a customer focus that is embodied in the NPM philosophy. The vision statement of DLGSM commits itself to the ideals of Vision 2016, and its mission statement reiterates the public service's focus on customer service. The Vision reads as follows:

> 'We, the Department of Local Government Service Management as part of the Ministry of Local Government will be a competitive customer focused centre of excellence in service delivery, development coordination and capacity building. We will maintain a transparent culture in keeping with National Principles and the ideals of Vision 2016.'

The Mission statement reads:

> 'We, the Department of Local Government Service Management as the lead organisation in the provision of human resource management services and capacity building in Local Authorities, commit ourselves to providing meaningful customer-focused service to facilitate efficient and effective service provision by the Local Authorities' (GoB; 2005a: 9).

The Vision statement for the DLGSM reads exactly the same as that of the Ministry of Local Government except for their self identification in the statement. However, the LAs are at different stages of developing their own vision and mission statements. It is anticipated that their vision and mission statements will be consistent with that of the Ministry of Local Government. This customer focus indicates some direction towards NPM-style reform of the HRM.

In its pursuit of public sector reforms, the government of Botswana decentralised some responsibilities of the DPSM to other government ministries to shore up efficiency and accountability in all issues related to HRM. This covered the human resource functions of all posts up-to D1 (which is a super scale position). The HRM responsibilities of all the agencies that fall under the Ministry of Local Government remain with the Permanent Secretary of that Ministry. However, the HRM operational functions for LAs are performed by the DLGSM as already mentioned and some responsibilities have further been decentralised to the Local Authorities, while some are shared (see Appendix 10).

The DPSM has retained supervisory responsibility over local authorities to ensure that the HRM strategy is successful. This central control is manifest in the public sector human resources management structure, which comprises of the Public Service, parastatal organisations, the Teaching Service and Local Authorities with the DPSM at the helm. This structure is, however, perceived to impose some limitations on certain aspects of human

resource management especially with regard to recruitment in local government. What is surprising is that the acute shortage of skilled labour in the professional and technical fields has been noted repeatedly in every national development plan but little seems to have changed. The government unequivocally notes that the shortage of manpower limits the capacity of local authorities to perform their mandate and that the 'shortage is more pronounced in the professional and technical fields' (GoB, 2003a: 393).

The DPSM is not only responsible for the broad policy guidelines but also for the standardisation and coordination of the day-to-day HRM activities of the other government ministries and departments. The advantage of this institutional set-up is that it ensures a consistent application of policies across the civil service and local government. On the other hand it has led to centralisation that has availed little freedom/flexibility in the decision-making process within the broad policy framework for other players such as the DLGSM and the councils. The centralisation resulting from the coordination of HRM activities is within the government's tradition of central control that predates the colonial era and has been perpetuated under the new reforms. The framework for the performance of HRM activities in local government is discussed below.

4.4. HRM Practices

The management of human resources in local government is centralised as illustrated in Figure 4.1 above. At independence the HRM system used was the separated model but due to problems related to nepotism, capacity and resource constraints faced by the majority of the councils the government introduced a unified service in 1973. Immediately after this, all HRM responsibilities were performed by the DLGSM at the centre. However, as the capacity of local authorities increased some HRM responsibilities have been decentralised. While

DLGSM remained with HRM responsibilities for middle management positions upwards, the rest, including posts ranging from the salary scales/grades A1 to C3 (i.e. for unskilled workers to middle management entry level), have been decentralised. That means they can hire and dismiss such without reference to the centre. This as well, accounts for the positioning of the HRM system to be neither fully centralised nor fully decentralised as reflected in Figure 4.1 above. The HRM system is somewhere in the middle, showing mixed tendencies towards centralisation/decentralisation under a personnel management system. However, for the promotions of officers on C3 posts the concerned council has to make a recommendation to DLGSM who in turn would look elsewhere in the country to see if there is a vacant senior post into which the officer could be promoted.

Councils in practice find some decisions that are made at the centre (DLGSM), to be inconvenient. Two examples are presented for illustrative purposes. These are transfers of staff between councils and, training and development. Transfers, for example, have been noted to be disruptive of council activities and also limit the control of councils over their employees (Olowu and Wunsch, 2004: 94; Sharma, 1997; Picard 1987). Indiscriminate transfers have been noted to leave some employees disgruntled (Sharma, 1997). Transfers of this kind also may leave even the most productive employees demotivated.

As for training Sharma (1997) observed more than a decade ago that there was no comprehensive manpower development plan that has been drawn, even though a training needs assessment for local authorities was done in 2005. Current training for local authorities consists of 'institutional training, in-house training, mobile training, and *ad hoc* workshops and seminars' (ibid: 67). Ironically, training is not designed to address the needs of the broader unified local government service but that it is local authority specific (ibid). Some

employees that a particular council recommended for further studies to build their capacity to perform at a higher level may be transferred to another council after the completion of their studies (Phirinyane and Kaboyakgosi, 2001). Sometimes there are no vacancies in a particular council into which they could promote an employee and as a result they end up losing the trained person to another council (ibid). There are both advantages and disadvantages in the setup. The advantage is in the always present opportunity to promote an employee from a municipality with no senior posts into one with a vacant post. HRs can be deployed where they are most needed. On the contrary local authorities have no control over an employee whose capacity was developed through training in anticipation of them taking up more challenging responsibilities (filling a vacant post). This background shows that after the centralisation of HRM in the early 1970s, there has been an evolutionary change towards decentralised HRM that is still in progress. Lastly, this chapter looks at performance management.

4.5 Performance Management

The government of Botswana has embarked on a series of public service reforms such as: Performance Management (PMS); Computerised Personnel Management System (CPMS); Organisation and Methods (O&M); Privatisation; Performance Based Reward System (PBRS); Performance Contract; Parallel Progression; Scarce Skills; Job Evaluation; Localization; and Decentralisation (GoB, 2003a: 366). It is useful to consider how these have been implemented since they have a bearing on the underlying research question about the degree, effectiveness and overall direction of decentralisation. Some of these were to be implemented with the assistance of the Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC), notable among them PMS and PBRS.

Of all the public sector reforms the most important in Botswana are PMS, PBRS, Computerisation of Personnel Management Systems and Decentralisation. These were completely new initiatives and had a dramatic impact on the management of HRs in the public service. Through CPMS all HR managers had access to computerised data base linked to the computer at the DPSM. Decentralisation has shifted HRM responsibilities for the designated cadres entirely to the Permanent Secretaries, thereby doing away with the delays that ministries used to complain about. PBRS is intended to align individual performance with rewards in order to retain good performers and discourage poor performance. The implementation of PBRS is intended to facilitate the implementation of Performance Contract for senior public officers. New performance appraisal instruments for central government have been designed and implemented. However, at the time data was collected the local authorities were yet to develop theirs. PMS is the most comprehensive of all the reforms and through it all other reforms have been consolidated which had hitherto been intermittent and limited in scope. PMS involved the restructuring of public institutions to realign them to their strategies.

These reforms have been extended to local governments as well, but after they have first been implemented in central government. Computerised HRM systems are in place in all the councils. Certain HRM responsibilities have been decentralised from the DLGSM to the councils. But before the discussion focuses on the implementation of PMS at local level, we discuss the establishment of the BNPC and its role in public personnel management in Botswana.

The BNPC was established through an Act of Parliament, the Botswana National Productivity Centre Act, 1993. The objectives of the BNPC are to promote increased

productivity, standards of management and labour-management relations, and to create productivity consciousness in Botswana. BNPC seeks to achieve its objectives through a tripartite strategy involving the government, commerce and industry and trade unions in Botswana. Its Board of Directors is constituted to reflect this 'tripartism' composition, and a few other stakeholders; an interestingly complex form of decentralisation that is in consonance with the ideals of NPM.

BNPC was contracted to introduce the Performance Management Systems in the government between 1999 and 2004. PMS was rolled out to the local authorities in 2004, after its roll out to central government was completed. Prior to that, in 2000/1 BNPC introduced PMS as a general concept of change management for purposes of creating awareness among LAs' CEOs. In 2002 a situation analysis was carried out to assess the management reality and how PMS could be rolled out to the local authorities. However, due to technical problems the implementation of the project was delayed, the project eventually being implemented in two phases, first phase started in 2004/6 and the second phase having started in 2006 and ending in 2007.

A structure has been developed to manage the implementation of PMS at local level, and to ensure its success. The project is housed at the Office of the President and the Botswana National Productivity Centre has been contracted as the consultant for the implementation of the project. Funding for the project was provided by the Office of the President. Because the project started after budget allocations had already been passed by parliament the Ministry of Local Government had to explore other sources of funding including Supplementary Budget from the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

The Ministry of Local Government is responsible for managing the project. The overall project is managed through a Technical Committee consisting of representatives from: District Administration as the Client, DLGSM, Reforms Unit in the Office of the President, Performance Improvement Coordinator (LAs) - Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Lands and Housing, and BNPC. There are monthly progress reviews for which the BNPC as the Consultant has to furnish reports. The Consultant is also expected to visit the project sites regularly to monitor progress. The Reforms Unit has been moved from the DPSM to the Office of the President to give it the necessary prestige and keep it close to the Permanent Secretary to the President and State President for close monitoring. This shows the political commitment the leadership has on the public sector reform initiatives.

4.6. Information on Outcomes

Local authorities in Botswana do not have objective quantifiable measurement of organisational and individual performance in place (Phirinyane and Kaboyakgosi, 2001: 49). The local authorities used annual plans, quarterly and monthly reports as instruments for the measurement of performance (ibid). There were no key performance indicators and key result areas that could guide the Local Authorities as to whether they were moving in the right direction to achieve their objectives. Most of the councils at the time of this study were still implementing PMS, implying they had not yet started using the measurement mechanisms that PMS affords them. Although audit reports are prepared annually for local authorities, there is no performance audit carried out for local government. The combined absence of a performance measurement system and a lack of performance audit imply there is limited information on performance outcomes.

4.7 Summary

This chapter presented the background on decentralisation and HRM in Botswana. The discussion shows that many policy choices and decisions that the government made had enduring influence on the socio-political and economic policy choices. Many of the decisions/choices were influenced by experience and as time passed by became path dependent. Some of these influences predate independence and in some cases even the colonial era. For instance, this study has shown that political stability occurred prior to independence as part of the condition for British protection. The domination of civil society by the ruling elite was inherited from the Tswana polity predating colonialism and perpetuated during the colonial and the post-independence period. The pre-independence social culture has been largely preserved and successfully blended with modern governance practices. The domination of civil society went along with the centralisation of power in Tswana society. This aspect of social culture extends to organisational culture where it is expressed in the power relations between senior officers and their subordinates.

On economic management the prevailing scenario has been that of a conservative approach where the government avoided excessive debt and donor funding that seemed not consistent with national interests. Here was a very poor country at independence that could have easily fallen for donor funding and loan finance but opted for restraint. The persistence of one party in power and the policy feedbacks on the good policy choices, led to the formation of institutions around a particular approach to economic management that continued to bear good results and remained largely unchanged since independence. Rules and norms have been developed and entrenched around prudent economic management that underpin the way the economy is run. These institutions were persistent to the extent that when the

centralisation of fiscal resources had evidently become a liability for local authorities, moves to decentralisation have remained very slow.

With regard to the management of HRs, the timing of the decision made by the first President of Botswana rejecting localisation for the mere Africanisation of the public service was critical. That marked a critical juncture in the establishment of a merit based system. Also, the enactment of the ULGS Act in 1973 to standardise and coordinate the recruitment of employees for local government (which effectively reversed a more decentralised system), was a timely sequencing that assisted in the fight against nepotism, corruption and lack of capacity across municipalities. Flexibility in HRM has been subordinated to the pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services. This has led to a decentralisation characterised by a dominant centre and limited autonomy for local government in the management of its HRs. The introduction of the PMS in the public service marked yet another critical juncture in HRM as it led to a major shift in the HRM ethos to one based on customer service. Also, the introduction of PMS was accompanied by the establishment of a strategic framework in the public service. These changes denoted transition to NPM-style reforms that are linked to SHRM. Nevertheless HRM practice at local level remained the personnel management type as the reforms were still ongoing.

The introduction of democratic local governance at independence at the expense of traditional leadership represented a critical juncture in decentralisation, and its timing took place at the formative stages of local governance in the post independence era. In spite of the two Presidential Commissions on Local Government Structure change has largely been evolutionary (as opposed to radical). On the other hand decentralisation has been contingent upon the regime's perception of the threats to its own survival. In some cases decisions that

could strengthen local government were deliberately avoided. This is in spite of the officially stated position on decentralisation. This led to a situation where the centre gave more responsibilities to local government as and when they felt it was either politically and administratively convenient or expedient to do so. The next chapter discusses the case of the North West province. It presents background information that will help us to better understand the prevailing scenario in South Africa.

CHAPTER V

BACKGROUND TO SOUTH AFRICA AND THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of South Africa and the North West province. The background information of any province in South Africa can only be appreciated within the broader context of South Africa. The chapter applies the analytical framework developed in Chapter II to present the background that partially answers the research questions. In this chapter the question of whether there is a trade-off between SHRM and decentralization or local democracy in South Africa is considered. The chapter begins by looking at the main factors/elements that influence the management of human resources in local government in South Africa. Also highlighted are some of the peculiarities that distinguish South Africa from other African countries.

The discussion in this chapter focuses first on the environmental and institutional factors and how they impact on the HRM and decentralisation.

5.2 The Environmental and Institutional Factors

The environmental factors have been divided into two spheres, the internal and external environment.

5.2.1. The External Environment

Political Background

South Africa is situated at the southern tip of Africa and shares borders with six other countries; Mozambique, Swaziland (which it almost encircles), Zimbabwe and Botswana to the north, Namibia to the north west, and Lesotho which is totally encircled towards the southern interior of the country (see Appendix 4). South African society has experienced conquest, racial segregation and violence for over several centuries. Prior to conquest by European settlers, Africans in south-eastern South Africa had a turbulent period. In the 1820s a predatory Zulu kingdom under Shaka's leadership traumatised other neighbouring chiefdoms. Thompson (1996: 85) gives a graphic illustration of the aftermath of Shaka's military campaigns against neighbouring ethnic groups, he stated that:

> Settlements were abandoned, livestock were destroyed, fields ceased to be cultivated, and in several places the landscape was littered with human bones. Demoralized survivors wandered round singly or in small groups, contriving to live on game or veld plants. Some even resorted to cannibalism – the ultimate sign that civil society had collapsed.

Many communities were destroyed or displaced. Thompson further notes that thousands of the displaced groups, Basotho, Batswana, Mfengu and Xhosa left the highveld and went to the Cape in search of livelihoods, which they could only secure by working for white settlers. When the white settlers expanded eastward, the highveld appeared to be uninhabited as it was now sparsely populated. In the highveld the settlers defeated Mzilikazi's Ndebele who fled across the Limpopo River into present day Zimbabwe (ibid). Elsewhere the Zulus too were eventually defeated after repeated battles. The Sotho and Tswana chiefdoms that the Ndebele had displaced returned to their former homes. 'The entire highveld region became a scene of divided loyalties and endemic conflict' (Thompson, 1996: 94). Africans were eventually conquered by the white invaders from the south, and were subjected to discriminatory

policies. The conquest of Africans by the Boers/Afrikaaners (South African whites of Dutch descent) marked a critical juncture in South African politics.

The Afrikaaners established independent republics and resisted British sovereignty. It was after their loss to the British in the Second Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 that the Treaty of Vereeniging established British sovereignty over the republics[7]. According to the Treaty of Vereeniging blacks were not allowed to vote, except in the Cape Colony where the British dominated. Institutionalised racial segregation in South Africa became more blatant and emboldened after the establishment of the Union of South Africa in February 1909 when it was entrenched in the constitution (Thompson, 1996: 150). From 1910 (when South Africa became independent) to 1948, as colonial influence over South Africa waned, racial segregation and the disenfranchisement of blacks was extended to all four of the South African provinces, formerly the Orange River Colony, the Transvaal, Natal and Cape Colony (ibid). Events that occurred in the years 1910 and 1948 were incremental to the initial forces that introduced apartheid.

The basis of this discrimination was separate development for the different races in South Africa. This was captured in D.F. Malan's speech in 1944 when as leader of the opposition he stated that he does not use the word 'segregation' but 'apartheid', 'which will give the various races the opportunity of uplifting themselves on the basis of what is their own' (cited in Giliomee, 2003: 374). It was in the 1940s that the racially motivated discrimination came to be officially known as 'apartheid' (Giliomee, 2003; Thompson, 1996). The first recorded reference to apartheid was in 1929 by Rev. J.C. Du Plessis of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) (Giliomee, 2003: 381). The DRC policy, although recognising racial equality between

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[7] www.southafrica.to/history/history.html

white and black, advocated for blacks to develop 'on their own terrain, separate and apart' (ibid: 382). This 'apartness' was to be the gist of apartheid. As Thompson (1996: 190) states, there were basically four principles behind apartheid and these were, that:

- The South African population consists of four races – the Whites, Coloured, Indian and Blacks, each with a distinct culture of its own,
- Whites as the civilised race were entitled to have absolute control over the state,
- White interests should prevail over Black interests, and that the state was not obliged to provide equal facilities for the subordinate races,
- The White race was one nation constituted of two components, Afrikaans and English speakers, but Africans belonged to several distinct nations.

Based on these principles the apartheid government proceeded to segregate the African populations into 'homelands', or what was also known pejoratively as Bantustans, according to their ethnic identities. There were about 10 homelands created: Bophuthatswana, Ndebele, Lebowa, Venda, Gazankulu, Swazi, Kwazulu, Qwaqwa, Transkei and Ciskei. Four of these were declared independent (Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, Transkei and Venda) by apartheid South Africa, but no other sovereign state ever recognised these as independent. All these except Ciskei were located on fragmented territories between white farms. At the end of apartheid in 1994 South Africa was reorganised into nine provinces; Gauteng, Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Northern Cape, Mpumalanga, Free State, Limpopo, North West and Kwazulu (see Appendix 4).

The North West province, which is the focus of this study, was made from parts of the former Bophuthatswana, parts of the former Cape Province and the Transvaal. The main language in the North West province is Setswana, the same language spoken in Botswana. Throughout its so-called independence Bophuthatswana remained economically and politically dependent on the apartheid regime. Lucas Mangope became the President of Bophuthatswana when it

gained 'independence' in 1977 and under his regime political opposition was not allowed and major anti-apartheid organisations such as the ANC were banned (Francis, 2002). Civil society was almost non-existent and participatory political institutions were not easy to develop even after 1994 (ibid: 3). Laws governing the public service as all others regulating all spheres of life were based on racism. However, international pressure coupled with economic sanctions and guerrilla attacks eventually led to the demise of apartheid, and all its creations (homelands) crumbled with it.

The African National Congress (ANC) having been formed in 1912, and banned since 1960, came to power in the 1994 democratic elections. The ANC won an overwhelming majority of 85 percent of the vote in the North West provincial elections (Jones, 1999). The ascension to power by the ANC marked another critical juncture in the politics of South Africa. However, the new South African government inherited established institutions and their 'powers and habits were carried forward' (Hawker, 2000: 632). This points to the strong element of inheritance in politics and public policy referred to in Chapter II. Hawker (2000: 632), writing only six years after the beginning of a new era, cited other scholars approvingly that 'the new state may face a recalcitrant bureaucracy, military and judiciary'. Although nothing of this sort happened on a massive scale, the main challenge for the new government of South Africa has been integrating employees from the former regime with the new less experienced but sometimes more qualified ones.

The new leadership was fully aware of the potential pitfalls during the transition period and perhaps because of the uncertainties in the early years delayed the transition to democracy at local level (Wallis, 1996: 179). However, between 1997 and 2004 an array of legislations and

white papers were issued resulting in a complex local government legal framework (see Appendix 6 for a list of some of the laws governing the South African local government).

Chapter 3 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996) establishes principles of 'cooperative government and intergovernmental relations'. What this notion means and how it works out in practice constitutes the present day reality of South African decentralisation and local government. Section 43 vests the legislative responsibilities of the national, provincial and local spheres of government in the Parliament, provincial legislatures and municipal councils respectively. The South African Parliament consists of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces. The latter represents provincial interests in the legislative process. The political head of a provincial department is known as a Member of the Executive Council (MEC). All metropolitan and district municipalities and some local municipalities have an executive mayoral system. The mayors are indirectly elected by the municipal councils (see sub-section on Decentralisation for more details on the local sphere of government). The South African constitution stipulates that elections should be based on the proportional representation electoral system. The President is elected indirectly by parliament. Provincial legislatures elect their own Premiers. The Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 (Act No. 13 of 2005) was enacted in accordance with Section 41(2) of the Constitution to provide for structures and institutions to facilitate supportive intergovernmental relations.

The ANC dominated the first rounds of elections in most parts of the country. However, the ANC has lately been experiencing factional problems within its structures. At national level presidential hopefuls jostled for control of the party. Divisions emerged between supporters of the then incumbent President Thabo Mbeki, who was recalled by the ANC's Executive

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Committee in 2008 before the end of his term in 2009, and his erstwhile deputy Jacob Zuma. Factions in the provinces were said to follow these fault lines. However, three different factional groups were reportedly active in the North West; known colloquially as the 'Talibans', 'Mapogo' and the 'Vryburg Mafia' (City Press, 2005c). One of these, the Talibans, was accused of wanting to take over the province (ibid). The situation had deteriorated to the extent the death of one former councillor was blamed on factionalism. The then ANC Provincial Chairperson and Premier of the North West, Edna Molewa, is alleged to have apologised on behalf of the ANC to the family of the multiple murder-suicide perpetrator Jaycee Nxamakele (The Mail, 2006). Nxamakele is alleged to have murdered his wife and two children and then killed himself due to frustrations he was experiencing as a result of the ANC factionalism. An MEC for Roads and Transport at the time, Jerry Thibedi, was quoted calling for unity and denouncing factionalism as evil at the funeral (ibid). It will be explained later in Chapter VII how these factions influenced HRM.

The underlying social culture of the Northern part of South Africa goes some way to explain what could be the factors influencing current factional behaviours in the society.

Social Culture

It is evident that South Africans have never had peace since the ancient days of Shaka, conquest by settlers and the subsequent racial discrimination and the resistance to it. Political violence and protests started as a challenge to the apartheid regime that apparently lacked legitimacy. Although political movements were formed as early as the 19th Century when apartheid was introduced, the initiatives by the black communities to resist increased in their momentum in the 1970s.

Political violence especially among black communities heightened during 1984 to 1989 when 5, 500 people lost their lives, and more than 13, 500 more lost their lives between 1990 and 1993 (Charney, 1999: 184). The increase in violence was largely in black communities, and was suspected to have been instigated by some white elements seeking to destabilise the transition process (Thompson, 1996: 242; Charney, 1999: 182). Economic sanctions, disinvestment from multinational companies that sold their interests in South Africa and internal political violence and civil resistance made it hard for the Afrikaaners to continue to govern. National party leaders realised this and attempted 'to create institutions Africans could respect …' (Thompson 1996: 237).

However, as Thompson (1996: 237-8) noted, the white electorate instead swung to the right. The swing to the right among white voters was most obvious in the Transvaal where in the white municipal elections of October 1988, the Conservative Party won most of the small towns and almost won a majority in Pretoria (ibid: 238). The institutionalisation of apartheid significantly benefited the white community by creating exclusive white areas that were affluent and by far had good social services. These benefits, and other political factors beyond the scope of this thesis, constituted the feedback loops that spurred the white South Africans not to effect change of government through elections. The positive feedbacks from the racist policies led to resistance to change as demonstrated by the continued popularity of the National Party among white South Africans. On the other hand the black communities, largely rejecting the apartheid institutions that were imposed upon them, developed institutions (rules or norms) that governed civil resistance, with adherence enforced through punitive reprisals (e.g. killing and/or destruction of property of suspected collaborators). As it will be illustrated in the next paragraphs, some of these norms persisted even after majority rule was introduced in 1994.

Although the apartheid regime had competent security forces that it effectively utilised in brutalising the antiapartheid activists, it deliberately provided inefficient policing services in the black townships. Baker (2002: 33) states that communities resorted to 'their own forms of policing in a context where the state offered very little and what was offered was seen as at best, inadequate and at worst, hostile, racist and illegitimate'. The neglect, or the inadequacy, of policing services in the townships led to the creation of vigilante groups, known for reprisal killings of those suspected of collaborating with the white regime.

Bophuthatswana did not escape suppression of civil society development. The Mangope regime 'was extremely vigilant and hostile to any potential political threat from what is considered foreign, in other words South African, trade unions and political groups' (Jones, 1999: 513). Moreover, Mangope's rule was characterised by 'patronage and corruption' which were used 'to maintain political support' (Francis, 2002: 3; Jones, 1999). Civic organisations started to form after the collapse of Mangope's regime.

Widespread strikes, boycotts of rents and service charges, and violent clashes had nevertheless presented an insurmountable challenge to the apartheid regime (Major, 2005: 493; Fjeldstad, 2004; Charney, 1999). Mangope's fall in Botphuthatswana was also associated with the strike by civil servants over pay increase, which turned into political demonstrations as hospital staff, students and residents joined in (Jones, 1999). Widespread unrest formed the political culture that influences present day politics in the North West and South Africa as a whole. Both the apartheid regime and the former Bophuthatswana regime left an enduring legacy of social discord that may last for a considerable time. For instance, payment boycotts have continued into the new era and are creating challenges to the local

authorities' ability to raise revenue (Fjeldstad, 2004: 540). This is one of the indicators that history has a bearing on the future developments.

Economic Background

The South African economy is by far the biggest single economy in sub-Saharan Africa (see Appendix 7). South Africa has one of the most advanced communications and transport infrastructure in Africa, a well developed legal system and an advanced economy. South Africa also boasts a well developed energy sector, exporting electricity to its neighbours, a good industrial base and a well developed financial sector with one of the largest stock markets in the world. South Africa's neighbours depend on her well developed communication and transportation infrastructure for the transportation of their goods. Migrant labour in the region has always flowed to the south, with 280, 000 migrant labour employed in South Africa in 1984 (Thompson, 1999: 230).

The North West province is regarded as somewhat of an exception. It is a medium-sized but relatively poor province, with a 2004 population estimated at 3,562,280 and constituting 8.3 percent of the South African population. The population composition is predominantly African, with the Setswana speakers making 67.2 percent, IsiXhosa 5.4 per cent and only 7.5 percent Afrikaans speakers. As one of the poorest, it contributes only 5.3 percent of the total GDP. Table 5.1 presents a statistical overview of the North West province.

Table 5.1: Statistical Overview of the North West Province

CAPITAL	MAFIKENG	
Principal Languages	Setswana	67,3%
	Afrikaans	7,5%
	IsiXhosa	5,4%
Population	3,562,280	
% of total	8.3%	
Area (km)	116 320 km	
% of total	9.5%	
GGP at current prices	R22,974 million	
% of total GDP	5.3%	
Per capita GGP	R6,905	
Economically active population	1.35 million	
% of population	37.7%	

Source: RSA (2004)[8],

The province is also composed of areas that are predominantly rural with a mainly poor population, high levels of illiteracy, inadequate infrastructure and huge backlogs in basic service delivery and maintenance (RSA, 2006). The distribution of available resources is skewed and limits the potential for the improvement of service delivery and growth (ibid).

Apartheid South Africa created wealthy white suburbs with central business districts (CBDs) and municipal services comparable to those of the developed countries and on the other hand extremely deprived black townships without any economic base (Reddy, 1996: 53). The apartheid regime did not allow the location of commercial or industrial undertakings in the homelands. After the new dispensation most people still remain in their localities, and with 40 percent of South Africans living below the poverty datum line (RSA, 1997), municipalities are faced with a grim prospect of financial viability.

To create an economically supportive environment for the municipalities the new government established a fiscal legislative framework for intergovernmental cooperation. Section 214 (1) and (2) of the Constitution guarantees equitable shares and allocations of funds to provinces

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[8] www.nwpg.org.za - Note should be taken that figures may change due to alteration of provincial boundaries.

and municipalities. Other laws, such as the Public Finance Management Act 1999, Annual Division of Revenue Act, the Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations Act 1997, and the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 2003, also regulate the intergovernmental financial and fiscal relations. Section 36 (1) and (2) of the Constitution establishes the 'predictability and certainty of sources and levels of funding for municipalities including transfers for the next three financial years'. Section 3 (2) of the Municipal Finance Management Act provides for its own supremacy in the event contradictions arise between this Act and any other legislation, excluding the Constitution.

Provincial and local government transfers are managed by the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG). In the 2004/05 financial year provincial and local government transfers from the DPLG amounted to R13, 137,381. Appropriations increased by 26 percent in the second fiscal year, 39 percent in the third, 44 percent and 39 percent in the fourth and fifth years respectively. The year on year allocations to municipalities indicate a rapid increase in the amount of funding. In spite of the seemingly huge financial support from the national government, municipalities have to raise a substantial proportion of their revenue, about 90 percent, from own sources. Chapter 13 of the Constitution stipulates the funding sources for local government, such as entitlement to equitable share of revenue raised nationally, property rates, surcharges on user fees and, national legislation allowing, other taxes and levies. However, the main challenges for local authorities to raise adequate revenue and efficiently manage their financial resources are lack of capacity, poverty and non-payment as well as boycott of user fees, corruption and failure to collect debt (Schoeman, 2005; Fjeldstad, 2004; Rainford, 2004 and Jones, 1999).

Although corruption was a problem in apartheid South Africa and continues to present challenges in the new South Africa, the country has been one of the least corrupt in Sub-Saharan Africa alternating between the second and third least corrupt (see Appendix 13). Between 2004 and 2008 South Africa's CPI Score ranged between a minimum of 4.5 and 5.1. Only on two occasions in 2006 and 2008 did South Africa drop to third position as least corrupt country in SSA after Botswana and Mauritius respectively. Even then, South Africa was in a comparable position to some East European countries such as Latvia, Slovakia, Greece and some newly industrialised economies (NIE) such as South Korea and Malaysia.

The Auditor General's Report 2004/05 indicates that of the 284 municipalities only 95 (33%) had completed their financial statements for auditing by 30 April 2005 which was 10 months after the deadline. Forty (14%) of the municipalities had not submitted their financial statements by that date were. Slightly over half, 145 (51%) submitted their financial statements after the deadline on 30 September 2004. Compliance to the Municipal Finance Management Act which was effected in 2004 is yet to bear some impact. Municipalities are required to link the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) with the multi-year budgets, but this was proving difficult for many municipalities due to lack of capacity. According to the Municipal Demarcation Board findings, many of the services provided by the municipalities for the 2002/03 financial year were either not budgeted for, no human resources allocated for them or provision not linked to a budget (RSA, 2003). However, the government acknowledged the complexities involved and the capacity limitations of local government and has recruited consultants from overseas as change agents in the financial management reform (Rainford, 2004). Skilled labour in South Africa, especially the North West province is in short supply as shall be highlighted in the following sub-section.

Labour Market

During the apartheid era training institutions for blacks were under resourced and did not cater adequately for technical courses which white schools provided for their students. Also, the government extended its control over the already less resourced black education which was under the mission schools (Thompson, 1996). The objective of the government was clearly to keep black education sub-standard. This was achieved through the Bantu Education Act 1953. Later Coloured and Asian education too was also controlled. Verwoed made his intentions about black education clear when he stated that:

> Native education should be controlled in such a way that it should be in accord with the policy of the state. … If the native in South Africa today in any kind of school in existence is being taught that he will live his adult life under a policy of equal rights, he is making a big mistake. … There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour (Omond, cited in Thompson, 1996: 196).

Through the ironically misnamed Extension of University Education Act (1959) blacks were barred from acquiring university education unless given permission by a cabinet minister. Even those blacks that had access to university education were taught in segregated classes (Thompson, 1996: 197). Education for white South Africans was by far superior to that of blacks in every respect. Whites were also recruited in large numbers into the public sector, including homeland governments. Thompson (1996: 199) states that, in 1977, 90 percent of the top bureaucrats were Afrikaaners, and that 'the vast majority of white bureaucrats were ardent supporters of apartheid'. Although there were blacks in government employment they occupied subordinate positions that did not require high skill levels. The new government has sought to correct the past anomalies by declaring education a basic human right, beginning with primary education, adult basic education and further education. Section 29(2) of the Constitution provides for equity and the redress of past injustices in access to education. Racial discrimination in schools is prohibited including in privately owned institutions.

Other legislations have been introduced that facilitate the implementation of the Constitutional provisions on education, especially targeted at employers. The Skills Development Act 1998 and the Skills Development Levies Act 1999 have been enacted to ensure that every employer develops a five year Skills Development Plan and to report annually to the national government their performance on these. Section 3 of the Skills Development Levies Act imposes a levy of not less than one per cent of the employer's annual payroll to redress historical imbalances.

According to Section 4 of the Skills Development Levy Act 1999 public service employers in national and provincial spheres of government are exempt, but local government is excluded from the exemption. Every employer eligible to pay the skills development levy is legally required to register with a relevant Sector for Education and Training Authority (SETA) for purposes of payment of their dues and for their employees to benefit from the scheme. Municipalities belong to the Local Government SETA.

The municipalities in South Africa have 230 000 employees in their establishment (RSA, 2005). The North West province municipalities had about 10, 150 public servants in 2002/03 (RSA, 2004). Historically, Bophuthatswana exported labour to white South Africa with 70 percent of its economically active population constituting migratory labourers or commuters across its borders (Jones, 1999: 513). Furthermore, the North West province had about 22.7 percent of the adult population reported as having never received any formal education (RSA, 2003). Significant damage had also been done to the skills pool in the country. The number of people completing artisan training had dropped to 5,588 in 1992, which was less than half the

1988 figure (Jackson, 2002). Also, there are lower levels of tertiary education in technical and scientific subjects than in other developing countries (ibid, 204).

A number of factors may combine to influence the performance of municipalities such as lack of skilled labour, inability to attract the right employees, demographics, poverty, etc. Apart from human resources development, how labour relations are managed remains one of the important workplace issues that must be addressed.

Labour Relations/Trade Unions

Labour unions played a significant role in the resistance movement in South Africa. Charney (1999: 184) observes that black resistance 'spawned new social movements similar to labor, civic, youth, student, and women's groups …' These were aligned to the United Democratic Front (UDF) and/or the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), which were both allies of the ANC (ibid). COSATU, originally known as South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) was formed in 1955 when the South African Trades and Labour Council (SATLC) dissolved to form the South African Trades Union Council (SATUC) and dropped African unions from its membership (Major, 2005). There was also the Federation of Free African Trade Unions of South Africa (FOFATUSA) which was allied to the Pan African Congress (PAC) (ibid). Under the apartheid regime Africans were not allowed to register trade unions but they could join any registered unions that were mainly white. Supposedly this arrangement was intended to deprive Africans of any ability to use labour unions to foment any effective resistance to apartheid.

Labour relations in South Africa are protected in the Constitution. Section 23 of the Constitution guarantees the right of workers to unionise, strike, take part in union activities

and for every trade union to engage with employers in collective bargaining. The Labour Relations Act (No. 66 of 1995) gives effect to Section 23 of the Constitution. The Act promotes labour relations in all respects, establishes the Labour Court and Labour Appeal Court as well as obligating South Africa to international labour protocols. The Act also provides guidance on how labour organisations are to be formed and registered. It encourages employers to form employers' associations and establish bargaining chambers. In the North West Province for instance municipalities have a forum where they collectively discuss HR issues and develop common policies and common salary scales. The Local Labour Forum was formed to represent employees. The perception is that a worker environment in which there is organised labour encourages a consultative atmosphere. One of the key entities established by the Labour Relations Act 1995 is the South African Local Government Bargaining Council (SALGBC). SALGBC is constituted by organisations within local government to manage disputes within organisations, negotiate and conclude bargaining agreements, and to standardise collective agreements such as working conditions.

In local government the legally recognised entities are the South African Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU), South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and the Independent Municipal and Allied Trade Union (IMATU). The role of labour unions has changed from resistance to that of partnership with the government, a strong example being COSATU. The following discussion focuses on decentralisation.

Decentralisation

In apartheid South Africa there were 800 racially segregated municipalities. After the year 2000 these were amalgamated into 284 municipalities. The apartheid legacy has left a major impact on the nature of the South African public service. Personnel management at all levels

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of government was centralised to ensure compliance with the discriminatory laws and practices of the regime. It is apparent that the apartheid legacy is the single most important factor acknowledged by several authors such as Olowu and Wunsch (2004), Jackson (2002), Reddy et al (2000) and Harrison-Rockey (1999), as influential on the performance of municipalities and/or the public service in general. However, initiatives undertaken in the South African public service have introduced a paradigm shift from public administration to NPM-like reforms. The reforms were characterised by:

- The desire to provide high quality services valued by citizens;
- Increased autonomy from centralized control;
- A shift to performance measurement of both individuals and institutions with corresponding reward structures;
- The provision of human and technological resources needed to meet performance targets;
- An open mindedness to exploring challenges in traditional public service functions and responsibilities (Ncholo, 2000; 87).

This paradigm shift and the administrative reforms that go with it are expected to have a significant transformation on the entire public service's efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. The South African public service, including local government, faces the challenge of consolidating a previously racially fragmented public service (Harrison-Rockey, 1999; Ncholo, 2000; Pycroft, 1999, and Olowu and Wunsch, 2004).

As previously stated decentralisation in South Africa is based on the principle of cooperative government founded in the constitution. Chapters 3, 7 and 13 of the Constitution set the framework for local government. The Municipal Systems Act, 2003 (Act No 44 of 2003), the Municipal Structures Amendment Act, 2003 (Act No. 1 of 2003) and the Municipal Finance Management Act are the key primary legislations that govern local government. There are many other decentralisation laws (see Appendix 7) that cannot be discussed here because of lack of space.

Sections 2 and 3 of the Municipal Structures Act establish the different categories of municipalities. These are categories A, B and C municipalities. Category A municipalities are those that may be referred to as metropolitan cities. These are large metropolitan cities which include Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria, Port Elizabeth, Durban and the East Rand. The North West province does not have a category A municipality, all of its municipalities fall within category B and C (see Appendix 8 for the categorisation of municipalities in the North West province). Category C are district municipalities and category B are local municipalities. District municipalities cover an area constituted of several (about 4-6) local municipalities.

The responsibilities of municipalities are stated in Schedule 4 Part B and Schedule 5 Part B of the Constitution as matters relating to: air pollution; building regulations; child care facilities; electricity and gas; fire fighting services; local tourism; municipal airports; municipal health services; municipal public transport; municipal public works; pontoons; ferries; harbours, etc.; storm water management systems; and water and sanitation services and domestic waste-water and sewage disposal. Schedule 5 lists the following responsibilities: beaches and amusement facilities; billboards and the display of advertising in public places; cemeteries, funeral parlour and crematoria; cleansing; control of public nuisance; control of selling of liquor to the public; facilities for the accommodation, care and burial of animals; fencing and fences; licensing of dogs; licensing and control of undertakings that sell food to the public; local amenities; local sports facilities; markets; municipal abattoirs; municipal parks and recreation; municipal roads; noise pollution; pounds; public places; refuse removal, refuse dumps; and solid waste disposal; street lighting and; traffic and parking.

In the North West province, many of the municipalities have not been able to effectively perform their executive functions. In the 2002/03 financial year the Municipal Demarcation Board found that eight of the North West province municipalities could not carry out 50 percent of the MEC's executive functions (RSA, 2003). Bophirima District Municipality was found to be the least capable. There was found '… significant unevenness in service provision across all services in the Bophirima District Municipality and, it is assumed, between the urban and rural areas' (ibid; 36).

Because of the limitations on capacity the national government has developed an intervention programme already mentioned earlier, Project Consolidate, which is targeted at supporting local government, especially ailing municipalities. This intervention is presented as support for weaker municipalities, but it might also be seen as a disguised form of centralisation. The government indicates that there are two key elements of the project:

- A targeted hands-on support and engagement programme on the building of capacity of municipalities to perform their mandate
- A complimentary process of systematic refinement of policy, fiscal and institutional matters that will enable the consolidation of the local government system in the long-term (RSA, 2004: 16).

Capacity constraints are a major challenge in the North West province municipalities. Of the 25 municipalities in the North West province, 17 (68 per cent) were on Project Consolidate, with seven performing less than 50 per cent of their powers and functions and some performing less than 30 per cent (North West Provincial Government, 2005). The North West province municipalities that were under Project Consolidate were Mafikeng, Ditsobotla, Tswaing, Ramotshere Moiloa, Ratlou, Klerksdorp, Maquassi Hills, Ventersdorp, Lekwa Teemane, Molopo, Kagisano, Mamusa and Greater Taung, Rustenburg, Moses Kotane, Moretele and Madibeng Local Municipalities (ibid). Given that there were eight municipalities in 2003 that could not perform 50 percent of the executive functions, and by

2005 only one had improved or dropped out of the list shows the slow progress that many face.

The South African government wants to integrate the public service in the national, provincial and local spheres into a single public service, in the belief that building an effective developmental state that could intervene decisively and coherently in the economy and society to address past injustices, requires the harmonisation of systems, norms and conditions of service in the three spheres of government (RSA, 2006). A Task Team on the Single Public Service was established in 2003, and gave its report in 2006. The task team consisted of the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG), National Treasury, National Departments of Health, Water Affairs and Education, and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA). According to the proposed time frame, in the report approved by Cabinet on 31 May 2006, a bill was to be tabled in Parliament in October 2007. The key objective of the Single Public Service strategy is to create an integrated seamless service delivery which is based on the ANC's 2004 Election Manisfesto known as The People's Contract (RSA, 2006: 3). The objectives of the framework legislation for a Single Public Service are to:

- Create a common culture of service delivery based on the precepts of Batho Pele ('people first') ;
- Stabilise and integrate intergovernmental relations;
- Achieve more coherent, integrated planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring and evaluation;
- Create a single senior management service cadre, where appointment would be to the service rather than the post;
- Provide a uniform framework of remuneration and conditions of service;
- Establish uniform norms and standards for employment in the public service including employment practices and employee relations frameworks and mandating arrangements;
- Provide a mechanism for the transfer of functions and staff between institutions and spheres of government;
- Provide for human resource development strategy for the Single Public Service and the development of an integrated skills database to support human resource planning; and
- Provide for an anti-corruption strategy and standards of conduct for the Single public service;

- Ensure that e-government governance, information and communication technology regulations, norms and standards are adhered to within the single Public service (RSA, 2006: 4).

These objectives are indicative of a shift towards centralisation in which employees could be transferred between the spheres of government as well as having a single senior management cadre that can only be coordinated from the centre. How this will impact on HRM in other spheres of government will be a matter of interest for further research. On the other hand this development shows that there are other factors beyond local government priorities that the development of HRM policy is contingent upon. How decentralisation and HRM are related and also how they are influenced by the public management model in South Africa is illustrated in Figure 5.1 below.

The preceding discussion indicates that HRM in apartheid South Africa was of the personnel management type and highly centralised under a public administration system. It is the norm for repressive regimes to have their administrative systems centralised as they want to have maximum and effective control over all the state apparatus. This places the then South African HRM system in the upper left hand side quadrant of the matrix. After 1994 the South African HRM system shifted with the adoption of NPM-like reforms to SHRM, at least in theory and in local government these reforms are still unfolding as it is explained in detail in Section 5.5 and Chapter VII. As it is stated in Section 5.5 each municipality has responsibility

Figure 5.1: Decentralisation/HRM Matrix showing the development of HRM in South Africa
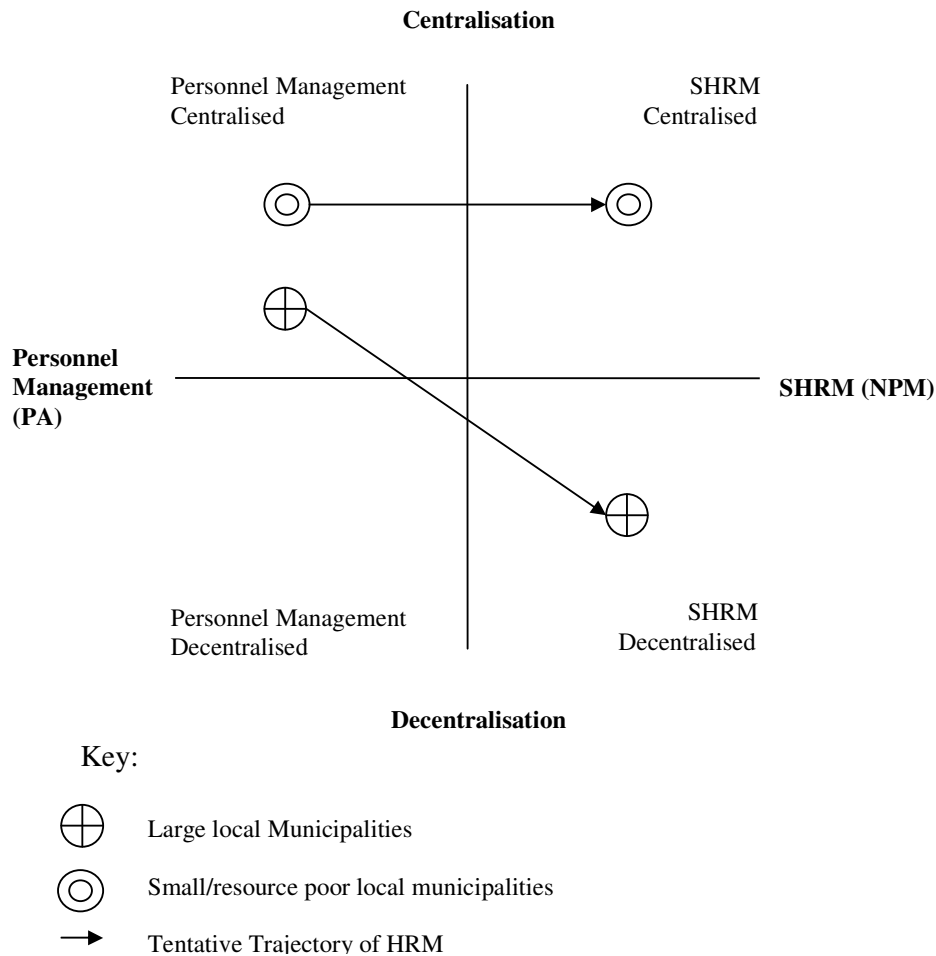
Source: Author's Own Construct (2008)

over the management of its HRs. In view of the reforms the South African government has

introduced, it would be expected that the trajectory of HRM would follow the pattern

presented in Figure 5.1 above. The literature suggests that the HRM system in the North West

province is moving from a centralised personnel management system to a decentralised

SHRM system among the large local municipalities. The HRM responsibilities have been

devolved, through the law, to the municipalities (this is discussed further in Section 5.4). In

the matrix that is represented by the movement from the upper left hand side quadrant to the

lower right hand side one. However, the smaller/resource poor local municipalities that are dependent on the district municipalities for their HRM functions are reflected as moving away from a centralised personnel management system to a centralised SHRM. Centralisation in this case refers to the centralisation of some aspects of HRM in the sense that they are managerially performed by another entity. In practice whether there has been such a move or not is addressed in Chapter VII.

The following Section considers the internal environment of local authorities in South Africa.

5.2.2 The Internal Environment

Local Political Leadership

Municipalities in South Africa are obliged by statute to adopt a particular strategic framework. Chapter 5 Part 2 of the Municipal Systems Act lays the strategic framework for development planning through the Integrated Development Plans. Section 26 of the Municipal Systems Act spells out the elements of the strategic framework that must be in place. These include: the development of a municipal council's vision for a long term development; the development of municipal objectives; scanning its environment devising development strategies; a spatial development framework; operational strategies; three year budgets; and establishing key performance indicators and performance targets.

Section 27 of the Municipal Systems Act lays the responsibility of developing a district strategic framework on the district municipalities. Among other things the district municipalities must adopt a framework for IDP in its area and ensure that matters included in the IDPs of local municipalities and district municipality are aligned to the national and provincial legislative requirements. The development of a strategic framework by

municipalities should be consultative from the very beginning, taking cognisance of the local community, traditional leaders, organs of the state and other stakeholders and allowing them a role to play in the drafting of the plans. Section 30 of the Act allocates responsibility for the management of the drafting process on the political leadership of the municipality, which is the municipal mayor, executive committee or a committee of councillors appointed by the municipal council as the case may be. The provincial government plays a supportive and monitoring role to ensure the successful implementation of the plan. According to section 35(1), once adopted, the IDP becomes the key strategic planning instrument on which all planning and development and, the exercise of executive authority are based.

Section 83(3) of the Municipal Structures Act gives district municipalities the responsibility for ensuring the integrated development planning for the entire district, promotion of bulk infrastructural development and service delivery, capacity building for local municipalities in its area and ensuring the equitable distribution of resources to the local municipalities to ensure appropriate levels of services in its area. The North West province has four district municipalities, 21 local municipalities and two cross-border municipalities (Merafong City Municipality and Moshaweng Local Municipality) that it shares with Gauteng and Northern Cape respectively. Within each of the categories of municipalities there are three basic types of municipal systems. These are the Mayoral Executive System, Collective Executive System and the Plenary Executive System. The Mayoral Executive System municipalities are the most numerous followed by the Collective Executive and the Plenary Executive. The political leadership of the municipalities bears the responsibility for the execution of the municipal obligations pronounced in various Acts stated above. The Municipal Systems Act sets the basic principles and values governing local public administration. These are to be in conformity to those in section 195 (1) of the constitution. Section 51 (i) of the Municipal

Systems Act allocates the responsibility for overall performance of the municipality to the municipal manager. While the municipal managers have the administrative responsibility for the performance of their organisations, the mayors bear the political responsibility. The Act also advocates for the involvement of staff, in as far as possible, in the decision making process of the municipality.

The proceeding text below highlights the advantages, challenges and resources that help or impede the success of municipalities in the performance of their mandates.

Strengths and Weaknesses

The legislative framework in South Africa gives local government considerable protection from interference by other spheres of government. The new local government also enjoys wider recognition and legitimacy compared to that of the apartheid era. Although the large South African economy that forms part of the local government environment confers some significant advantages there are considerable internal weaknesses as well, such as lack of capacity and limited sources of own revenue. Local authorities have in principle considerable freedom to hire and manage their own staff. However, transition from segregated local government and consolidation of the democratic dispensation may present their own challenges as both managers and politicians have to learn and acquaint themselves with the optimum level of operation in their organisations.

Core Competencies and Capabilities

A significant proportion of municipalities in South Africa have been enrolled on Project Consolidate, and more than 50 percent of those in the North West province have been under the programme. Capacity problems have led to the underdevelopment of competencies. Some

municipal executive functions have in practice been performed by the Provincial government. For instance, the delivery of housing that the Provincial government delegated to municipalities had to be withdrawn from some municipalities such as the Mafikeng Local Municipality. Furthermore, in 2006 the maintenance works on the stadium in Mafikeng was carried out by the Provincial government while according to the constitution it is the responsibility of the local municipality.

Organisational Values, Culture and Structure

Desirable local government organisational values are defined by various pieces of legislation; the key values being democracy, development, equity, community participation, accountability, participatory management, efficiency, effectiveness, economy, representativeness and affirmative action. Legislation also promotes the development of a culture of performance management among the political leadership. The nurture and successful implementation of these values into the new local government management is anticipated to radically transform the South African local government.

The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (*Batho Pele* White Paper) promotes the culture of *Ubuntu* that underlies the African renaissance. *Ubuntu* is closely associated with courtesy, but in its African sense means much more than that. This could be viewed as an infusion of African culture into modern management systems of the government as explained in Chapter II. *Batho Pele* is a Sesotho adage meaning 'people first'. The *Batho Pele* White Paper seeks to:

> Introduce a fresh approach to service delivery: an approach which puts pressure on systems, procedures, attitudes and behaviour within the Public Service and reorients them in the customer's favour, an approach which puts people first (RSA, 1997: 12).

Batho Pele is governed by a set of eight service delivery principles outlined below:

- Consultation: citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive and, whenever possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered.
- Setting service: citizens should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect.
- Access: all citizens should have access to the services to which they are entitled.
- Courtesy: citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration.
- Information: citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive.
- Openness and transparency: citizens should be told how national and provincial departments are run, how much they cost, and who is in charge.
- Redress: if the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy; and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response.
- Value for money: public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money (RSA, 1997: 15).

These principles were designed for the national and provincial governments but extended to other organs of the state, including local government (ibid). Most of the local government laws were enacted after the *Batho Pele* White Paper and are structured around the principles that it sets out. The *Batho Pele* principle puts customer service at the fore, indicating its compatibility with the NPM-style reforms. How the factors enunciated from the previous sections have affected, or will affect, HRM is dealt with in the next sections beginning with the concept of HRM below.

5.3. The Concept of Human Resource Management

Human resource management in South Africa is governed by the provisions of Chapter 10 of the Constitution and Chapter 7 of the Municipal Systems Act. Section 195(1) of the Constitution asserts that public administration in South Africa is governed by the democratic values and principles. It envisages adherence to a professional ethic; the promotion of efficiency; effectiveness and economy in the use of resources; responsiveness to the needs of the people; accountability; must be representative of South African people; and based on a participatory policy-making process. The constitution further stipulates that the human

resource management practices must be in such a way as to maximise human potential. And that employment and personnel management practices should be based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past and to achieve broad representation. These are to be carried out within the framework of the *Batho Pele* White Paper that expresses a public service ethos that emphasises the perception of citizens as customers. Besides the customer centred approach the South African approach incorporates affirmative action to strike optimal representation to redress historical apartheid distortions.

5.4. HRM Practices

The human resource practices in municipalities are governed by Chapter 7 Part 4 of the Municipal Systems Act, Employment Equity Act 1998, the Skills Development Act, the Skills Development Levies Act and the Transfer of Staff of Municipalities Act, 1998. The Municipal Systems Act establishes two categories of municipal employees. Sections 55 (1) of the Municipal Systems Act establishes municipal managers as head of the administration of a municipality. Municipal managers are charged with the responsibility for implementing and monitoring the IDP, responsibility for the efficient, effective, economic and accountable management of the municipality, be responsive to the needs of the community, and operate in accordance with the performance management system. Section 57 of the Municipal Systems Act requires that the employment of municipal managers and managers directly accountable to them must be contractual, that is they must enter into a performance contract. The municipal managers themselves enter into performance contracts with the municipality as represented by the executive mayor. The employment contracts are on a renewable two-year basis.

Section 66 of the Municipal Systems Act provides for the municipal manager to approve a staff establishment together with a mechanism to regularly evaluate it, provide job descriptions, determine remuneration for posts and, set the conditions of service. Section 67 (1) requires the development of management systems that engender fairness, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in human resource management. These principles must be applied to the management of HRs in terms of:

- recruitment, selection and appointment
- conditions of service
- supervision and management of staff
- the monitoring, measuring and evaluating of performance of staff
- promotion and demotion
- transfer of staff
- grievance procedures
- disciplinary procedures
- investigation of alleged misconduct of and complaints against staff
- dismissal and retrenchment of staff

Capacity building is addressed in Section 68 of the Municipal Systems Act. Perhaps this shows the significance attached to it in view of the crippling lack of capacity in many of the municipalities. The section gives municipalities the responsibility to develop their own staff according to each municipality's capacity needs but within the scope of both the Skills Development Act and the Skills Development Levies Act. Besides relying on funds from the Sector Education Training Authority, municipalities are allowed to make budgetary provisions to train their own staff. There is a statutory provision for those municipalities that cannot afford to provide funds for training their own staff to make a request for funding from the local government SETA. Insofar as municipalities have been capable of implementing these provisions this equates with a highly decentralised, if centrally prescribed system. However, as we have seen, many municipalities have not been able to keep up with what is required of them. In response the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) has been persuaded to play a mediating role. The legislative provisions give the

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municipalities the responsibility over their human resources. The smaller municipalities that have capacity problems have their HRM responsibilities performed on their behalf by the district municipalities.

SALGA in fact plays a pivotal role in the performance of HRM practices by individual municipalities. At its first Human Resources Development Policy Conference at Gallagher Estate in Midrand, Gauteng, attended by 650 municipal councillors, municipal managers and human resource practitioners SALGA committed itself to overseeing an integrated capacity building strategy (SALGA, 2003). The resulting strategy saw a Local Government Workplace Learning College (LGWLC), overseeing the participation of municipalities in the Local Government Water Sector Education and Training Authority (LGWSETA), and a commitment by municipalities to increase their budgetary allocations to more than the statutory required 1% and more human resources towards education, training and development (ibid: 6, 7). At the same conference SALGA decided on a remuneration policy that allows for differentiated, but overlapping, salary scales for municipal managers. Table 5.2 presents the salary scales for municipal managers as published by SALGA in 2003.

Table 5.2 Salary Scales for Municipal Managers

CATEGORY	LOWER QUARTILE	MEDIAN QUARTILE	UPPER QUARTILE
1	329,000	366,000	406,000
2	366,000	406,000	451,000
3	406,000	451,000	502,000
4	451,000	502,000	558,000
5	502,000	558,000	620,000
6	558,000	620,000	750,000

Source: SALGA (2003).

The so-called bargaining unit employees' salaries are determined by SALGA through the use of the Task Job Evaluation through the collective bargaining process. Through this nationally supported intervention SALGA has led the municipalities into coordinated response to central performance and systems demands that could be seen to have some strong centralisation characteristics.

5.5. Performance Management

Performance management in the South African local government is a statutory requirement. Chapter 6 of the Municipal Systems Act provides for the establishment, development, measuring, monitoring and review of performance management systems. According to Section 38 of the Municipal Systems Act municipalities should customise PMS according to their own resources and circumstances in line with their IDPs. It is also a statutory requirement for the promotion of a culture of performance management among the political and administrative leadership of the municipality. Section 39 of the Act bestows the responsibility for the development of PMS on the political leadership (executive mayors, executive committees) of municipalities.

Section 41 (1) of the Municipal Systems Act provides for the measurement of the performance outcomes and impact with regard to the municipal development priorities and objectives set out in the IDP. Subsection (1)(c) states that the key performance targets must be measurable as well as performance being monitored and reviewed at least once a year. The law requires the setting up of a regular reporting system to the council, political structures, other political office bearers and municipal staff, the public as well as other organs of state. The monitoring and review process should be designed as an early warning indicator for under-performance.

Section 42 of the Municipal Systems Act requires the involvement of the local community in the development, implementation and monitoring of a performance management system and, in particular, the setting of key performance indicators and performance targets for municipalities. However, the national Minister of Provincial and Local Government, in consultation with MECs (Members of the Executive Committees - provincial ministers) for local government and organised local government, has the prerogative to determine general key performance indicators for local government and also may review and adjust those key performance indicators. Once a municipality has set the key performance indicators and performance targets it is a legal requirement for them to publicise them internally and to the public. Section 45 requires that the results of the performance reviews must be audited as part of the municipality's internal audit process, and annually by the Auditor General. These contradictory provisions in which KPIs are determined by the MEC and yet supposedly participatory are intended to reflect the spirit of cooperative governance, although in practice central assessment takes precedence over local participation.

SALGA plays a major role in the implementation process of the performance management system for municipalities. SALGA's support of the municipal programme includes training support consisting of four performance management modules:

- Toolkit: Implementing a basic Performance Management System
- Balanced Scorecard for local government
- How to integrate the SA Excellence model in managing PMS in local government and
- How to conduct a benchmark study

SALGA's strategy is to help municipalities to implement a basic PMS and then move from there to implement the more sophisticated subsequent modules (SALGA, 2005). The SALGA intervention comes five years after the law establishing PMS in local government was

established. Besides the delayed SALGA intervention, local government also receives direct support on the implementation of PMS from the DPLG. The department states that a major achievement in this role was the production of the Municipal Annual Performance Report for 2003/04 and the holding of the Municipal Performance Excellence (Vuna) Awards in December 2004 (RSA, 2005: 50).

For an understanding of centralisation/decentralisation in the South African context the accountability system should be examined. The following section presents the local government performance management reporting framework.

5.6. Information on Outcomes

Sections 46, 47 and 48 of the Municipal Systems Act provide for the reporting processes on the performance reviews and audits. Section 46 requires municipalities to produce annual reports consisting of a performance report reflecting a municipality's performance during the year, comparing that to the previous year's performance. Also, in the report should be the financial statements and an audit report of the financial statements. The municipality must table the annual report within one month of receiving the audit report. The municipal manager is charged with the responsibility of putting a notice in the media publicising to the local community the planned council meetings at which the report will be tabled. The Auditor General and the MEC for local government are also notified and do attend the meetings at which their representatives have the right to speak. The municipal manager is required to attend the meeting for purposes of responding to questions.

The municipality has to adopt its annual report within 14 days and make copies accessible to the public, other organisations and the media for a fee or free of charge. Other copies are

submitted to the MEC for local government in the province and to the Auditor General and other relevant organisations.

Section 47 requires the MEC to make and submit a consolidated annual performance report of municipalities to the provincial legislature and to the national Minister. The report must highlight municipalities that underperformed during the year and propose corrective measures. A copy of the report should be submitted to the National Council of Provinces. The Minister must compile an annual report to parliament, and to the MECs for local government a consolidated report of local government performance in terms of key performance indicators. However, the Auditor-General's report showed that little has been done with regard to performance auditing, including all spheres of government. Table 5.3 illustrates the number of performance audits issued to management and tabled.

Table 5.3 Number of performance audits tabled in South Africa

DEPARTMENT/ENTITY	NUMBER ISSUED	NUMBER TABLED
National departments	9	6
Provincial departments	10	7
Public and other entities	1	1
Local government	3	1

Source: Auditor-General Annual Report 2004-2005

The numbers of performance audits carried out by the local government entities were inadequate and those carried out by municipalities were too few, with only one having been tabled. Compliance to the requirements governing the performance management reporting system was very low, probably because of lack of capacity and the fact that organisations were still familiarising themselves with the task they are faced with. According to the Auditor

General's report all performance audit reports were issued to the management of the concerned entities. The lack of compliance to the reporting system presented a gap in the feedback process.

5.7. Summary

This chapter has explained that South Africa has moved from a transitional stage from apartheid to the consolidation of democratic governance. However, apartheid has left an enduring legacy that will continue to influence government policy for many years to come. History has had a big influence on the future, creating constraints and opportunities for the new administration. The new political forces that came into power in 1994 (which was a critical juncture) are yet to fully change the course of events. Some things would be difficult to change such as who lives where, even though people can move and settle where they choose to. What went on before has had new government policies and legislations focused on addressing past injustices, equity, representation, racial equality and other issues of a related nature. Also, institutions (norms and rules) had developed that guided the struggle against apartheid. The culture of resistance inherited from the liberation struggle, although largely reduced, still remains disruptive to municipal services.

Local government is entrenched in the constitution, and there is a substantial volley of legislations governing local government. Intergovernmental relations are regulated by law, significantly guaranteeing local government autonomy. Municipal capacity to perform their statutory functions is one of the major problems confronting local government as new ones were rebuilt from the ashes of the old. More than half of the municipalities in the North West province are under Project Consolidate due to lack of capacity.

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Since democratic rule, the South African government has been concentrating significant effort on correcting the anomalies of the past. These historical events have inspired the development of the idea of a Single Public Service. Although a law has not yet been enacted critical stages towards that have been reached, such as the approval of the recommendations by Cabinet. This and other historical developments indicate that HRM strategy is contingent upon national strategic objectives. These national objectives are political in nature and are realised through political processes. Within the ANC there has been an internal split that also affected the business of some municipalities, indicating that external contingencies are a significant factor in the management of local affairs.

Yet on the other hand there are indications that internal resources within local government are recognised as some of the imperatives in effective service delivery. The positioning of municipal managers at the helm of the performance management systems is an attempt at ensuring the optimal exploitation of internal resources of the organisation in the performance of its mandate. With the stated objective of creating a common culture of efficiency, effectiveness and economy through the Single Public Service might enable the government to exploit internal resources (in this case organisational culture) in a more effective way. The Local Government SETA, LGWSETA, Skills Development Act and the Skills Development Levies Act are some of the strategies aimed at building internal capacity of the municipalities in order to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. At another level the PMS approach is related to the NPM concept, which itself is a shared idea globally. The infusion of cultural aspects underpinned by the idea of *Ubuntu* in the adoption of modern systems of management suggests attempts at adaptation.

The HRM philosophy as spelt out in the Constitution, the *Batho Pele* White Paper and the Municipal Systems Act is based on an NPM ethos. The idea of the Single Public Service, driven by historical events, emerged as an overarching policy as well as a platform for moves towards the centralisation of top public service posts. The introduction of an overarching framework in which functions and staff can be transferred across government spheres, might create challenges for managers in the event the human resources that they matched to other resources and functions in the development of organisational strategy are transferred.

The next Chapter presents the findings from the Botswana case study.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION: BOTSWANA

6.1. Introduction

This chapter applies the analytical framework developed in Chapter II to the findings from the Botswana case study. The analysis is based on empirical data from interviews with key informants and from official documents and media reports. The interviews were separated into two categories: the quantitative interviews (for HR staff in the councils) and qualitative interviews for senior public officers. The objective is to understand how human resources are managed in Botswana and why they are managed the way they are. Understanding the factors that shape or influence local governance will enable us to appreciate the nature of HRM in Botswana, and also to understand the factors that influence HRM and, how and why the HRM in local government in Botswana differs from that in South Africa.

The data examined here is based upon questionnaires and interviews. There is a brief presentation of the biographical data of the respondents from both data collection methods, that is, the survey respondents and the qualitative interview respondents. The data from the survey respondents is presented in tables while that from the qualitative interview respondents is presented in text. But these are discussed in an integrated manner under particular themes drawn from the analytical framework.

6.2. Biographical Data of Respondents

6.2.1. Survey Respondents

The representation of the respondents per type of council shows that 60 per cent came from the district councils, whereas 40 per cent were from the urban councils. Table 6.1 shows that almost 47 percent of the respondents were senior HR managers, about 43 per cent were from middle management and 10 percent from lower levels of the human resources departments of the councils.

Table 6.1: Position held by respondent

POSITION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Senior management	14	47
Middle management	13	43
Clerical	3	10
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Of the 30 respondents 10 (33 per cent) were male and 20 (67 per cent) were females (see Table 6.2). This gender bias is due to the fact that in Botswana for quite a long time certain professions such human resource management were seen as suitable for women. Other professions in Botswana that are traditionally dominated by women include nursing and primary school teaching.

Table 6.2: Gender of Respondent

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Male	10	33
Female	20	67
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

The respondents were generally well educated, with almost all of them (70 per cent) possessing either a diploma or degree in human resource management or personnel management qualifications (see Table 6.3 below). Only 23 per cent had qualifications in other social science subjects such as Bachelor of Arts Social Sciences or Public

Administration, and only about seven per cent had training in other areas such as education. Most of the diploma holders were apparently holding senior positions indicating that these may have served longer with junior qualifications and rose through the ranks, and were also trained by the Department of Local Government Service Management. As more people graduated from the local university and universities abroad with specialist qualifications in human resource management the DLGSM may have targeted them to build human resource management capability at local level.

Table 6.3: Field of training of respondent

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
HRM/Personnel Management	21	70
Social sciences	7	23
Other	2	7
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

However, the majority of the respondents (57 per cent) had been in the post for only one year. About 20 per cent each had spent two and three years in their posts respectively. Only one respondent had been five years in post (Table 6.4 below).

Table 6.4: Number of years in the post

YEARS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
1	17	57
2	6	20
3	6	20
5	1	3
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Those who have spent about a year in their posts could possibly be the new recruits or those who have been recently promoted into new job posts or were transferred from other local authorities. The other 43 per cent who have stayed longer in positions could be the more

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experienced and senior officers who have approached the top end of salary bands in the HR departments.

6.2.2. Qualitative Interview Respondents

The qualitative interview respondents consisted mainly of senior central government officials (DLGSM and Ministry of Local Government), senior officers from local councils, the Botswana Unified Local Government Staff Association, Botswana National Productivity Centre and University of Botswana lecturers and other experts. These were selected based on their knowledge, experience and role in policy matters in local government. Section 6.3 below presents the data analysis beginning with the environmental factors.

6.3. The Environment

The environment consists of the factors that impact on local authorities and influence their nature, structure and management. Effectively it is these factors that give the local authorities their character. These factors are categorised into two separate spheres: the external environment and the internal environment. The analysis first presents the external environment as it sets the context within which local authorities operate.

6.3.1. External environment

Politics

During the interviews the qualitative respondents criticised the current local government organisational arrangement on three key points. First, they indicated that although the councils have been established since independence without being harassed, their existence is not guaranteed because they are not entrenched in the constitution. The perception was that the Minister of Local Government has the power to dissolve a council that does not conform

to the decisions of the government of the day even if such a council does not pose a threat to national cohesion and/or security. The respondents felt this denies local councils the freedom to make decisions that address the needs of the community. In spite of these fears no council, even opposition controlled ones, has ever been threatened with dissolution in their entire history.

Secondly, the respondents observed that councillors have no decision-making powers, but that the authority to make decisions rest with the bureaucrats, the Council Secretaries and Town/City Clerks. The council secretaries and town clerks are administratively supervised by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Local Government but not the Minister. Therefore, the respondents claimed, the people's elected representatives have no meaningful role.

Thirdly, the local government elections are held simultaneously with the General Elections which denies the local authorities the attention they need. The political parties' national priorities and other issues of a national nature overshadow their local government policies. Some respondents felt that the local government elections should be conducted separately from the parliamentary elections so that local issues could get the pre-eminence they deserve. Although other respondents viewed such an approach as costly, it may be worth the cost in terms of local democracy.

With regard to HRM issues, the qualitative interview respondents felt that politicians or councillors do not have any powers over staff. For instance, they cannot discipline underperforming Chief Executive Officers nor do they have a say in the selection of a CEO and other HR matters. In one case that shows the remote involvement, if any, of councillors

in HR matters, the mayor of Gaborone was surprised one day to find a group of disgruntled city council employees gathered in front of his office to demand an explanation from him about the late payment of their wages for five consecutive months (Mmegi, 2006a). The mayor expressed shock at the incident, stating that the council managers have never bothered to explain the situation to him (ibid). With the lack of control over the councils' key resource, the human resources, the councillors are constrained to be accountable to the electorate on service delivery.

The respondents pointed out that the government has always wanted to keep the administrative and political spheres at local level separate. Nevertheless, they pointed out that councillors should make decisions on staff matters and that the possible strategy to realise this could be through the direct election of a mayor. The Second Presidential Commission on Local Government Structure in Botswana noted that the council chairpersons and mayors are expected to be politically accountable for the service delivery failure of the councils but they do not have authority to control council staff. Both the qualitative interview respondents and the Venson Commission perceived the political leadership of the councils to be weak.

Another concern was raised by some respondents that councillors often want to corruptly influence management decisions, and that involving them in HRM would only worsen the situation. A respondent gave an illustration of ill-conceived intervention from councillors, arguing that:

> Politicians are corrupt and councillors in particular. Construction companies target council staff who they know sit on tender committees. If the officer refuses to cooperate they are then targeted by some councillors who want them to be transferred to other councils.

The interference from the councillors was perceived to be of limited effect as transfers are managed at the centre and CEO's loyalty is to the centre but not the council. One respondent remarked that:

> There is a lot of political interference on HRM. Councillors are not conversant with their mandate. Council CEOs also, not doing what they are supposed to be doing but what councillors expect or want. There is a compromise on quality of service and also on the calibre of people recruited because of corrupt practices in the recruitment process, especially for CEOs as national politicians interfere. Quite often the Minister ignores recommendations from DLGSM. There is a lot of political interference on HRM.

The above comment shows that in one way the bureaucracy is accountable to itself and to the political elite at the centre but not the councillors. But the key issue is; will autonomy help in managing and controlling corruption, and most importantly improving efficiency? One respondent cautioned that 'due care and caution should be taken in promoting decentralisation so that it does not promote corruption'. The resistance by government to decentralise HRM responsibilities to local level political leaders, and the concerns raised by some top bureaucrats during the interviews shows a united front between the two to safe guard their common interests. In another way this shows the institutional effects that make change difficult simply because of what has gone on before. The norms seem to pervade decision making in government and also permeate social culture. The discussion below further explores social culture and how it influences the management of local authorities.

Social culture

The qualitative interview respondents observed that civil society in Botswana lacks a fighting spirit. Coupled with this, stated the respondents, was the subordination of civil society for many years by the state, and that has led to a lack of demand for better public services. This

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defining characteristic of Botswana's culture goes back in history to the pre-independence era Tswana polity as indicated in Chapter IV. However, this seemingly negative aspect of civil society has on the other hand created an atmosphere in which the public service can perform its functions without the threat of disruption from public boycott or riots against poor service delivery. When asked whether the socio-political environment provides a supportive environment for their organisations to function efficiently, the majority of the quantitative interview respondents answered in the affirmative (see Table 6.5 below). Only about 17 per cent were not positive and 83 per cent either viewed it as 'a fairly supportive environment' or 'a supportive environment.'

Table 6.5: The socio-political environment

SOCIO-POLITICAL ENVIRONEMT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Not supportive at all	1	3.3
Not so supportive	4	13.3
Fairly supportive	10	33.3
Supportive	15	50.0
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Although the councils have often been criticised for poor service delivery by both national politicians and the public, the challenges they experience on service levy payments has not been associated with any form of boycott or protest against poor service delivery.

On another but related matter, the qualitative interview respondents mentioned two significant factors embedded in the social culture that impact negatively on the performance of the public service – funerals and moonlighting. Employees lose a lot of time attending funerals of distant relatives, friends and colleagues. One respondent specifically mentioned that:

> Employees travel long distances every weekend to attend funerals in their home villages. Also, during the preparation for funerals

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employees sneak out to work on the preliminary matters of the burial. Friday is spent on things like picking up the corpse for burial, and then travelling to the home village for the funeral. Organisations also spend too much on funerals. Vehicles are made available and colleagues released to attend funerals, which of course is both positive and negative. It shows compassion and fellow feeling, which are prevalent in Botswana.

On the negative side a lot of time and organisational resources are diverted from advancing organisational objectives. Organisations incur expenses which are usually not budgeted for, such as fuel costs and drivers' overtime payment for driving a government vehicle to the funeral outside normal working hours. The respondent further stated that colleagues of the bereaved also lose time that could be committed to performance of duties by holding meetings during working hours concerning preparations for their impending funeral trip. Allowing employees to use official time and other public resources to address funeral matters confirms Kamoche's (2001) assertion about the prevalence of corporate welfarism in Africa (see Chapter II).

The qualitative interview respondents indicated that Batswana have strong ties with their birth place or home town to the extent some employees have resisted transfers to places they regard as far from their home town/village and/or the urban centres or far from the railway line where there is better communication and transportation infrastructure. This supports Hofstede's (1993) idea of collectivism in which choices or decisions in developing countries are made in the interest of the group.

On the issue of moonlighting, the respondent said it is strongly tied to the economic life style of some public officers. However, moonlighting in Botswana unlike in other African countries is prompted by economic opportunities as compared to economic hardships elsewhere on the continent. The respondent said that there are two principal factors that are

tied to, and promote, moonlighting in Botswana: cattle rearing and other commercial undertakings. Public officers in Botswana are not allowed to be directly involved in any kind of business except cattle rearing. On Fridays most of the public officers who are involved in pastoral farming sneak out of office to buy stock feed and vaccines at the privately owned veterinary shops and the Livestock Advisory Centres (LACs) owned by the government respectively. Respondents stated that it is also not uncommon to find many employees running businesses during office time. Wares ranging from jewellery, apparel, bedding, Tupperware, food, etc., are brought to the workplace to be sold during office time. Some employees, a respondent stated, may even be involved in big businesses and often find an excuse to leave office in the morning and come in the afternoon having produced nothing the whole day, and still get paid.

It is apparent that the work ethic in Botswana has become a serious concern. In spite of the public sector reforms geared towards improving productivity, employee attitudes do not seem to change for the better. A lot of man-hours are spent on productivity matters such as WITS and PMS but productivity continues to decline. How effective these reforms are is another question. Perhaps this could be summed up in the words of one respondent that the 'Reasons are, these are taken merely as rituals. There is no hurry or urgency in Botswana. People are simply not applying themselves. But most importantly motivation and commitment are lacking.'

Perhaps we need to ask a question, of which there could be many answers. 'Why is it employees are not committed?' Respondents opined that perhaps one of the principal causes contributing to the lack of commitment to work is the permanent and pensionable work arrangement. They also stated that most poor performers in the local authorities have been

transferred from one council to the other. The worst that could be done to them was to be transferred to the remotest settlement.

Economy

Empirical data from the field shows that a significant proportion, 50 per cent, of the survey respondents when asked as to whether they think the national economy provides a supportive environment for the efficient operation of their organisation responded in the affirmative. However, 40 per cent felt that the national economy only provided 'a fairly supportive environment.' Only a minor proportion of about 10 per cent felt that the economy provided a 'not supportive environment at all' and/or 'a not so supportive environment' (see Table 6.6 below).

Table 6.6: How supportive has been the economic environment

ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Very supportive	6	20
Supportive	9	30
Fairly supportive	12	40
Not so supportive	1	3
Not supportive at all	2	7
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

The qualitative interview respondents generally felt the economy provided a supportive environment for the efficient operation of local authorities. However, they noted that economic factors such as development planning and budgeting are centralised. One respondent summed this up when he said local municipalities have 'no latitude to identify local needs such that even where economic opportunities are available they may even pass or diminish. … Viable economic sectors are centralised and revenue accrues to central government and redistribution is based only on central government priorities'. Yet another respondent observed that:

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Local authorities are largely dependent on central government especially for project funding. They are not able to generate their own funding. It is time local authorities stand on their own now. There are possible funding sources for councils. For instance Central District Council could get funding from proceeds from the mines; North West District Council could get something out of tourism; Gaborone City Council can raise funding from the business sector. Other councils can also be innovative to establish sources of funding. Councils nowadays have the capacity to manage their own resources. They are also able to identify their own felt needs.

However, the survey respondents when asked about their opinion about the government procedures for the allocation of resources, the majority (63 per cent) felt that the distribution of resources is 'fairly equitable.' About 20 per cent felt that it was either 'a moderate equitable distribution' or 'a fully equitable distribution' at 13 per cent and 7 per cent respectively. Only about 17 per cent felt it was either 'not equitable distribution' or 'not equitable at all' (see Table 6.7). Qualitative respondents stated that the main objective of government for not allowing councils to raise their own revenues has been premised on the principle of equitable distribution of resources aimed at establishing a common standard of service delivery without discriminating against any council.

Table 6.7: Government procedures for allocation of resources

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Not equitable distribution	3	10.0
A rarely distribution	2	7
A fairly distribution	19	63
A moderately distribution	4	13
A fully equitable distribution	2	7
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Although this principle may be based on good intentions it has eroded the ability of some councils to identify viable sources of own revenues and only served to deepen their dependence on central government appropriations. The central government provides 100 per cent of the development fund for LAs as well as 95 per cent of district councils' recurrent

budget and 70 per cent of urban councils' recurrent requirements (GoB, 2003: 392). This is one aspect of standardisation in the councils by central government, which is in fact centralisation.

On the availability of resources to local authorities, the quantitative interview respondents were pessimistic. About 57 per cent felt there is 'inadequate material resources' at their organisation's disposal, while only 33 per cent felt there is 'fairly adequate material resources.' And 10 per cent thought the material resources are 'not adequate at all' (see Table 6.8). These perceptions are consistent with those that question the sustainability of the current funding strategy.

Table 6.8: Does your organisation have adequate resources to operate efficiently

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Inadequate material resources	17	57
Fairly adequate material resources	10	33
Not adequate at all	3	10
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

One respondent stated that 'the main revenue sources for Gaborone City Council are rates, which are estimated at about P100m per year and could be enough for the recurrent budget.' However, these funds are put into the central government consolidated fund and appropriated with other revenues across the entire public sector. Councils have no say in how these are to be spent. It is widely noted that this situation has put LAs decision-making in a precarious position as all decisions lie with central government that is the tax rate, approval of cost recovery process for council services, etc. In response to a recommendation of the Decentralisation Policy Paper and Action Plan of 1993 the government has committed itself to a formula based revenue support grants to the local authorities. The formula factors in size

of the population served by a district/town council, remoteness and geographical size (GoB: 2003: 392).

Instances of increasing opportunities for corruption in the councils and mismanagement have left many to be perturbed. Councils have appeared in the media having paid for incomplete or even non-implemented projects. In the Central District Council a number of projects were fully paid for before completion and another was not even started. According to the Daily News (2006) presentations were made in the Full Council meeting that an abattoir had been completed, only for the councillors to hear later that some staff members of the council have been engaged to complete the project. Another project (the construction of water system toilets at a rural primary school), at the same meeting was presented as completed and fully paid for only to be discovered that in actual fact the construction never took place.

Yet another major scandal rocked the Gaborone City Council. In a matter that was presented before the courts and duly adjudicated, a private waste management company, Daisy Loo, is alleged to have been corruptly awarded a contract by some council staff for bush clearing and grass cutting on the Segoditshane River valley, which runs across the city. The Managing Director of Daisy Loo and three council employees have since appeared before a court on charges of conspiracy to defraud the council an amount of P24 million (BOPA, 2006b; Mmegi, 2005). Not only was Daisy Loo alleged to have attempted to defraud the council of huge sums of money, the contract was found, in its award, to have breached 'mandatory statutory requirements' by having the then Deputy City Clerk signing the contract instead of the Mayor (Mmegi, 2006b). Claims for payment by the company were also said to be inflated and falsified, and the company illegally used council vehicles and employees to perform some of the job resulting in those employees claiming overtime pay from the council (ibid).

In October 2006 the Court of Appeal threw out Daisy Loo's case, and its manager and the three council officials faced criminal charges at a magistrates' court. Although this alleged corruption might seem to be the worst case, there are a lot of other corruption scandals, albeit involving smaller amounts of money, concerning the improper award of tenders in the councils. Incidents like these have led the central government to want to keep tight controls over financial resources of the councils. In other words centralisation is used to control corruption in the local authorities, while on the contrary conventional wisdom in decentralisation literature is that decentralisation is used to control corruption (see Chapter I).

The qualitative interview respondents felt that the government's attempt to insulate council matters from politics will not work and has backfired. They argued that the Mayor was not aware of the contract until when it blew out due to the huge claim from Daisy Loo which the council disputed. Perhaps if the claim had not been so huge it may have gone undetected or not attracted the attention it did.

However, in spite of the emerging scandals the central government has been keen on increasing fiscal autonomy. A 'cost recovery' system has been proposed for the councils but modalities of how this should function are yet to be finalised. The qualitative interview respondents noted that the cost recovery system could be one approach that could assist councils to be financially independent. The envisaged changes show an incrementalist approach, which may allow the changes made to grow proportionately with capacity. At this point the discussion focuses on another component of the economy, the labour market.

Labour market

There is a general shortage of skilled labour in the Botswana labour market. For many years the labour market has not been able to satisfy the needs of any sector including local government. The qualitative interview respondents stated that most graduates from the University of Botswana that applied for jobs in local government had studied social sciences or general science. Councils, they stated, need technical skills and professionals, for instance auditors, nurses, engineers, etc. The fact that many university graduates in Botswana can stay for years without jobs has also contributed to the significant increase in the number of graduates joining the local governments, which would normally not be their first choice. One respondent stated that:

> The local labour market does not satisfy labour demands especially science based/oriented disciplines. External recruitment has been a resort, (especially from Kenya, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania), but now the government is focusing on other countries, especially the Caribbean (Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, etc). Posts that require social science qualifications are easily filled but not so with posts that require technical skills.

Respondents noted that besides problems of shortage of technical and professional labour in the local labour market, local governments are faced with stiff competition for the scarce labour with the private sector and central government. Respondents identified the private sector as the greatest competitor for labour with them and that some employees leave to establish their own businesses. There is competition also with developed countries for medical professions, especially nursing. The few nurses available are competed for by local authorities and central government. Local authorities have found it challenging for them to retain the employees they have been able to recruit. Poor work conditions and other problems have been cited, by some respondents, as major weaknesses of the local authorities. The local

authorities' employees have a staff association to handle their collective bargaining and negotiation issues. The matter is discussed in the following subsection.

Labour Movement/Trade Unions

The quantitative interview respondents were asked 'what role do staff associations/trade unions have in the HRM policy process?' Forty per cent said 'a significant role,' 20 per cent 'a major role,' 17 per cent thought it was 'a minor role,' while 13 per cent said 'a not so significant role,' and only 10 per cent felt it played 'no role at all' (see Table 6.9).

Table 6.9: Role of Trade Unions in HRM policy process

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
No role at all	3	10
A minor role	6	20
A not so significant role	3	10
A significant role	12	40
A major role	6	20
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

These results indicate that a significant proportion of the respondents perceived BULGSA to be playing a meaningful role in the HRM policy process. This view differs slightly from the negative feedback from the qualitative interview respondents. Some qualitative interview respondents, however, stated that BULGSA leadership has often been overly confrontational in their dealings with government and that BULGSA seems not to be clear about their role, except negotiating salaries. They were also said to interfere in recruitment and transfer issues without seeking clarification first so that they could make informed contributions. Another respondent curtly stated that '[t]hey don't understand the role of a trade union.' However, qualitative interview respondents noted that the relation between the association and those that it deals with such as the Permanent Secretary and Establishment Secretary depends on the personalities of the incumbent officers. Also mentioned was that at local level there are

cordial relations between the association and the local authorities but these are also dependent on the local authority CEO and the local leadership of BULGSA. Respondents stated that the Unified Local Government Service Act is under review for amendment as well to accommodate the unionisation of the staff association. This development is a move away from the traditional state-labour relationships where there was the dominant partner and subordinate partner respectively. The section below focuses on a different but equally important matter, decentralisation.

Decentralisation

The predominance of the centre in terms of resource control (see subsection on the Economy above) over local government has created capacity gaps at local level. Responding to a question 'Does the local government have adequate capacity to manage the decentralised responsibilities effectively?' the majority (66.7 per cent) of the quantitative interview respondents were sceptical. Those who 'strongly disagree' made 20 percent and those who chose 'disagree' made about 46.7 per cent. Only six per cent said they 'strongly agree' and 26.7 per cent 'agree' (Table 6.10). The capacity of the local authorities has been strongly associated with both the availability of financial resources and the quality of personnel they are able to acquire.

Table 6.10: Does local government have the capacity to manage decentralised responsibilities

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Strongly agree	2	6.7
Agree	8	26.7
Disagree	14	46.7
Strongly disagree	6	20
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

When asked about their opinions, whether the mechanisms in place to ensure the autonomy of local government are efficient and effective the majority (60 percent) of the quantitative

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interview respondents indicated to be less optimistic about the mechanisms meant to ensure the autonomy of local government (see Table 6.11). Only 10 percent thought the mechanisms in place were suitable.

Table 6.11: The mechanisms to ensure autonomy of local government/administration
 are efficient and effective

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Don't know	2	7
Strongly disagree	3	10
Disagree	15	50
Agree	10	33
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

These perceptions correspond with the rejection of some of the Venson Commission recommendations that sought to further deepen decentralisation. For instance, the commissioners recommended the entrenchment of councils in the Constitution but government rejected it on the grounds that '[c]ouncils are entrenched in subsidiary legislation to the Constitution, which has just as much legal standing. *This has served us well*' (emphasis added) (GoB, 2003: 34). On the call to reform the nomination of councillors to make it more transparent, the government argued that '[t]he current system of nominating councillors is adequate' (ibid: 37). While these government responses echoed path dependent sentiments, the latter also indicates the entrenchment of systems of patronage and the resistance to alter these. Criticism was extended to the councils by the qualitative interview respondents who criticised them for not decentralising more powers and authority to the sub-districts as most decisions are still taken at the district headquarters.

Another aspect of local management where central government still has a strong hand is HRM. Public complaints about poor service delivery by government Ministries and Departments, as well as local authorities have prompted central government to undertake some productivity improvement reforms (GoB, 2002: 3). Key among these reforms was the

performance improvement strategy and the decentralisation programme. The government also benefitted from advice from the World Bank on these (ibid). In what indicates some political and administrative commitment to reform the government established institutional and policy frameworks to successfully implement these reforms.

However, respondents stated that there is a lack of political control at local level over the choice of personnel to be hired, rewards and punishments essential for the control of the performance of the councils' staff. The decentralisation of these HRM activities is not to the Local Authority per se (in which politicians could have a say) but to the administrators only, and some extra-Departmental Committees[9]. This relationship is expressed in Figure 6.1 below. Section 5 of the Unified Local Government Service Act places all HRM responsibilities under the Establishment Secretary. However, Section 6 allows the Establishment Secretary to delegate some of his/her powers in respect of senior officers to local authorities, but these may be varied or set aside at the Establishment Secretary's discretion. In essence HR responsibilities have not been devolved to local authorities but deconcentrated to them. This particular approach can be categorised as horizontal decentralisation as explained by Mintzberg (1993) (see Chapter II).

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[9] This refers to the Promotions Board and the Training and Selections Committee to which some HRM functions have been decentralised. These are discussed in Section 6.5 as well as the role of the Ministry of Health.

Figure 6.1: Dispersal of HRM responsibilities between the Centre and Local Authorities
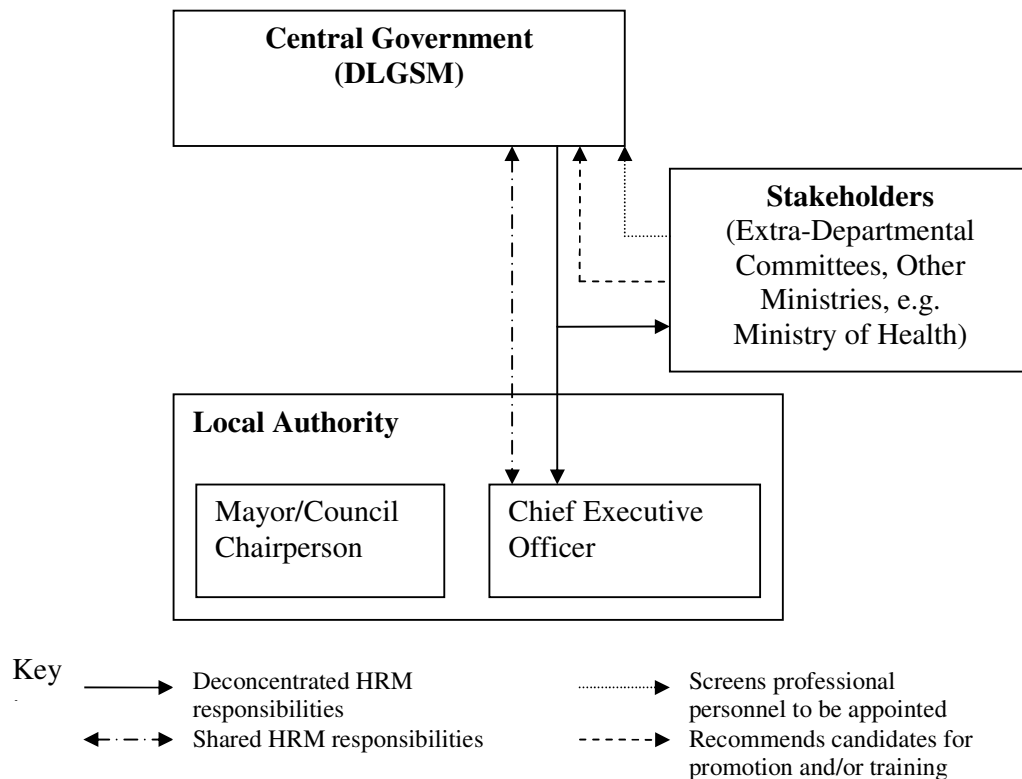
Source: Author's Own Construct (2008)

The qualitative interview respondents observed that since the Directorate of Local Government Service Management is mandated to manage and provide human resources to the LAs it is therefore responsible for the performance improvement strategy of the LAs. However, PMS (an aspect of SHRM and/or NPM as stated in Chapter II) was introduced in the LAs from the Ministry of Local Government, with the active involvement of the Office of the President, but not through the DLGSM. Also, the PMS Programme Coordinator (LAs) was based at the Ministry of Local Government but not at the DLGSM.

The implementation of the PMS project follows a uniform pattern for all LAs (another form of standardisation). Information gathered during the research indicates that BNPC was hired

as a consultant to manage the implementation of the reform project. One of the interviewees stated that the project implementation strictly adhered to project schedule and attached penalties for unjustifiable failure to stick to the programme schedule. The respondent further remarked that 'even central government did not have a comprehensive project programme like this one' (referring to when central government implemented its own PMS).

Asked whether the councils have the capacity to manage the decentralised HRM responsibilities the quantitative interview respondents were sceptical, as illustrated in Table 6.18.

Table 6.18: Local Authorities' capacity to manage decentralised HRM responsibilities

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Poor capacity	7	23
Limited capacity	14	47
Some capacity	6	20
Adequate capacity	3	10
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

A significant proportion of about 47 per cent felt that there is 'limited capacity' and 23 per cent felt that there is 'poor capacity' to manage the decentralised HRM responsibilities. Another 20 per cent felt there is 'some capacity' while only 10 per cent felt there is 'adequate capacity.' Altogether about 70 per cent were not confident of the councils' capacity to efficiently handle their HRM responsibilities. This lack of confidence among the respondents may well reflect the poor staffing and positioning of HR units in the councils. Overall, on a centralisation/decentralisation and SHRM/Personnel Management matrix the HRM system in Botswana's local authorities could be depicted as in Figure 6.2 below on the basis of the data acquired from the field.

Figure 6.2: The HRM Matrix Showing the HRM System in Botswana

Centralisation

Personnel Management
Centralised

SHRM
Centralised

**Personnel
Management
(PA)**

SHRM (NPM)

Personnel Management
Decentralised

SHRM
Decentralised

Decentralisation

Key:

⊕   Position of Botswana Municipalities on the
     Quadrant
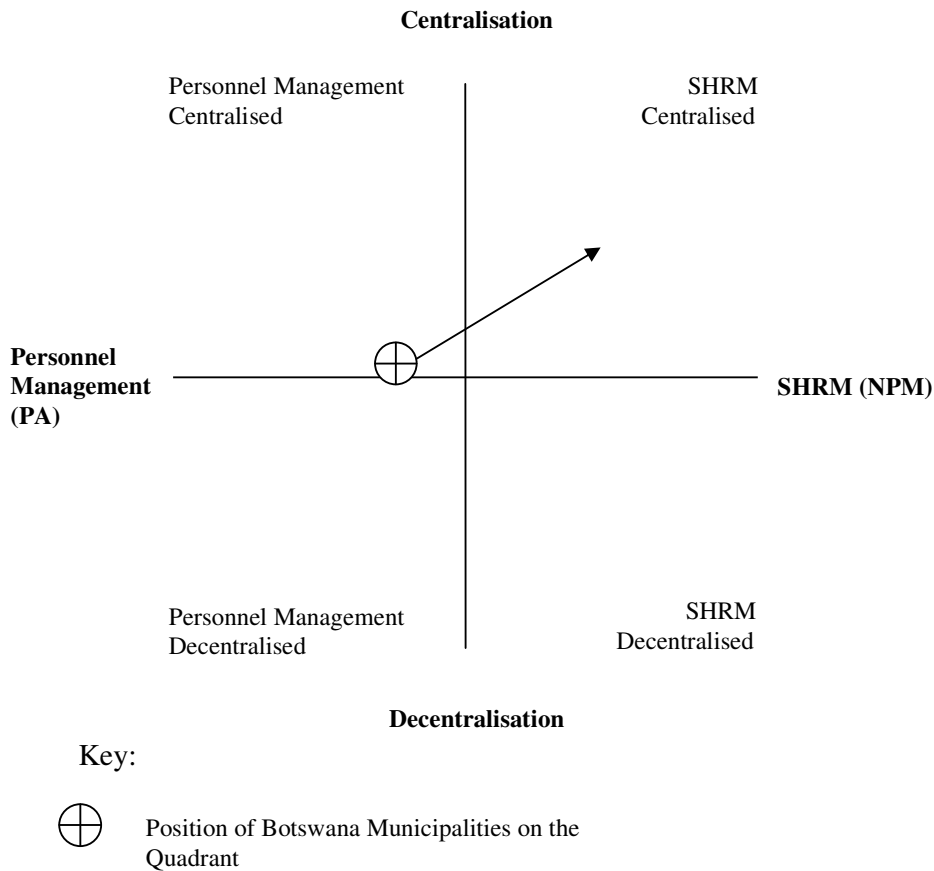
Source: Author's Own Construct (2008)

The preceding discussions show to what extent the HRM functions are decentralised as well as being shared by the local authorities and the DLGSM. Appendix 10 shows which HRM responsibilities are decentralised to the local authorities and which ones are performed by the DLGSM and/or are shared between the local authorities and the DLGSM. One issue that shows the significant role played by the centre in HRM at local level is ability of the centre to pick and choose any of the employees posted to municipalities that they want to transfer to another municipality. For instance, some qualitative interview respondents perceived the transfers performed at the centre as disruptive to the councils' implementation capacity. This

matter is related to issues raised by respondents under the section dealing with training, in which returning trainees may be posted to other local authorities on promotion. This would compel the LA that has lost an employee through such transfers to fill the vacancy with another employee who does not have the training that the one they lost had.

The data shows that on the centralisation/decentralisation axis HRM in the local authorities is somewhat in between centralisation and decentralisation because of the shared responsibilities referred to above. It is also indicative that the public management system is the traditional public administration therefore placing Botswana's local authorities on the PA (left hand side) of the matrix. The implementation of PMS (which entails elements of performance and its measurement, contracts, strategic integration and, ideally, flexibility – see Section 2.5) indicates that there will be further moves away from a personnel management system to the one based on integrating HRM with organisational strategy. This likely move is represented by the arrow that indicates the possible direction in Figure 6.2 above. As indicated in Chapter II the implementation of PMS ideally paves the way for the adoption of SHRM.

Reform is not static as at the time of this study some HRM related reforms were still being implemented that could have an impact on where the HRM is ultimately placed. These reforms were NPM inspired and centred around a performance management system that is premised on a strategic framework. However, the strong coordination from the centre, that already exists and the government's affinity to stick to the status quo, points to a centralised SHRM. The next section discusses the factors in the internal environment.

6.3.2. Internal environment

Organisational Strengths and weaknesses

Local government in Botswana boasts a number of advantages or strengths that enable it to perform its statutory functions efficiently. The qualitative interview respondents noted that the availability of resources, human and material (funds, office equipment, vehicles and offices/buildings) resources, and the stable operational structures within the councils are almost always guaranteed.

Perhaps because of the availability of these resources and a conducive environment, councils have been able to build some capacity in certain areas that even surpass that of some central government agencies. Respondents stated that the construction of district housing for central government has been delegated to the councils due to their comparative ability to deliver housing compared to the District Administration which is charged with that mandate but has underperformed. The centralisation/decentralisation and HRM matrix is further expanded in the rest of this Chapter.

Respondents also noted the strong support from DLGSM as an advantage in that it ensures the equitable distribution of human resources across all councils irrespective of their income generating potential. Although the transfer of employees between councils has been noted elsewhere as a limitation (see Chapter IV), the respondents saw it as advantageous. This arrangement, they stated, ensures that capable managers are circulated around all councils and in the process building capacity and even turning around some of the poorly performing councils. Also, respondents noted that the DLGSM ensures consistency in the application of policies or directives across the councils. However, the DLGSM's role makes the local

authorities' HRM system to lose flexibility in dealing with employees as they have to conform to standardised rules and procedures.

Although a number of strengths have been identified, the respondents identified specific weaknesses that constrain councils to perform more efficiently. These weaknesses revolve around the level of staff, centralisation and the inability of councils to retain trained and experienced staff. Notable among the weaknesses identified by some respondents was the perception that the councils' current stock of CEOs is not adequately trained in management and financial management. The respondents said some CEOs cannot detect financial irregularities at an early stage. They further said there is also a lack of visionary leadership, leading to a reactive management style whereby they thrive on, to quote one respondent, 'putting-out fires' instead of anticipating problems and developing strategies to resolve them. However, the respondents noted that there is 'light at the end of the tunnel' as the deputy managers have degrees and post graduate degrees. A report of the Local Authorities Public Accounts Committee mentioned that the councils' Treasurers are also not well equipped to perform their functions. The heavy reliance on expatriate staff was also mentioned as a liability. Localisation in the technical fields has been extremely slow. Expressing how dire the situation is, one respondent stated that 'in all the councils' clinics there are no national doctors, all are expatriate staff.' One of the weaknesses that the respondents raised was the issue of organisational structure for the municipalities. This is best discussed under the next section on organisational culture and structure.

Organisational culture and structure

Another respondent stated that centralisation created some unexpected challenges with the imposition of a uniform organisational structure over all the councils. He stated that all the

councils irrespective of size have a similar organisational structure, which is a one-size-fits-all type of approach. The respondent gave the example of Sowa Township, which he said has a population of about 4000 residents, and has the post of Deputy Town Clerk just as the Central District Council, with a single post of Deputy Council Secretary, but with a population of over 250,000 people in an area covering about the third of the country (see Appendix 12). As for matters relating to the management of the non-decentralised posts, the respondents stated that performing most of the HRM practices is a challenge as the process is lengthy, due to exchanges of correspondence between the concerned council and the DLGSM. In addition to that, the DPSM restricted the growth of the civil service by implementing a zero growth policy, which was applied uniformly over the civil service including local government as well (see National Development Plan 9).

Some respondents stated that the centralised management of personnel does not take into consideration the peculiarities of the various councils, resulting in them failing to tailor-make remuneration packages to retain staff. The observation of the respondents is based on the fact that the local government service in Botswana has a standardised salary structure across all local authorities, with equal pay for similar posts irrespective of the size of the various councils. For example, all local authorities' CEOs were on the same salary grade and they had the same number of deputies irrespective of the size of their organisations. To illustrate the matter, Appendix 14 present the salary grades of Gaborone City Council and two of the smallest councils. This standardisation is in spite of the fact that more often than not the bigger the organisation the more responsibilities the manager/s would have. The Venson Commission made some recommendations that if accepted would have altered both the structure and systems of the local authorities but on a number of occasions in the Government White Paper the reason for the rejection of some of the recommendations were that 'it has

served us well in the past'. This points to path dependent decision-making in the reform of local government.

The respondents observed that a culture of entitlement has developed among government employees. Superiors are reluctant to discipline underperforming and wayward subordinates thinking they will be jeopardising their livelihoods. One respondent captured it in his remarks, that:

> 'Performance Improvement Committees are not efficient. It is common for officers to defer work to the following year. Unpopular decisions like firing somebody is not liked by many managers. Government work started as a source of income for many but not as a form of serving the nation. Unethical behaviour, such as rudeness is allowed to take root and the perpetrators progress well in the job hierarchy. Courtesy is not well entrenched among public officers but it is desirable. These kind of employees are often the beneficiaries of scholarships for training as their superiors feel some sense of relief during their absence. And upon their return these employees would have acquired new skills and are promoted at the expense of the loyal and well performing ones who did not get the opportunity to go for further training to improve their skills.'

Respondents felt it is this laisser-faire attitude or culture among superiors that has led to the declining service delivery standards in the councils. Respondents further stated that in some quarters the situation at one point was so bad that in the councils there used to be a certain practice whereby subordinates would not follow the established channels of decision making and would commit organisational resources without proper consultation. When such officers are challenged about their decisions they feel victimised. A Council Secretary, Kutlwano Matenge, lamented the lack of commitment among public officers, stating that it has contributed to poor service delivery (Daily News, 2003c). The problem of rudeness among employees, which was mentioned by a respondent, goes against the spirit of national vision and ordinary Tswana and/or African culture of courtesy. One of the tenets of Vision 2016 is the infusion of the concept of *Botho* (a Tswana concept that refers to a person who is well

mannered, courteous, has a well rounded character and is disciplined) in the entire nation and the public and private sectors in particular. BNPC is responsible for promoting this concept as part of its productivity improvement mandate. This concept is similar to South Africa's *Ubuntu* discussed in Chapter VII, and its introduction in Botswana's productivity movement may have been borrowed from the former. This also indicates the borrowing of ideas between the two countries. The next section presents the concept of HRM.

6.4. Concept of Human Resources Management

The qualitative interview respondents stated that the institutional structure set up to oversee the implementation of the HRM policies causes some ambiguities, especially when there are controversial issues at hand to be addressed. The respondents stated that the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Local Government wants to take the final decisions about HRM matters when conditions are favourable. They stated that the Permanent Secretary argues that he/she is guided by the DPSM and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. But when those decisions are challenged by employees or unions in court the Permanent Secretary no longer wants to be associated with the issue, arguing that the Directorate of Local Government Service Management was established by an Act of Parliament and can be sued in its own right. Indeed as it will be shown later in this chapter, Permanent Secretaries can direct the Establishment Secretary on what decision to take but when that decision is challenged in court it is the Establishment Secretary who is held accountable. The respondents mentioned that indeed the courts have always maintained that DLGSM is an independent entity established by law and should be answerable for its decisions. Respondents mentioned that the Act was revised, and that the revisions made the HRM decision-making process in the Act more inclusive of local authorities and DLGSM but the PS rejected the proposed changes, preferring instead to stick to past practices in which the

Ministry has the last say. This refusal ensured that the PS still has veto powers in the decision-making process concerning HRM matters at local government level. Therefore, HRM remains largely centralised as illustrated in Figure 6.1 above. The extent of decentralisation/centralisation on HRM is presented in Section 6.5 below.

6.5. HRM Practices

This section relates the context within which LAs operate and the guiding HRM policies and how they impact on or influence the HRM practices. The HRM practices that will be discussed in this section are: Manpower Planning, Recruitment and Staffing, Appraising, Rewarding and, Training and Development. The discussion begins with manpower planning.

Manpower Planning

Manpower planning for the LAs is a shared responsibility performed by both the Manpower Planning and Budgeting Division of the DLGSM and the LAs (see Appendix 10 on the distribution of HRM responsibilities between LAs and DLGSM). Although planning and budgeting for manpower is a critical stage for the management of HRs, the Division is manned by one officer. Apparently the incumbent officer was an expatriate, which attests to the slowness of the localisation strategy. The conditions of service seemed to have been a major contributory factor to the problems related to staffing the Division. Respondents at the DLGSM indicated that officers have been recruited in the past to increase the staffing for the Division and also to eventually localise but all national officers have left as the Division is small and progression prospects seemed limited compared to other Divisions of the DLGSM. The lack of qualified citizens to perform the manpower planning functions at DLGSM may imply the absence of the same skill at local level or in the wider labour market.

The qualitative interview respondents have argued that central government HRM policies developed by DPSM are more often than not applied without due regard for the prevailing conditions at local level. The factor mentioned quite frequently by respondents as having affected councils in a more negative way was the freezing of new posts across the public service. Respondents noted that irrespective of the growth in scope of activities the councils have to maintain the same levels of employment, even when the DLGSM sees problems there is nothing that can be done. However, respondents noted that a way around this has been found and it involves having to forfeit less critical posts to create the essential ones.

On the question whether they think there is congruence between staffing plans and the organisation's strategic plan, 46 per cent of the quantitative interview respondents said 'no', while 37 per cent said they 'don't know', only 10 per cent felt the staffing plans 'reflect congruence with the local authorities' strategic plan'. Seven per cent were non-responses. The perceived lack of integration between staffing plans and organisational strategy indicates that the councils practice a personnel management type of HRM. Furthermore, this indicates the influence of public administration in the local authorities of Botswana. This is illustrated by the placement of Botswana on the left hand side of the matrix (Figure 6.2) under personnel administration and closer to PA on the PA/NPM axis. Related to planning is the recruitment and staffing processes which are discussed below.

Recruitment and Selection

Qualitative interviewees noted that the decentralisation of some HRM functions to LAs has been successful except for the recruitment of nurses at C3 level, which has had to be recentralised. A qualitative study respondent noted that:

Recruitment for the health sector posts has been recentralised. It was very difficult for villages that are far away to recruit nurses. Gaborone City Council enjoys a privileged position because of its location and they attracted nurses from all over the country. Some nurses would not apply for advertised posts in the far away districts just waiting for an opportunity to open up in Gaborone and apply for that one. Some who were employed elsewhere would resign their post to apply for the one in Gaborone. The DLGSM does not have the power to prevent them from doing so. It is a question of personal choice and balancing that against service delivery. The recentralisation of health sector recruitment satisfies the needs of the service and it has benefited LAs in rural areas. BULGSA also understands the situation and they supported the recentralisation.

Another challenge the respondents mentioned was that there is some difficulty in filling posts due to lack of qualified and experienced citizens in the labour market. Because of this the recruitment efforts have been targeted at other developing countries, especially in Africa. However, the qualitative interview respondents stated that some expatriate employees especially from African countries falsify their qualifications and some of them are alleged to have stolen medical equipment and medications, particularly the Anti-Retroviral medication (ARVs for HIV/AIDS) from hospitals and clinics. The respondent stated that this was one of the reasons why in 2005 the DLGSM redirected its recruitment efforts to the Caribbean countries.

Another factor stated was that the Ministry of Health is responsible for the vetting system to stamp out fake applicants for medical posts but is failing to detect the impostors. In view of the many complex challenges, such as expatriate's false qualifications and nobody willing to go and work in the outlying districts such as Kgalagadi, decentralising the recruitment of nurses to the councils experienced a setback and was recentralised.

When asked whether the recruitment practice was geared towards achieving the organisation's mission and objectives, 50 per cent of the quantitative respondents said 'Yes'

and 40 per cent said 'No'. Only 10 per cent said they 'Don't know'. This supports Armstrong and Baron's (2002) assertion that personnel management strategies as well are linked to organisational objectives (see Appendix 15). That is the linkage of organisational objectives and personnel management strategy is not exclusive to SHRM.

The qualitative interview respondents stated that there is a significant amount of interference from the centre (Minister and Permanent Secretary) on the appointment of council CEOs. In fact, contrary to the respondents' assertion of interference, Section 5 of the Unified Local Government Service Act gives the Minister of Local Government the prerogative to appoint LAs' CEOs. However, it was the manner in which appointments were made that seemed to be problematic. The respondents stated that the Minister usually appoints the CEO from shortlisted candidates after interview by DLGSM, but that sometimes the Minister may decide to appoint the lowly ranked candidate on the list. Appointments of other staff may also be through transfers of staff from one LA to the other. The qualitative interview respondents felt that transfers sometimes disrupted the concerned council's implementation capacity. Reasons for staff transfers vary. For some, as the 2005 O & M Task Force observed, could be used as punishment. Others may be transferred because they are due for promotion but there is no vacant senior post in their council into which they could be promoted. However, when asked if the transfer of staff between LAs is a good practice, the majority (60 per cent) of the quantitative respondents thought it was (see Table 6.14). About 37 per cent said it is 'A good practice' and 23 per cent said it is 'Somewhat good practice' with 13 per cent saying it is 'A fairly good practice.'

Table 6.14: Is the transfer of staff between LAs a good practice?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
A good practice	11	37
Somewhat good practice	7	23
A fairly good practice	4	13
A bad practice	8	27
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Only 27 per cent perceived transfers to be 'A bad practice', against 60 percent approval rating. The need for the transfer of staff between councils is seen as a surety against failure to attract qualified employees by some councils.

The 2005 O & M Task Force recommended that the Appointment and Transfers Boards/Panels be introduced at local level to ensure the objectivity and transparency of both the appointment and transfer of staff. It is important to note that the 2005 Task Force did not recommend for any further decentralisation of HRM responsibilities to the LAs. The decentralised HRM responsibilities were not devolved but delegated as they could be withdrawn as and when the DLGSM deemed appropriate. Besides the recruitment selection and placement of staff, the councils are also faced with the challenges of retaining employees and keeping their morale high. The following subsection discusses the incentives that are available for this purpose, in this case rewards, promotions and other incentives.

Rewards, Promotions and Other Incentives

The qualitative respondents stated that the poor conditions of service, a unitary pay structure, lack of promotion, and other challenges combine to make employment in local government less attractive. The respondents further stated that, as a result, working for LAs has been viewed negatively especially by the highly educated.

A significant challenge that has been noted by the qualitative interview respondents is the disparity between central government and local government conditions of service and pay. Although there are gross disparities in the salaries between central government and local government, the local government salaries are clearly structured. This was reflected also in the way the quantitative interview respondents felt. When asked 'are salaries clearly structured?' the majority said 'Yes' (67 per cent) and only 33 per cent said 'No.'

However, when asked whether local government salaries are competitive, an overwhelming majority of 97 per cent said 'No' and only three per cent said 'Yes'. This is consistent with what most researchers have found and central government has also acknowledged. On another question, which sought to understand as to whether non-monetary benefits are clearly articulated and competitive the majority of the respondents (86 per cent) said 'No' and 10 per cent said 'Yes' with only three per cent saying they 'Don't know.' These responses indicate that the incentives for good performance are not adequate and non-monetary benefits not well articulated.

The qualitative interview respondents mentioned that were it not for the rigidities associated with the promotions process, promoting staff could be another strategy that could be used to reward good performers. CEOs can only promote officers up to grade C3 beyond which it is the responsibility of the DLGSM. Promotions into grades upward of C3 have to be recommended to the Promotions Board by the local authority. The Promotions Board consists of representatives from the DLGSM, BULGSA, and a CEO from one of the councils. The place of the Promotions Board in the HRM process is illustrated in Figure 6.1 above. Such promotions carry the high likelihood of the officer under consideration being transferred to any other council that may have a vacancy for a higher post. This carries the advantage that

opportunities for promotion will be open elsewhere if not available in the council that recommended somebody for promotion. However, some officers are known to have successfully challenged decisions to transfer them (GoB, 2005: 20). This includes both ordinary transfers and on some occasions even transfer on promotion. The transfer practice has some contradictions (as observed also in Chapter IV) in that on one hand it avails limited skilled HRs to all LAs equitably while on the other hand it disrupts the implementation of some programmes and/or projects by the abrupt removal of an officer and sometimes not immediately replacing them with somebody with the same skills and/or competence.

On another factor, both the qualitative and quantitative interview respondents noted that seniority is the main criterion considered for promotion as stipulated in the Scheme of Service. The qualitative interview respondents stated that performance is only considered when there are several employees who joined the service at the same time and they are all due for promotion at the same period. The Scheme of Service, which was introduced to ensure consistency across LAs serves to disadvantage young good performers who (for lack of patience) end up leaving for better prospects elsewhere, such as the private sector.

However, it would appear that the limitations mentioned above have not affected the vacancy rate at local level to the extent one would have expected. Table 6.15 presents the perceptions of the quantitative interview respondents.

Table 6.15: The vacancy rate among the skilled labour

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Very low	5	16.7
Low	7	23.3
Moderate	13	43.3
High	4	13.3
Very high	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

The respondents' perceptions were as follows: 43 per cent thought the vacancy rate among skilled labour was 'moderate,' while 23 per cent said it was 'low.' 17 per cent indicated that the vacancy rate was 'very low,' and 13 per cent said it was 'high' while only three per cent said it was 'very high.' The perception that the vacancy rate is generally moderate could be factual due to the fact that job opportunities in the entire economy have reduced significantly leading to limited mobility of labour within the different sectors of the economy.

When asked at what level is turnover highest, 50 per cent said 'middle management', 33 per cent pointed to the 'Technical level' with 17 per cent thinking it is at 'other' generalised levels. None indicated that top management and artisans were leaving in significant numbers. This pattern is consistent with part of the conclusions made by the Botswana Government about the resignations from public service that higher levels of resignations usually occur among the C1-C2, C3-C4 and also B1-B2 and B3-B5 posts (GoB, 2003: 376). The B salary bands are for artisans and semi-skilled workers, while the C bands are mainly occupied by diploma and degree holders. The justification for this trend was that the younger employees are more likely to leave as they have invested less time in the organisation (ibid: 375). It may also be that they are more highly qualified and employers would prefer them as they are younger and more skilled. Another question posed was as to whether exit interviews are conducted among those resigning? The responses were as follows: 50 per cent said 'Never', 23 per cent 'Rarely,' 13 per cent 'Sometimes,' 10 per cent 'Quite often' and only three per cent said 'Always' (see Table 6.16).

Table 6.16: Do you conduct exit interviews among resigning staff

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Never	15	50.0
Rarely	7	23.3
Sometimes	4	13.3
Quite often	3	10.0
Always	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

This implies that there is no systematic way of capturing the reasons for resignations in the councils. Without proper and accurate knowledge of the causes for dissatisfaction among employees it may not be easy to find a lasting solution to the problem. The next sub-section presents findings on training and development.

Training and Development

Training is one of the key strategies that the government has adopted as a means to address the shortage of skilled labour and to mitigate its impact on service delivery. Training and development is a shared responsibility between the councils and DLGSM. Both are responsible for drawing the training plan.

A respondent stated that training for local authorities is managed by a consultative committee known as the Training and Selection Committee. The committee is composed of members from the Land Boards, District Councils, Tribal Administration, Urban Councils, BULGSA, and DLGSM represented by the heads of the following divisions; Training and Development Division, Recruitment Division, Personnel Division, and Manpower Planning Division, and the Deputy Establishment Secretary as Chairman. The respondent stated that decisions are reached on consensus and are passed on to the Establishment Secretary as recommendations

for his consideration. This Committee is one of the decentralisation initiatives of the DLGSM.

The other question asked related to the identification of training needs within organisations. The quantitative interview respondents were asked to state the clarity of the criteria used for identifying training needs within their organisation. The majority (60 per cent) indicated there is 'no clear criteria,' slightly over 16 per cent said there is a 'fairly clear criteria,' 10 per cent stated there is 'no clear criteria at all' while almost seven per cent each indicated there is a 'somewhat clear criteria' and that there is a 'clear criteria' respectively (see Table 6.17 below). This shows the absence of a well structured mechanism for identifying training needs and that training needs assessment needs to be carried out more frequently and recommendations from the exercise implemented. It seems having training officers in the councils is not enough but that policies and clearer guidelines need to be developed.

Table 6.17: Criteria for identifying training needs

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
No clear criteria at all	3	10.0
No clear criteria	18	60.0
Fairly clear criteria	5	16.7
Somewhat clear criteria	2	6.7
There is a clear criteria	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

The selection for training based on seniority has created the problem of training to be perceived as a personal right by government employees. In accordance with the Scheme of Service, employees expect to be sent for training after a certain number of years in the service. One qualitative interview respondent stated that employees seem to have adopted training as a personal empowerment facility after which they can leave the service and seek better prospects elsewhere. Furthermore, the respondent stated that, some of those sent for

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further training change courses without the approval of the sponsor (government) after which difficulties with placement emerge upon their completion of studies and return to the work station. The respondent stated that upon their return such employees find that their training did not give them the skills they needed to progress in their job. It was also stated that others do it deliberately targeting particular skills so that they can leave local authorities and join either central government, parastatals or the private sector. The respondent further stated that one other challenge is that when employees trained by DLGSM resign from the service they are normally not asked to reimburse the costs of training as required in the training regulations.

Respondents noted that as training is local authority specific it does not address the strategic objectives of the unified local government service. Also, one respondent noted that it disadvantages those officers who are frequently transferred from one LA to the other. These officers, the respondent stated, miss out on training opportunities that were created for them at a particular LA where they were serving before being transferred to the other local authority that may not have identified the same training need in their training plan. Some of the most capable officers are transferred frequently between local authorities to address problems that others could not solve, and it is these who stand to lose more. Once the problem is resolved they are transferred to another hot spot.

The councils are responsible for in-house training and institutional training is the responsibility of the DLGSM. In-house training has suffered in some respects. Some respondents noted that funds allocated for in-house training were inadequate. Respondents frequently mentioned that lately funds for in-house training have become very limited as a considerable amount of money was being diverted to the PMS workshops. However, some

local authorities are known to lack the capacity to utilise the funds allocated to them for in-house training.

Training is generally costly, especially training provided in developed countries. Degrees and diplomas also cost a considerable amount of time. Alternative approaches to training may have to be pursued. The Local Government Structure Commission of 1979 had recommended that a Local Government Institute be established to focus on training for LAs. This recommendation was repeated by the 2nd Local Government Structure Commission and was accepted by Government in its Government Paper No. 1 of 2004. Most probably, such an institution could focus more precisely on the needs of the local authorities and perhaps offer training at an affordable cost, and help improve performance. Section 6.6 below discusses performance management.

6.6. Performance Management

The individual performance appraisals are done regularly in Botswana's councils, albeit annually, as attested to by 100 per cent of the quantitative respondents. However, the perception of some respondents is that the performance appraisal has lost its meaning and is done for the sole purpose of annual salary increase. Asked if the performance appraisal is linked in a significant way with rewards and sanctions for employees, the majority thought they were 'not linked at all' or they are 'weakly linked' at 37 per cent and 40 per cent respectively. About 17 per cent thought they are linked while seven per cent said they are 'somewhat linked' (see Table 6.19).

Table 6.19: The Link between performance appraisal and rewards/sanctions

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Not linked at all	11	36.7
Weakly linked	12	40.0
Somewhat linked	2	6.7
Linked	5	16.7
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Instances of a disjunction between performance appraisal and rewards/sanctions do occur. These could result from failure to follow established procedures as in the case of Leonard Matlhare vs Attorney General that was brought before the High Court and eventually the Court of Appeal in Botswana. The Establishment Secretary of the DLGSM had compulsorily retired Matlhare on the grounds that his performance, as Co-ordinator of the Kaudwane Settlement Programme, was poor. In the retirement letter the Establishment Secretary alleged that the progress report that Matlhare presented to visiting Ministers at Kaudwane settlement in 1997 'reflected poor performance, poor co-ordination and a weak implementation of the programme' (GoB, 2003c: 3). Apparently, Matlhare had been promoted to the rank of Principal Remote Area Development Officer in 1996 and his last annual performance review was in 1998, in which his performance was rated above average (ibid). The court also found that none of the appellant's supervisors had ever complained of his poor performance and that the respondents could not challenge the evidence that the appellant gave. The Appeals Court upheld Matlhare's appeal and set aside the retirement, reinstated him and the DLGSM was ordered to pay both the High Court and Court of Appeal legal costs. Although the Court of Appeal based its decision on other reasons such as failure to act judicially and observe the rules of natural justice, as well as making a ruling that the allegations made in the retirement letter were unfounded, the Establishment Secretary stated that she acted on the Permanent Secretary's observations. This latter aspect alone shows the extent to which central government controls HRM at local level. And as one of the respondents observed earlier,

when such decisions are challenged in court the Permanent Secretary does not appear before the court as it happened in this case.

One of the qualitative interview respondents added that 'merit assessment scores and comments are never considered by the Ministry (Ministry of Local Government).' And that the openness of the performance appraisals remains questionable, especially with regard to the appraisal of senior officers. The respondent further stated that some senior officers are known not to perform very well and yet the departments they head have apparently done very well and they get the undue credit for that. Perhaps the performance appraisals should be opened to colleagues for other employees to give feedback on senior officers, the respondent said.

Another question was posed to the quantitative interview respondents as to whether the performance appraisal and the organisational objectives are linked. Table 6.20 presents the results. Forty per cent said they 'Strongly disagree,' with 33 per cent stating they 'disagree' and 20 per cent indicated that they 'agree' and seven per cent said they 'Don't know.' This indicates that organisational objectives and individual employee work objectives (if any) are perceived not to be aligned. What may have led these responses could be the knowledge among the interviewees of the impending reforms; that is PMS, Performance Based Reward System and a new performance appraisal tool. Already these had been implemented in the civil service and local government employees were aware of them and also that these were being rolled out to local government as well.

Table 6.20: The linkage between performance appraisal and organisational objectives

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Agree	6	20
Disagree	10	33
Strongly disagree	12	40
Don't know	2	7
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Also, the absence of measurable goals is apparent. Earlier under the subheading 'Rewards, Promotions and other Incentives', it has been shown that promotions are not based on performance but length of service. Performance appraisal has now become a salary increment ritual that has little or no value in effectively monitoring performance. This leads to the idea that the performance appraisal is largely subjective. Another question sought to know if the results from the performance reviews were used to make adjustments to employees' work objectives. Fifty per cent of the respondents said 'Never,' 27 per cent thought 'Rarely,' 20 per cent 'Sometimes' and only three per cent said 'Quite often' with none choosing 'Always' for an answer (see Table 6.21).

Table 6.21: Are performance reviews used to make adjustments to employees' work objectives

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Never	15	50
Rarely	8	27
Sometimes	6	20
Quite often	1	3
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Asked whether performance reviews are used to identify employees' capacity needs, 43 per cent said 'Sometimes,' 30 per cent 'Rarely,' 23 per cent chose 'Never' and three per cent said 'Quite often.' When aggregated, 53 per cent said either 'Never' or 'Rarely' and a fewer proportion (46%) answered in the affirmative (see Table 6.22). These responses indicated limitations with the performance appraisal system and the manner it is applied.

Table 6.22: The use of performance reviews to identify employee capacity needs

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Quite often	1	3.3
Sometimes	13	43.3
Rarely	9	30.0
Never	7	23.3
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Several qualitative interview respondents stated that the key performance management strategies in the local authorities include the use of annual plans and the performance appraisal instrument. The qualitative respondents also noted performance management also depends on the initiative of the incumbent CEO and the various heads of departments within the local authorities.

Asked how they would describe the performance management in their organisation, the majority (57 per cent) of the quantitative interview respondents said it is 'weak,' 23 per cent 'moderately successful' and 20 per cent indicated it is 'very weak'. There were none who opted for 'successful' and 'very successful' (see Table 6.23).

Table 6.23: State of performance management in local authorities

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Very weak	6	20
Weak	17	57
Moderately successful	7	23
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

But not all was that bleak as when asked to indicate whether they think the management of human resources in local government has improved or not within the past 10 years, the results presented in Table 6.24 below posit a more positive picture. Sixty three per cent said there was 'moderate improvement,' 20 per cent indicated an 'insignificant improvement', 13 per

cent saying a 'significant improvement' and only three per cent saying 'no improvement at all.'

Table 6.24: Has the management of HRs improved in the past decade

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Significant improvement	4	13.3
Moderate improvement	19	63.3
Insignificant improvement	6	20.0
No improvement at all	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

There was none that indicated a 'great improvement'. It may not be easy to identify what may account for the perceived improved performance besides the assumption that, among some possibilities, the leadership and change management workshops that the local authorities' CEOs have been attending since 2001 in preparation for the implementation of PMS may have contributed. However, it emerges that there is a culture of performance assessment and management, albeit with its weaknesses.

In response to the question 'Has your organisation adopted WITS' only 30 per cent said 'yes' and seven per cent said they 'don't know'. A majority of 63 per cent said 'no'. Responding to the question 'Has WITS programme been successful or not as a performance improvement tool?' 33 per cent said it is 'not applicable.' Fifty three per cent said it has not been successful at all, while only 13 per cent said it was 'moderately successful' (see Table 6.25).

Table 6.25: The success of WITS as a performance improvement tool

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Not applicable	10	33.3
Not successful at all	16	53.3
Moderately successful	4	13.3
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

The government has noted that since the Commonwealth Secretariat evaluated WITS in 1998 and adopted the recommendations thereof, there has been a positive work culture, commitment to work and concerns for customers' needs which is improving for those agencies that took WITS seriously (GoB, 2003: 368). In spite of the positive feedback the government acknowledges about WITS in central government departments it has not been adopted by local authorities as a performance improvement strategy. How the information collected during the performance management process is utilised is discussed below.

6.7. Information on Outcomes

The analysis of performance outcomes at local government remains problematic. The qualitative interview respondents indicated that a significant factor in this regard is the one-on-one quarterly review of performance for councils between CEOs and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Local Government. The respondents stated that the Permanent Secretary in turn holds performance reviews with the Permanent Secretary to the President. The quantitative interview respondents were asked as to whether baseline data and performance improvement data are analysed regularly. A significant proportion of the respondents, about 37 per cent each, said 'never' and 'sometimes' respectively, with about 26 per cent indicating only 'rarely.' None perceived it to be 'often' and/or 'always' (see Table 6.26). The absence (or weakness at best) of a systematic analysis of performance review data creates a gap in the performance management process whereby data collected is not efficiently used to feedback into organisational performance.

Table 6.26: Are baseline and performance improvement data analysed regularly

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Never	11	36.7
Rarely	8	26.7
sometimes	11	36.7
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

If those with a negative response are combined (i.e. 'never' and 'rarely') they make a majority at 63 per cent. Whereas the qualitative interview respondents have indicated that organisational performance is dealt with at the higher levels of management (i.e. between CEO and PS), the findings from quantitative interviews indicate that the available data on performance is not analysed regularly. The lack of analysis of performance data could be related to the fact mentioned earlier that performance reviews are a mere ritual for salary increment but not necessarily to assess or measure employees' output. The basis for rating performance is more about the personal traits of the appraissee than their performance against any objective criteria, a factor associated with the performance appraisal system. Section 6.8 below summarises the chapter.

6.8. Summary

The chapter has shown that the top political and bureaucratic elites have kept the local politicians out of the executive functions of local authorities. Accountability is to the top bureaucrats at the centre but not the elected representatives. The practice of keeping councillors out of administration is an old one, justified by a constitutional assumption of separation of powers, and shows how historical choices and practices perpetuate themselves and are difficult to change. On the other hand the docility of the people leaves too much room for government control. This factor is also historical and there are institutions (in particular patronage) around it that make it difficult (but not impossible) to change. Corporate welfarism is widespread in the public sector, as well as ethnic or social cleavages. Perhaps these are indicative of African culture as already mentioned in Chapter II. The work ethic is deteriorating while on the other hand practices that do not auger well for improved performance, such as moonlighting, are on the increase.

The economy is perceived to be providing a fairly supportive environment for the local authorities. However, the lack of fiscal autonomy has left the local authorities heavily dependent on central government funding. Corruption and mismanagement, even though low, were considered to be on the increase. The national labour market was considered weak, with local authorities relying on expatriate labour for professional and technical skills. Poor work conditions making it difficult for councils to retain staff they have recruited.

Decentralisation is one area where the mechanisms in place were perceived to be weak and the government seems not eager to adopt the more radical changes such as the introduction of a mayoral system. Both achievements and failures have been noted in the decentralisation of HRM responsibilities to LAs. Figure 6.2 illustrates the type of HRM and extent of its decentralisation. The increase in both managerial and political decentralisation has been incrementalist, in some cases as with the rejection of some Venson Report recommendations the government stuck to what 'worked well' in the past and/or 'the status quo'. These are a clear indication of path dependent and rational choices in the development of local government that seems aimed at accentuating and preserving past successes and avoiding risks. Also, minimalist decentralisation in employee management could be seen in the limited increase in HRM responsibilities to local authorities as in the post of C3 and below. This scenario makes the Botswana HRM system to straddle the dividing line between centralisation and decentralisation on the matrix due to its somewhat dual system (i.e. HRM responsibilities centralised or decentralised for different posts). Another notable development is the extension of HRM responsibilities to other bodies such as extra departmental committees reflected in Figure 6.1. Although this enhances decentralisation of HRM responsibilities, these are only deconcentrated (at the discretion of the Establishment

Secretary), rather than devolved responsibilities, as they can be easily withdrawn. The centralisation of HRM responsibilities goes beyond the DLGSM as the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government can still instruct the Establishment Secretary on what decisions to take pertaining to employees as stated by the respondents and demonstrated in the Motlhale vs Attorney General case.

Another important factor relates to the question as to whether local authorities in Botswana can be said to be moving towards Strategic aspect of HRM was in the implementation of Performance Management Systems. The PMS project was controlled from outside of the local authorities and might appear to be implemented more in practice rather than spirit. Officers' assessment of the practice suggests that its strategic purpose is in practice ignored. The introduction of NPM-like reforms had not yet shifted Botswana's HRM system from the personnel administration type, which is associated with public administration, to the SHRM type that is associated with NPM. In essence the HRM system was still in transition as there were elements of both approaches. This development indicates that in spite of the system being in transition the nascent moves made towards the adoption of SHRM are significant for a developing country.

The findings indicate that the local authorities operate in a politically, economically and socially stable environment. Standardisation, which has centralising tendencies, is one of the key approaches to the management of local authorities in Botswana. Transfers are one feature of the centralised system. These were perceived as disruptive to the implementation process. Yet at the same time it was seen as facilitating the equitable deployment of limited skills across local authorities. Centralisation was also seen as protecting central government interests and self-preservation by the ruling elite. The culture of performance management is

not well developed but crowded out by other priorities, such as the use of performance data for annual salary increase. However, information from performance reviews is seldom used but only when there are several employees with the same length of service competing for the same post for promotion.

The next chapter raises the same questions dealt with in this chapter in relation to South Africa.

CHAPTER VII

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION: NORTH WEST PROVINCE

7.1. Introduction

This chapter analyses the North West Province case study using the analytical framework developed in Chapter II. The analysis is based on empirical data from interviews with key informants and documentary data. The interviews were separated into two categories, the quantitative interviews (for HR staff in the municipalities) and qualitative interviews for senior public officers from the national, provincial and local government as well as other experts. The objective was to understand what influences the management of human resources: how HRs are managed in the North West Province and why they are being managed the way they are. The study looked at whether there is a trade-off between SHRM and decentralisation in a developing country context (i.e. can SHRM be only delivered by central government in the African context). Also, the study considered the factors that influence the management of human resources in local government and the reason behind the differences in outcomes with other countries adopting similar policy advice.

We start with the biographical data of the respondents from both data collection methods, that is, the survey respondents and the qualitative interview respondents.

7.2. Biographical Data of Respondents

7.2.1. Survey Respondents

Presented first is the biographical data of the survey respondents and then afterwards present that of the senior public officers who were interviewed using the qualitative

approach. The representation of the respondents per type of municipality shows that 72 per cent came from the mayoral executive, whereas 28 per cent were from the committee executive. Table 7.1 shows that the majority of the quantitative interviews respondents, just less than 41 per cent, were from senior management, 38 from middle management and only 22 per cent were clerical staff of the human resources departments of the municipalities.

Table 7.1: Positions held by Respondents

POSITION HELD	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Senior Management	13	40.6
Middle Management	12	37.5
Clerical	7	21.9
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Of the 32 respondents 12 (38 per cent) were male and 20 (63 per cent) were females (see Table 7.2). The composition of gender in the human resources departments of the municipalities studied indicates a higher proportion of women over men.

Table 7.2: Gender of Respondents

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Male	12	37.5
Female	20	62.5
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

With regard to training, 38 per cent of the respondents indicated they possessed tertiary education qualifications in social sciences (e.g. public administration, local government studies, etc). Twenty eight per cent held human resource management qualifications. Twenty five per cent had business studies qualifications (see Table 7.3 below).

Table 7.3: Field of Training of Respondents

QUALIFICATIONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Human Resource Management	9	28
Social Sciences	12	38
Business Studies	8	25
Other	3	9
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

On the length of time respondents spent in their current job posts the majority (53 per cent) indicated they spent about a year in their posts. About 19 per cent of respondents claimed to have spent about three years in their posts, while 12.5 per cent stated they spent two years. About 16 per cent preferred not to respond to the question. The employees who have spent about a year in their posts could possibly be the new recruits and those who have been recently promoted into new posts. In the rapidly changing context of South African local government, it has not been taking long for employees to be promoted due to the changes taking place. The following section briefly presents the qualitative interview respondents.

7.2.2. Qualitative Interview Respondents

The qualitative interview respondents consisted mainly of senior officers from municipalities, national and provincial government, the South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA), Municipal Leadership Training Authority (MULTA), and the South Africa Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU). These officers were selected on the basis of the role they played at the policy level both within local government and central government (national and provincial). The next section presents the data analysis from the interviews, following the outline based on the analytical framework.

7.3. The Environment

This section is divided into two main subsections, the external and internal environment. But under these there are specific subheadings that guide the analysis.

7.3.1. External Environment

This section is divided into several subsections that analyse the various elements that influence the environment within which local authorities in South Africa operate. The discussion begins with the political environment.

Politics

Politics in the North West Province can only be interpreted within the broader context of the South African national politics. However, as some literature shows each province within the South Africa has its own political character. But it is the political history and the interaction between the national, provincial and local that defines what each sphere of governance can do and cannot do. The respondents appreciated the progress made with regard to governance since majority rule in South Africa, but they also acknowledged that limitations are still quite significant. This perspective was captured in one of the respondents' statements, that:

> There are many challenges a developmental state experiences as it evolves over time. Social and community structures introduced during the apartheid era are still there and the integration of racial groups has been limited. Poverty is still a major challenge, as well as income disparities between the racial groups, consultation at community level in certain contexts is problematic, police intimidation is frequent, democracy is not well understood and the judicial system shows some discriminatory practices similar to those of the apartheid era.

Although South Africa has undergone some transformation the above statement indicates that some practices that were deeply entrenched in the apartheid governance system will not be easy to do away with. However, the racial policy has changed but the new government has to inherit some of the undesirable social and community structures of the past, and try to make them work better. This shows that what has gone on before may not be easy to undo and that it will influence future decisions and actions of both the state and society.

However, responding to a question on whether the political environment in South Africa is conducive for the efficient operation of local government in the North West Province, all of the qualitative interview respondents were positive that the environment was conducive for the optimum performance of local government institutions. They stated that there are opportunities and avenues for direct government intervention. They identified two strategies critical in this area: community participation, and the holding of regular local government elections. Most respondents noted that the introduction of ward committees, especially in the previously excluded communities has been a major political development at local government level in enhancing participation in the development process. The respondents stated that these committees help councillors in the performance of their duties and do enhance and deepen democratic governance. One respondent stated that they assist particularly in identifying the needs of the communities and linking these to the Integrated Development Plan (IDP).

The quantitative interview respondents were also positive about the political environment that it offers a conducive atmosphere for their organisations to operate fairly efficiently. When asked, does the socio-political environment provide a supportive environment for the efficient functioning of your organisation, 44 per cent of the quantitative interview respondents said the political environment offers 'a fairly supportive environment', 34 per cent perceived it to avail 'a supportive environment', 16 per cent perceived it to be 'a not so supportive environment', and only six per cent said the political conditions offer 'a very supportive environment' (see Table 7.4 below). However, none of the respondents felt the political environment was 'not supportive at all'. These responses show that most of the officers acknowledge the challenges faced by local government within the context of transition to democracy.

Table 7.4: The Socio-political Environment

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
A not so supportive environment	5	16
A fairly supportive environment	14	44
A supportive environment	11	34
A very supportive environment	2	6
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

However, some qualitative interview respondents noted the politicisation of service delivery as one of the negative contributors to a not-so-good environment for the operation of local government. This was said to be most common in areas where opposition parties dominate. The respondents stated that service delivery in such places is less than satisfactory and is deliberately designed to punish residents for their political choices by the governing party.

The qualitative study respondents have also noted that factional fighting that prevailed within the ANC especially in the run-up to local government elections in 2005/06 pervaded even the bureaucracy. Some municipal managers were alleged to have been fired not necessarily because they underperformed according to their employment contracts but because they belonged to the wrong faction within the ANC. Respondents observed that what perhaps contributes to the politicisation of municipalities is the not-so impressive calibre of some councillors. Their selection to represent their parties was said to be dependent on their loyalty to the party they belong to but not based on competence. These responses indicate that the allocation of resources within the decentralised system of government has been used for patronage purposes and for mobilising or maintaining political support as indicated in Chapter II. The next discussion presents social culture and how it influences local governance and HRM.

Social Culture

The North West province is culturally heterogeneous, but predominantly African. However, the qualitative interview respondents noted that African culture is not predominant in the public service management system. They further stated that the language of employment has always been Afrikaans and English for many decades, and blacks have been marginalised because of the discriminatory practices. Their culture appears not to have been entrenched in the management systems. However, one respondent added that President Thabo Mbeki's African Renaissance that seeks to bring back African norms and values, is an attempt at infusing African culture and values into the management of public institutions and all aspects of life. The respondent went on to state that:

The government has tried to capture and reintroduce African values even on corporate images. For instance, the Coat of Arms presents a Bushman and their language to emphasize indigenous culture. Office dress includes *Madiba* (nickname for Nelson Mandela) shirts and other traditional attire. In Mafikeng area, for example, women wear *seshoeshoe* (a traditional Sotho-Tswana women's dress) dresses to work. The government looks at this as part of the cultural diversity management, which is provided for in Chapter 9, Section 181 (1) C of the Constitution. It is also part of the public service transformation and diversity management practice.

Respondents stated that the African culture of respect and deference for seniority has not been significant in their organisations, although it does occur in some local authorities, largely due to lack of training and exposure to modern management practices. One respondent stated that such tendencies are mainly found among the traditional chiefs' advisors, many of whom lack exposure to issues of performance management. This phenomenon, the respondent noted, has affected management significantly and has brought in the issue of traditional leadership to the fore. Some chiefs were said to have perceptions that they are being undermined, and that some important decisions are taken without their consent. Respondents mentioned that at times the implementation of some programmes experienced some difficulties when chiefs did not show their active support for them. Another respondent stated that there is a need for initiatives to 're-socialise' people so that they could understand that the organisational context is different from the social context.

On other issues respondents stated that some of the significant challenges that the municipalities in the North West Province encounter are poor service delivery, and boycotts and protests that sometimes disrupt service delivery. The qualitative interview respondents stated that the history of South African politics has been influenced by the experience of the liberation struggle and that protests and service

payment boycotts have become a culture of resistance. Some respondents felt that it would take many years for the people to unlearn such practices.

Most of the qualitative interview respondents blamed payment boycotts and protests on capacity constraints that have led to municipalities' failure to deliver services. The low calibre of some of the local politicians was mentioned by the respondents as one of the contributory factors to the municipalities' inability to formulate sound policies and that it negatively affects their effectiveness and efficiency. A leader of one of the opposition parties, Tony Leon, attributed the widespread protests against municipalities to the failure of the ANC councillors to deliver services (Mail & Guardian, 2006).

In some cases the protests have turned violent. For instance, the Khutsong Township experienced some violent protests since late 2005 over the transfer of the township to the North West province. Khutsong formerly fell under the Merafong City Local Municipality, under the West Rand District Municipality in Gauteng Province (South Africa's richest province), but was in 2005 transferred to the North West Province to solve the cross-border municipality problems. The residents objected and felt they were not listened to as the government went ahead with its proposal. According to the Mail & Guardian (2006) residents felt neglected and that the promise of improved service delivery would not be fulfilled if they are transferred to the poorer North West province. High school students boycotted classes, staged street protests blockading streets with burning tyres and threw stones at the police brought in to control the riot (ibid).

Violent protest is not limited to the North West province. Nor is it limited to dissatisfaction with municipal service delivery, but it is almost a culture (in the entire country) of expressing a differing opinion or concern that the residents of townships employ to compel government officials to act, as incidents elsewhere in the country would suggest. For instance, the University of Pretoria's Mamelodi Campus students also went on a sometimes violent strike. Elsewhere the security guards also staged a violent strike over differences with their employers over pay. The U.S. State Department (2001) also noted violent clashes between stone throwing demonstrators and the police. Perhaps these violent protests that were used during the uprisings against the apartheid regime would take long to fizzle away and that the same resistance strategies that were used against the apartheid regime are being used against the democratically elected ANC government.

It is significant to note that in spite of the widespread riots and boycotts, the interview respondents showed some optimism about the improvement of the situation and its limited impact on the performance of municipalities. Perhaps this perception could be summed up in one of the qualitative interview respondent's statement, that:

> This could be a transitory stage, service delivery will improve. People's expectations and demands are high. However, they are informed how to engage with municipalities. There is a difference between urban and rural dwellers in how they present their demands for services. Because literacy rates are low in the rural areas political opportunists are taking advantage of them by fomenting boycotts and demonstrations to cause havoc in the localities. The number of people paying for services has greatly improved. However, households with unemployed bread winners are experiencing difficulties keeping up with payments for services. But people's attitudes have greatly improved with their increased access to services.

The challenges were said to be not only limited to boycotts and riots, but the vestiges of apartheid as well. The qualitative interview respondents stated that a significant number of skilled white South Africans had resigned from the public service at the time when the ANC took over from the National Party. The respondents felt that some former white bureaucrats resist change and did not want to continue in the public service to serve under a black led government. They lamented the fact that most skilled labour is white and that many have left the public service since 1994. The respondents also stated that the Employment Equity Act could perhaps be a source of conflict, with skilled labour, who are mainly white, feeling undermined by being put on equal footing with the not-so-qualified or experienced black officers. The Employment Equity Act is an affirmative initiative to ensure equitable representation of races, gender and the disabled in the public service.

Indeed pockets of resistance were reported from some of the former apartheid regime officers. In one incident at the Maquassi Hills Local Municipality at Wolmaranstad in the North West province, a white officer was reported to have been fired for allegedly uttering a racist slur against the Mayor, and he was also accused of about 20 other racist remarks (Mail & Guardian, 2002). One of the officials at the municipality was quoted as saying that 'since the inception of the new municipality there has been incidents of defiance from Marais (one of the municipal employees at the time) who had difficulty in recognising the municipal manager and directors. Calling the mayor a kaffir was the last straw' (ibid). The Maquassi Hills local municipality incident was not an isolated case but one of several dotted across the province, showing that racism was still rife in some sections of society. In Vryburg, which falls under Naledi

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Municipality not far from Maquassi Hills and still in the North West province racial intolerance has been a long running problem at the Vryburg Hoërskool.

The Mail & Guardian (2005) stated that in 1998 a peaceful protest march by black students accompanied by their parents turned violent when white parents, at the instigation of some school board members, attacked the black students with *sjamboks* (whips made of strong rubber/plastic material). Although some of the white parents were prosecuted the cases dragged on until it was dropped, and racial tensions exploded again in 2000 after a black student stabbed his white colleague with a pair of scissors and was sentenced to a jail term (ibid). According to Mail & Guardian the main problem at the school was the alleged school management's racism in which white and black students had 'two different timetables' and 'parallel-language medium' of instruction – Afrikaans for whites and English for blacks, and white students would only sing the Die Stem part of the national anthem ignoring the other part with African words. The problems were effectively resolved when a former head teacher, Andries Du Toit, was recalled from retirement to manage the school. By 2005 Du Toit was hailed as having taken the school 'a long way towards creating a culture of racial tolerance and integration' (ibid). These two incidents may appear to be old but the respondents indicated that a number of racial intolerance incidents go unreported, and that this is the tip of the iceberg, implying that changing the mindset would not be a short term thing. The next section discusses the economy.

Economy

This section discusses the perception of the respondents about the economic context within which the local authorities operate. Table 7.5 below presents the views of the

quantitative study respondents. A question was posed as to whether or not the national economy provides a supportive environment for the efficient functioning of the local authorities. Forty seven percent indicated that the economy provides 'a fairly supportive environment', with a significant 28 percent thinking that it provides 'a supportive environment'. A minority of about 19 percent thought that it either does not provide 'a supportive environment at all' or 'a not so supportive environment', with only six percent saying it provides 'a very supportive environment'.

Table 7.5: National economy and supportive environment for local authorities

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Not supportive at all	1	3
A not so supportive environment	5	16
A fairly supportive environment	15	47
A supportive environment	9	28
A very supportive environment	2	6
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Another question was posed to the quantitative interview respondents concerning the procedures for the allocation of resources between local authorities, and the responses are presented in Table 7.6 below. Forty seven per cent viewed the government procedures for the allocation of resources as 'fairly equitable'. Thirty one per cent thought it was 'moderately equitable' and 13 per cent perceived it as 'rarely equitable' while only nine per cent saw it as 'fully equitable distribution'. None of the quantitative respondents opted for the 'not equitable distribution'.

Table 7.6: Procedures for the allocation of resources to local authorities

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
A rarely equitable distribution	4	13
A fairly equitable distribution	15	47
A supportive environment	10	31
A very supportive environment	3	9
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Coupled with these views are those of the qualitative interview respondents. One mentioned that the South African government is committed to rebuilding the economy, and that at the national level there is the Reconstruction and Development Programme which aims to achieve that objective. And that local government reform is central and important to introducing economic development programmes at the local level. The respondent went on to state that:

> SA is now entering the consolidation phase. This is a phase meant to introduce programmes such as the developmental local government programmes. For instance, there is the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) running into billions of Rands meant for municipal infrastructure development. These programmes are implemented at municipal level to grow the economy. There is also the Municipal Finance Management Act which introduces supply chain management. The tendering process is central to the provision of services, creates jobs through the reservation policy in which a certain percentage of projects is reserved for local economic development, and we are beginning to see the spin offs.

Most qualitative interview respondents felt that the national economy does offer a conducive environment for the municipalities to operate efficiently. The respondents noted that the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) which is geared towards the development of infrastructure at municipal level is an instrumental facility in this regard. MIG is part of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (based on 5 year development planning) process at municipal level. Local Economic Development (LED) is another process that has been developed to ensure the sustainability of local economies. IDPs and LED processes are targeted at service delivery and development. Qualitative interview respondents noted that local communities are involved in these planning processes. They also mentioned that priorities differ from one municipality to the other and that these priorities/preferences are reflected in the

annual budgets. Most of the funding, they said, is provided by the Department of Provincial and Local Government.

However, respondents stated that municipalities do not have the same income generating ability, largely owing to their economic base. Examples were given of the Mafikeng Local Municipality which is surrounded by rural villages and Klerksdorp which is surrounded by mines. But the main problem cited by respondents was the poor economic situation among the predominantly African settlements, such as those around Mafikeng and the rural municipalities, which makes the payment for services problematic. This situation is a legacy of the apartheid system, (see Chapter V), in which black communities were located in peripheral regions without any viable productive economic activities. Poverty and low incomes were said, by the respondents, to constrain the financial viability of some rural municipalities and their ability to raise revenue from own sources. But in some cases the lack of institutional capacity to collect revenue has contributed to serious financial difficulties.

An illustrative case of a municipality in the North West province that experienced severe financial difficulties is the Mamusa Local Municipality in Schweizer-Reneke under the Bophirima District Municipality. The municipality experienced debilitating financial problems that had been running for three years at the time of reporting in July 2006. In addition to financial problems the situation had deteriorated so badly that there were 'divisions and conflicts within its administration and council' to the extent '… the then councillors turned their council chamber into a boxing arena' (North West Government, 2006). The council was dissolved and from 23 June to 3 September 2004 the municipality was placed under an administrator (ibid). In June

2005 employees could not be paid their salaries in time due to lack of funds and the provincial Department of Developmental Local Government and Housing (DLG&H) had to intervene for the salaries to be paid. The report further states that due to lack of capacity the municipality was found to have failed to collect taxes and rates which form the basis of its revenue and budget.

The problems persisted and in June 2006 the provincial government appointed an acting municipal manager, Seth Magaga, from its Monitoring and Intervention division in the department of DLG&H to work at the municipality for three months (North West Government, 2006). Furthermore, the report states that a financial expert, Professor George Williams, was also appointed to help turn around the municipality's financial management and develop a long term financial strategy in 12 months. The situation, however, was so dire that the provincial department of DLG&H decided to send more personnel consisting of labour relations professional and legal experts to sort out the problems, and another financial expert to assist Williams. When probed about instances of this nature, one respondent said that:

> Municipalities are operating under very challenging conditions. They are cash strapped. Their income base has not increased whereas the service areas they cover have increased significantly. Close to 70 per cent of the municipalities are in rural areas and unemployment is currently very high at about 45 per cent. There is an equitable share of funds from national government which is aimed at assisting with the provision of free services. But the R20 million availed is just a drop in the ocean, it is not enough. The MIG Funds are also available but a lot has to be done as there is a serious back log of projects to be implemented. Implementation backlog is estimated at 70 per cent. This is mostly on roads and storm water drainage. The Central District Municipality is spending R11m on water reticulation, and intends to increase its spending to about Rl5m the following year. This may be good as well but it will take a long time to alleviate the problem as capacity is a major challenge. The national objective is to eliminate the

bucket toilet system by 2007, distribute electricity to all by 2010, and water by 2012.

The national government had recognised the potential challenges and disparities in the financial viability and managerial capacity of the different types of municipalities and provided for national and provincial intervention as the need may arise. Section 99 of the Constitution empowers a Cabinet member to assign powers or functions to a provincial Executive Council or to a Municipal Council. And more specifically, Section 139 provides for Provincial supervision of local government and for direct intervention, for among other things, to safeguard the continuous provision and maintenance of national standards of essential services. Although the Municipal Systems Act and other legislations have decentralised many responsibilities to the municipalities, the constitutional provisions cited above tend towards centralisation on the basis of safeguarding services and maintaining service standards.

The qualitative interview respondents indicated that IDPs and LED programmes focus on development of local communities, which would result in economically prosperous local government. However, they stated that these programmes are still nascent and that they have not yet matured or borne any results yet. They also lamented the lack of capacity and necessary skills at local level to effectively implement these programmes. In the words of one, these are:

> Very good policies which if properly implemented may boost the operation of municipalities. LED is geared towards creating job opportunities. The spin offs from the IDP would result in LED.

In addition to the identified capacity gaps, one of the main challenges that the qualitative interview respondents said may derail the effective implementation of the good policies and programmes is corruption and mismanagement, especially in the tendering process. In a dramatic case involving the suspected corrupt award of an R80 million construction tender, the police swooped on the Mafikeng Local Municipality in November 2005 confiscating computers for forensic investigations (City Press, 2005a). In another case the Speaker of the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality based in Rustenburg appeared in court accused of alleged corruption. According to the City Press (2005b) the accused official allegedly sought to extort R5, 000 from a businesswoman who had won a catering tender of R24, 000 for a function organised by the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality in May 2005. It is alleged in the paper that the mayor threatened violence and that if the lady did not pay her she will never again win any tender from her (the mayor's) municipality.

In spite of the challenges and occasional setbacks, most of the qualitative interview respondents were optimistic, arguing that the positive aspects outweigh the negative. The respondents opined that given the economic climate in South Africa it does offer good climate for local government's economic prospects. They further mentioned that even rural municipalities are also benefiting from the economic boom through economic activities such as farming and the economic linkages between urban and rural settlements. One further argued that there are instruments and systems in place to support a robust economic turnaround in the rural municipalities. These were said to be the March 1998 White Paper on Local Government that provides for efforts to be taken for local economic development; the Municipal Systems Act and the Municipal Structures Act. The respondent stated that the Municipal Structures Act

requires local government to create a good atmosphere for the economy to grow. For example, every local municipality has local economic development programme such as Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) programme.

Related to economic growth and the performance of the municipalities is the availability of labour to the municipalities, in this context the labour market. The next section discusses the labour market in the North West province.

The Labour Market
A question was posed to the qualitative interview respondents as to whether the labour market provides the municipalities with the required skills. Respondents noted that there are scarce skills which are mostly found only among the white population due to past racial inequalities in access to education. For instance, training in engineering, quantity surveying, accounting qualifications were a preserve of the white training institutions the respondents indicated. However, respondents stated that municipalities have now come up with bursary schemes and study loans in order to build the capacity of their labour force. The Skills Development Act and the Employment Equity Act 1998 were pointed out as some of the targeted responses by government at addressing the previously disadvantaged social groups such as the disabled, blacks and women.

However, respondents stated that there are pockets of resistance to this strategy from sections of the white population. Respondents highlighted that most skilled labour is white and that white South Africans resist change. Many were said to have left the

public service after 1994. Respondents further explained that acquiring the services of the skilled labour was very costly for municipalities. They stated that most of the technically skilled whites resigned to establish their own companies and they are now engaged by municipalities as consultants on contract at high cost. This was said to be creating financial difficulties for many municipalities. But another respondent, contrary to others, was very critical of the municipalities, and he said:

> Municipalities are spending too much money on consultants claiming that they do not have the necessary skills. Even HR Managers are not representing their municipalities claiming they don't have the necessary skills to represent their municipalities in labour hearings. This has negatively affected their budgets and they have to prioritise and stop paying consultants for the basic tasks they must be doing themselves.

Respondents noted that the Employment Equity Act has helped transform the racial balance in many municipalities, but women and the disabled still hold fewer senior positions than envisaged. One respondent noted that the idea is not about race but getting the best qualified person for the job in such a way that principles of affirmative action, equity and fairness, and competence are observed. However, some respondents indicated that there are many skilled people who remain unemployed because of the rigidities in the recruitment process. For example, the organisation structure could be such that the municipality cannot create a post that can absorb a particular skill that a municipality needs because they might have reached the maximum number of posts they can afford. Respondents stated that the labour market has many unemployed graduates but local municipalities are unable to absorb them as they are holding qualifications that are not needed by the employers.

Other respondents argued that the general lack of the required skills in the municipalities is a result of poor planning. Some stated that there is a lack of a skills inventory for the province. Respondents noted that each municipality develops its own skills plan, which would only be specific to them but there is no coordination of the process across the various municipalities in the province. This, they stated, is a fragmented approach and is not coordinated at all. Because of this the respondents said the labour market fails to satisfy the labour needs of the municipalities. Perhaps the issue is not so much about the labour market failure but the not so well managed labour policy. The analysis now presents the labour movement.

The Labour Movement/Trade Unions

Associations and trade unions are an important stakeholder in the South African local government employee relations system. As mentioned earlier, in Chapter IV of Labour Relations Act 1995, SALGBC is constituted by organisations within local government and that the SALGBC is the custodian of all agreements entered into with its partners.

However, respondents noted that there are significant challenges in executing agreements entered into by the parties. Resistance from employer organisations and problems of communication between employers and employees were mentioned as some of the frequent problems. Other related problems were said to emanate from dual loyalties wherein some employees of municipalities are seconded to committees that have to carry out the SALGBC mandate. These may clash with the performance of their employers' tasks/assignments and therefore impact on their performance, a respondent said.

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Respondents said one key agreement entered into between SALGBC, SAMWU, SALGA and IMATU is the implementation of the Task Job Evaluation System. SALGBC was tasked with overseeing the implementation of the 'Task Job Evaluation System'. However, respondents indicated that there was resistance to it by some municipalities. Respondents mentioned that the agreement was entered into way back in 2002 but still in the first quarter of 2006 about 108 of the local municipalities had not completed implementing it. The project was borne out of the fact that previously the Group Areas Act favoured certain municipalities to the exclusion of others and concentrated skills in those areas.

According to the respondents, the Task Job Evaluation System requires the deployment of employees with these skills to those municipalities without the required skills. A respondent stated that there is the Project Job Evaluation Committee which consists of labour/trade unions and the employer. Its mandate is to oversee the smooth implementation of the Task Job Evaluation, job descriptions and placement. The committee consists of representatives from SAMWU, IMATU, SALGA, and SALGBC, and is responsible for the deployment of skilled employees across the municipalities. It was stated in the interviews that the objective of the project was to distribute skilled labour equitably across municipalities. However, respondents stated that there was some limited resistance to this arrangement.

Where there is no skilled labour they find somebody from within a district municipality within which the needy local municipality falls and they may place the

employee where their skills are urgently needed. Respondents stated that there have been disputes related to this and in some cases matters have had to be resolved in the courts. The decision to deploy employees in the needy municipalities is taken by all the stakeholders. Information from respondents indicated that most of the disputes that arose were usually related to the amount of compensation, challenges to the deadlines for relocation, etc., but not the principle behind the skills transfer. In this arrangement line managers cede their authority to deploy skilled labour to the Project Job Evaluation Committee.

Informants mentioned that racial issues are still rife in the management of municipalities, and that the SALGBC's skills transfer programme is another strategy aimed at redressing such maladies. An example was given of a power station in Cape Town that was failing to perform optimally due to lack of skilled labour. The qualified white employees were said to have resigned their posts when senior management positions changed hands from whites to blacks. Respondents further stressed that confining essential skills to a particular race has badly affected the performance of municipalities. Another example of 'sabotage' was given, that, the layout maps of water and sewage pipes, electrical cables, etc., were not passed over to blacks when they assumed senior positions in local government. Some whites also resigned and offered their services as sub-contractors or consultants with much higher charges now that they knew municipalities were desperate to have their services. And that they were determined not to share/pass over the skills they have to blacks. In this instance, the respondents stated that the SALGBC plays a pivotal role in ensuring that municipalities run efficient and effective services through a well coordinated skills sharing and transfer process. This arrangement indicates that the role played by the

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centre in HRM is significant and the justification for this is the correction of historical anomalies. In this leading role SALGBC acts more like a surrogate/proxy for the centre.

SALGA is another major player in labour relations. SALGA constitutes a collective voice for the employers. While SALGBC deals with issues of skills development, SALGA represents employers on labour matters relating to conditions of service, annual salary increase, etc. Qualitative interview respondents stated that SALGA also plays an influential role in the skills development for municipal employees to the extent the training programmes run by MULTA are sanctioned by them. However, respondents noted that some municipalities feel MULTA does not satisfy their needs, perhaps because it is not independent. MULTA is a division of the Business School of the University of the North West.

Respondents noted that SALGA plays a pivotal role in providing guidance and support to municipalities, especially technical advice. One area that respondents noted as being supported by SALGA is human resources management. A number of areas in HRM were mentioned in which SALGA gives support. These included the development of unified conditions of service in the municipalities; assisting in labour disputes especially when municipalities are faced with litigation and; annual salary negotiations. However, a major challenge that has been noted was the shortage of HR specialists and some of those that are available were said to be not well exposed to local government. A respondent mentioned that, as such, it is a big challenge to assist them but municipalities were said not to be using SALGA which has the technical

expertise to help them. The SALGBC and SALGA are surrogates for enforcing national policies.

SAMWU and IMATU are the two main trade unions that represent the interests of municipal workers. Respondents indicated that these relate to issues such as discipline, negotiating working conditions (health & safety), salaries, benefits (medical aid, housing schemes, etc). Membership is open to all municipal employees. However, municipal managers and managers directly accountable to them as provided for in Section 57 of the Municipal Systems Act are excluded due to SALGBC Regulations that do not allow senior officers to join trade unions. However, some were said to be members but could not be represented on any issues due to the restrictions imposed by the said regulations. Some of the achievements that trade unions pride themselves with are holding effective strikes such as the wage strike that was organised by SAMWU in 2005.

The trade union movement in the North West Province is well entrenched as SAMWU claimed to have provincial and branch offices across the North West province. SAMWU was said to be well established and organised in every municipality in the North West Province and also nationwide. Also, SAMWU is an affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), which is an ally of the ANC government. However, respondents noted that its major challenge is in reconciling employee interests and those of the employer due to the structure of its relationship with the ANC and COSATU. But one respondent was adamant that the ANC government understands that its existence and policy making capability is

linked to a vibrant trade union movement. This, they argued, guarantees SAMWU the leverage to influence key decisions that affect employees without having to play double fiddle to the ANC led government. SAMWU was said to have a Provident Fund which is controlled by workers even though it was said to be small. The following section deals with public sector reforms, emphasising decentralisation as one of the key reforms that the government has undertaken.

Decentralisation

Decentralisation in South Africa is entrenched in the constitution as already mentioned in Chapter V. Chapter 3 of the Constitution on Cooperative Government also guarantees the distinctiveness of the local government sphere but states that it must operate within the scope of cooperative government. According to the ideals of cooperative government as entailed in the constitution, the relationship between the three spheres of government should be cordial and on an equal basis (i.e. there is no senior partner) in spite of the constitutional provision. For instance, the constitution stipulates that in the event there is a dispute between any spheres of government none can dictate terms to the other but that differences should be negotiated and only where negotiations fail can the matter be resolved in a court of law. However, the Constitution and Municipal Systems Act establish national standards and monitoring regimes (especially through the PMS) that municipalities have to abide by. The insistence by the centre upon national standards is a form of centralisation. Adherence to national standards is achieved through the supervisory responsibilities bestowed upon the provincial government by the constitution over local government. On the other hand the adoption of PMS (in view of what PMS entails as outlined in Chapter

II) indicates the desire by the government to introduce SHRM (stated or not) in the municipalities.

Responding to a question as to whether 'the mechanisms in place to ensure the autonomy of local government are efficient and effective' the quantitative respondents gave the following responses summarised in Table 7.7 below.

Table 7.7: Mechanisms to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in local administration

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Don't know	1	3
Strongly disagree	1	3
Disagree	18	56
Agree	7	22
Strongly Agree	5	16
Total	32	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

The majority, 56 per cent, indicated that they 'disagree' that the mechanisms in place ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of local government administration. Twenty per cent said they 'agree' that the mechanisms enable local government to be efficient and effective in its operations. Sixteen per cent felt they 'strongly agree', while only three per cent each either 'strongly disagreed' or 'don't know'.

Some of the qualitative interview respondents also felt that the national and provincial governments intervene excessively in local government affairs. Others felt, however, that such interference is sanctioned by the law. Indeed, Chapter 6 of the Constitution Section 139 (1) empowers the national government to take away the executive

functions of a municipality that fails to execute its mandate effectively. One respondent observed that:

> All this is done within the context of the law. Local government is autonomous but within the confines of the existing legislative framework. Intervention by provincial government is executed according to the legal framework. So far there have been two such interventions, one in Mamusa Local Municipality when they were bankrupt. Another was in November 2005 when the MEC for Developmental Local Government and Housing took over the executive functions of the Mafikeng Local Municipality to deliver housing. The main challenge is that municipalities which have a problem and where the provincial government feels it should intervene always resist such interventions. The intervention consists of the appointment of an Administrator, who the Department gives a set of Terms of Reference and he/she reports back to the department on their progress.

Although respondents argued that the structures and mechanisms are in place for the national and provincial government intervention. They stated that there are other covert ways in which the governing party's political leaders intervene to determine the managerial leadership in the municipalities. They also mentioned that the top politicians also interfere in other ways in the running of local affairs, including matters that should be the preserve of management. An example was given of majority political parties 'meddling' in the municipal budgets, by way of dictating to its councillors what proportion of the budget should be for recurrent expenditure and how much for development projects and programmes. Another example given was that of the debate surrounding the change of the name of the City of Pretoria to Tshwane (in Gauteng Province), in which the national government intervened whereas it should be the residents who should decide on the name they wanted.

Qualitative interview respondents further stated that the infighting within the ANC is spilling over into the municipalities and making things unnecessarily tough. Another

problem was said to be that perhaps there are many governance structures that have become a financial burden. Some felt that perhaps the suggested phasing out of provincial government would enhance local government. Another area of contention was the district municipalities. Respondents felt that the district municipalities were sometimes helpful but argued that they are not so relevant if municipalities could have adequate funding and capacity. In fact, they stated, some of the funds and personnel availed to district municipalities could be more useful if diverted to local municipalities. And that there would be no need for district municipalities as the capacity of the local municipalities would have been enhanced.

When asked if local government has adequate capacity to manage decentralised responsibilities effectively, the survey interviewees gave the following responses (see Table 7.8).

Table 7.8: Does local government have capacity to manage decentralised responsibilities

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Don't know	3	9.4
Strongly disagree	2	6.3
Disagree	7	21.9
Agree	18	56.3
Strongly agree	2	6.3
Total	32	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Fifty six per cent of the respondents stated that they 'agree' there is adequate capacity. About 22 per cent said they 'disagree' and nine per cent said they 'don't know' while six per cent each said they 'strongly disagree' and/or 'strongly agree'. The majority felt that local authorities have the capacity to manage their own affairs, in spite of the

fact that more than half of the municipalities in the North West province were beneficiaries of the Project Consolidate programme (see Chapter V) that is meant for the rescue of ailing municipalities.

When asked 'does your organisation have the technical capacity to manage the decentralised HRM responsibilities?' the responses turned out as follows; 50 per cent felt there was 'limited capacity', 34 per cent thought there is 'some capacity', nine per cent thinking 'poor capacity', and only six per cent saying there was 'adequate capacity'.

Table 7.9: Does local government have the technical capacity to manage decentralised HRM responsibilities

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Poor capacity	3	9.4
Limited capacity	16	50.0
Some capacity	11	34.4
Adequate capacity	2	6.3
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Perhaps this indicates that there is a lack of skilled HR personnel in the municipalities. The lack of skilled HR experts perhaps leads to the weak implementation of agreements between municipalities and their partners (e.g. SALGA).

Figure 7.1 below presents an illustration of the dispersal of HRM responsibilities in the South African municipalities. The Municipal Systems Act bestows executive powers in the office of the mayor or equivalent as the case may be. These powers

include HRM responsibilities for the appointment of line managers and first line reporting managers. The appointment of the latter is a shared responsibility between the mayor and the CEO. The Act devolves HRM responsibilities for all other staff to the municipal managers.

Figure 7.1: Dispersal of HRM responsibilities in the Local Authorities of South Africa

Key:
— Devolved HRM responsibilities
— · — · — Delegated HRM responsibilities
- - - - - Professional and technical advice & performs transfers on behalf of municipalities
◄·········► Shared HRM responsibilities
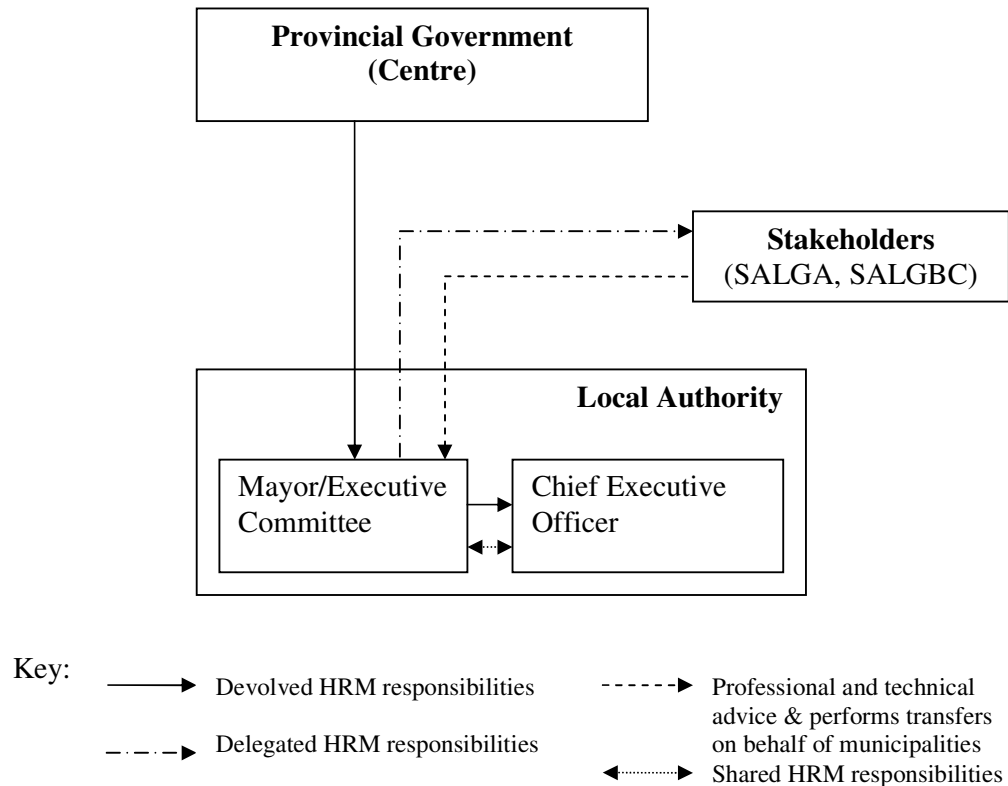
Source: Author's Own Construct (2008)

HRM responsibilities under the above model are vertically decentralised as the responsibilities are devolved to local authorities and can only be revoked through the amendment of the law. The HRM responsibilities at local level are further decentralised or dispersed from the mayors to CEOs, while some are shared between the two as indicated above. Some of the HRM responsibilities have been delegated to other stakeholders (SALGA and SALGBC) as already discussed under the Labour

Movement/Trade Unions sub-heading above. This is further discussed in Section 7.5 where it is shown that the standardisation of salaries in the municipalities was achieved through the involvement of SALGA as a proxy for the national government. As more and more municipalities comply with SALGA's requirements they are brought into uniform practice and are brought under indirect central control.

The degree of HRM decentralisation is illustrated in the decentralisation/centralisation and SHRM/personnel management matrix in Figure 7.2 below. As already discussed in Chapter II, personnel management is associated with public administration while SHRM is associated with NPM. In the matrix below it is shown that the municipalities in the North West vary in their HRM practice, in particular the variation is related to the size of the municipality. The smaller, rural and poorer municipalities had their HRM functions centralised at, and performed on their behalf by, the district municipalities. In Figure 7.2 the smaller municipalities are placed in the upper right hand quadrant that depicts a centralised SHRM system.

The bigger and well resourced municipalities on the other hand are placed in the lower right hand quadrant indicating their HRM approach depicts a decentralised SHRM system. However, there is evidence of increasing centralisation through the requirement for them to adhere to national standards and controls brought through SALGA and SALGBC. Also, as it is demonstrated in Section 7.7 municipal managers account for their municipalities' performance to both provincial government and national government ministers of local government. It is on the basis of these reports

made to the centre that intervention strategies are developed. These developments

indicate a gradual shift among the larger municipalities from the lower right hand side

Figure 7.2: Types of Municipalities and their Present HRM System

Centralisation

Personnel Management
Centralised

SHRM
Centralised

**Personnel
Management
(PA)**

SHRM (NPM)

Personnel Management
Decentralised

SHRM
Decentralised

Decentralisation

Key:

⊕   Large local Municipalities

◎   Small/resource poor local municipalities

– ▶   Possible direction
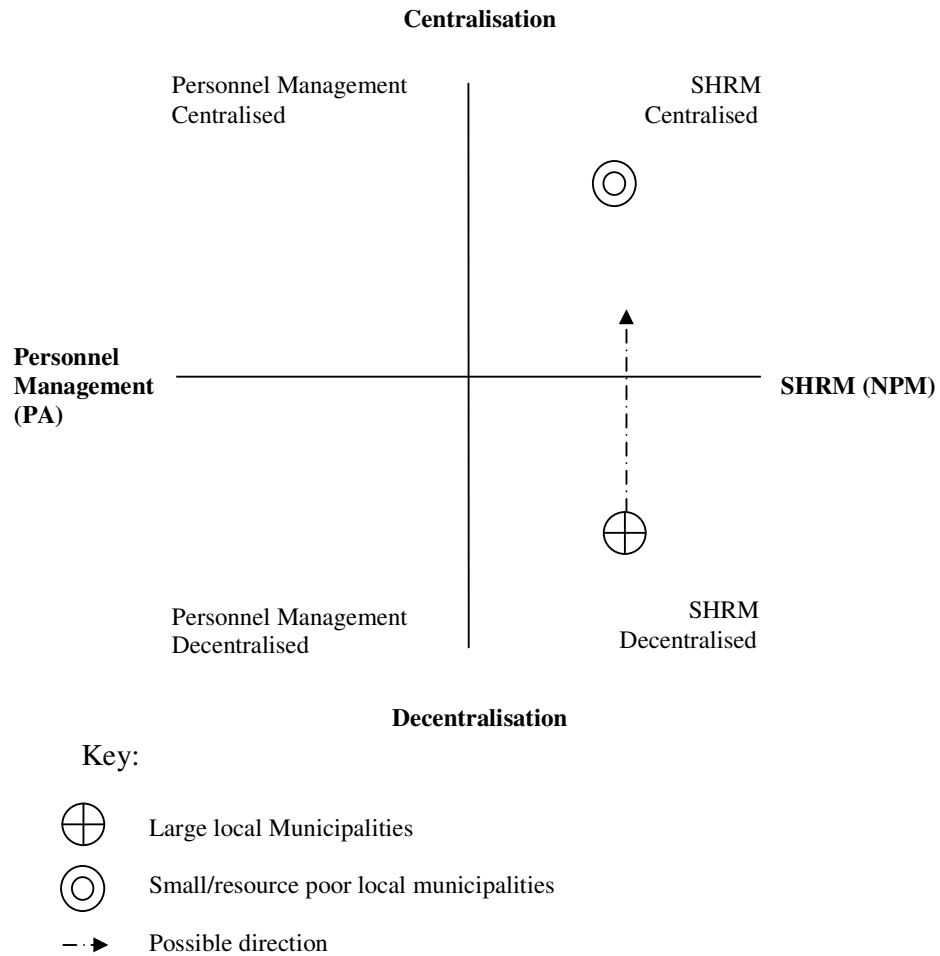
Source: Author's Own Construct (2008)

quadrant to the upper right hand side one (i.e. from a decentralised SHRM practice to

a centralised system) as indicated by the arrow in Figure 7.2. Although there are

different factors that led and/or are leading to the move for both the smaller and larger

municipalities to a centralised SHRM system, the overall trend is that there is convergence under a centralised SHRM system. Further evidence is provided in Section 7.4 below that places South Africa's municipalities on the right hand side of the personnel management (PA) / SHRM (NPM) axis. The following section looks at the internal environment of the municipalities.

7.3.2. Internal Environment

Strengths and Weaknesses

The qualitative respondents were asked about what they think are the strengths and weaknesses of the municipalities. Some of the strengths mentioned were that local municipalities generally have a nearly full staff complement, and they enjoy support from the provincial and national governments. Also mentioned was that the municipalities fully manage their own staff, they are able to hire and fire their own staff. And that these staff are not transferable, hence capable employees with experience are retained in the service of the particular municipality. It was also mentioned that the lack of transfers enable people to get to know and understand their colleagues very well. Trust develops and team spirit strengthens. Once somebody is transferred from outside it is difficult to integrate them in, they said.

The weaknesses or potential threats for municipalities were said to be lack of technical skills among the labour force, and the inadequacy of funding. Respondents blamed lack of funds on the failure by residents to pay for municipal services and some municipalities' failure as well to collect revenue. Other problems identified included the lack of promotion opportunities which is compounded by the lack of transfers. Some respondents stated that staying too long in one place without the

possibility of being transferred lead to people developing comfort zones and becoming rigid and resistant to change. A question was asked as to whether there are adequate material resources at the disposal of local authorities, and Table 7.10 presents the results.

Table 7.10: Adequacy of material resources in local authorities

	FREQUENCY	PER CENT
Inadequate material resources	7	22
Fairly adequate material resources	9	28
Moderately adequate material resources	14	44
Adequate material resources	2	6
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

When asked about the adequacy of material resources about 44 per cent of the quantitative interview respondents indicated that the resources are 'moderately adequate' and 28 per cent opted for 'fairly adequate'. About 22 per cent thought there were 'inadequate material resources' and only six per cent thought there were 'adequate material resources'.

Organisational Culture

Another question was asked: 'to what extent is your organisation responsible for the welfare of its employees?' about 38 per cent said to a 'significant extent' and 31 per cent 'moderately involved'. Twenty five per cent thought it was to a 'limited extent', with six per cent thinking it was 'to a great extent'. None chose 'not involved at all'.

Table 7.11: Organisation's responsibility for staff welfare

	FREQUENCY	PER CENT
Limited extent	8	25
Moderately involved	10	31
Significant extent	12	38
To a great extent	2	6
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

The qualitative interview respondents were asked to what extent municipalities are involved in corporate welfare. Respondents indicated that municipalities are not involved in activities where public resources are expended on matters of a personal nature, such as the use of official vehicles and other resources during the burial of an employee's relative. This managerial practice was inherited from the previous government, and it shows some degree of Western management ideals and culture.

7.4. Concept of Human Resource Management

When asked about the HR policy in local government, the qualitative interview respondents stated that the current local government arrangement allows for variations from one municipality to the other. They also mentioned that it is a requirement for municipalities to develop their own HR policies. Another respondent said the guiding principle is the *Batho Pele* (People First) concept, which focuses on the customer. The respondent went further to say that 'this principle emanates from Chapter 10 of the Constitution which deals with the public service'. Section 195 (1) of the Constitution establishes the values and guiding principles for the public service. Section 50 (1) of

the Municipal Systems Act 2000 which establishes the basic values of local public administration and human resources also states that local public administration is governed by the values and principles set out in Section 195 of the Constitution. In essence, the HR policy ethos for municipalities is based on the democratic values and principles stated in the constitution.

A question was asked to the quantitative interview respondents, as to whether 'clear systems exist that clarify each stakeholder's role in the management of human resource management policy' About 47 per cent said they 'agree' and 34 per cent opted for 'disagree', while 19 per cent chose 'strongly agree'. Associated with this question is the one about the role played by trade unions and/or staff associations in the HR policy process (see Table 7.12). Forty seven per cent thought these organisations play 'a significant role'. About 34 per cent opted for 'a not-so significant role'; while nine per cent each thought 'a minor role' and some 'a major role'. Overall this shows respondents' perception that the stakeholders are involved in the HR policy process.

Table 7.12: The role of trade unions in the HRM policy process

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
A minor role	3	9.4
A not so significant role	11	34.4
A significant role	15	46.9
A major role	3	9.4
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

A few questions were asked about the strategic planning framework. When asked, 'does your organisation have the mission and vision statements?' 94 per cent said 'yes' and only six per cent said 'no'. Another question was asked as to whether these statements are accessible to all members of staff. The majority, 56 per cent said 'yes' and 28 per cent 'no', with only 16 per cent indicating they 'don't know'. When asked if these strategic plans are operational, about 63 per cent said 'yes' and 28 per cent indicated they 'don't know' with only nine per cent saying 'no'. The majority of the respondents indicated that the strategic plans are operational but a significant proportion of HR officers also did not know as to whether the strategic plans are operational. These responses and the government documents indicate that the South African government is committed to the transformation of its HRM system and the overall management of the public service. This places South Africa's municipalities on the right hand side of the matrix (SHRM / NPM) on the PA/NPM axis in Figure 7.2.

However, there are indications that the South African government wants to integrate the public service in the national, provincial and local spheres into a single public service (see Section 5.2.1). This initiative is indicative of the centralising tendency of the ANC led government in which local government HRM strategy making will be heavily influenced by external contingencies/factors as opposed to internal resources. On the centralisation/decentralisation axis of Figure 7.2 already some of South Africa's municipalities are placed on the upper right hand side quadrant. These other developments such as the integration of the national, provincial and local public services would further cement South Africa's HRM system's move up from the lower right hand side quadrant (decentralised) to the upper right (centralised). It will be

further illustrated in the following sections how the current thinking in the South African public service has influenced the HRM practices. The HRM practices are discussed in the following section below.

7.5 HRM Practices

Human Resources Planning

Planning is considered one of the most important HR practices, and how HRs are linked to organisational strategy and the labour market is dependent on HR planning. Quantitative interview respondents were asked if 'the staffing plans reflect congruence with the organisation's strategic plan' A majority, of 53 per cent, said 'yes', 31 per cent chose 'don't know' and only 16 per cent said 'no'. Although more than half of the respondents indicated that there was congruence between their municipalities' HR plans and the strategic plans, a significant proportion of 31 per cent indicated they were uncertain. Some of those municipalities that had HRM policies, clearly articulated their recruitment targets, reflecting their Employment Equity Plans with quantitative targets for a given period (e.g. five year plans). These plans guided the recruitment and selection processes.

Recruitment and Selection

According to the Municipal Systems Act the recruitment of the municipal manager and first line reporting managers is the responsibility of the municipality in consultation with the municipal manager for the latter. The recruitment and appointment of all other staff is the responsibility of the municipal manager. The qualitative interview respondents stated that the recruitment and selection processes are performed in an open and competitive way, with vacant posts being advertised.

Respondents stated that for middle management positions downwards, they are supposed to be appointed as interns to give them the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the systems. However, the qualitative interview respondents stated that there are many challenges in the recruitment process such as political influence and corruption. And that these problems are increasing. Respondents mentioned that many municipal managers do not have the necessary experience and exposure to do their job properly as many are merely political appointees. And that political interference pervades all levels of the municipalities.

Remuneration and Rewards

The questions in this subsection sought an understanding of the respondents' views about the appropriateness of the salaries and non-monetary rewards and their roles in motivation. The first question asked if salaries are clearly structured and 56 per cent said 'yes', 34 per cent 'no' and nine per cent 'don't know'. When asked 'Are salaries competitive?' 44 per cent said 'no', 40 per cent 'yes' and 16 per cent said they 'don't know'. Perhaps this shows that although the salaries are well structured but they are perceived as not competitive. Respondents noted that although the salaries are well structured, they entrench an unequal pay system across municipalities to the disadvantage of the smaller ones. According to Circular 68/2005, Ref. 4.3.10.5, dated August 17, 2005 addressed to all executive mayors and municipal managers of municipalities in the North West province, SALGA advised municipalities to implement new salary scales. The salary scales featured an across the board salary increase of 6 per cent excluding officers on contract such as the CEOs and managers responsible to him/her. The salary scales graded municipalities from 1 to 10, with 1 being the smallest and its municipal manager being the lowest paid and 10 being the

largest and its municipal manager most highly paid in the province (see Table 5.2 in Chapter V). The least paid municipal manager got R104, 376 per annum while the highest paid got R267, 696 which translates into a ratio of 1: 2.6. Bigger municipalities got better grading and therefore higher pay for their managers.

Despite the criticism from the quantitative respondents the remuneration system rewards managers according to the level of responsibility they are performing. In fact, one of the qualitative respondents noted that in the metropolitan municipalities such as those in Gauteng province, municipal managers are paid annual salaries of over R900, 000 per annum. The respondent stated that such municipalities, unlike the less resourced ones, have attracted some employees from both the provincial and national government.

There was yet another question, about whether non-monetary benefits are clearly articulated and competitive. About 41 per cent said 'no', 31 per cent 'don't know' and 28 per cent said 'yes'. When probed, some of the quantitative respondents said that senior managers are the only employees entitled to some benefits in the form of bonuses. And that they often award themselves, in the words of one respondent, 'big bonuses' even when the performance of the municipality is deficient. This was corroborated by a statement on the Democratic Alliance (one of the opposition political parties) website, which stated that:

> A reply to a DA parliamentary question reveals that 67% or 93 out of the 138 Municipal Managers that run municipalities under government's Project Consolidate rescue programme for dysfunctional municipalities were awarded performance bonuses in the past financial year … In Bophirima municipality in the North West province, where 73% of residents have no access to

basic sanitation, the Municipal Manager was awarded a performance bonus of R377 665.

The bonus culture in the South African municipalities is derived from the idea of incentivisation inherent in NPM. However, although the idea behind incentivisation is to reward good performance in South Africa it does not achieve that objective but rather it is linked to the patronage system discussed in Chapter II. Earlier in this chapter views from the respondents have indicated that many of the municipal managers are political appointees.

The other questions wanted to establish the perceptions of the respondents on turnover, vacancy rate and the level at which turnover is most likely to be highest. On the turnover rate, about 72 per cent of respondents thought the turnover rate was 'moderate', 13 per cent 'low', nine per cent 'very high' and only six per cent 'very low' (see Table 7.13).

Table7.13: The turnover rate in local municipalities

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Very high	3	9
Moderate	23	72
Low	4	13
Very low	2	6
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

The vacancy rate among skilled labour was perceived to be 'moderate' by 59 per cent of the respondents. About 22 per cent thought the vacancy rate was 'low', while only

16 per cent said it was 'high'. A negligible three per cent thought it was very 'high' (Table 7.14).

Table 7.14: How would you describe the vacancy rate among skilled labour?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Very high	1	3
High	5	16
Moderate	19	59
Low	7	22
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

However, when asked at what level in their organisation is turnover heaviest, 28 per cent each indicated 'technical level' and 'middle management'. 25 per cent chose 'other', 13 per cent 'top management' and six per cent 'artisan' level (see Table 7.15).

Table 7.15: At what level of the organisation is turnover heaviest?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Top management	4	13
Middle management	9	28
Technical level	9	28
Artisan level	2	6
Other	8	25
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

It will be shown in the next subsection on Training and Development that local municipalities are having a challenge retaining some of their newly trained personnel especially those in the technical fields as they are in high demand across the economy. Asked if they conduct exit interviews for those who have resigned, 28 per cent said 'never', 22 per cent 'rarely', 19 per cent 'sometimes', 13 per cent 'quite often' and 16

per cent 'always'. Although obvious assumptions as to why employees leave may be made, such as dissatisfaction with pay and other working conditions, but to know exactly which aspects of the conditions of service need to be attended to, a more accurate assessment can be made with exit interviews. Perhaps this points to some of the weaknesses or gaps in the HRM strategic planning process. The next discussion focuses on training and development.

Training and Development

This subsection presents the strategies adopted by the municipalities to build their capacity through training and development of their employees. The first question was about whether the HR policy contains clear guidelines for training and development. About 41 per cent of respondents said they 'strongly agree', 38 per cent 'agree', nine per cent 'don't know' and six per cent each 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree' (see Table .16).

Table 7.16: Guidelines for training and development are clear

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Don't know	3	9
Strongly disagree	2	6
Disagree	2	6
Agree	12	38
Strongly agree	13	41
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Another question asked if the respondents felt there is a clear criteria for identifying training needs. Thirty eight per cent said there is a 'somewhat clear criteria', 34 per cent 'clear criteria' and 28 per cent a 'fairly clear criteria. Generally respondents felt

the criteria for identifying training needs within their organisations is clear. Another question asked about the adequacy of funding for training and development. Respondents indicated that there is adequate funding. About 47 per cent said there is 'adequate funding', 22 per cent 'somewhat adequate funding', 16 per cent fairly adequate funding', 13 per cent said 'funding is rarely available', and only three per cent said 'not adequate at all' (see Table 7.17). Perhaps the reported adequacy of the availability of funding is related to the SETA intervention strategy.

Table 7.17: Is there adequate funding for training and development in your organisation

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Adequate funding	15	47
Somewhat adequate funding	7	22
Fairly adequate funding	5	16
Funding is rarely available	4	13
Funding is not adequate at all	1	3
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

As to whether employees are deployed in positions where they will apply their newly acquired skills after training, about 34 per cent said they 'disagree'. Twenty eight per cent indicated that they 'agree', 22 per cent 'strongly disagree' and 16 per cent opted for 'strongly agree' (see Table 7.18). The majority, 56 per cent altogether, were of the view that employees were not deployed in positions where they can apply the skills they acquired in training.

Table 7.18: Employees deployed in positions where they will apply their newly acquired skills after training

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Strongly agree	5	16
Agree	9	28
Disagree	11	34
Strongly disagree	7	22
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

It is not clear why this is so but a number of possibilities are plausible. Perhaps this shows that contrary to what respondents said earlier, training is not linked to organisational objectives or that employees are trained for skills they do not really need. In the latter case it may imply that employees could be seeing training as a form of entitlement or a form of holiday from work which they should get irrespective of its relevance to their jobs. Coupled with the alleged inappropriate deployment of newly trained employees, the qualitative interview respondents stated that municipalities are facing serious challenges with the training of technical staff such as fire and emergency personnel. Respondents said their training is more expensive and when these employees complete their studies, other employers such as airports recruit them leaving the less economically endowed municipalities empty handed, and with a vacant post for which they have to recruit afresh. At this juncture the study turns its attention to performance management.

7.6. Performance Management

This section seeks to understand performance management in the municipalities. The questions sought to understand how performance management is carried out and whether it is linked with other HR practices and organisational objectives. The sub-section seeks to understand the linkage between other HR practices performance management, in particular performance appraisal.

A question was posed as to how often has performance appraisal always been performed in a year in the municipalities. As presented in Table 7.19 a significant proportion of 47 per cent of the respondents said 'never', 25 per cent said 'once' and 22 per cent said 'quarterly or more' with about three per cent each indicating 'twice' and 'three times'.

Table 7.19: How often is performance appraisal carried out in your organisation in a year?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Never	15	47
Once	8	25
Twice	1	3
Three times	1	3
Quarterly or more	7	22
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

However, it is important to note that the qualitative interview respondents indicated that performance appraisals were conducted only among the senior officers who were on contract but not all members of staff. When asked if the appraisals were linked to rewards and sanctions for employees, 47 per cent indicated that it was 'not linked at all'. About 25 per cent indicated it was 'somewhat linked' and 16 per cent 'weakly

linked'. And only six per cent each indicated that it was 'linked' and/or that there are 'strong links' (see Table 7.20).

Table 7.20: Is performance appraisal linked to rewards and sanctions for employees?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Not linked at all	15	47
Weakly linked	5	16
Somewhat linked	8	25
Linked	2	6
Strongly linked	2	6
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

As for the linkage between performance appraisal and organisational objectives, 31 per cent indicated that they 'disagree' that these are linked. But 28 per cent said they 'agree', and 19 per cent indicated that they 'strongly disagreed', with 13 per cent stating they 'don't know' and only nine per cent saying they 'strongly agree'. Altogether those who 'strongly disagree' and/or 'disagree' accounted for 50 per cent of the respondents, making them the largest single group. Earlier it has been shown that there are no performance appraisals among the junior staff. Based on the views expressed above, it is safe to assume that whenever performance appraisals are performed they are not carefully aligned to organisational objectives. During the course of the fieldwork, it was indicated by some respondents that at the Mafikeng Local Municipality the then municipal manager was dismissed on what was perceived to be politically motivated grounds. Therefore it would not be surprising that sometimes performance appraisals are used to justify some other actions/decisions that may not necessarily be directly related to the performance of the job. That is

performance appraisals can be used to meet other ulterior objectives, say political objectives.

Table 7.21: The linkage between performance appraisal and organisational objectives

	FREQUENCY	PER CENT
Don't know	4	13
Strongly disagree	6	19
Disagree	10	31
Agree	9	28
Strongly agree	3	9
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

Asked whether the results of the performance reviews were used to make adjustments to employees' work objectives, 41 per cent indicated 'never', 19 per cent 'quite often', 16 per cent 'sometimes', 13 per cent 'rarely' and nine per cent 'always' (see Table 7.22).

Table 7.22: Are the results from the performance reviews used to adjust employees' work objectives?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Never	13	41
Rarely	4	13
Sometimes	5	16
Quite often	6	19
Always	3	9
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

When asked if there has been an improvement of employee performance due to performance reviews, 34 per cent indicated that they 'agree', 28 per cent 'disagree', 16 per cent 'don't know' while 13 per cent 'strongly agree' and nine per cent 'strongly disagree'. Those who 'agree' and/or 'strongly agree' represented 47 per cent

of the respondents (see Table 7.23). The proportion of respondents who felt there has been improvement on employee performance is significantly large despite the earlier views that performance reviews are either never or rarely performed. It is plausible that the dismissal of other senior officers may have prompted others to improve their performance as a bargaining chip for them to retain their jobs irrespective of political affiliation.

Table 7.23: Has there been improvement to employee performance due to performance reviews?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Strongly agree	4	13
Agree	11	34
Disagree	9	28
Strongly disagree	3	9
Don't know	5	16
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

The last question in this subsection wanted the respondents to express their views about the linkage between remuneration and employee performance. Respondents had to indicate whether they agreed or not and the degree of their opinions. The statement read; 'The remuneration in your organisation is not strongly linked to the employee's performance'

Table 7.24: The remuneration in your organisation is not strongly linked to the employees' performance.

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Strongly agree	12	38
Agree	6	19
Disagree	10	31
Strongly disagree	3	9
Don't know	1	3
Total	32	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

About 38 per cent felt they 'strongly agree' with the statement. Thirty one per cent said they 'disagree' and 19 per cent 'agree' and nine per cent 'strongly disagree' with only three per cent saying they 'don't know'. Overall, about 57 per cent either 'strongly agree' and/or 'agree' that individual performance is not aligned with pay. Some qualitative respondents indicated that because there is a lack of performance appraisal there is no way performance can be linked with salaries.

Asked if there is a functional performance management system in place or not, about 47 per cent of the quantitative interview respondents said 'yes' there is a functional performance management system in place, and 38 per cent said 'no', with 16 percent saying they 'don't know'. Qualitative interview respondents stated that each municipality is required to develop a strategic plan and identify critical areas of service delivery. And that PMS is a policy that all municipalities have to adhere to. But they further stated that although the PMS was legislated for, its implementation has not been successful. A typical example was that of the Mafikeng Local Municipality in which one respondent stated that:

In 2005 the Mafikeng Local Municipality engaged a Transformation Manager who is under the direct supervision of the Municipal Manager. This manager has not been able to produce the performance management tool. It is the Municipal Manager who is responsible for performance management.

Trade union resistance was also mentioned by respondents as an impediment to the successful implementation of PMS. Respondents indicated that these were in spite of efforts made by SALGA to steer the implementation of PMS. Respondents indicated that SALGA conducted workshops in 2001 on PMS but still in 2006 the municipalities were asking for assistance at the time when they were supposed to be implementing the programme. This is in spite of SALGA having developed and published a PMS toolkit in 2005 and conducted workshops for municipalities across the country. Chapters have been established in the municipalities to assist them with the implementation of the programme.

In a move that showed government's frustration with the pace at which PMS was being implemented, the government was said to be coming up with proposals to improve service delivery. According to Mail & Guardian (2006c) these were said to include having the municipal managers being 'forced to sign performance agreements … Legislation to introduce salary bands for municipal and senior managers at municipalities …' and '… job descriptions, employment contracts and performance contracts entered into between municipalities, municipal managers and those accountable to them'. The Minister of Provincial and Local Government, Sydney Mufamadi, was quoted as having said that 'now there will be a direct relation between what managers do and what the community expects of them' and that there

have been some concerns about his (Minister Mufamadi) ability to regulate performance for municipal managers (ibid).

Indeed the qualitative interview respondents also confirmed that municipal managers and departmental mangers were hired on contract already. However, it is surprising that the Minister of Provincial and Local Government was quoted in the media proposing to introduce contractual employment for municipal mangers and other senior staff members when it was already there. Perhaps the matter to be addressed is about ensuring that the legal and policy provisions in existence are adhered to and that information on performance outcomes is made available. The next section discusses feedback on performance management.

7.7. Information on Outcomes

This section presents the feedback process on performance management of the municipalities. First we consider the linkages of performance with the national economy.

Linkages with the National Economy

The qualitative interview respondents stated that performance management in the municipalities is linked to the national economy through the Integrated Development Plan. Respondents stated that municipalities identify their own objectives and also have to draw the Key Performance Areas and set targets for service delivery. Then quarterly reviews are set and departmental managers report to the municipal manager who in turn reports once every six months to the council. Respondents mentioned that

the performance of programmes such as the public works programme and the level of joblessness are used as proxies for performance.

In addition to the municipal managers' biannual reports to their councils, respondents stated that internal auditing is carried out monthly on Key Performance Areas and targets and reports submitted to the councils once every six months. These audit reports are intended to confirm or corroborate what the municipal managers would have reported to their respective councils. In addition to the biannual reports to their councils, municipal managers report annually to the MEC for Developmental Local Government and Housing in their province and also to the Minister of Provincial and Local Government at national level as well. And they do get feedback from both the provincial and national governments on their performance reports. Qualitative interview respondents stated that the reports that municipalities prepare are used to identify problems, both potential and actual, and to develop intervention strategies to assist the municipalities. When asked as to whether baseline data and performance improvement data are analysed regularly, 34 per cent indicated 'never', 28 per cent 'quite often', 16 per cent 'sometimes', 13 per cent 'rarely' and only six per cent 'always' and only one non-response (see Table 7.25).

Table 7.25: Are baseline data and performance improvement data analysed regularly?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Always	2	6
Quite often	9	28
Sometimes	5	16
Rarely	4	13
Never	11	34
Total	31	100

Source: Field Survey (2006)

A significant percentage of the respondents indicated that baseline data on performance is not used to the extent that may help the municipalities to improve on their performance in a well informed manner.

However, respondents noted that there are challenges in the monitoring and evaluation of the performance management process. They stated that the Key Performance Indicators are informed by the IDP and that budgets are developed to finance the development plans. The main problem, respondents noted, was that the programme was not well coordinated. They stated that several municipalities and sector departments are not well interlinked and that this has negatively affected the linkages between the national economy and the municipalities' performance.

7.8. Summary

This chapter has shown how the external and internal environments influenced HRM in local government in the North West province. In particular political concerns drive administrative decisions in a significant way. According to the ideals implicit in the HRM policy and the Municipal Systems Act line managers are responsible for HRM, HRM flexibility is enshrined in the same legislation, there is emphasis on the measurement of performance and, individualisation and incentivisation are also part of the HRM system. All these are defining characteristics of SHRM as defined in Chapter II. However, in practice this study found out that some HRM decisions were contingent upon political concerns. For instance, in South Africa there are genuine concerns for affirmative action, that every employer has to factor in and ensure are

part of their HRM policy and practice. But there have also been some HRM decisions, as the respondents indicated, that were based solely on patronage. This relates mainly to the appointment of the municipal managers and first line reporting managers. The study shows that the ANC factional fighting played a significant role in this development.

In South Africa the HRM scenario is complex and is governed by an array of legislations and many actors are involved in the HRM process. The multiplicity of legislations and other instruments that govern the management of HRs is a product of South Africa's political history. Due to the inequity of resource endowment, in both material and human resources terms, there has been a need to standardise HRM practices as well as the physical distribution of skilled HRs among municipalities. These were effected through the direct involvement of national and provincial government through a programme known as Project Consolidate as well as by proxy - SALGA and SALGBC.

Another factor that has had a significant impact on HRM is social culture. The previous regime in South Africa applied European management practices, although within a racist system. An important aspect of these management practices is individualisation and the absence of, or limited, corporate welfarism. In a way that shows path dependent HRM decisions, in spite of radical reforms after 1994, this practise has been inherited and perpetuated by the new regime. Also related to social culture and its bearing on organisational culture is the ANC led government's decision to introduce a policy, and intention to legislate, for a single public service. In

South Africa this indicates a major shift towards uncertainty avoidance, which is closely associated with developing countries (see Hofstede's cultural typologies in Chapter II). The findings indicate that there is a move towards centralisation as a solution to uncertainties posed by the weak labour market and also perhaps the national government's fear of loss of political control over the provinces and municipalities as the current system gives them formal powers in the choice of senior staff.

The culture of violent protests and service payment boycotts disrupted service delivery and created financial loss to the affected municipalities. The lack of own financial resources was also blamed on poverty and historical factors that also limited the municipalities abilities to raise revenue. The HRM system in the municipalities is also influenced by their economic strength, with the bigger and economically strong municipalities having well developed HRM departments and policies. Economic constraints such as the inability to offer competitive salaries led to the loss of skilled personnel to organisations that could afford higher remuneration packages. Direct intervention has been used in severe situations as in the case where the Mamusa Local Municipality was put under administration. Yet another was when a municipality could not carry out one of the delegated functions (housing) efficiently and the provincial government intervened by providing the service itself. As indicated in Chapter II this shows the difficulties unfunded mandates create for municipalities.

The monitoring of individual performance through the use of the performance appraisal instrument is virtually non-existent in the municipalities except for the top

managers. The findings indicate that the performance reviews for managers were not solely based on objectively verifiable criteria but political considerations took precedence. Neither were rewards linked to performance reviews as even managers whose municipalities underperformed were awarded performance bonuses. Performance management was based on PMS which is embedded in the legislative framework. However, its implementation has been inconsistent across the municipalities. SALGA which is responsible for the facilitation of the implementation of PMS has no powers to enforce the implementation but can only persuade and encourage. The trade unions interfered with the implementation process for PMS by their resistance to it. The national government has noted the slackness in the implementation process and the Minister of Provincial and Local Government responded in a way that seeks to tighten up things and make municipal managers more accountable. These developments point to centralised control of HRM at local level through performance standards decided at the top. Municipalities concentrate their efforts on those aspects of HRM and general management that are of consequence to the national and provincial governments, neglecting those that are internal.

Feedback on performance management is linked to the national economy through the IDPs. Also, municipal managers produce biannual reports to their councils. These are supplemented by audit reports that either confirm or refute what the managers may have presented. Municipal managers also have to report on an annual basis to the MEC for Developmental Local Government and Housing, the Auditor General, and the Minister of Provincial and Local Government. Although there is structured information on organisational performance, there is none for individual performance.

Compliance to the reporting mechanism was weak with very few municipalities having tabled their reports. Chapter VIII presents the conclusion.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Introduction

This study has analysed the linkages between decentralisation and human resource management in Botswana and South Africa (focusing on the North West province). The SHRM conceptual model and the path dependency theory were applied to both case studies to understand the dynamics of HRM and decentralisation in particular contexts. This chapter presents the conclusion of the preceding chapters, analysis of empirical data and concludes by drawing the significance of the findings and recommendations for further research. To refresh the mind of the reader, the discussion begins first by revisiting the Statement of the Problem and then explores the research questions.

8.2 Statement of the Problem

Chapter I introduced the research problem, the questions and hypotheses. These are repeated here for the convenience of the reader. The challenges associated with public management are related to poor service delivery and the pursuit of solutions to these. In developing countries the proposed solutions have always come from the West in the form of management ideas propagated by donors, development banks and consultants. The transferability, adoption and/or adaptability of these ideas across the world are what scholars seek to understand. As already noted the problem of poor service delivery is a complex one as it arises from multiple interrelated causes. Key

among them are: lack of capacity, limited financial resources and, inappropriate institutional frameworks, policies and systems.

The problem of poor service delivery is more complex than just its association with resources. There are many factors at play (such as the environmental context) and how these shape the HRM policies and practice in a particular country. Nevertheless, HRM in most developing countries remains weak. The qualitative and quantitative capacity of the human resources that could effectively deliver services remains unfulfilled. In the face of limited resources and structural problems there is a limited scope for long term planning in the management of human resources. These problems are most severe at local government level where resources are generally limited and their interface with other variables has not produced the much needed improvements in service delivery. However, from the case studies at hand it shows that there are no simple or straight forward answers to the questions that this study attempted to answer. Presented below are the key findings from the study in relation to the research questions.

8.3. Main Findings of the Study

This section is divided into three subsections that address each of the research questions. The first focuses on addressing the primary research question:

Is there a trade-off between SHRM and decentralization or local democracy in Botswana and South Africa?

The key factors that determine HRM in Botswana and South Africa are multifaceted. What this study sought to understand is whether these factors lead to trade-offs in

HRM techniques and autonomous decision-making or is it possible for developing countries to have both SHRM and decentralisation, that is does having one preclude having the other? This study has found that in both countries the centre decides on the nature of the HRM reforms while local authorities are the implementers. The study has also shown that contingent factors (such as politics, economy, socio-cultural issues, etc) and path dependent policy choices have significantly influenced decentralisation in the two countries. These influences have tended to be at the expense of the requirements of the SHRM model (as outlined on page 41) in that the latter anticipates that the desired flexibility will be introduced via decentralisation of decision-making about HRM. However, from a cursory look there seems to be a lot of similarities between the two countries although a closer look sees significant differences emerge.

These emerging differences could be ascribed to external factors in each country (such as politics, socio-culture, economy, history, traditions, processes, etc) that according to the contingency theory have a bearing on HR policies (see pp46, 47). The following discussion summarises how these factors in the external environment influence the nature of HRM. Both Botswana and South Africa are politically stable and have close economic and cultural ties. Besides these ties there is some evidence of the transfer of ideas between the two countries. This phenomenon of the transfer of ideas between countries is an aspect of the external environment and ideas are known to impact on virtually every aspect of human life be it culture, traditions and many other factors (that have already been identified under the contingency theory). In this study the sharing/transfer of ideas between countries has had a significant influence on HR philosophy such as with the infusion of the concept of *Ubuntu* and *Botho* in

South Africa and Botswana respectively. These two countries are among some of the few sub-Saharan Africa countries that have committed themselves to the adoption of NPM-like reforms. Associated with NPM reforms is PMS which both countries have adopted as the main civil service reform. Here we realise the role played by donors and consultants (e.g. World Bank) in the transfer of ideas, but most significantly at least according to the contingency theory is the role played by the external factors in shaping HRM policy. However, the practice of HRM in Botswana and South Africa takes different approaches, with the former being bureaucratic and centralised while the latter is decentralised in approach (see sections 6.3.1., 6.8., 7.3.1 and 7.8). This leads to the discussion on the types of HRM approaches, applied in Botswana and South Africa, and the extent of their decentralisation. As we shall see, despite their differences our findings suggest that it is likely that the two countries will converge around a centralised version of human resources management (identified in Figure 8.1 as Centralised SHRM) on account of their emphasis on PMS.

The following discussion shows further the significance of the contingency theory in helping us understand the significance of the external environment on HRM policy and practice. In theory the external factors create a particular context of the organisation that is directly linked to its HR policies. In Botswana, for instance, the external factors interacted in a complex way that influenced HRM to move from a decentralised personnel management system shortly after independence to a centralised personnel management system before experiencing what appears to be competing pressures in terms of centralisation and decentralisation, as depicted in Figure 8.1 below. However, with regard to the diagram, it is not of course possible for a two-dimensional diagram to convey the full complexity of the interplay of these

competing pressures. The diagram shows HR policy in Botswana pursuing a zigzag path between decentralisation and centralisation and this may be the reality. However it is also possible to interpret these results as demonstrating the degree to which policy in this area is subject to contradictory imperatives – with performance management encouraging centralisation whilst other aspects of the SHRM menu might be taken to imply managerial decentralisation. The outcome cannot be easily predicted as it depends on the relative strengths of the drivers behind centralisation and decentralisation. Donor (World Bank) advice, which was influential in both countries (although conditionality was not involved) perhaps underplays the degree to which priorities such as performance management and administrative decentralisation may conflict at different stages of reform.

However, the reform process is ongoing and indications are that the performance monitoring requirement inherent in PMS would probably shift Botswana's position across to the upper right hand side of the PM/SHRM axis (see Figure 8.1) once the implementation of PMS has been completed.

As already indicated in Chapter II, PMS and SHRM are closely associated. PMS is the platform for SHRM in the study countries because through it the public services implement systems that enable them to link HR strategy to organisational objectives. In Botswana this direction is implicit in the PMS philosophy that enunciates the public service vision, mission and values, against which local authorities are tying or developing theirs. Also, there is a shift in the HRM ethos to the one that emphasises customer focus, a significant factor denoting SHRM characteristics (see Chapter IV).

Figure 8.1: The Decentralisation/Centralisation and Personnel Management (PA) / SHRM (NPM) Matrix

Centralisation

Personnel Management Centralised

SHRM Centralised

Personnel Management (PA)

SHRM (NPM)

Personnel Management Decentralised

SHRM Decentralised

Decentralisation
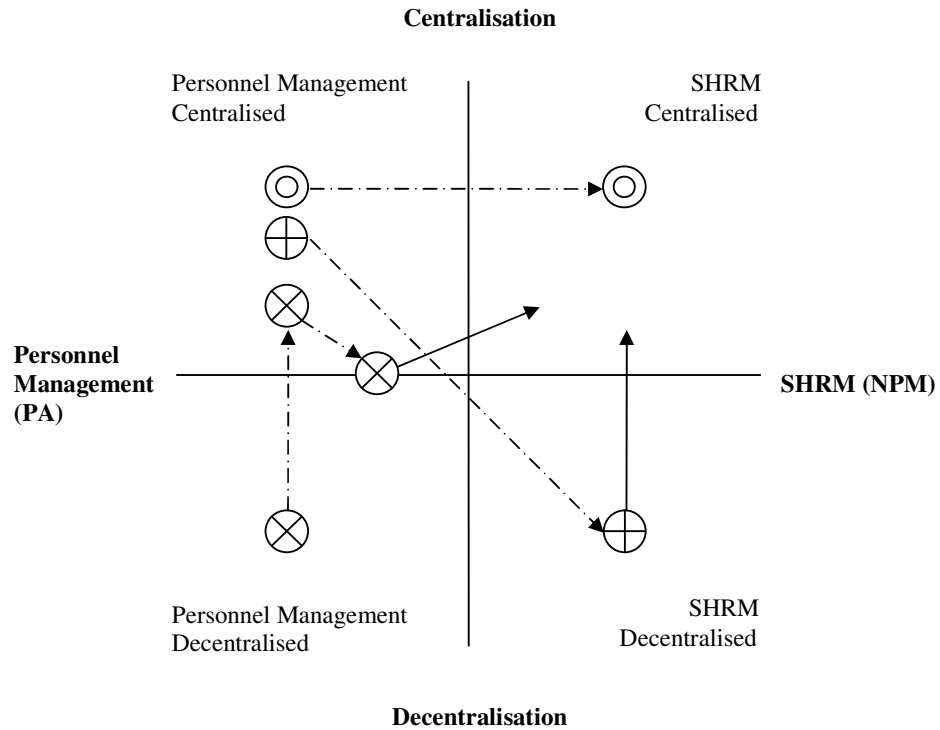
Key:

⊗   Botswana's past and present positions

⊕   South Africa's large municipalities' past and present positions

◎   South Africa's small/resource poor municipalities past and present positions

–·▶   Direction taken previously

⟶   Possible/tentative direction

Source: Author's Own Construct (2008)

On the other hand the South African experience indicated a shift away from the personnel management system in 1994 (at least in principle) to strategic human resource management (see Figure 8.1). However the municipalities have different experiences, with the bigger municipalities managing their own HRM affairs while the smaller/resource poor local municipalities were dependent on District

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Municipalities for their HRM. In terms of the matrix South African municipalities are placed in the lower right hand side quadrant having moved from the upper left hand side quadrant. Yet the indications are that once all municipalities have adopted the standards set by SALGA and SALGBC, which they had started doing, albeit slowly, South African municipalities will move in the direction of the upper right hand side quadrant, denoting an approach that combines both centralisation and SHRM. As with Botswana this combination would be a result of an emphasis on the PMS component of SHRM, It could be argued that the South African government is seeking to use SALGA (responsible for PMS coordination) and SALGBC as proxies for central control. This scenario again attests to the significance of the contingency theory in being able to capture the dynamics of the external factors that are beyond the purview of organisations that nevertheless influence their HRM policies.

There are other strong indications that HRM is gradually being centralised in South Africa, for example where transfers of skilled HRs between local municipalities are handled by SALGA and the district municipalities. The approval of the Single Public Service Policy by Cabinet in 2006 signals a major shift towards centralisation (see Section 5.2.1 and 7.4) in which the top management in all spheres of government will effectively belong to a single public service and will be transferable between them. South Africa also uses a multi-stakeholder approach in its HRM systems (see Section 7.3.1). These developments in South Africa have been ascribed to history (an aspect of the external environment) as discussed in Chapters V and VII.

Thus, although at the time of data collection the two countries had different approaches to the implementation of a similar policy (PMS), there was also evidence

that they are both still in a transitory stage and that their HRM systems are gradually moving towards convergence in that both may be seen to be moving towards a system in which PMS will be centrally coordinated so that the HRM in both cases will be situated in the quadrant characterised by what we have termed 'centralised SHRM'. In Figure 8.1 this convergence is represented by the bold arrows pointing towards 'SHRM centralised' quadrant.

Thus the need to monitor performance tends, in the cases of both South Africa and Botswana, to centralisation of HRM. Thus, while from a theoretical point of view, SHRM is expected to involve decentralisation of decision-making (e.g. to line managers), in both of these cases, the move towards SHRM seems to be accompanied by greater centralisation of HRM decision-making.

The adoption of PMS brought about centralisation of the coordination mechanism through the performance targets set by the centre, for instance through the Municipal Systems Act in South Africa. The mechanism in place to ensure compliance, that is the performance audit, ensures central control. This is particularly evident in South Africa where performance auditing is a requirement for all municipalities, even though only three attempted to do it (see Section 5.6) but many others experienced problems due to capacity constraints. In Botswana performance auditing is still being developed. Also in Botswana the coordination of the implementation of PMS was directly driven by the centre and this contrasts with South Africa's case where the centre was indirectly involved, showing the varying degrees and styles of intervention. In South Africa the bigger and well-resourced municipalities that have

better capacity and resources, have developed their HRM strategies that show some external fit with organisational strategy.

The configuration of HRM systems in the two countries is summarised in Figures 6.1 and 7.1 in Sections 6.3.1 and 7.3.1 respectively. The evidence indicates that in Botswana HRM reforms are determined and driven by the centre (see Section 4.3 and 6.3.1) while in South Africa the evidence indicates that HRM reforms are determined by the centre through instruments such as the Municipal Systems Act but the implementation is driven by SALGA, a proxy for the centre (see Sections 5.3 and 7.3.1). These arrangements undercut the HRM flexibility at local level, which indicates that there is to a significant extent a trade-off between SHRM and decentralisation or local democracy in Botswana and South Africa. Therefore, the findings support the proposition that: *The adoption of SHRM reforms is likely to be driven by the centre rather than by local authorities themselves.*

What are the main factors/elements that influence HRM in local government in Botswana and South Africa?

The sub-section above has shown some of the differences and similarities to the HRM approaches between Botswana and South Africa. In answering the second research question this sub-section focuses on those key features of the HRM systems between the two countries that hold some explanation to the variance. Table 8.1 presents a comparative summary of the case studies about their approaches to HRM and decentralisation. South Africa gained inclusive democratic governance just over a decade and a half ago, while Botswana has over 40 years of uninterrupted democratic rule. In South Africa the motives behind decentralisation emphasised identity, representation and broader participation/local decision-making in the planning and

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budgetary processes. On the other hand Botswana emphasises improving service delivery, efficiency and poverty reduction over democratic processes such as identity or representation. These differences are largely due to the political histories of the two countries as reflected in chapters IV, V, VI and VII. Some of the differences between the two countries are presented in Table 8.1 below. These are explained in the rest of the section below.

Table 8.1 Key Features of Decentralisation in Botswana and South Africa

SOUTH AFRICA (*POST APARTHEID*)	BOTSWANA
Democracy/Representation	Efficiency
Separated HRM System	Unified HRM System
Politicisation/Patronage	Professionalism
Personalisation	Standardisation
Autonomy in decision-making	Implementation of Techniques
Strategic management framework	Nascent strategic management framework
Political commitment	Political commitment

Source: Author's Own Construct (2008)

In view of the aforesaid Devas and Delay's (2006) multiplicity of motives for decentralisation, shows that South Africa has similar motives to those found in newly democratising states as in Eastern Europe. Botswana, with a long history of stable governance since independence is more concerned with efficiency. Political stability is a rare historical condition in Africa, and unique historical conditions according to the RBV theory are known to be essential for the creation of sustained efficiency and effectiveness in public organisations (see pp48-50). This internal environment within local government organisations in Botswana created inimitable or imperfectly mobile

resources or assets such as unique experiences, organisational culture and unique personalities that are a source of sustained efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. However, the concern for efficiency in Botswana has led to a centralised HRM system that is inclined towards standardisation to ensure the quality of HRs across municipalities and ensure professionalism. This standardisation has led to efficiency in the implementation of management techniques across municipalities as demonstrated in the implementation of the PMS project. This approach is unique in Africa in that centralisation here is not used to ensure patronage but efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. On the other hand, the South African HRM system is decentralised and allows for variation from one municipality to the other, but appointments are often politicised and decision-making is more personalised largely because of ANC factionalism. Patronage has emerged as a significant factor in South Africa, whereas in Botswana it was mentioned but not as significant in the employment system.

However, congruence between HRM and organisational strategy in both countries was weak. The reasons for that are varied. In South Africa it is because managerial decisions are often interrupted for political expediency while in Botswana it is because the systems were still being developed and implementation still ongoing. History accounts for most of the differences between the two countries. For instance, while Botswana's local government and HRM systems evolved over time, South Africa has had to transform its own in a short period of time – beginning in 1994 when gaining democratic governance. This shows that the critical junctures or initial forces that set things in motion in Botswana took place much earlier, in 1966 and beyond, in South Africa there had to be radical changes in 1994.

Decentralisation in both Botswana and South Africa enjoys political commitment. In Botswana there is however some reluctance to decentralise executive functions to local politicians (see Section 6.3.1) in order for the centre to be able to ensure that its objectives are achieved – in particular efficiency and effectiveness. Municipalities in Botswana have in some cases performed better than central government field agencies such as in the delivery of district housing (see Chapter VI). However, in South Africa commitment to decentralisation has come at a cost of municipal capacity and efficiency in service delivery. This has led to intervention from the national and provincial governments through Project Consolidate and direct intervention at provincial level as in the case of Mamusa Local Municipality (see Sections 7.3.1) and some failures in housing delivery. Although South Africa is committed to reforms, the strategy for implementing the reforms through local government associations poses significant challenges due to their lack of powers to impose sanctions for non-compliance and the varying capacities of municipalities to effectively implement the reforms. Perhaps in terms of the RBV theory these developments indicate that in South Africa the internal resources (in particular intangible resources such as organisational culture, skills and experiences) that should account for sustained efficiency and effectiveness are still developing and being reshaped and are not yet well entrenched in the administrative system.

South Africa and Botswana have chosen divergent paths and strategies (decentralisation and legislation, and centralisation and a project management approach respectively) to the improvement of performance management in their local governments but the intended means and ends are the same – PMS and the

improvement of service delivery respectively. While Botswana adopted NPM reforms at the instigation of technical advice from the World Bank[10], South Africa did so with advice from consultants during the transition period. The South African approach to HRM is participatory and involves autonomous decision-making. However, the Botswana government adopted a unilateralist (top-down) approach to the implementation of productivity improvement reforms. Perhaps the differences here could as well be explained by the size of the entities involved: South Africa is a large multi-ethnic country while Botswana is less ethnically diverse and its population is smaller than that of the North West province and also its municipalities were fewer in number.

The approach to HRM in local government in both countries tends to limit the role played by line managers contrary to what SHRM theory and PMS envision. In both SHRM and PMS concept the significance of the line manager is assumed, however, in the two countries the concerns to establish viable institutions, assurance for accountable use of limited resources and the delivery of basic services tend to override theoretical assumptions and emphasise the directing of the employment systems. In the North West province and perhaps the entire South Africa, where the HRM system for local government is separated, on face value it strengthens decentralisation. But, at a closer look at the separated system in South Africa shows that it too works counter to decentralisation but in a different fashion from that in Botswana. In South Africa external contingencies exerted some pressures that were compounded by the municipalities' limited financial resources and poor capacity, and they could not perform their functions efficiently (as in most of the North West

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[10] Botswana is not serving any Structural Adjustment Programmes and therefore has the leverage to customise recommendations from the World Bank according to its needs and capabilities.

municipalities) and the centre was more likely to intervene – therefore undermining decentralisation. Curtis (1999) raised more or less similar concerns even though he referred specifically to the viability of performance management in the South African local government. The factors raised by Curtis (and stated below) have an inverse relationship with decentralisation. He raised two issues:

- 'Externally imposed contradictions and constraints: for instance, municipalities must balance their budgets but are under pressure not to sack anyone'. Presently this still stands as this is not only about salaries but also the municipalities' ability to raise revenue. Lack of adequate funding has lead to weak capacity and failure to perform executive functions. Where they have failed the national and/or provincial government have intervened or there is always the threat/possibility of intervention.
- 'Lack of leadership experience in handling the political-administrative interface'. This weakness has persisted and is compounded by political interference and the ANC factional fighting that has been taken to the council chambers and board rooms. Municipal managers were appointed along partisan and factional lines at the expense of merit and performance.

The implications to theory, specifically RBV, and its significance in this case are that the weakness of the internal resources have led to an imbalance in the pressures applied from the external factors vis-a-vis the internal factors. Although centralisation has always been referred to pejoratively and as having failed (see Mawhood, 1983), Botswana has built a local civil service that is among the most efficient and effective in the developing world (see Olowu and Wunsch, 2004) in spite of it being relatively centralised. Perhaps the case of Botswana local government, albeit it weaknesses, reflects the relative strength of its internal resources that have been painstakingly built over time. The interventions from central government in both countries indicate that *external contingencies are more important in influencing HRM in local government than the internal resources and any HRM theories.* Although, according to theory, SHRM requires the devolution of managerial authority, in both South Africa and Botswana the introduction of SHRM is within contexts that are somewhat centralised.

In the following sub-section the discussion addresses the third research question, as to what really underlies the choices made by the two countries.

Why do countries adopting similar policy advice end up with different outcomes?

The political, social and economic history of Botswana and South Africa differ greatly even though the majority of the people of the North West province belong to the same ethnic group as their northern neighbours. Both countries have stable growing economies, thriving democracies and are socially stable. But South Africa emerged out of a traumatic political experience not a long time ago and influences of this experience are still evident in its management systems and the broader socio-political environment. The new South African regime inherited existing public institutions which had a history. This history creates some of the constraints and opportunities that the new regime encounters. HRM in the North West province is largely influenced by the transformational process in South Africa and this transformation process is informed by history and politics. The considerations for affirmative action, which understandably is justifiable not only politically but also morally weight down on the strategies that can be adopted in HRM. At the same time politics has played a significant role especially in the recruitment process in the municipalities. Perhaps this is related to patronage which in a way is an instinctive reaction to the desire for self-preservation by the top politicians. Similar political strategies have been practised in Botswana with regard to the appointment of municipal CEOs in which the centre had the prerogative to appoint. However, in Botswana the appointment of top municipal managers was not politicised to the extent

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it was in South Africa. On the other hand Botswana started off after independence with few skilled HRs and had to build these from nothing, hence the unified HRM approach aimed at the equitable distribution of skilled labour across municipalities. South Africa inherited established municipalities that existed on an ethnically diverse country with a history of segregation, hence identity took precedence. Politicisation of HRM over time becomes part of organisational culture.

Management techniques are being applied in contexts where there is history and institutional factors. As a result organisations become locked in their old traditions and become path dependent in their decision making. Particular occurrences at the initial stages (critical junctures) have influenced later managerial practices in a major way in both countries (see Sections 4.2.2., 5.2.1. and 6.5). Perhaps these account for the reluctance of central government in Botswana to devolve executive powers to local politicians and also to decentralise more HRM responsibilities to local authorities (see Section 6.3). However, both South Africa and Botswana have been influenced by modern management thought in particular NPM ideas. Although both Botswana and South Africa are not under the Structural Adjustment Programmes, they do receive technical advice from both the Bretton Woods institutions and international consultants respectively. This indicates the significance of external contingencies in their management thought. There is also some sharing of ideas portrayed in this case by the role played by Pelonomi Vesnon, the former Permanent Secretary in the then Ministry of Local Government, Lands and Housing (Botswana), in the roles she played both as a consultant in Western Cape and as Chairperson of the Second Local Government Structure Commission in Botswana. The South African

influence on the adoption of the *Botho* concept in Botswana also attests to this borrowing.

Resource constraints are some of the significant factors in the evolution of management in the two countries. The top politicians and top bureaucrats in both countries have made decisions that try to balance the political and administrative concerns. This in particular applies to the appointment of managers in both Botswana and South African municipalities. South Africa introduced the Single Public Service policy to ensure that there is an optimal allocation of qualified and competent HRs in the top public service posts at all levels of government, while in the lower rungs it is through the transfer of skilled labour through SALGA. In Botswana this is assured through the continued centralised appointments of top, and some senior and middle management, local authority officers. Tendencies towards centralisation in both countries appear to come from uncertainty avoidance (see Section 2.5).

Management practices and values are an expression of culture. Moving away from a managerial culture based on discrimination the *Batho Pele* White Paper on Local Government in South Africa has become pivotal to the reengineering of organisational culture across the public service (see Section 5.2). In some respects South Africa also exhibits a Western culture of management in which there is very limited corporate welfarism (see Section 7.3) in contrast to Botswana's elaborate corporate welfarism (see Section 6.5). These differences are due to the historical experiences of the two countries. This difference is ascribed to the different historical experiences of the two countries and the different managerial approaches and management thinking that have been perpetuated from periods past. Performance

management is not well entrenched in both countries even though Botswana has an established tradition of performance appraisal that includes all levels of the public service. There is also the Scheme of Service that insists that the length of service takes precedence, as well as deference to the superior (also an aspect of African culture) (see sub-section 4.2.2. and Section 6.5). However, the performance management culture in Botswana seems to be effective as the literature and interviews have shown that Botswana relied on qualified expatriate labour from other countries to compensate for the skills they lacked. Many of these expatriate personnel come from countries that Adamolekun (2005) has categorised as underperforming (see Chapter II). Perhaps what accounts for their performance in Botswana would be the relatively suitable organisational culture in which they operate. As a result Botswana has been credited by scholars as having one of the most efficient local civil services.

In South Africa performance appraisal is limited to the top management cadre and is yet to be introduced at the lower levels of the municipalities. There is also a culture of awarding bonuses to municipal managers irrespective of the performance of the organisations they manage (see Section 7.5). These bonuses could perhaps be linked to the patronage system that seeks to reward nothing but political party loyalty. But a significant development in both countries is the involvement of various stakeholders in the management of HRs (see Sections 6.5 and 7.5). These stakeholders involve trade unions as well and are intended to ensure fairness, and this approach could be used as a corruption control strategy. The organisational culture in Botswana indicates that HRM in that country still carries more of the features of the personnel management type (as indicated in Figure 8.1) than otherwise, albeit the strong

indications that the HRM system is in transition. South Africa on the other hand was adopting SHRM (see Figure 8.1 above).

This study has shown that there are multiple factors that influence HRM, such as politics, social culture, economy, organisational culture, history and other contingent factors. Although political stability and economic prosperity can be achieved by any country, there are some factors peculiar to particular countries that cannot be acquired by other countries such as history and culture (and competencies that are influenced by organisational culture and account for efficiency). These are some of the internal organisational resources that are inimitable or cannot be copied by others and therefore are immobile resources that account for sustained efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery in the public sector. These factors lead to the conclusion that: *the inimitable resources and immobile resources of local authorities will lead to different approaches to the management of human resources.* As stated in Chapter I inimitable and immobile resources refer to organisational resources (tangible/intangible assets) that cannot be easily copied and/or transferred to other organisations. The subsection below presents the implications of these findings.

8.4. Implications

HRM in local government is influenced by a combination of factors such as politics, economy, resource availability, culture, and laws, which are factors in the immediate environment. Also, there are influential external contingencies such as management ideas. These management ideas were adopted at the advice of the World Bank in the case of Botswana, and during transition in the case of South Africa, while the other managerial practices were bequeathed from colonialism.

The inefficiency in applying these ideas has been explained within the context of the countries within which the reforms inspired by those ideas are implemented. Adopting new practices is not easy as bureaucracies are large organisations that change over time. Also, the bureaucrats are an interest group that has its own interests to protect, that at times may be threatened by change – change from the known (comfort zones) to the unknown. These may result in management culture shock, scepticism, and resistance to change by public employees. In both countries, attempts were made to ameliorate the potentially negative factors, by ensuring that the implementation of the HRM reforms was preceded by the immersion of the leadership into the new concept behind the reform, after which followed implementation. This process unfolded in Botswana beginning in 2001 as a change management strategy (see Section 6.3.1) and the central government had to use 'carrot and stick' approach for local authorities to comply. In South Africa, a much larger and complex country, the process was different but nonetheless unfolded in a similar fashion but without sticks or carrots attached. However, because the approach depended more on persuasion it took longer for the local authorities to adopt PMS and/or implement the Task Job Evaluation System (see Section 7.3.1). There are, however, many variables and considerations at play in the public sector that influence the implementation of reforms. In Chapter II we noted, McCourt and Ramgutty-Wong's (2002) observation that SHRM was a Western solution to Western private sector problems, the implication being that application in the public sector in developing countries would run counter to their management cultures. Whether further movement in the direction of SHRM is necessary is, however, open to question.

It is possible that culture may play a positive rather than merely restraining role regarding the adoption of innovations in management. The introduction of the *Batho Pele* concept and *Ubuntu* in South Africa and its equivalent, *Botho,* in Botswana in their management systems are attempts at blending new management techniques with national cultures (i.e. adaptation).

This study has shown that in both countries there was a strategic framework in place. However, in South Africa municipalities were at different stages of applying it to their HRM systems as the poorer municipalities were lagging behind. In Botswana the municipalities were moving at the same pace in applying the strategic framework to the HRM system. In both countries the process of operationalising the strategic framework was still being rolled out.

8.5. Conclusion: Contribution to Research and Future Research

This study's main finding is that although SHRM and decentralisation are frequently assumed to go together and are both (implicitly) advocated by the Bretton Woods institutions, in the cases researched reforms which may broadly be categorised as moving towards SHRM, have been accompanied by a tendency towards managerial centralisation. This is noteworthy not least because centralisation is characteristic of the recent traditions of one of the countries, but not of the other. This study also suggests that good contemporary employee management is not dependent on introduction of SHRM. Traditional personnel management can still achieve good results, as shown in both cases. Nevertheless, this study has shown that the two countries have shown the desire and determination to implement NPM-style reforms, the implementation of which seems to require movement in the direction of SHRM

principles – although it could debated whether in these cases SHRM would be a vehicle for NPM style reforms or a by product of these. However, they have taken different approaches to implementing their reforms, in spite of their policies (e.g. PMS) and/or reform objectives being more or less similar. The different approaches result from the countries' peculiar contexts and history. Both countries' HRM systems were still in transition, but at different stages. This study argues that, from the cases studied, even though developing countries may implement similar reforms based on similar policy advice or prescription, a combination of factors such as social and organisational culture that are not transferable between countries account for the difference in outcomes (as shown in Figure 8.1 and the accompanying text, it seems likely that in the longer term the outcomes may converge, however, as the emphasis in both cases, although implemented differently, is likely to increase or reinforce centralisation).

The study has also shed some light on the dynamics of HRM in the local government of, in the economic sense, fairly successful sub-Saharan African countries. Mosley (2008) found that in the developed countries the national governments were more inclined to refine the *directing* (emphasis added) of the public employment system organisation instead of doing away with the controls. In Botswana and South Africa the national governments have shown the intention to direct and/or participate actively in the human resource management of the local authorities. However, in the relatively more decentralised South Africa participation/intervention is somewhat indirect (by proxy) while in Botswana it is direct. For a defining characteristic this development in both countries could be considered as 'paternalistic decentralisation'. Local government in these countries has not matured, in South Africa because of the

reconstitution of municipalities after 1994 while in Botswana because of what has been described as the deliberate underdevelopment of local government capacity (see Picard and Tordoff, op.cit.).

The findings suggest that in countries where local governments are experiencing a lack of resources, as is the case with many SSA countries, and/or where local government has not matured, a more centralised approach to the administration of HRM is the most likely to be preferred by policy makers, even though in both countries government policy favours decentralisation as a general principle.

There were two significant factors related to the study countries that create opportunities for further research. First it was the fact that the implementation process of PMS was still ongoing in both Botswana and South Africa as reform is an ongoing process. The second was that neither country produced adequate data on performance management. It would be opportune in future, once the performance auditing systems in Botswana and South Africa are fully operational, for them to be reviewed. Since this study limited itself to researching the process of external fit (HR strategy and organisational strategy), it would also be of interest in future to consider internal fit (between different components of HR) as well.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. A processual, strategic model of HRM in Africa

INTERNAL CONTEXT

Organizational strengths and weaknesses
Core competencies and capabilities
Corporate values and culture

HR POLICIES

Managing diversity
Equity and consideration
Occupational health and safety
Competence-creation

REWARD MANAGEMENT

Incentives and motivation
Merit-seniority balance
Financial-non financial balance
Gainsharing

STRATEGIC APPROACHES

From:
Passive Compliance
'Muddling through'
Political manipulation

To:
Evolutionary R-C approach

HR PLANNING AND STAFFING

Job analysis
HR forecasts
Recruitment and selection
Induction and deployment

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance planning and goal setting
Performance standards and measurement
Assessment of Potential
Employee feedback

TRAINING and DEVELOPMENT

Training needs assessment
Teambuilding
Skill-formation and competence enhancement
Managing development
Continuous learning and socialization

CAREER MANAGEMENT

Career planning
Coaching and counselling
Mentoring
Success planning

EXTERNAL CONTEXT

Industry characteristics
Socio-cultural factors
Political and legal factors
Labour market conditions

HR ETHOS

Cooperative teamwork
Corporate welfarism
Traditionalism
Community spirit
Social harmony

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Collective bargaining
Union recognition
Conflict resolution
Arbitration

◄——— Strategy Formulation ———►   ◄——— Strategy Implementation in HRM ———►

Source: Kamoche, 2001.

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Appendix 2. Integrative framework for understanding HRM in context.

External Context

Local – National - Multinational

| Laws and regulations | Culture | Politics | Unions | Labour markets | Industry characteristics |

Internal organization context

Technology   Structure   Size   Life cycle stage   Strategy

Sense making and decision making	Human resource management	Outcomes
Informal … Formal	Prescribed ……. Enacted	Short term … Long term

Interpret environments
Prioritize objectives, e.g.,
  Legitimacy vis-à-vis
  stakeholders
 	
  Economic efficiency
 	
  Resource acquisition and
  development
	Philosophies
	Policies
	Practices
	
	Planning Staffing Appraising Rewarding Developing
		Individual
		  Performance
		  Satisfaction
		  Learning
		Organizational
		  Efficient
		  Cohesive
		  Adaptable
		Societal
		  Productivity
		  Quality of life
		  Human capital development

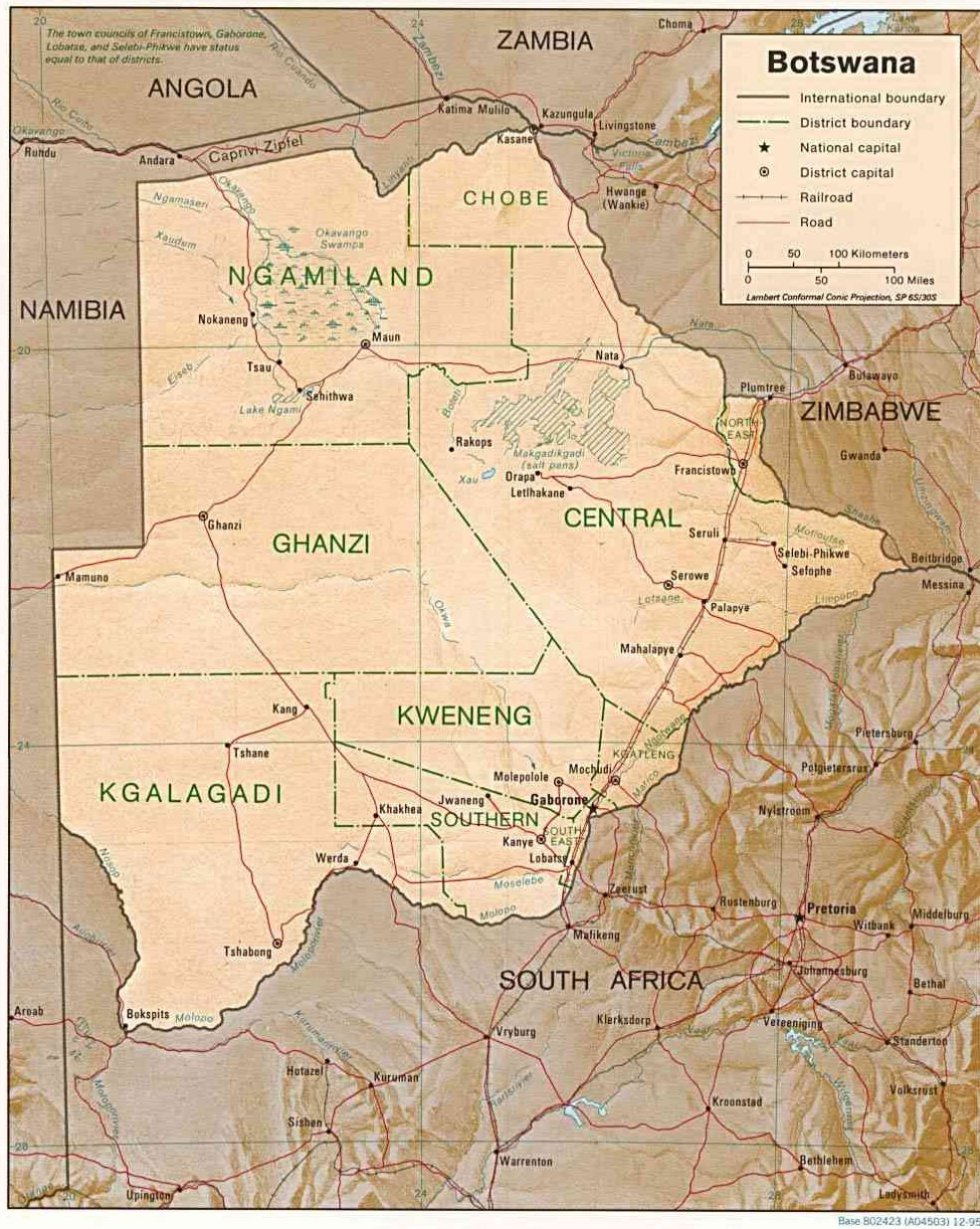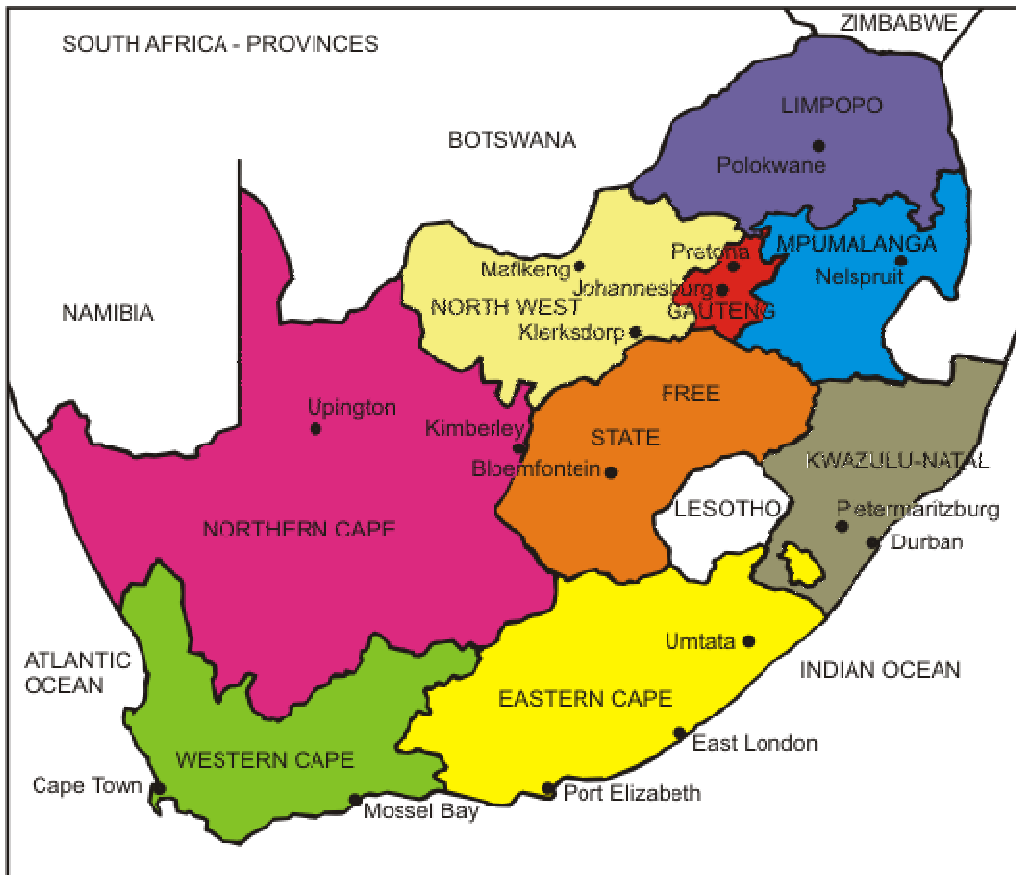Source: Jackson and Schuler, 1999.

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Appendix 3: District Map of Botswana

Source: http://www.africa-expedition.com/images/ct/botswana_rel95.jpg

Appendix 4: Provincial Map of South Africa

Source: http://www.anc.org.za/images/maps/samap.gif

Appendix 5: District and Local Municipalities – North West Province

Source: http://nwpg.gov.za/soer/FullReport/displaymap.asp?mapno=018

Appendix 6: South Africa Local Government Legislation and Acts

- Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 (Act no. 13 0f 2005)
- Local Government: Remuneration of Public Officer Bearers Act, 1998 (Act No. 20 of !998)
- Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act, 2004 (Act No. 6 of 2004)
- Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003)
- Local Government: Municipal Systems Amendment Act, 2003 (Act No. 44 of 2003)
- Local Government: Municipal Structures Amendment Act, 2003 (Act NO.1 of 2003)
- Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000)
- Disestablishment of the Local Government Affairs Council Act, 1999 (Act No. 59 of 1999)
- Skills Development Levies Act, (Act No. 9 of 1999)
- Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act No. 97 of 1998)
- Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. of 117 of 1998)
- Local Government: Municipal Demarcation Act, 1998 (Act No. 27 of 1998)
- Transfer of Staff of Municipalities Act, 1998 (Act No 17 of 1998)
- Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act No. 55 of 1998)
- Organised Local Government Act, 1997 (Act No.52 of 1997)
- Repeal of Local Government Laws Act, 1997 (Act No. 42 of 1997)
- Remuneration of Town clerks Act Repeal Act, 1996 (Act No. 61 of 1996)
- Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No.66 of 1995)
- Local Government Transition Act, 1993 (Act No. 209 of 1993)

Appendix 7: Economic Indicators – Botswana and South Africa

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT	BOTSWANA	SOUTH AFRICA	SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	WORLD
GDP in million constant 1995 US dollars	6,330	170,568	362,493	34,109,900
GDP PPP (million current international dollars) {a}	11,508	1,053,452	1,053,452	44,913,910
Gross National Income (PPP, in million current international dollars), 2000 {a}	11,493	392,0911	994,240	44,458,520
GDP per capita, 2000 in 1995 US dollars	4,107	3,938	617	5,632
in current international dollars	7,467	9,291	1,797	7,416
Average annual growth in GDP, 1991-2000				
Total	4%	2%	2%	3%
Per capita	2%	0%	0%	1%
Per cent of GDP earned by:				
Agriculture	4%	3%	17%	X
Industry	44%	31%	31%	X
Services	52%	66%	53%	X
International Trade				
Trade in goods and services (million current $US				
Imports	X	32,842	80,986	X
Exports	X	36,572	78,438	X
Exports as a percent of GDP, 2000	X	29%	33%	X
Balance of Trade, 2000 (million current $US)	X	3,730	1,213	X
Official Development Assistance (ODA) and Financial Flows				
ODA in million US dollars, 1998-2000{b}	66	514	8,040	59,073
ODA per capita in US dollars, 1998-2000{b}	44	12	17	10
Current Account Balance (million $US), 2000	X	-469	X	X
Total external debt, million $US, 1998-2000	468	24,507	224,885	X
Debt service as a % of export earnings, 1995-97 {b}	4.2%	11.5%	X	X
Foreign Direct Investment, net inflows (million current $US), 2000	30	961	6,664	X
International Tourism Receipts, 1995-1997 (million $US)	174	1,962	X	X

Source: Earth Trends 2003

Appendix 8: Botswana Councils

Urban Councils

Gaborone City Council

Francistown City Council

Selebi-Phikwe Town Council

Lobatse Town Council

Jwaneng Town Council

Sowa Township Authority

District Councils

Central District Council

Ghanzi District Council

Kgalagadi District Council

Kgatleng District Council

Kweneng District Council

North East District Council

North West District Council

South East District Council

Southern District Council

Appendix 9: Categories of the Municipalities of the North West Province

Category B Municipalities (Local Municipalities)

Mayoral Executive System

Mafikeng Local Municipality
Klerksdorp City Council
Potchefstroom City Council
Madibeng Local Municipality
Rustenburg City Council

Collective Executive System

Ramotshere Moilwa (Zeerust) Local Municipality
Moretele Local Municipality
Moses Kotane Local Municipality
Ratlou local Municipality
Tswaing Local Municipality
Distobotla Local Municipality
Kagisano Local Municipality
Naledi Local Municipality
Greater Taung Local Municipality
Molopo Local Municipality
Maquissi-Hills Local Municipality

Plenary Executive System

Kgetleng River Local Municipality
Ventersdorp Local Municipality
Mamusa Local Municipality
Molopo Local Municipality
Lekwa Teemane Local Municipality

Category C Municipalities (District Municipalities)

Mayoral Executive System

Central District Municipality
Southern District Municipality
Bojanala Platinum District Municipality
Bophirima District Municipality

Appendix 10: Distribution of HRM Responsibilities between DLGSM and LAs

RESPONSIBILITY	LAS	DLGSM	SHARED
Appointments of temporary and industrial employees and other officers up to C3	√		
Internal postings and deployment arrangements	√		
Leave administration	√		
Supervision and conduct of officers	√		
Disciplinary matters for industrial employees	√		
Authorisation and payment of all of the approved establishment	√		
Specific recommendations on most other personnel management issues	√		
Approval of unpaid leave for officers up to C3	√		
Issuance of Certificate of Service for resigning and retiring officers up to grade C3	√		
Promotion of staff in grades up to C4	√		
Powers of interdiction and dismissal in grades up to C3	√		
In-house training	√		
Salary administration	√		
Consultations on staff welfare			√
Vacancy monitoring			√
Training needs assessment and preparation of training plan			√
Performance monitoring and appraisal			√
Disciplinary matters			√
All powers relating to confirmation to pensionable service specified in Section 9 of the LGS Act			√
Manpower budgeting			√
Training (in-service and institutional) and selection			√
Processing of terminal benefits			√
Discretion in determining the salary entry point in recognition of previous relevant experience and qualifications		√	
Appointments of officers above C3		√	
Transfer of staff between local authorities		√	

Appendix 11: List of Officers Interviewed – North West Province

[Not available in the digital version of this thesis]

Appendix 12: List of Officers Interviewed – Botswana

[Not available in the digital version of this thesis]

Appendix 13: Corruption Perception Index – Selected SSA Countries

Country	2004 CPI Score	2004 Country Rank	2005 CPI Score	2005 Country Rank	2006 CPI Score	2006 Country Rank	2007 CPI Score	2007 Country Rank	2008 CPI Score	2008 Country Rank
Botswana	6.0	31	5.9	32	5.6	37	5.4	38	5.8	36
South Africa	4.6	44	4.5	46	4.6	51	5.1	43	4.9	54
Mauritius	4.1	54	4.2	51	5.1	42	4.7	53	5.5	41
Namibia	4.1	54	4.3	47	4.1	55	4.5	57	4.9	61
Total countries ranked		145		158		163		179		180

Source: Abridged from Transparency International multi-year.

Note: The total number of countries ranked varies each year as more countries are included in the survey.

Appendix 14: Number of Posts and Salary/Grades for CEOs from Selected Local Authorities in Botswana

GABORONE CITY COUNCIL

scale		2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	Totals
	Town Clerk's Office				
E1	Town Clerk	1	1	1	
E2	Deputy Town Clerk	1	**1**	**1**	2

SOWA TOWNSHIP AUTHORITY

scale		2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	Totals
	Town Clerk's Office				
E1	Town Clerk	1	1	1	
E2	Deputy Town Clerk	1	**1**	**1**	2

NORTH EAST DISTRICT COUNCIL

scale		2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	Totals
	Council Secretary's Office				
E1	Council Secretary	1	1	1	
E2	Deputy Council Secretary	1	**1**	**1**	2

Source: Extracted from Local Authorities Establishment Register, 2006

Appendix 15: Similarities and Differences between HRM and Personnel Management

SIMILARITIES	*DIFFERENCES*
Personnel management strategies, like HRM strategies, flow from business strategy	HRM places more emphasis on strategic fit and integration.
Personnel management, like HRM, recognizes that line 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 a management-and business-oriented philosophy.
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 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).
Both personnel management and HRM recognize that one of their most essential functions is that of matching people to ever-changing organizational requirements – placing and developing the right people in and for the right jobs.	HRM places more emphasis on the role of line managers as the implementers of HR policies.
The same range of selection, competence analysis, performance management, training, management development and 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.
Personnel management, like the 'soft' version of HRM, attaches importance to the processes of communication and participation within an employee relations systems.	HR specialists are expected to be business partners rather than personnel administrators.

Source: Armstrong (2006).

Appendix 16: Questionnaire (North West Province)

The questions in this questionnaire are designed to solicit your opinion on a number of issues pertaining to human resource management in your local authority. There is no right or wrong answer. You may indicate your opinion by an 'X' in one of the five options aligned to the right of every question. Please make only one selection except where instructed otherwise. In the event your opinion does not match any of the available options, please choose the one that is closest to your considered judgement, and one that best describes the situation as it prevails in your organisation but not what you feel should be the case.

The confidentially of your responses is guaranteed. Your identity will not be passed over to any third party without your consent. The biographical data requested below is for statistical and follow-up purposes only should the need arise.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. Name of Respondent: …………………………………………………………..

2. Gender: Male ☐ 1   Female ☐ 2   3. Age ………………

4. Educational Level …………………… 5. Field of Training ……………………......

6. Position Held ………………………………… 7. Number of Years in Post ……......

8. Name of Organisation ……………………………………………………………….

9. Type of Municipality:

        Mayoral Executive ☐ 1   Committee Executive ☐ 2

        Plenary Executive ☐ 3

I. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT OF THE ORGANISATION

External Environment

1. Does the national economy provide a supportive environment for the efficient functioning of your organisation?

    a) A very supportive environment   ☐ 5

    b) A supportive environment   ☐ 4

    c) A fairly supportive environment   ☐ 3

    d) A not so supportive environment   ☐ 2

    e) Not supportive at all   ☐ 1

2. Does the socio-political environment provide a supportive environment for the efficient functioning of your organisation?

a) A very supportive environment   ☐ 5

b) A supportive environment   ☐ 4

c) A fairly supportive environment   ☐ 3

d) A not so supportive environment   ☐ 2

e) The environment is not supportive at all   ☐ 1

3. Mechanisms to ensure the autonomy of local government/administration are efficient and effective.

a) Strongly agree   ☐ 5

b) Agree   ☐ 4

c) Disagree   ☐ 3

d) Strongly disagree   ☐ 2

e) Don't know   ☐ 1

4. Government procedures for the allocation of resources between local authorities provide for:

a) A fully equitable distribution   ☐ 5

b) A moderately equitable distribution   ☐ 4

c) A fairly equitable distribution   ☐ 3

d) A rarely equitable distribution   ☐ 2

e) No equitable distribution   ☐ 1

Internal Environment

5. Do local governments/administrations have clear organisational structures with clearly defined lines of authority?

a) Clear organisational structures   ☐ 5

b) Somewhat clear organisational structures   ☐ 4

c) Fairly clear organisational structures   ☐ 3

d) Not so clear organisational structures   ☐ 2

e) Organisational structures not clear at all   ☐ 1

6. Local governments/administrations have adequate capacity to manage the decentralised responsibilities

   a) Strongly agree   5

   b) Agree   4

   c) Disagree   3

   d) Strongly disagree   2

   e) Don't know   1

7. Are there adequate material resources at the disposal of your organisation for it to perform its functions efficiently?

   a) Adequate material resources   5

   b) Moderately adequate material resources   4

   c) Fairly adequate material resources   3

   d) Inadequate material resources   2

   e) Not adequate at all   1

8. To what extent is your organisation responsible for the welfare of its employees?

   a) To a great extent   5

   b) Significant extent   4

   c) Moderately involved   3

   d) Limited extent   2

   e) Not involved at all   1

9. In dealing with staff matters in your organisation, do you ordinarily deal with them

   Collectively   1   Individually   2

10. When you have a different opinion with your superior and he/she insists on their position even when the facts show s/he may be in the wrong, what would you consider as the most important factor that could determine your next action? Please order the following possible responses according to the most important to the least important in this regard, with 1 representing the most important, 2 the next, until 4 which is the least important.

    Respect for seniority

    The interest of the organisation

321

The merits of the case ☐

II. HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY

11. Does your organisation or the government have a human resource management policy?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   I don't know ☐ 3

12. Who is responsible for your organisation's human resource management policy?

   a) The council/municipality ☐ 5

   b) HR Unit/department ☐ 4

   c) The Ministry responsible for local government ☐ 3

   d) A local government association ☐ 2

   e) I don't know ☐ 1

13. Clear systems exist that clarify each stakeholder's role in the management of human resource management policy?

   a) Strongly agree ☐ 5

   b) Agree ☐ 4

   c) Disagree ☐ 3

   d) Strongly disagree ☐ 2

   e) Don't know ☐ 1

14. Are there some decentralised human resource management responsibilities that your organisation is responsible for?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   I don't know ☐ 3

15. To what level have the human resource management responsibilities been decentralised to your organisation?

   a) Fully decentralised ☐ 5

   b) Decentralised all the posts below top management posts ☐ 4

   c) Only decentralised middle management positions to below ☐ 3

   d) Only the junior positions decentralised ☐ 2

   e) Not decentralised at all ☐ 1

16. Does your organisation have the technical capacity to manage the decentralised responsibilities?

a) Adequate capacity   ☐ 5

b) Some capacity   ☐ 4

c) Limited capacity   ☐ 3

d) Poor capacity   ☐ 2

e) Not applicable   ☐ 1

17. If the answer is not 'A' above, who performs the responsibilities which your organisation cannot do?
…………………………………………………………………………

18. What role do trade unions or staff associations have in the HR policy process?

a) A major role   ☐ 5

b) A significant role   ☐ 4

c) A not so significant role   ☐ 3

d) A minor role   ☐ 2

e) No role at all   ☐ 1

19. Does the organisation have the mission and vision statements?

Yes   ☐ 1   No   ☐ 2   I don't know   ☐ 3

20. If yes, are these statements readily accessible to all staff members in the organisation?

Yes   ☐ 1   No   ☐ 2   I don't know   ☐ 3

21. Does your organisation have a functioning strategic plan?

Yes   ☐ 1   No   ☐ 2   I don't know   ☐ 3

III. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Human Resource Planning

22. Does your organisation do the staffing plans?

Yes ☐1   No ☐2   I don't know ☐3

23. Do the staffing plans reflect congruence with the organisation's strategic plan?

Yes ☐1   No ☐2   I don't know ☐3

24. Who is responsible for the approval of staffing plans in your organisation?

a) A special committee ☐5

b) HR Unit/department ☐4

c) Unit/departmental Heads ☐3

d) Chief Executive Officer ☐2

e) The ministry/department responsible for local government ☐1

25. Is HIV/AIDS a factor to reckon with in the HR planning process?

a) A serious factor to consider ☐5

b) A somewhat serious factor to consider ☐4

c) Moderately considered ☐3

d) Rarely considered ☐2

e) Never considered ☐1

Recruitment, Deployment and Promotion

26. Who is responsible for the recruitment of the staff that serve in your organisation?

a) HR Unit/department ☐5

b) Outsourced ☐4

c) Chief Executive Officer ☐3

d) The ministry/department responsible for local government ☐2

e) Other (specify) ……………………………………………. ☐1

27. Is the current recruitment practice geared towards the achievement of the organisation's mission and objectives?

Yes ☐1   No ☐2   I don't know ☐3

28. The recruitment processes in your organisation are transparent and competitive?

a) Strongly agree ☐5

b) Agree ☐4

c) Disagree ☐3

d) Strongly disagree ☐2

e) Don't know ☐1

29. Are staff deployed according to job descriptions?

a) Always ☐5

b) Very often ☐4

c) Sometimes ☐3

d) Rarely ☐2

e) Not at all ☐1

30. Who is responsible for the promotion of the staff in your organisation?

a) A special committee within the local authority ☐5

b) HR Unit/department ☐4

c) Unit/departmental Heads ☐3

d) Chief executive Officer ☐2

e) The ministry/department responsible for local government ☐1

31. If there is the practice of transferring staff in your local authority, who is responsible for that?

a) The local authority ☐5

b) HR Unit/department ☐4

c) The ministry/department responsible for local government ☐3

d) Chief Executive Officer ☐2

e) I don't know ☐1

32. Do you find the practice of transferring staff between local authorities a good practice?

a) A good practice ☐ 5

b) Somewhat good practice ☐ 4

c) A fairly good practice ☐ 3

d) A bad practice ☐ 2

e) Not applicable ☐ 1

33. Please rank the following problems from 1 to 8, giving one to the most serious human resource management problem in your local authority within the box opposite to your preferred choice, 2 to the next most serious, … and so on, until 8 to the least serious.

Corruption ☐

Inadequate funding ☐

Lack of skilled labour ☐

HIV/AIDS ☐

Lack of job security ☐

Uncompetitive salaries ☐

Uncompetitive work conditions ☐

Lack of autonomy ☐

Remuneration and Rewards

34. Are salaries clearly structured?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   I don't know ☐ 3

35. Are salaries competitive?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   I don't know ☐ 3

36. Are non-monetary benefits clearly articulated and competitive?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   I don't know ☐ 3

37. The remuneration in your organisation is not strongly linked to the employee's performance?

a) Strongly agree   ☐ 5
b) Agree   ☐ 4
c) Disagree   ☐ 3
d) Strongly disagree   ☐ 2
e) Don't know   ☐ 1

Training and Development

38. There are clear policy guidelines for training and development.

a) Strongly agree   ☐ 5
b) Agree   ☐ 4
c) Disagree   ☐ 3
d) Strongly disagree   ☐ 2
e) Don't know   ☐ 1

39. Is there a clear criteria for identifying training needs within the organisation?

a) There is a clear criteria   ☐ 5
b) Somewhat clear criteria   ☐ 4
c) Fairly clear criteria   ☐ 3
d) No clear criteria   ☐ 2
e) No criteria at all   ☐ 1

40. Please order the following possible factors that may be used for selecting staff for training, from 1 to 5 with 1 being the most relevant and 5 the least relevant.

Seniority of staff ☐

Organisational capacity needs ☐

Prerogative of the ministry/department responsible for

local government ☐

Performance review ☐

Personal relationships ☐

Employee initiative ☐

41. Who determines or identifies the staff members' training needs?

a) Individual staff initiative ☐ 5

b) Heads of Departments/Units ☐ 4

c) HR department/unit ☐ 3

d) A special committee ☐ 2

e) Ministry/department responsible for local government ☐ 1

☐

42. Does your organisation have adequate funding for training and development of its staff?

a) Adequate funding ☐ 5

b) Somewhat adequate funding ☐ 4

c) Fairly adequate funding ☐ 3

d) Funding rarely available ☐ 2

e) Not adequate at all ☐ 1

43. Do staffs participate in decisions about their training and development?

a) They always participate ☐ 5

b) They participate quite often ☐ 4

c) Sometimes they do participate ☐ 3

d) They rarely participate ☐ 2

e) Never participate ☐ 1

44. Order the following modes of training from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most common and 5 the least common method of training in your organisation.

On the job training ☐

Workshops/seminars ☐

Short courses (eg 3 months, 6 weeks, etc) ☐

Distance education ☐

Long term training (eg certificate, diploma, degree, etc) ☐

45. After training staffs are not deployed in positions where they will apply their newly acquired skills.

a) Strongly agree ☐ 5

b) Agree ☐ 4

c) Disagree ☐ 3

d) Strongly disagree ☐ 2

e) Don't know ☐ 1

Staff Retention

46. How would you describe the turnover rate in your organisation?

a) Very high ☐ 5

b) High ☐ 4

c) Moderate ☐ 3

d) Low ☐ 2

e) Very low ☐ 1

47. The vacancy rate in your organisation is …

a) Very high ☐ 5

b) High ☐ 4

c) Moderate ☐ 3

d) Low ☐ 2

e) Very low ☐ 1

48. According to the organisation structure of your organisation at what level is turnover heaviest?

a) Top management ☐ 5

b) Middle management ☐ 4

c) Technical level ☐ 3

d) Artisan level ☐ 2

e) Other (specify) ……………………………………… ☐ 1

49. Do you conduct exit interviews among your staffs that are resigning from their posts?

a) Always ☐ 5

b) Quite often ☐ 4

c) Sometimes ☐ 3

d) Rarely ☐ 2

e) Never ☐ 1

50. If you have conducted exit interviews in the past, what are the most common factors that make employees to leave your organisation? Please order the factors stated below from 1 to 8, beginning with the most prevalent to the least common factor.

☐

Dissatisfaction with remuneration

☐

Lack of promotion prospects

Poor working conditions ☐

Level of development of town in which organisation located ☐

Distance/remoteness of town from national/provincial capital ☐

Employee relations

Distance from home town or ethnic cleavages ☐

Ill health ☐

IV. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

51. Does the organisation have a functional performance management system in place?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   I don't know ☐ 3

52. If yes, how often is performance appraisal performed annually?

a) Quarterly or more ☐ 5

b) Three times ☐ 4

c) Twice ☐ 3

d) Once ☐ 2

e) Never ☐ 1

53. Is the performance appraisal/review linked in a significant manner with rewards and sanctions for employees?

a) There are strong links ☐ 5

b) Linked ☐ 4

c) Somewhat linked ☐ 3

d) Weakly linked ☐ 2

e) Not linked at all ☐ 1

54. The performance appraisal/review and the organisational objectives are strongly linked.

a) Strongly Agree ☐ 5

b) Agree ☐ 4

c) Disagree ☐ 3

d) Strongly disagree ☐ 2

e) Don't know ☐ 1

55. Is the performance review of employees used to identify their capacity needs?

    a) Always   ☐ 5

    b) Often times   ☐ 4

    c) Sometimes   ☐ 3

    d) Rarely   ☐ 2

    e) Not at all   ☐ 1

56. Are the results from the performance reviews used to make adjustments to employees' work objectives?

    a) Always   ☐ 5

    b) Often times   ☐ 4

    c) Sometimes   ☐ 3

    d) Rarely   ☐ 2

    e) Not at all   ☐ 1

57. Employee performance in your organisation has improved because of the performance reviews?

    a) Strongly agree   ☐ 5

    b) Agree   ☐ 4

    c) Disagree   ☐ 3

    d) Strongly disagree   ☐ 2

    e) Don't know   ☐ 1

58. Are baseline data and performance improvement data analysed regularly?

    a) Always   ☐ 5

    b) Often times   ☐ 4

    c) Sometimes   ☐ 3

    d) Rarely   ☐ 2

    e) Never   1 ☐

59. Who drives the performance management system in your organisation?

a) Top management of the local authority ☐ 5

b) Managers and supervisors in the local authority ☐ 4

c) The ministry/department responsible for local government ☐ 3

d) Politicians ☐ 2

e) Other (specify) …………………………………………… ☐ 1

60. Are there any of your staff members on fixed-term employment?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   Not applicable ☐ 3

61. Are those not on fixed term employment also involved in the performance management system?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   Not applicable ☐ 3

62. How would you describe the performance management in your organisation?

a) Very successful ☐ 5

b) Successful ☐ 4

c) Moderately successful ☐ 3

d) Failing ☐ 2

e) Totally failed ☐ 1

Appendix 17: Questionnaire (Botswana)

The questions in this questionnaire are designed to solicit your opinion on a number of issues pertaining to human resource management in your local authority. There is no right or wrong answer. You may indicate your opinion by an 'X' in one of the five options aligned to the right of every question. Please make only one selection except where instructed otherwise. In the event your opinion does not match any of the available options, please choose the one that is closest to your considered judgement, and one that best describes the situation as it prevails in your organisation but not what you feel should be the case.

The confidentially of your responses is guaranteed. Your identity will not be passed over to any third party without your consent. The biographical data requested below is for statistical and follow-up purposes only should the need arise.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. Name of Respondent: ……………………………………………………………..

2. Gender: Male ☐ 1   Female ☐ 2   3. Age ………………

4. Educational Level …………………… 5. Field of Training …………………......

6. Position Held ………………………………… 7. Number of Years in Post ……......

8. Name of Organisation …………………………………………………………….

9. Type of Council: Urban ☐ 1   District ☐ 2

I. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT OF THE ORGANISATION

External Environment

1. Does the national economy provide a supportive environment for the efficient functioning of your organisation?

   a) A very supportive environment   ☐ 5

   b) A supportive environment   ☐ 4

   c) A fairly supportive environment   ☐ 3

   d) A not so supportive environment   ☐ 2

   e) Not supportive at all   ☐ 1

2. Does the socio-political environment provide a supportive environment for the efficient functioning of your organisation?

   a) A very supportive environment   ☐ 5

   b) A supportive environment   ☐ 4

   c) A fairly supportive environment   ☐ 3

d) A not so supportive environment ☐ 2

e) The environment is not supportive at all ☐ 1

3. Mechanisms to ensure the autonomy of local government/administration are efficient and effective.

   a) Strongly agree ☐ 5

   b) Agree ☐ 4

   c) Disagree ☐ 3

   d) Strongly disagree ☐ 2

   e) Don't know ☐ 1

4. Government procedures for the allocation of resources between local authorities provide for:

   a) A fully equitable distribution ☐ 5

   b) A moderately equitable distribution ☐ 4

   c) A fairly equitable distribution ☐ 3

   d) A rarely equitable distribution ☐ 2

   e) No equitable distribution ☐ 1

Internal Environment

5. Do local governments/administrations have clear organisational structures with clearly defined lines of authority?

   a) Clear organisational structures ☐ 5

   b) Somewhat clear organisational structures ☐ 4

   c) Fairly clear organisational structures ☐ 3

   d) Not so clear organisational structures ☐ 2

   e) Organisational structures not clear at all ☐ 1

6. Local governments/administrations have adequate capacity to manage decentralised responsibilities effectively

   a) Strongly agree ☐ 5

   b) Agree ☐ 4

   c) Disagree ☐ 3

335

d) Strongly disagree ☐ 2

e) Don't know ☐ 1

7. Are there adequate material resources at the disposal of your organisation for it to perform its functions efficiently?

a) Adequate material resources ☐ 5

b) Moderately adequate material resources ☐ 4

c) Fairly adequate material resources ☐ 3

d) Inadequate material resources ☐ 2

e) Not adequate at all ☐ 1

8. To what extent is your organisation responsible for the welfare of its employees?

a) To a great extent ☐ 5

b) Significant extent ☐ 4

c) Moderately involved ☐ 3

d) Limited extent ☐ 2

e) Not involved at all ☐ 1

9. In dealing with staff matters in your organisation, do you ordinarily deal with them

Collectively ☐ 1   Individually ☐ 2

10. When you have a different opinion with your superior and he/she insists on their position even when the facts show s/he may be in the wrong, what would you consider as the most important factor that could determine your next action? Please order the following possible responses according to the most important to the least important in this regard, with 1 representing the most important, 2 the next, until 4 which is the least important.

Respect for seniority ☐

The interest of the organisation ☐

The merits of the case ☐

II. HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY

11. Does your organisation or the government have a human resource management policy?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   I don't know ☐ 3

12. Who is responsible for your organisation's human resource management policy?

    a) The council/municipality   □ 5

    b) HR Unit/department   □ 4

    c) The Ministry responsible for local government   □ 3

    d) A local government association   □ 2

    e) I don't know   □ 1

13. Clear systems exist that clarify each stakeholder's role in the management of human resource management policy?

    a) Strongly agree   □ 5

    b) Agree   □ 4

    c) Disagree   □ 3

    d) Strongly disagree   □ 2

    e) I don't know   □ 1

14. Are there some decentralised human resource management responsibilities that your organisation is responsible for?

    Yes   □ 1   No   □ 2   I don't know   □ 3

15. To what level have the human resource management responsibilities been decentralised to your organisation?

    a) Fully decentralised   □ 5

    b) Decentralised all the posts below top management posts   □ 4

    c) Only decentralised middle management positions to below   □ 3

    d) Only the junior positions decentralised   □ 2

    e) Not decentralised at all   □ 1

16. Does your organisation have the technical capacity to manage the decentralised HRM responsibilities?

    a) Adequate capacity   □ 5

    b) Some capacity   □ 4

    c) Limited capacity   □ 3

d) Poor capacity ☐ 2

e) Not applicable ☐ 1

17. If the answer is not 'A' above, who performs the responsibilities which your organisation cannot do?

…………………………………………………………………………………

18. What role do trade unions or staff associations have in the HR policy process?

a) A major role ☐ 5

b) A significant role ☐ 4

c) A not so significant role ☐ 3

d) A minor role ☐ 2

e) No role at all ☐ 1

☐

19. Does the organisation have the mission and vision statements?

Yes ☐ 1 No ☐ 2 I don't know ☐ 3

20. If yes, are these statements readily accessible to all staff members in the organisation?

Yes ☐ 1 No ☐ 2 I don't know ☐ 3

21. Does your organisation have a functioning strategic plan?

Yes ☐ 1 No ☐ 2 I don't know ☐ 3

III. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Human Resource Planning

22. Does your organisation do the staffing plans?

Yes ☐ 1 No ☐ 2 I don't know ☐ 3

23. Do the staffing plans reflect congruence with the organisation's strategic plan?

Yes ☐ 1 No ☐ 2 I don't know ☐ 3

24. Who is responsible for the approval of staffing plans in your organisation?

a) A special committee ☐ 5

b) HR Unit/department ☐ 4

c) Unit/departmental Heads ☐ 3

d) Chief Executive Officer ☐ 2

e) The ministry/department responsible for local government ☐ 1

25. Is HIV/AIDS a factor to reckon with in the HR planning process?

a) A serious factor to consider ☐ 5

b) A somewhat serious factor to consider ☐ 4

c) Moderately considered ☐ 3

d) Rarely considered ☐ 2

e) Never considered ☐ 1

Recruitment, Deployment and Promotion

26. Who is responsible for the recruitment of the staff that serve in your organisation?

a) HR Unit/department ☐ 5

b) Unit/departmental Heads ☐ 4

c) Chief executive Officer ☐ 3

d) The ministry/department responsible for local government ☐ 2

e) I don't know ☐ 1

27. Is the current recruitment practice geared towards the achievement of the organisation's mission and objectives?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   I don't know ☐ 3

28. The recruitment processes in your organisation are transparent and competitive?

a) Strongly agree ☐ 5

b) Agree ☐ 4

c) Disagree ☐ 3

d) Strongly disagree ☐ 2

e) Don't know ☐ 1

29. Are staffs deployed according to job descriptions?

a) Always   ☐ 5

b) Very often   ☐ 4

c) Sometimes   ☐ 3

d) Rarely   ☐ 2

e) Not at all   ☐ 1

30. Who is responsible for the promotion of the staff in your organisation?

a) A special committee within the local authority   ☐ 5

b) HR Unit/department   ☐ 4

c) Unit/departmental Heads   ☐ 3

d) Chief Executive Officer   ☐ 2

e) The ministry/department responsible for local government   ☐ 1

31. If there is the practice of transferring staff in your local authority, who is responsible for that?

a) The local authority   ☐ 5

b) HR Unit/department   ☐ 4

c) The ministry/department responsible for local government   ☐ 3

d) Chief Executive Officer   ☐ 2

e) I don't know   ☐ 1

32. Do you find the practice of transferring staff between local authorities a good practice?

a) A good practice   ☐ 5

b) Somewhat good practice   ☐ 4

c) A fairly good practice   ☐ 3

d) A bad practice   ☐ 2

e) Not applicable   ☐ 1

33. Please rank the following problems from 1 to 8, giving one to the most serious human resource management problem in your local authority within the box opposite to your preferred choice, 2 to the next most serious, … and so on, until 8 to the least serious.

☐

Corruption

☐

Inadequate funding

☐

Lack of skilled labour

HIV/AIDS

☐

Lack of job security

☐

Uncompetitive salaries

☐

Uncompetitive work conditions

☐

Lack of autonomy

☐

Remuneration and Rewards

34. Are salaries clearly structured?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   I don't know ☐ 3

35. Are salaries competitive?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   I don't know ☐ 3

36. Are non-monetary benefits clearly articulated and competitive?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   I don't know ☐ 3

37. The remuneration in your organisation is not strongly linked to the employee's performance?

a) Strongly agree ☐ 5

b) Agree ☐ 4

c) Disagree ☐ 3

d) Strongly disagree ☐ 2

e) Don't know ☐ 1

Training and Development

38. The HR policy contains clear guidelines for training and development.

    a) Strongly agree ☐ 5

    b) Agree ☐ 4

    c) Disagree ☐ 3

    d) Strongly disagree ☐ 2

    e) Don't know ☐ 1

39. Is there a clear criteria for identifying training needs within the organisation?

    a) There is a clear criteria ☐ 5

    b) Somewhat clear criteria ☐ 4

    c) Fairly clear criteria ☐ 3

    d) No clear criteria ☐ 2

    e) No criteria at all ☐ 1

40. Please order the following possible criteria used for selecting staff for training, from 1 to 5 with 1 being the most relevant and 5 the least relevant.

    Seniority of staff ☐

    Organisational capacity needs ☐

    Prerogative of the ministry/department responsible for

    local government ☐

    Performance review ☐

    Personal relationships ☐

    Employee initiative ☐

41. Who determines or identifies the staff members' training needs?

    a) A special committee ☐ 5

    b) Heads of Departments/Units ☐ 4

    c) HR department/unit ☐ 3

    d) Ministry/department responsible for local government ☐ 2

    e) Individual staff initiative ☐ 1

42. Does your organisation have adequate funding for training and development of its staff?

a) Adequate funding ☐ 5

b) Somewhat adequate funding ☐ 4

c) Fairly adequate funding ☐ 3

d) Funding rarely available ☐ 2

e) Not adequate at all ☐ 1

43. Do staffs participate in decisions about their training and development?

a) They always participate ☐ 5

b) They participate quite often ☐ 4

c) Sometimes they do participate ☐ 3

d) They rarely participate ☐ 2

e) Not at all ☐ 1

44. Order the following modes of training from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most common and 5 the least common method of training in your organisation.

On the job training ☐

Workshops/seminars ☐

Short courses (e.g. several weeks to a few months) ☐

Distance education ☐

Long term training (e.g. certificate, diploma, degree, etc) ☐

45. After training staffs are not deployed in positions where they will apply their newly acquired skills.

a) Strongly agree ☐ 5

b) Agree ☐ 4

c) Disagree ☐ 3

d) Strongly disagree ☐ 2

e) Don't know ☐ 1

Staff Retention

46. How would you describe the turnover rate in your organisation?

    a) Very high □ 5

    b) High □ 4

    c) Moderate □ 3

    d) Low □ 2

    e) Very low □ 1

47. The vacancy rate in your organisation is …

    a) Very high □ 5

    b) High □ 4

    c) Moderate □ 3

    d) Low □ 2

    e) Very low □ 1

48. According to the organisation structure of your organisation at what level is turnover heaviest?

    a) Top management □ 5

    b) Middle management □ 4

    c) Technical level □ 3

    d) Artisan level □ 2

    e) Other (specify) ………………………………………… □ 1

49. Do you conduct exit interviews among your staffs that are resigning from their posts?

    a) Always □ 5

    b) Quite often □ 4

    c) Sometimes □ 3

    d) Rarely □ 2

    e) Never □ 1

50. If you have conducted exit interviews in the past, what are the most common factors that make employees to leave your organisation? Please order the factors stated below from 1 to 8, beginning with the most prevalent to the least common factor.

Dissatisfaction with remuneration ☐

Lack of promotion prospects ☐

Poor working conditions ☐

Level of development of town in which organisation located ☐

Distance of town from national/provincial capital ☐

Employee relations ☐

Distance/remoteness from home town or ethnic cleavages ☐

Ill health ☐

IV. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

51. Does the organisation have a functional performance management system in place?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   I don't know ☐ 3

52. If yes, how often is performance appraisal performed annually?

a) Quarterly or more ☐ 5

b) Three times ☐ 4

c) Twice ☐ 3

d) Once ☐ 2

e) Never ☐ 1

53. Is the performance appraisal/review linked in a significant manner with rewards and sanctions for employees?

a) There are strong links ☐ 5

b) Linked ☐ 4

c) Somewhat linked ☐ 3

d) Weakly linked ☐ 2

e) Not linked at all ☐ 1

54. The performance appraisal/review and the organisational objectives are strongly linked

    a) Strongly agree   ☐ 5

    b) Agree   ☐ 4

    c) Disagree   ☐ 3

    d) Strongly disagree   ☐ 2

    e) Don't know   ☐ 1

55. Is the performance review of employees used to identify their capacity needs?

    a) Always   ☐ 5

    b) Often times   ☐ 4

    c) Sometimes   ☐ 3

    d) Rarely   ☐ 2

    e) Not at all   ☐ 1

56. Are the results from the performance reviews used to make adjustments to employees' work objectives?

    a) Always   ☐ 5

    b) Often times   ☐ 4

    c) Sometimes   ☐ 3

    d) Rarely   ☐ 2

    e) Not at all   ☐ 1

57. Employee performance in your organisation has improved because of the performance reviews.

    a) Strongly agree   ☐ 5

    b) Agree   ☐ 4

    c) Disagree   ☐ 3

    d) Strongly disagree   ☐ 2

    e) Don't know   ☐ 1

58. Are baseline data and performance improvement data analysed regularly?

a) Always ☐ 5

b) Often times ☐ 4

c) Sometimes ☐ 3

d) Rarely ☐ 2

e) Never ☐ 1

59. Who drives the performance management system in your organisation?

a) Top management of the local authority ☐ 5

b) Managers and supervisors in the local authority ☐ 4

c) The ministry/department responsible for local government ☐ 3

d) Politicians ☐ 2

e) Other (specify) …………………………………………… ☐ 1

60. Are there any of your staff members on fixed-term employment?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   Not applicable ☐ 3

61. Are those not on fixed term employment also involved in the performance management system?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   Not applicable ☐ 3

62. How would you describe the performance management in your organisation?

a) Very successful ☐ 5

b) Successful ☐ 4

c) Moderately successful ☐ 3

d) Failing ☐ 2

e) Totally failed ☐ 1

63. Has your organisation adopted the Work Improvement Teams strategy (WITS)?

Yes ☐ 1   No ☐ 2   Not applicable ☐ 3

64. Has the WITS programme been successful or not as a performance management tool?

a) Very successful ☐ 5

b) Somewhat successful ☐ 4

c) Moderately successful ☐ 3

d) Not successful at all ☐ 2

e) Not applicable ☐ 1

Appendix 18: Qualitative Questionnaire

External Environment

1. Please explain as to whether in your opinion the economy offers or does not offer a conducive environment for the efficient operation of the local governments?

2. Please explain as to whether the socio-political environment offers or does not offer a conducive environment for the efficient and effective performance by the local governments.

3. In your opinion do you think the government system in your country guarantees the autonomy of local governments?

4. Are the central-local government relations in your country appropriate for the efficient management of social and economic development?

5. Are there any significant socio-cultural factors that you think may have influenced the character or nature of the management of your country's public institutions?

6. Does the labour market satisfy the demand for labour especially for local governments?

7. Do trade unions play any role in the management of human resources?

8. What role do local government associations play in the management of human resources?

9. Do international or regional organisations play any major role in local government issues in your country?

10. If they do, can you identify which ones they are?

11. If they don't can you explain why they don't play any significant role in local government matters in your country?

Internal Environment

12. What would you consider as the organisational strengths and weaknesses of local governments in terms of human resource management?

13. Is seniority an important value when considering people for promotion from one post to another or from one salary band to another?

14. Are there any cultural values and beliefs that may have been adapted for use in the management of human resources in the public service, especially local government?

Human Resource Management Concept

15. Do local governments have a distinctive human resource management policy?

16. Are there any linkages between HRM policy and the organisation's strategy?

17. If there are linkages, how are those linkages established?

18. Who else besides government is involved in HR policy formulation?

Human Resource Management Practices

19. Are there any HRM practices that are performed outside of the local authorities? If so, which are these and why are they performed by another entity other than the local authorities?

20. Do you find the current arrangement efficient for the running of local governments?

21. Of the HRM practices that you are responsible for, do you think the local authorities can't perform them themselves?

Performance Management

22. How is performance managed in the local governments?

23. Do the local governments manage performance effectively?

24. Is there a feedback process on information on performance management outcomes for employees and the organisation?

25. Is there an analysis of, and linkages of the performance management outcomes with the national economy?

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