CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The diligence of this scientific inquiry is in examining the information generated from the raw data collected and presenting it meaningfully. The primary and secondary data collected on the phenomena being investigated is hereby analyzed and processed into information for significant use.

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of reform on appointments to top positions of high responsibility in the Central Public Service. Data collection has targeted the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) as the unit of analysis. Despite many variable issues open to investigation, the research focused on real life experience of top public service employees in relation to four key aspects of reform: restructuring, institutional reform, recruitment, selection criteria, employment opportunity and values.

The empirical evidence collected helps to better understand the reform process, particularly the implementation of the Recruitment Policy and initiatives transforming the Public Service into a meritocratic Central Public Service. With Background information about the reality on the ground, and a determination as to the extent of reform effects on appointments of senior level management cadres, recommendations can now be made to address the skills-gap problem.

The data collected by means of a questionnaire will be treated as confidential and no personal particulars or details will be revealed or published. That fulfills the confidentiality and security guarantees component of research ethics. Care was taken to design a questionnaire *(see Appendix 5)* that focuses on the service history of the participant: first, giving his/her name, then title, position and level based on WASCOM

recommended pay structure. Every participant was required to list specific departments within the Office/ Ministry/Agency (O/M/A) in which he or she has previously served or is still employed in order to reflect their experience adequately. Acquired experience measured on the basis of number of years in the present and or previous position was required to gauge the individual's knowledge of the Public Service. For those who have served in the pre-independence administration, a section was inserted to give the name of the employer (government institution) and the number of years served so as to reflect their previous experience. Occupational ranks were also required for comparison with the present set-up.

5.2   DATA PRESENTATION

Data collection took three dimensions critical to successful analysis of the appointment phenomenon. Surveying documents generated an array of unrefined information referred to herein below as documentary evidence. It needs sorting and systematic validation before analysis. Responses through the questionnaire were straightforward indicating, yes or no.

The answers are summarized and presented as the collected data in Table 5.1 below. But for clarity, it is necessary that the key questions are identified by category of the information which is sought. The idea is to critically provide insights and the lead for analogue that is supporting the research question. The following three questions were selected during the follow up meetings with high ranking officials in the OPM and generated the quoted answers.

5.2.1 Merit System category

- *Question:* We have learnt from the staffing division of the PSC that, one characteristic of filling posts in the Public Service is "to instil confidence in the *merit system"*. What is the Public Service motivation in this perspective?

- *Public Service Management Official Answered that:* "It is strange that someone is talking about Merit System that has never been a part of the Recruitment Policy. If this is something documented, I would like to verify that before making a comment".

Nevertheless, upon verifying the statement on the OPM web-site, the respondent conducted the PSC Secretariat to rectify the error. He argued that the Public Service is guided by the Public Service Act, 1995 (Act 13 of 1995) and the appearance of the statement could have been a mistake attributable to human error.

Further verification with the PSC Secretariat showed that the statements on the web-site were not updated on time due to lack of capacity and competency of the responsible staff members to detect the implicating policy issues. However, the same respondents have completed the questionnaire supporting elements such as the 'security of job tenure' which is relevant to the Namibian setting.

5.2.2 Competency Management Category

Recruitment and selection in central government is guided by Public Service Act, 1995 (Act 13 of 1995) and the *Recruitment Policy* regulated by the Public Service Commission (PSC). Generally, this is believed to be a pragmatic approach based on a *Merit System*. Merit system emphasise professional values – developed consciousness about organisation's performances and cultures – as requisite for top-job entry. This emphasis signals a high competition among professional elites than in lower categories.

- *Question:* As high-ranking officials are by structural standards fewer in any organisation, would you describe competition as an attempt to attract (external) and retain (internal) people with technical competencies? (Yes/No). If no, what is the best practice of filling top management cadre posts?

- *Answer* by a high ranking official in the PSC Secretariat responding to this question stressed that "the purpose of filling the Public Service posts is to attract the most qualified candidates inside and outside the Public Service. For that reason, all management level posts are advertised in the daily newspapers for all to apply".

This question sought to address the competency issue. The open ended questionnaire suggesting the selection criterion such as recommending known cadres, elevating the lower ranking employees, searching for innovative talents, building-up competency stock, and retaining competency, was completed with more preference for the searching of innovative talents.

5.2.3 Political/Cadreship Category

The Constitution of Namibia Chapter 11, Article 95 Section (a) stipulates on equal [employment] opportunities (EEO). Affirmative Action (Employment) Act, 1998 (Act 29 of 1998) universally abbreviated as AA has been in force since its promulgation into an act of parliament.

- *Question:* Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA) are fundamental concepts in the employment policy adopted to address the imbalance of the past. How does your organisation define the victims of discriminatory practices? The target group consists of previously disadvantaged members of the society specifically Blacks, women, and people living with disabilities. Does it mean that being Black qualifies a person to occupy a high position without required competency?

- *Answer* from top officials in the Policy Analysis department was that "AA and EEO policies are the catalyst for political considerations which provides for a certain degree of exemption from standard requirements. The final choice normally favors the category underrepresented in the appointing establishment".

It means that AA and EEO are strategic driven policies aiming at addressing the imbalance of the past and at the same time giving the Blacks the majority role in public affairs. The observation disclosed that Permanent Secretaries did not contest for their appointments but benefited from AA/EEO. However, all respondents had strongly rejected any move to recommend known cadres for appointment because such a move compromises the principle of fairness and transparency.

The purpose of this research study is to present the data which can produce the desired results. The key answers are assisting to focus on those issues pertaining to the targeted outcome. Much of the data collected will be used as cross-issues but not serving to describe the phenomenon. In order to avoid a potential confusion, the useful data is grouped in categories, as per Table 5.3 below, for proper management.

Table 5.1 presents the data collected by questionnaire in the following order:

QUESTION BY CATEGORY (YES/NO OR AFFIRMATION)	OPM AND RCs OFFICIALS RESPONSE				
	Cabinet Office	Policy Analysis Department	Public Service Management	PSC Secretariat	Regional Councils
1. Is your work experience in the present position less than 10 years?	N	N	N	N	Y
2. The O/M/As you have so far served, were they inherited from the apartheid occupation era?	N	N	Y	Y	N
3. EEO/AA emphasize non-discrimination. Has your O/M/A of late been implementing this policy?	Y	Y	N	N	Y
4. Decentralization created kills-gap. Did your O/M/A effect internal promotions to close the gap?	N	N	N	N	N
5. PSC Staffing Division is applying the Merit System to instill confidence in the Public Service. Do you agree?	Y	Y	N	Y	Y

Source: Author Generated Model

Further to the presentation, it is necessary to test the reliability of the data before producing the results to be generated from this data. As the qualitative data cannot be categorized in independent and dependant variables, the testing is being substituted by performing a triangulation as follows:

- Documentary Evidence based on available records collected
- Real Experience Evidence gathered through interviews
- Observed Evidence from preliminary surveys and subsequent face-to-face verification of collected data.

The reliability of data had to be determined to ensure that the analysis thereof is accurate. Firstly, fifty-five contacts were initially identified across the Public Service to maximize the results. Those who acknowledged the invitation letter to participate in the interviews were mostly junior ranking civil servants. Only two top management cadres, all from Regional Councils, had confirmed their readiness during follow-up calls to establish rapport thereby casting doubt whether the result will be reliable. But, in order to maintain the focus of research the investigation was narrowed to the OPM as the specific unity of analysis. Five top levels (PS, Under-Secretaries and CRO) and the corresponding number of senior level (Directors and Deputy Directors) had finally agreed to participate. Thus, the number was reduced from fifty-five down to ten respondents. Therefore, the

interviews become manageable.

Secondly, there were twenty-five open-ended questions to answer on the questionnaire *(Appendix 5)* reflecting five categories, namely: personal experience; institutional transformation; Public Service restructuring; policy intervention; and reform strategy. The answers were expected to support or refute the Research Question "To what extent the cadre appointments transformed into a meritocratic Public Service".   Much of the information collected by this method appeared to have been filtered, which necessitated face-to-face contacts so as to verify the data. Thus, the interviews with directors and deputy directors were treated as supplementary to avoid duplication of what the top management cadres had said. Therefore, the figures in the summary represent five respondents only. The results are summarized in Table 5.2 below:

Table 5.2 Key results from the semi-structured interviews by the questionnaire

KEY RESULT BY CATEGORY	MOST FAVOURED	AVERAGE	LESS FAVORED	INDICATORS
Merit System	4	0	1	Four in favor
Competency	5	0	0	All five in favor
Cadreship	0	0	5	None in favors

Source: Author Generated Model

Table 5.2 indicators the higher number of respondents in favor of appointments based on competency. The Merit System was reflected in a set of values spread over the twenty-five questions of the questionnaire. Nevertheless, the indicative result of respondents in favor of the Merit System is four. These results have set three categories under which the data is finally presented and analyzed. Each category in turn is linked to the institutional, strategic, and/or political perspectives in which the data will be analyzed and interpreted to determine the substantive findings.

5.3 DATA ANALYSIS

The interpretation of the data presented in Table 5.1 shows that respondents gave answers to open-ended questions on the Questionnaire (Appendix 5) reflecting three categories, namely:

- Merit System
- Competency-Management System
- Cadreship Principle System

The categorization is helping to analyze the data in perspectives. In other words, the reduction of data into categories is minimizing the chances of non-scientific analysis. An analysis outside the categories would means that each issue is interpreted separately, thus, resulting in clumsy elaborations and the undesired confusion.

Table 5.3 Data Categories

CATEGORY	GROUPING	INTERPRETATION/MEANING
A	Merit System, Bureaucracy, Political Patronage, and Democracy	Data related to these group of concepts is classified as fundamental, hence, category A
B	Competency, Educational Qualifications and Equal Employment Opportunity	This group is reflecting values/ principles vital for selection for appointment
C	Political Cadreship principle, Gender, Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity	Manipulable considerations that can fit in with political or system orientation

Source: Author Generated Model

The interpretation of data categories indicates that Category A is fundamental and thus encompassing B and C. But, A fits more in describing Public Administration systems, while B is for describing the New Public Management, and C is for the New Public Administration. The relationship between these categories is basically dependent on interplay of components. For example, EEO fits in both B and C, while cadership fits in C and A. The inter-group relationship can be defined in perspective or values that are closely related or interchangeable. The reason for applying this model in this research study is to provide scientific results as well as to proffer a tangible explanation of findings.

5.3.1 Institutional Profiles

Analysis of the data collected revealed that the structures of a few of the present public institutions were inherited from the apartheid system of governance. Government structures consisted of departments and offices responsive to legislations passed in South Africa with minimal modifications for application in the then South West Africa/Namibia. At independence, restructuring was necessary to transform the system to cater for democratic governance and level the playing ground for national reconciliation. Significantly, some of those institutions inherited from the apartheid occupation era were transformed into a new brand compatible with the New Public Management Approach, which is adapting to business-like management principles and customer service. To address the issue of changing structures and organizational culture, management level posts requiring specific competences were created. Old institutions were generally involved in policy change as inherited policies were too outdated to address the past imbalances. In the old system academic qualification requirements were not strictly adhered to. Instead only merit records and administrative experience were favored for promotion into middle level management.

5.3.2   New Institutions

The participants in this research study offered different views with regard to the current state of affairs in the post-independence administrative settings and filling of Public Service posts.   Standardized requirements begin with tested managerial skills commensurate with academic qualifications at tertiary and postgraduate levels. Responses received from the Public Service Management department officials indicate that the current state of technical competency in the Public Service has improved compared to the situation at independence. Significant improvement was achieved as a result of job upgrading with higher qualification prerequisites to enhance efficiency in the Public Service. Investment in education, particularly through the University of Namibia and the Polytechnic of Namibia, has partially satisfied this requirement.

5.3.3   Selection criteria

Documentary evidence indicates that assessing of merit records was not the central tendency in the recruitment of government officials. The derived supposition is that anyone could have been eligible to ascend into a position of public responsibility. Given stringent policies reserving job rights for Whites in the colonial civil service, it was not practical to introduce the merit system without contradicting the apartheid doctrine of Whites-only Public Administration.   Thus, a general perception shared across the spectrum of interviewees is that the Merit System as concept was first introduced in the post-independence Public Administration to embrace the policy of National Reconciliation.

Other values that have been under valued are academic qualifications. Standard VI (Six), which was the highest grade in primary education, was until independence the standard requirement for entry positions below management level. For management positions the requirement was Form V (Five) or matriculation, which was the highest grade at secondary level of education.   Policy formulation and implementation was rarely articulated by local bodies as this was subjective to the supreme laws dispensed from Pretoria. Thus, the appointment of policy responsible officials was at the discretion of the South African Administrator General in the territory of South West Africa (Namibia).

None-the-less, on close examination of the infamous Odendaal Report Recommendations for Bantustans in the then South West Africa, it was brought "die-hard racists" came to the government service because the field has been narrowed by racist laws. Job-rights were reserved as if they were the only ones who could deliver the services efficiently. Notably, these were self-interested individual motivated by economic prospects such as high salaries and social status, rather than equal treatment and equity. Merit System, as pioneered in the United States of America, might have been correctly described as non-partisan and flexible in attracting professional persons to the civil service. However, in the Namibian context, the situation on the ground indicates that a different type of self-interested competition exist, but lacks the rigor to enforce competency requirements.

5.4.   EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The interview with Efficiency Charter Unit revealed that the Affirmative Action (AA) implementation has reached the final stage as a balanced filling of public posts had been accomplished by the end of NDP1 in 1995. New standards of recruitment are in place to ensure vacant posts are advertised internally as opportunity for promotions, and externally as a chance to attract competent personnel. The selection of suitable candidates now looks at qualifications, experiences and most importantly the skills that the individual brings to the service. It is critical that the overall quality of personnel correspond with the O/M/A's mission and goals.

The two categories of Affirmative Action (AA): previously disadvantaged (Blacks, women, and people living with disability - victims of discriminatory practices); and previously advantaged (male Whites), have been implicitly refuted due to the fact that they are a form of indirect discrimination in the selections of candidates. Rather, the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) definition was preferred as it fits in with the reality of selection criterion based on academic qualifications, job experience, and skills. Comparatively, EEO values meet both internal promotion and external recruitment more effectively than AA, which is limited to a few categories. A justification is obviously hatched in that even the recommendation to the Public Service Commission would have to emphasize the non-discriminatory practices.

Cabinet Secretariat and Policy Analysis Officials indicated that whilst AA is achieving its objectives, the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy has been higher on the agenda, targeting male and female candidates. It is so in that the Public Service is exempted from some of the provisions of the Labour Act and the AA requires an operational friendly policy in the form of EEO. Most people coming to the Public Service have been considered on the basis of their academic qualifications and skills that does not necessary distinguish between genders. Gender issues come in second place if not third place when selection in accordance with the Recruitment Policy is fairly

conducted. Fairness is arbitrated through the Public Service Commission Secretariat using staff auditing methods. However, shortcomings due to human error or policy ineffectiveness are not ruled out. For that reason a mechanism was put in place to train public servants in effective implementation of policies to insure efficiency in the management of government business. One hopeful tool is the Public Service Charter that must be implemented in all departments by all public servants. The Charter was taken to sub-offices and regions, and based on regular assessments, performance results are now better than before the implementation.

Nevertheless, respondents implementing the Decentralization Policy have a different view, that the AA and EEO policies might require appropriate administrative systems to be put in place to ensure their proper application in Regional Councils. In the present administrative settings AA could easily conceal the abuse of power without implicating the perpetrators in the process. Evidence provided from the OPM shows that a phased application of the AA has been completed, and a new stage of reform has just begun. Officials in the Public Service Management Department stated that institutional building for the Public Service is over due. Early strategies tied to the AA apparently delayed the introduction of the Performance Management System (PMS) deemed critical to a comprehensive reform process. Even the ongoing annual staff auditing could not solve the competency concerns ten years after implementing the WASCOM Recommendations.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) is currently working on the establishment of the National Institute of Public Management (NIPM) specifically focusing on upgrading skills for public servants. The idea is to provide training directly benefiting performance in the Public Services. Based on that proposition, the aim is to improve the capacity of those already in the service to be able to compete for the next level of promotion usually contested through external recruitment.

5.5   MERIT SYSTEM APPOINTMENTS

Senior Officials in the Cabinet Secretariat and the Efficiency and Charter Unit expressed mixed feelings on the clause about Personnel Audit Functions emphasizing Merit System instilling confidence in the Public Service appointment. In their view, whatever records there might be should have something to do with personal traits. Their predicament was reinforced by referring to meritocratic values that should be demonstrated by Civil Servants as a team once in employment, and never to individual attributes. Perhaps the documented statements insisted on merit-based selection and appointments generic to any type of public administration. If the Merit System was ever operational in the Namibian Public Service, then it could have been established to preempt spillovers from the colonial-apartheid administration that prejudiced job rights on a racial basis. Nonetheless, they have further stressed that a pragmatic approach on issues addressing competency have been applied on a daily basis to realize the organizational goals.

One example provided by officials in the Public Service Management Department was the envisaged creation of the NIPM. The decision was inspired by the needs and future reality of the Public Service performance. This vision is based on past and present experience calling for adopting practical solutions to the competency problems. Similarly, the issue of rationalizing the Public Service was apparently pragmatically addressed through comprehensive reform strategies. Nonetheless, rationalization suffered setbacks due to lack of policy support. Given the crosscutting issues emanating from the WASCOM Report Recommendations of 1995, which were in contradiction with AA and EEO policies on national reconciliation, recommendations were revoked and a new approach in the form of Efficiency and Charter Unit in the OPM was adopted.

Regarding present appointments in the Public Service posts, the following stances are said to be more than often regarded as workable to instill confidence in the employees:

5.5.1 Transparency

Transparency in recruitment attracts potentially qualified persons to Public Service as the preferred employer. According to top officials in the two Regional Councils, the trend of transferring personnel from the Central Public Service attracted competent people to their newly expanded structures at a high rate. Their success is basically guaranteed if they can display innovative talents, rather than a system of favoritism, where a known cadre could be favorably recommended.

5.5.2 Competitive Salaries

The salaries commensurate with performance have been a factor in attracting personnel to the Public Service. Increasingly, meritocratic culture has become dominant in Public Service operations, which are efficiency and commitment driven, but generally lack incentives to retain qualified personnel. Bureaucrats harboring self-interested motives, as noted, have made use of the opportunity to seek greener pastures in the parastatals and private sectors. The Public Service Secretariat could not provide statistics on the migration across the Public Service. However, the officials were sure that most desertions of experienced staff members were status-related. This limited exodus did not create shortages, because many candidates inside and outside the Public Service are waiting for such opportunities to fill the gap.

5.5.3 Security of Job Tenure

The job security has been an incentive for employees from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. The government did not have a regulation to retain employees possessing high skills other than the advantage of competing for promotion within the structure. With new opportunities for employment in the Public Service that are not autocratic, large numbers of employees continue to the join lower ranks in the hope that someday they will rise to the top.

5.5.4 Build-up Competencies

Competency levels, according to the Public Service Management department, entails measures addressing shortage through various methods of staff development to retain

critical skills for the Public Service. Presently, ongoing training ventures include the joint Masters Program in Public Management for middle-level and top management, concluded between the Government of Namibia, the University of Namibia and the Institute of Social Studies in The Netherlands. While these ventures represent the highest profiles in response to government training needs, the skills gap problem in the Public Service admittedly remains unresolved until the NIPM is launched and operational. As there is no system of Performance Management in place to build up high profile skills over the time, it is not possible to rely on internal promotion. Therefore they usually look outside for qualified persons to fill vacancies as they occur. Retaining the right personnel was obviously hard for the officials to define, but to some degree they expressed confidence in the ongoing personnel audit that would ensure that standard qualifications are maintained at all levels.

5.5.5 Individual Qualities

The qualities as requirement for consideration do not count much in recruitment. Personal traits, sometimes stated in Curriculum Vitae (CV), are, according to the Personnel Auditors, not a factor in the shortlisting of candidates but simply a reference. It is nevertheless expected that short-listed candidates demonstrate at the interview extensive management experience. For the interview panel to determine the suitability for appointment, questions are set to unveil such values required of the successful candidates and not mere rhetoric that may be expressed to impress the panel. The Recruitment Policy emphasizes reaching out to a broader number of aspirants and affords all potential applicants an opportunity to contest the post in a transparent manner. Apparent selection of candidates is procedural and should reflect fairness in order to pass arbitration of the Public Service Commission. Distinctions are drawn based on: demonstrated planning experience; proven leading capacity; tested organizing skills; credited co-coordinating ability; and level of communication skills.

5.6   COMPETENCY MANAGEMENT

On implementing the Decentralisation Policy as a reform strategy, the respondents disagreed that the process was indirectly downsizing the Public Service. Losing qualified

middle-level managers actually was, but the argument defended such transfers and suggested recruiting outsiders to fill the resulting skills-gap. Again, respondents expressed confidence in existing policy frameworks on inter-governmental relations and could see no point of Central Government enforcing critical issues of governance at sub-national levels of government. To say the least, respective ministries are duty bound to recommend policy change to enhance national co-ordination of efficiency and effectiveness in the Public Service.

Improving performance of top executives was difficult for some respondents to confirm. However, those who answered the question whether the staff development in the O/M/A's included induction for the frontline supervisors and the management cadres have positively confirmed the public perception on the subject. Workshop methods of training organized both internally and externally apparently were favored most, while in-job training, short tailor-made courses, and long-term studies got scanty attention as ineffective or costly in terms of productivity time wasted.   Generally, jobs seekers are expected to align their choices corresponding to their qualifications.

The present level of competency was gauged using requisite for top jobs. Respondents marked that search for innovative talents is the most favored method of filling the top management cadre vacancies as they occur. Varying perceptions were given on building up competencies to retain the best, reasoning that the government has no policy on stemming the exodus to greener pastures. Other strategies denied were recommending known cadres and automatic elevation of the lower ranks, because they are contradictory to transparency in filling the Public Service posts. Candidates must still submit proof of academic qualifications with a high level of professional experience before being considered for the top posts. Personal traits and motivations are hardly added to criteria for selection, as these values are manipulable to mislead the selection.

Respondents have shunned Labor Unions' opposition to commercialisation of government services, as in their opinion, going corporate was a reform strategy to enhance competition and promote profit making ventures in the public sector. There was no job-loss as the union might have feared. Nevertheless, NPC officials could not deny or

confirm that inefficiencies were rife despite attracting the qualified personnel from government ranks to join the parastatals.

Policy unit reply to the questionnaire indicated the strong possibility of new policies guided by specific Acts of Parliament to control parastatals. The Central Agency was created to serve as policy-link between parastatals and the government through the OPM. Policy co-ordination involves the Cabinet Office ensuring compliance with legislations and Permanent Secretaries Forum for policy implementation co-ordination.

In face-to-face discussions on recruitment and selection of candidates, Public Service Management official, indicated that personnel rules and regulations of parastatals are based on the Public Service Recruitment Policy with minor adjustments to cater for issues related to varying professions.

5.7 RESEARCH RESULTS

The sources of data collected must be reliable to generate accurate information basis for explaining the research findings. It assists to reconcile primary and secondary data collected for analysis. Similarly, accuracy can be achieved through categorization when analyzing the same data.

The outcome of this formative (determining) research, whilst destined to determine the effect of reform on appointments of Management Cadres, should finally use the findings to corroborate or refute the question of research. Since the qualitative data collected for analysis in this chapter cannot be measured, a categorization is necessary to articulate the research findings from the insiders' perspectives (viewpoint). Real life experience reflected in the data could not be subjected to prescribed norms to generate accurate information. For this reason, the author has adopted the Grounded Theory that can be applied holistically to the research process. Qualitative data analysis becomes flexible (pragmatic view of knowledge as an experiential process) to explain because it is independent of any prescriptive (normative) model. Thus, this formative research takes a realistic view so as to proffer tangible solutions to the skills-gap problem.

Preliminary surveys produced evidence of previously disadvantaged citizens seeking jobs in the public service. Findings indicate that the motive for such a tendency is hinged on security of job tenure enabling an individual employee to serve longer in the public service position. Informal participatory observation involving attending interviews for various posts at supervisory and management cadre levels unveiled some mediocrity in matching qualifications with job requirements. For instance, there would be no explanation why a nurse by profession should be appointed Director of Planning in a field other than health without relevant qualifications. It leaves observers to wonder whether there were no competent contenders for the same post. These types of actual choices, which were tantamount to handpicking of preferred candidates, usually led to cunning selection for appointments, thus compromising competencies required for the job. The author also discovered that the political patronage style is very common in appointing cadres to top positions. Permanent Secretaries appointed since independence in 1990 have not had to contest for their posts. The Public Service Commission Secretariat declined to comment on this stance, citing these as political appointment beyond their control. It reflects cadreship principles seemingly applied within an acclaimed Merit System to breed new bureaucratic elite outside Public Service Recruitment Policy prescribed procedures.

5.8 RESEARCH FINDINGS SYNTHESIZE

Documental evidence generally indicates that fundamentally, educational qualifications with practical experience are the criteria for appointments. Empirical data collected has confirmed these standards as required of most preferred candidates. But the implementation of AA might pose a challenge inasmuch as appointments are subject to open contestation and not sanctioned by political intervention. From the responses to the questionnaire, and the feed-in meetings or the verification interviews with participants, it is clear that whilst AA ensures that the previously disadvantaged are not discriminated against, it does not prevent discrepancies. Incidents of marginalizing anyone with a previously disadvantaged background, for instance when males and females are equally

qualified for recommendation for the post, are hardly reflected as issues of concern to be reported to the Public Service Commission.

The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), however, has laid grounds for addressing gender imbalances. One out of five respondents admitted that the procedures followed transfer responsibility from O/M/As to the Public Service Commission to approve and recommend best practices within powers and discretions conferred upon them by the Constitution of Namibia and in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Service Act, 1995 (Act 13 of 1995)*. Further elaborations indicate that the final choice normally favors the category underrepresented in the appointing establishment.

The pattern used to align the empirical evaluation to competency-management matched institutional transformation from the apartheid era and institutional structuring to statehood at independence. A selection of five respondents in key positions of policy formulation and implementation has provided evidence adequate to evaluate technical competence capacities. Those institutions which inherited and retained the capacity at which they operated in pre-independence era have experienced a drastic transformation of structure and culture to be compatible with the new political setting. The participants in this study indicated that the institutional setting in the post-independence environment experienced substantial expansion of structure at political executive level and management cadre level, none of which existed before, as seconded officials from the Civil Service of Apartheid South Africa then exercised such responsibilities. The requirements were moderate for merit record, management experience, and political maturity while substantially higher for academic qualifications. Since there were fewer job seekers with high academic qualifications at the outset, this requirement was waived in favor of the merit-based appointments.

As for new government institutions – offices, ministries and agencies created at independence and through subsequent restructuring initiatives for the proper administration of government business – structuring was necessary to acquire the

capacity to formulate and implement public policies. Hierarchical structures have been set up consisting of departments, directorates, and divisions, which specialized in different aspects of governance. Management cadre posts created in these structures represent the required specialties that entail the recruitment and selection for appointment of suitably qualified personnel. Thus, requirements in these circumstances were those more related to Affirmative Action (AA) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO).

The research has nevertheless sought to provide empirical evidence to solve this Public Service motives phenomenon. Motivations that led most job seekers to apply to the government could be classified as applicants' self-interested search for competitive salaries and high social status. But most respondents have denied this idea to be a valid reason as experience has shown that the majority scramble for entry level posts that provide a basic living wage with remote chances of gliding through promotion to the top post. It has thus become evident that previously disadvantaged applicants have much confidence in public sector employment for their own sake and job security guarantees.

The conclusions in Chapter six will determine whether or not the outcome of empirical examination is valid for recommendations. The semi-structured interviews using the questionnaire helped to produce data critical to the understanding of changes and basis for merit-based appointments, political appointments, and cadreship principles followed in the process of implementing the *Recruitment Policy*. Critical assumptions nevertheless have been advanced about professionalism to describe the inevitable disparity created under such circumstances. Other contents vital to the outcome are documental evidence which is integrated with the findings on the recruitment process. Thus, the summary of this chapter is dedicated to synthesize the finding of the research.

5.9 SUMMARY

At independence, Namibia inherited the central administration and ethnic administration structures that served the purposes of the South African colonial apartheid-regime. The old civil service personnel were to be retained until their honourable retirement as per constitutional guarantees. Besides the incorporation, a complement of new civil servants, mostly people from exile, was integrated into the enlarged structure.

The empirical evidence collected refuted the existence of the Merit System in the Public Service of Namibia, although documental evidence indicates to the contrary. The present practice is nonetheless said to be democratic (political setting) and pragmatic rather than bureaucratic (institutional setting). Bureaucracy should be understood in terms of the Weberian Model of neutrality from political influence, and unbiased professional career in public administration. Pragmatism simply denotes what works, not necessarily in realistic terms but values.

As empirical evidence unraveled, it transpired that *professionalism* as a basis for reform and public service transformations was on the decline. Changes in the organizational culture were principally influenced by universal reform. These may inhibit the Competency-Management approach being the best practice. Thus, the research study determines the effect of the Merit System, which was adopted as the preferred approach to public service appointments based on cadre-principles, meticulously using the Grounded Theory as the basic theory for understanding this phenomenon, and proposes the NPM as a new paradigm for reform to improve performance in the newly established Public Service.

Democratic governance encompasses varying models such as bureaucracy. The Central Government of Namibia is structured to be pragmatic in delivering standardized services to the citizens. This notion was proved and validated because facts indicate the pragmatic

approach is overt in public affairs, but covert in Public Service appointments. Competency-based (rather than Merit-based), for its transparency, could be the preferred approach to staffing the public bureaucracy.

The *Competency Management concept* is, nevertheless, being widely adopted as the most effective approach to contemporary transformation of civil services. It is the best method to retain the qualified and competent for the Public Service. The Merit System, however, it has outlived the era of being a flagship paradigm for any significant reform process. This differentiation could be problematic when measuring competencies essential for quality service delivery. The Central Government of Namibia could introduce the Competency-Management and Development approach as an alternative measure for appointing the civil servants and a mechanism for retaining a professional public service.

Data collection in this research study has combined the general case study methods that looked at historical, political and socio-economic development perspectives of the unit of analysis through the *life history technique*. At the same time, the data analysis provides an answer to the research question as to what extent the *Merit System* is applied, and why cadreship appointments are not the best practices for staffing in the Public Service.

5.10 CONCLUSION

The current reform process is partially meeting the objectives of democratic governance towards Vision 2030. The purpose of investigating the impact of reform on the filling of public service posts was accomplished, with the indication that new models slightly more in line with the New Public Management system have replaced the old recruitment model. The change of organisational culture and structure has caused management reform. However, the transformation process, due to apartheid policies of racial, ethnic and institutional segregation that prevailed, was not articulated with a democratic view. Thus, adaptive change is essentially a measure for the organisation's survival in the competitive markets.

Policy analysis in this chapter is about improving performance through appointments of the right type of people, retaining competent staff and developing a professional and meritocratic public service. The subject has been extensively discussed throughout the thesis but within different contexts. In any case, Public Service Reform is the theme of the research where different perspectives should be examined using a multitude of models, techniques, and methods. It is for instance not uncommon to subject managerial behaviour to an empirical research before further assessment to get different outcomes.

The study was highly influenced by the experience of selected Commonwealth countries in the West as well as the developing nations of Africa and Asia. Recruiting and selecting categories of civil servants on a competency-basis does not preclude political patronage inasmuch as political approval is sought to fill the posts. The viable solution to the old practice is to have appropriate legislation in place and to develop policies to ensure transparency and fairness in the application of models.

The analysis above should produce an explanatory framework for the research findings in Chapter six. Thus, analysing the impact of organisational culture on managerial behaviour supports the research question and statement assumptions. The following, Chapter six, focuses on reporting the findings to confirm whether the objectives of the research study have been met, and it also concludes the research study.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   INTRODUCTION

Nations that gained recognition as Trustees under the United Nation (UN) system from 1945, Namibia among them, have since gained independence and statehood. It is common experience in post-colonial states that whenever each one of them tried in its own right to shake off the yoke of dependency for development, inherited government structures frustrates efforts to consolidate the independence gains. Most of formerly colonized and emerging developing nations in Africa, for instance, could not significantly transform their civil services to serve the purpose of a developmental state. The period between 1945 and 1995 was, therefore, marked by internal instability: political turmoil, economic stagnation, and social degradation of societies.

Public Service bureaucracies have played a prominent role in the fermenting crisis of societies in transition. Perpetual lack of appropriate policies on good governance in Africa has literally buttressed ineffective structures. Moreover, wily government officials have principally been identified as culprits and much of the public service inefficiencies, compounded to mismanagement of public resources, were attributed to them. Exemplary transformation of public institutions and government structures in the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries, then pioneering public sector reforms, become attractive to resolve the societal crises in post-colonial developmental states. The study, taking cognition of OECD endorsed reform policies transforming Traditional Public Administration and New Public Administration as member countries adapted to New Public Management (NPM), concluded that post-colonial government in Africa could have adopted a similar paradigm shift to survive global trends.

In this perspective, Namibia has also embraced NPM in pursuit of a comprehensive post-apartheid development agenda. As per the findings of this study, general indicators since

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independence in 1990 are that non-core public services were commercialised and professional management has been earnestly promoted for government institutions. Specific indicators are that competency emphasis for the Public Service of Namibia is an interface of professional management and administrative polity. Evidently, both indications underpin the reform strategy on the appointment of the right type of people for the public service, which is the subject of this study.

This study is determining the effects of reform on cadre appointments in the Central Public Service and makes recommendations on realistic solutions to the skills-gap that, seventeen years down the road of economic independence, still renders the system largely ineffective. The purpose was to critically examine the role of the Office of the Prime Minister in public service appointments, focusing on the recruitment of management cadres. Standard procedures in recruitment are susceptible to manipulation unless arbitration of transparency and fairness is consistently upheld. When appointing O/M/A's are selecting suitable candidates for the post to be filled, they are in principle obliged by Act of Parliament to operate in concert with the arbitrators of transparency and fairness, the National Planning Commission (NPC). Experiential observation has, nevertheless, unearthed serious inconsistencies, through which self-interested applicants could have unfairly circumvented the requirements. This study was focused on the recruitment and selection process, sorting-out political, gender and competency considerations as articulated in appointments to top positions. Findings partly show that top appointments in the Public Service sphere are insulated in covert political patronage. Thus, the branding of public service staffing process as Merit System is merely rhetoric for window dressing.

This concluding chapter, Chapter six, consolidates the research findings such as the reform impact on extent of cadre principle application in the appointment of senior public servants, and makes recommendations for tangible solutions to the problem of the skills-gap in the bureaucracy. A summation of conclusions in all five preceding chapters, each dealing with a specific normative issue, essentially extends the qualitative description of Public Service Reform into the conclusion of the research study. Thus, the objective of

this chapter is to explain how the empirical research was conducted and summarise findings into conclusions, which are the basis for describing the reform impact with specific reference to the filling of senior posts in the public service.

6.2   DOCUMENTATION RESEARCH CHALLENGES

Issue identification for this study led to the collection of secondary data from a variety of sources such as libraries, national archives, and Offices/Ministries/Agencies. Much of the work was done by visiting sources and with the assistance of personnel sorting out the relevant qualitative data. An itinerary prepared to study the literature and documented past events at the National Archives as well as resource centers presented a lot of challenges. Staff members at times would stress that their centers are neither accessible for research, nor were their libraries open to the public. National Archives procedures are so stringent and time-consuming so that obtaining material is a cumbersome exercise. However, persistence in locating the documentary evidence paid dividends such as finding the long shelved Government Service Act, 1980 (Act 2 of 1980) at the Legal Assistance Center. Documents on job-description, advertised criteria for consideration and qualification requirements have served as input that in the process stimulated an interest in examining the filling of management cadre posts in the central government.

6.3   PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED WHILE COLLECTING THE DATA

In order to conduct empirical research, a focus group for the collection of data within the institutional setting was needed. Given bureaucracy, which is the natural setting of the Public Service structure that ensures "formal lines of communication" (Taylor and Anderson, 2000) are not bypassed, expectations of passive co-operation are slim. However, the possible success or failure to obtain valid information, partly due to political sensitivity or confidentiality of issues, compelled this researcher to define what exactly was the purpose of the research and why in particular the Office of the Prime Minister was targeted. Similar concerns have transpired when introducing the research

study to identified participants at Deputy Director and top management-cadre levels. Although hesitation was common in both senior and junior rankings, in one particular case a Deputy Director expressed concern that the outcome would be published and possibly exposes him negatively. This early predicament on the interviewee's side was indicative of unreliable results. Perhaps this was in line with Hogwood and Gunn's (1986:227) conclusion that:

> [Whilst] co-operation (rather than simply compliance) of public officials and clients is often required in the evaluation…One paradox of evaluation is that it may only be possible to carry out monitoring or evaluation by promising not to use its results.

It took one full hour to go through a five-page questionnaire with most of those who responded. The main concern was either the question is irrelevant to line function, or the indicated options from which to choose were too related, thus resulting in failure to understand the meaning of the question. Therefore, much of the research time was dedicated to building the confidence of interviewees selected for the collection of empirical data. This confidence building involved sharing some information, or providing clues on sources of specific data used in setting a certain question. The most convincing approach in these instances was reassurance that once the research is complete and the thesis marked, a published version will be made available through the National Library's special collections. The participants were advised to keep their introduction letters handy for future reference should the need arise to consult on important research issues.

6.4   POSITIVE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE RESEARCH

The questionnaire technique was helpful to understand the issues from the insider perspective within their natural/institutional settings. Data reliability was at stake and no one knew for sure whether this could be accurate or misleading. For these purposes, contact persons were first identified and face-to-face verification meetings were held with respondents, whereupon critical evidence was gathered and analyzed to support assumptions of the research statement and research question. Thus, investigations conducted for qualitative data collection also served to establish rapport with the

participating contacts to ensure that the outcome would be reliable. The scientific basis of the findings was fundamentally demonstrated through the systematic and consistent manner in which this analysis was conducted. The investigation was finally concluded with a logical insight for reform interventions.

Since Policy Analysis as a methodology is outcome-oriented, it was applied to evaluate the technical competency levels of the Namibian public bureaucracy that ultimately matters to the research question of this study. This research study has identified, in Chapter four, the *Recruitment Policy* among published data for analysis. The first step was to examine the policy objectives and activities taking place in meeting policy goals. This study method entailed using implementation process to determine what would constitute success (Hogwood and Gunn, 1986: 222). Other possibilities were the exploration of supportive programs and their implementation. This study has for instance identified the Performance Management System (PMS), although generally regarded as overdue, as one policy issue determinant of promotions in the Public Service of Namibia.

Some linkage had to be established between Policy Analysis and Action Research models. Assuming that the reform process in the Public Service of Namibia is sustained by what Brewerton and Millward (2002:13) defined as ongoing incremental review and improvement of practices, the research had to explore the development trends within the narrow view of merit and cadreship approaches to filling Public Service Posts. The participants would thus be empowered to reflect on changes and progress hitherto made for the improvement of their situation over a long implementation process of reform programmes. This particular research study had administered the questionnaire interview technique, as the equally effective Focus Group Method was not convenient for senior public servants to form part of control group. Consequently, a Focus Group was regarded ineffective in the relationship where the organisation or unit of analysis was not *client* and the evaluator was an *external* independent researcher.

6.5   CONCLUSIONS

As per Chapter one, transformation of structures and cultures of inherited institutions was in short-term objectives a priority so as to address the imbalances of the past. Reform was necessary to take on nationhood responsibilities in an efficient and effective way to enhance New Public Management principles compatible with statehood in the post-colonial era. It entailed institutional capacity building for performance improvement in the delivery of services. *The study concluded that the public service reform was necessary and appropriate for Namibia to take on nationhood responsibilities in an efficient and effective way.*

The discussion in Chapter three and four stresses that Policy-Making and Implementation provide frameworks for both policy interventions and managerial functions the public service needs. In Namibia, the reform process became inevitable in the wake of commercialization of public services that otherwise would be redundant due to globalization and market competitiveness. The external conditions are mainly economic ties within global markets, change in international political environment, and the quest for SADC regional integration. The internal conditions are principally identified with democratic governance and the new public management system entailing adaptive change of structures, strategies and organizational culture. Policy interventions have thus steered the reform process around obstacles to achieve the desired goals. The degree of effectiveness varied greatly from stage to stage, however.

A review in Chapter four evaluated that the WASCOM on rationalization had pioneered the restructuring of the Public Service of Namibia to enhance efficiency in the delivery of public services. Specifically, down sizing was the strategy the government could take to cut expenditure on personnel. But due to financial constraints and skewed income distribution, WASCOM Recommendations were only partly implemented. The political leadership saw fit to introduce reform measures notwithstanding favorable economic conditions widely heralded at the time. The reform was to ensure a major shift from *user-*

pay based to *client-oriented public services delivery* whereby specific policies were formulated. A gradual reform was not the way to follow, as this would mean slowing down the process. The government rather opted for a comprehensive reform as socio-economic disparities widened. Concomitantly, intended policy initiatives were people-oriented, particularly in the implementation of Affirmative Action (AA) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) that aimed at minimizing disparities. *The study concluded that Commission had displayed a lack of sensitivity towards the economic disparities that may ensue as a result of the downsizing exercise.*

Reform implications are shortcomings evident from assessed reform impact particularly on the filling of various categories of high posts in the Central Public Service. Beginning with early transformation, policy initiatives suffered setbacks in the implementation process. Efforts to remedy the process caused the reform, which acknowledged the setbacks and adopted new models for continuity. First, the extent of the National Reconciliation policy fell short of addressing the ownership of the means of production until the land redistribution issue unearthed the dilemma. The rift between the have – usually previously advantaged Namibians of White race – and the have-nots – previously disadvantaged Blacks – has raised questions as to what could have been done to diffuse the volatile developments. Secondly, Affirmative Action (AA) has been declining in all spheres of Public Service. Compliance enforcement is limited to systematic Labour Management Relations Administration and Employment Equity inspections of the Ministry of Labour where many basic rights are compromised due to vaguely defined provisions of the Labour Act. Nonetheless, the implication of applying AA in the Public Service spheres is very severe, as no mechanism was put in place at least to moderate against potential AA abuses. Thirdly, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) has significantly transformed group representations on the public sector employment scale. However, distribution of opportunities to previously disadvantaged Namibians was premeditated to create a new breed of Black professional elite in the top structure of the hierarchical public service. *The study concluded in Chapter four that these three policy initiatives had in practice outlived their original purpose and should be essentially revised under a comprehensive reform.*

The new opportunities for the Public Service of Namibia should be viewed in the terms of the Charter for Public Service in Africa – a geopolitical region partnership for specific applications of guiding principles and related initiatives as best practices for the countries signatory to the Charter, and Charter for Public Service in Namibia that has set the agenda for public management reform. Provisions of both Charters ensure that public service improvement initiatives are based on an entrenched system of firm measures designed to enhance public service performance, hence, structural changes in response to changes in operational conditions as determined by policy on reform.

Currently, the policy analysis supports initiatives pertaining to some issues that are central to Public Service Reform. The terms used have been notably confusing: where the Merit System (principles frameworks) is being mistaken for merit-based criteria that count on personal qualities for recruitment, selection and retention of professional staff, and strategic Competency-Management process of cultivating the stock of knowledge (pool of skills and expertise organisations ought to build up over time) requisite for organisational generic competency, is often mistaken for competence (knowledge, skills and attitudes) qualification required of individual candidates for selection. There is always a difference in meaning related to the social interaction, which could be at organisational or individual levels. Other terms commonly used in most parts of this study are the cadreship principles and the pragmatic approach. *In relevancy to the discussion in Chapter three, the study concluded that the application of these concepts was old fashioned and irrelevant to the recruitment and selection of candidates for appointments in the Public Service posts in Namibia.*

The post-independence political setting guaranteed a pragmatic approach implying what works even though it obviously compromises on professionalism. Career service in the Public Service of Namibia comes with recognition in political circles. Professionalism, a developed consciousness for public administration career, is on collision with the reform initiatives liberalizing the traditional bureaucracy into competency-based New Public Management. As empirical evidence unraveled, it transpired that *professionalism* as an

instrument of reform and public service transformations is on the decline. Ironically, professionalism in Namibia is in limbo despite attempts to popularize the concept of professional civil service. *As per Chapter four and Chapter five, the study concluded that the Competency-Management has not been widely recognized as the standard criterion for selection to high posts albeit policy intervention to enhance it is long overdue.*

Data analysis in Chapter five has focused on the effect of reform especially on the filling of top public service posts. The preceding chapters have already focussed on vital areas of investigation setting points of departure in the process. The competency profile currently operational in Namibia provides for *core competencies* derived from: *general* categorization of the job, grade and level within the public service; *specific* categorization of the actual job within the O/M/A; *differentiating competencies* applicable only where the mandate and strategic direction of the unit and O/M/A's are exclusively operational; and, *generic competencies* for supervisory, management, and top management levels based on the generic competency framework for public service structures (OPM/PMS Principles Frameworks, 2001: 39).

Ascertaining that competency and professionalism (developed consciousness about organisational values) are not compromised for basic qualities such as personal traits that might have been acquired through social, political, and or economic status of a candidate, qualification requirements are the first stop. Indications are that a training institute for civil servants is in the pipeline to deliver courses with specific relevance to senior civil servants (Staff Reporter for The Namibian, 29 September, 2005). *The study concludes that PMS in the Namibian Public Service is long overdue, thus allowing unscrupulous rent-seeking motives to infiltrate the Public Service.*

As proved from real life experience, the *Merit System* and *cadre-principle* basis of appointments in the Public Service of Namibia naturally constituted the trend that saw a breed of cadres occupying top posts at independence and five-years after. Evidently, this scenario was politically engendered to ensure policy initiatives were geared towards institutional structuring and consolidation of independence gains. There is also a crisis of

meaning in the strategic Merit System, notable where individual merits or attributes of a staff member come in question. The collusion is even obvious when the old model of cadreship principles is a key decisive factor in the related policy intervention. In both instances, the Merit System has proved less significant in promoting efficiency and effectiveness of the public services. *Based on empirical results in Chapter five the study concluded that* the *Merit System was politically engendered to ensure policy initiatives were geared towards institutional structuring and consolidation of independence gains.*

Whilst Namibia had paradoxically boasted of having a Merit System in place at the outset, evidence from the empirical study indicated that New Public Management principles have become attractive for productivity of the public sector as a whole. Problems identified do not render the Merit System entirely impracticable, though. Conclusively, as per analysis in Chapter five, some principles are substantially useful but others basically carry implications on appointments and selections. The analysis concurred that the filling of Public Service posts in accordance with the *Public Service Act, 1995 (Act 13 of 1995)* characteristically instills confidence in the *Merit System* for the advantages it offers such as protection of employees from unjust persecution (USA Merit System Protection Board, October 24, 1997). However, the view that the Merit System "attracts people with talent, commitment and innovative ideas to build a professional civil service" in the light of self-interested public service motivations is not justified (OPM/PSC Staffing Division, 2002). *The study concluded that appointments combined with cadre-principle are equal to spoils where political patronage is a practice.*

Nevertheless, rejecting the Merit System, as the conceptual basis for best practices requires an adept perception of values involved so that fundamental management competency is not compromised. The policy-making and implementation processes should first provide for alternatives based on useful principles of the Merit System whilst plugging up those ones that nurture conditions for negation. The Constitution as fundamental law of the country and the Public Service Act as legislative statute on public service management, respectively provide foundations for policy initiative, intervention,

implementation and ultimately, evaluation. The experience of Commonwealth countries has been very useful to the assessment of operational conditions relevant to the Namibian social, political and economic environment in the post-colonial periods. *The Central Government of Namibia could introduce competency-management and development as a measure of appointing civil servants and a mechanism for retaining a professional public service.*

The systematic, semi-structured interview with respondents, produced evidence of highly structured institution, with complex mechanisms of planning and executing programs within managerial frameworks. It is evident that the traditional culture of administration is being phased out and New Public Management is taking root. *Conclusively, the Merit System has given way to new practices without loss of values that are generic to the selection of the right type of people for the professional management.*

The New Public Management formula has not been perfectly mastered in the Namibian Public Service. With all changes initiated at the top of the structure, it is hard to notice that managerial reform has taken shape without conducting a study. This case study has drawn a multifaceted conclusion based on new but previously uncovered evidence. Firstly, the fact that reform was delayed for the entire NDP1 and half-of NDP2 indicates how costly statehood is in terms of budgetary resources to implement programmes. Secondly, the political prerogative to appoint Permanent Secretaries (accounting officers for O/M/As) created a skewed structure in terms of the technical-competency levels required of the bureaucracy. Managerial reform would, nonetheless, entail institutional capacity building for performance improvement in the delivery of services. The study concluded that NPM is the paradigm that can drive the process further towards the achievement of Vision 2030. Therefore, Competency-Management fits in with managerialism whereas the Merit System falls short of required values.

6.6   RECOMMENDATIONS

An interesting outcome of this study is the discovery that the New Public Management, as the new paradigm for reform, can drive the Namibian Public Service to improve performance while addressing the skills-gaps in the bureaucracy. Therefore, the recommendations are:

6.6.1   The appointment of Permanent Secretary (PS) in the Public Service of Namibia should be Public Service rather than political. Political consideration in appointments is a challenging issue requiring the sound   recommendations that can help to reduce incompetency.

The political appointments of Senior Public Servants no longer serve the purposes of Vision 2030. Thus, the Permanent Secretary, as the key position articulating the policy making and implementation, should not be politicized. The study found that filling Senior Public Service posts in Namibia evidently neglect the Competency-Management, which is its strength in retaining a meritocratic civil service. Staffing and retaining the right type of people with necessary competencies has been problematic without proper performance management initiatives to ensure that Competency-Management is in place. The stock of knowledge and expertise the Public Service could build up for future filling of senior posts is being lost due to resignations as people opt for greener pastures in the parastatals and private sector. Implicitly, pragmatic nominations for PS positions are presently conducted by identifying senior management cadres, particularly at Deputy Permanent Secretary levels, for selection and recommendation by a senior level committee nominated by the appointing O/M/A. The names of three preferred candidates are submitted to the President for substantive appointment. In the proposed new set up, the Public Service Commission (PSC) as the arbiter of fairness and transparency should have the power to approve and/or refer back the recommendation for PS positions with appropriate advice on further considerations.

6.6.2   Amendment should be made to the Public Service Act, 1995 (Act 13 of 1995) to add a provision stating contractual appointments of Permanent   Secretaries (PS) to serve for five-year terms.

The incumbent Permanent Secretary should be eligible for reappointment at the end of a five-year term. Civil servant appraisals should follow similar patterns as in boards and councils with minimal differentiations where the PS must be appraised against generic management competency frameworks for the Public Service and according to performance management strategies designed for a particular O/M/A. For reappointment at the end of a five-year term, the incumbent PS or Accounting Officer should be offered an opportunity to reapply or abdicate. The recommended approach should improve management quality and allow competency development for the professional civil service.