CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The Public Management and Administration field, in essence, is broad, necessitating a specific study of theoretical frameworks. A review of conceptual literature and contemporary case studies material on structural transformation and policy reform was conducted to enlighten the research question and the statement of research. The existing knowledge was highlighted in terms of its relevancy to this research, thus enabling the incorporation of valid citation on previous experiences with civil service reform. Conceptual definitions by proponents usually do not provide generic approaches on administrative reform process, hence, the need for a focussed review of literature. The objective is to consult the theoretical material relevant to public service reform.

For any research, it is important to establish a relationship between theoretical and research perspectives (Procter, 2002) and identify gaps in the literature (Johnson, J. 1991). Varying views of different schools of thought cited must be contrasted so that what has happened over time helps to show how others handled similar problems in the past (Gerstenfeld, 2004). Philosophical or metaphysical nature of the phenomena   being investigated, whether observable or unobservable, has to be proved early before the scientific knowledge of the object that is theory informed and the paradigms position used in the research is established, appropriately in the concept definition section.

Research in the Public Administration field must not overlook or underlook the societal imperatives – dynamics, which are underpinning public service reform. Political, social and economic imperatives of a given society determine the type of public administration

adopted for a particular developmental state. Each societal imperative would obviously contribute differently to the internal environment. This pattern is not common in every country as developed and developing societies likewise experience their unique situation where peace and stability enhance the conditions for reform.

In this review of theoretical literature, the author looked at liberal democracy, autocracy and aristocracy as administrative system models adopted for developmental states in Africa. At independence, many African nations had adopted developmental state models deemed optimal for political emancipation and social progress. However, the political economy of dependency relations with former colonial masters persisted despite efforts to improve bilateral ties with other countries for mutual economic benefits. Dependency was for post-colonial states the determinant of survival on the global arena. What was initially post-independence social and economic dynamic was soon transformed into an internal tool for change in favor of neo-colonialism. In face of economic challenges and lack of social progress internally, governments had resorted to multi-lateral relations that required structural adjustment as a condition for assistance. Countries like Egypt and Tanzania had, for instance, introduced radical reforms embracing ideologically oriented national socialism and African socialism to consolidate their economic independence. The geo-political situation of the continent was afflicted by the East-West rivalry of the Cold-War Era leading many countries into intra-state political instability and civil wars. As a result, only few countries in Africa were able to adopt some of the administrative models defined herein bellow. Western democracy was gradually adopted in the Post-Cold-War Era when pragmatic lines of administration in many cases replaced the ideologically oriented African socialism and nationalism systems across the continent.

Influenced by the Post-Cold-War Era, the administrative reform process in Africa took a fast track to catch up with globalization. Governments started addressing democratic changes as they were introducing market economy. Countries in development transition have experienced a sudden transformation from autocratic regimes and authoritarian

democracies, to liberal democracies where pragmatism substitutes other forms of rational policy making and implementation. Adoption of New Public Management models pioneered in the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) before the end of the Cold War has become a reform fashion, which is a new paradigm, for civil services the world over.

In this chapter, the author chose to review the literature on conceptual definitions that would unveil and help explain the public service appointment phenomenon. Then the conclusion enunciates the insights derived from the review of administrative reform.

3.2   PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SYSTEMS

Public administration is an ancient practice traced back to the 5th Century BC in the mandarin bureaucracy in China (Bayat and Meyer, 1994:5). Contemporary development in practical science of administration began with the publication by President Woodrow Wilson of the United States of America in 1887, reorienting the government from the spoils system (Bayat and Meyer, 1994:5; Gortner, 1981:5). The liberal democracy system adopted in America nurtured freedom of association in political spheres, social progress and economic prosperity. The citizens enjoy the freedom of choice manifested in the universal suffrage franchise, which is the constitutionally guaranteed right to vote in elections for the type of government of the day.

Administrative systems, classified as autocracy/aristocracy, democracy, spoils and meritocracy have development out of political, social and economic imperatives prevalent in any given society. Political spheres denote the environment in which the citizens exert influence on the management of public affairs. Social organization and institutions shape group interests that foster professional associations and formation of political parties. Economic dynamics of the society determine the social status of its members and thus their role in the political spheres. Every administrative system nurtures a public bureaucracy, "the salaried officials", who make up the civil service (Hague and

Harrop, 2004:290).

Weber referred to organisation as having "internal structures" consisting of the supreme authority that is political, religious, profit-making business or charitable entity, and the administrative staff he called the bureaucracy (Gortner, 1981: 100-101). Bureaucrats occupy a "hierarchy of offices" on "free contractual relationship" with the employer, selected and appointed, not elected, on the basis of their "technical qualifications" (1981: 100). Thus, organization can be described as the integrated structures of authority with necessary competency to administer over the business of its entity.

Cloete (1994:167) referred to distinct staffing or personnel systems developed under different political milieus such as the *autocratic* system where public posts are reserved for the aristocracy; the *democratic* system where public officials are elected to office; the *spoils* system where patronage is a common practice to appoint public servants; and, the *merit* system where the public posts are subjected to open contestation. These theoretical perspectives will be highlighted in the review of relevant literature but only Merit System, which is the most modern of all systems listed, will form the base for analysing the staffing system applied in the Namibian Public Service.

3.2.1   Autocracy

Autocracy refers to the system of administration dominated by absolute power of one person, usually a monarch. The Autocracy System is a "form of government where a single individual holds unlimited power" (Cloete (1994:167). An emperor may rise to power due to hereditary line, but is referred to as an "autocrat rather than a monarch when his power overshadows his bloodline" (Cloete (1994:167). Wiley (2003: 22) defines autocracy as: the arbitrary rule of the 'chiefs' over the subordinates with 'structures of domination,' such as patriarchialism, feudalism, and charismatic authority, 'which had no rational character'. Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/aristocracy)

presents autocracy as a system of multiple forms, totalitarian or military dictatorship, but which can also be liberal, allowing a significant amount of individual rights such as freedom of speech and private property. Cloete (1994:167) describes autocracy as the system where public posts are reserved for the aristocracy – a privileged class of citizens of the country or state under autocratic rule. The term *autocracy* can also refer to a country that is ruled in this manner, hence, the multiple-definitions of autocracy as:

- A form of monarchy in which, at least in theory, there are no constitutional restrictions on the power of the monarch;
- Political theory: one person rule, where the rule is hereditary, the government in question is a 'monarchy';
- Rule by one person with absolute power. Consensual – arriving at a decision or position by mutual consent;
- A country or state that is governed by a single person with unlimited power;
- A government in which one person possesses unlimited power;
- A political system governed by a single individual;
- A political theory favouring unlimited authority by a single individual (Cloete, 1994:167).

The definitions above provide a broad description of the type of organization in the autocratic society. Wikipedia (2007) compares autocracy with oligarchy – rule by a minority small group of powerful people, and democracy – rule by the majority of the people. The conclusion might be drawn here that a political system governed by a single individual, ironically fashioning centuries-old practice, forms the weakest type of government in the contemporary epoch. The most published autocracy in Africa was Ethiopia under the autocratic rule of Emperor Haile Selassie from the 1930–1936 and 1941 until 1974. Autocracy in Ethiopia depended on military loyalty and the bureaucracy largely appointed from kith and kin of the monarch. But as the economic imperatives of feudalism declined, the emperor's power was eroded, pre-empting the ideologically inspired young military officers to "depose the ruler" (Wikipedia, 2007). The empire came to an end as a result of a "revolution" in 1974 that established a pro-communist government in Addis Ababa, headed by Colonel Mengistu Haille Mariam.

3.2.2 Democracy

Democracy, a translation from the Greek word *demokratia*, means rule by the entire body of citizens and originated from the political organization of the ancient Greek city-state of Athens (History Guide, 2007:4). Plato, a Greek philosopher, promoted the meaning of democracy, which to this date is inspiring modern scholars. Proponents have advanced different conceptions of democracy denoting the contexts in which it is applied. Direct democracy is participatory in that citizens enjoy political participation in voting on all major decisions, but no representatives are involved (Wikipedia/Democracy, 2007:2-3). This type of democracy is synonymous with small communities of civic organizations and large polity referendums.

Representative democracy, to the contrary, empowers electorates to elect representatives to a governing body, such as the constituency, to manage most of the public policy (Wikipedia/Democracy, 2007: 8). The commonwealth model of government mostly employs proportional systems of voting for representatives to the Local Authority Council.

Liberal democracy is based on free and fair elections of representative representatives to parliament, but only a relatively small representative body of the powerful elite is elected (Wikipedia/Democracy, 2007:3; 10). The system guarantees the protection of minorities, the rule of law (constitutional law), a separation of powers, and protection of individual liberties for all citizens, hence the liberal democracy as found in the USA political domain.

Social democracy fundamentally reflects a broad movement of socialist evolutions peculiar with social welfare states and the dictatorship of the proletariats (Wikipedia/Democracy, 2007:3). Contemporary social democracy evolved after socialist revolutions: Soviet democracy was a proletariat dictatorship for in a one-party state.

Democratic socialism – mainly adopted in states such as the former Germany Democratic Republic (GDR), formerly had bonds with communism and the social democracy in Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) that are Western democracies with social welfare state systems. The use of the term democracy emphasizes the rule by people usually holding elections of representatives to governing bodies, usually structured governments, but with various forms of application. Despite this commonality, only the Scandinavian countries have notably had multiple-party types of elections. Renwick and Swinburn's (1980:151) definition is that:

> Democracy originally meant a system of government on the participation of all qualified in decision-making. It is now usually used to describe a political system in which the individual is involved in choosing a representative from competing political parties, or sometimes, from one party.

Cameron and Stone (1995: xii) describe democracy as the manifestation of the people influencing the government of the day by elections. Elections are either presidential, where the president of the country is elected, parliamentary, where political parties contest for seats in the parliament, or provincial/state/county/regional and local authority, where political parties contest for constituencies or the equivalent, to control subnational levels of government.

Fundamentally, electorates – citizens eligible to vote in an election – legitimise the victorious political party or coalition of parties to form the government. Renwick and Swinburn, (1980:152) view politics as the playing sphere for societal conflict about how problems are to be resolved and the methods to be used such as elections. Thus, in a democracy, the people must have the voting power – a political franchise guaranteed by the constitution of the country – to remove the government by some peaceful and orderly mechanism, usually elections (Cameron and Stone, 1995).

3.2.2.1 Institution

Cloete, (1994:73) referred to public institution arrangement as a hierarchical structure of offices and officials in place for implementing the laws passed by legislatures. This arrangement, where subordinates give account to their superiors, was given the term "public accountability" (1994:73). Furthermore, in this arrangement are work place duties meant to prevent time being wasted and duplications of functions on the central government level (1991:74). Thus, a concept of public accountability refers to the management of public institutions and official behaviour of the executive officials guided by procedural codes or manuals designed to ensure that they act within prescribed frameworks and obey instructions (1994:74). A democratic government, as the body of executive function of the state, must have structures in place to serve the administration of the state and ensure democratic governance is sustained, and must deliver quality services to the citizens in an efficient and effective manner.

The literature contradicts the practicality of appointments devoid of open competition for the post. Citing Farnham and Horton (1996:168), the British system heeds a more systematic approach in that:

> Recruitment should continue to rest upon the principles of fair and open competition, promotion on merit, a non-political civil service and an emphasis on personal characteristics of integrity, objectivity and impartiality, but there should be more explicit criteria for the selection, appraisal, development and promotion of all staff…

For career management and succession, planning undertaking similar principles, although not necessarily a replication thereof, should have been part of public service reform initiatives for developing competencies in a systematic way, to build up knowledge reserve for the Central Government. What is in place is the Charter for the Public Service in Africa, Article 5: Principle on political neutrality in respect to the government of the day. Nonetheless, the issue is, are all these being implemented?

3.2.2.2 Political Appointment

In both liberal and social democracies of Western Europe, relationship between ministers and the public servants is strongly embedded in political appointments of the bureaucracy. Senior public service employees are at the center of policy-making and policy-implementation, which in Hague and Harrop's (2004: 299) definition implies bureaucratic accountability. They argued that:

> [H]hierarchical control by a minister remains an essential part of bureaucratic accountability. Recognizing that senior bureaucrats should possess political craft, many established democracies now tend to staff important ministries with politically loyal and sympathetic civil servants.

Some readings cited have provided conceptual guidance crucial to this explicit analysis. According to Albanese (1981:640) *accountability* implies that managers (or management cadres) are accountable to their immediate superior for performance results in their area of responsibility. He argued that the reason for "manageable position" is to improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of the job performance of others, that is subordinates, peers, specialists who assist them in performing their job and the entire organization for competent performance (1981:14). He exerted further that accountability is an obligation on the part of the managers (or management cadres) to improve the quality of organizational function. That view held that accountability is literally a relationship of responsibility within the organization and outside the organization where managers use their social power to assist in setting standards for the entire social good, and that the "profession" of managers in public institutions and private sectors alike upholds high standards of conduct in the society.

Efficiency in *New Public Administration* as defined by Oman (1992:164) denotes producing the maximum output for a given level of input. Albanese (1981:15) defined efficiency as a ratio of output to input. This supports Oman's (1992: 16-17) idea of doing well and without waste whatever is being done, and focuses on how work is done, what should be done, in a world of options. It is the "more, better, faster and cheaper" side of

performance. Efficiency is, thus, a concept related to productivity as well as to performance, which are separately related to any form of management functions such as staffing in the public institutions.

3.2.2.3 The Bureaucracy

The bureaucracy conception is rooted in Max Weber's description of the organization through the study of the society. The term is widely used to describe officials in control of the public sector and administrators of the civic and private organizations. Characteristics, which are usually hierarchical, subordinate the bureaucracy to the supreme authority of the organizations. This kind of relationship implies the selection and appointment based on technical competencies of individual officials and neutrality in the exercise of delegated powers (Gertner, 1981: 100).

La Palombara (1963:14) writing on classic neutrality of the bureaucracy in political development and transformation suggests that:

> [R]esponsible neutrality would require that bureaucrats play a major role…in the implementation of programmes …in their definition and development into policies…the bureaucracy, particularly in its upper reaches, will always be deeply involved in the political process.

The resulting argument indicates that the classic Weberian conception of bureaucracy is an ideal formulation and not subject to empirical verification (1963:13). Thus, it is not compatible with all requirements of modern reform. The role of bureaucracy in modern political and socio-economic changes emphatically requires, as the central tendency, such Weberian public administration values: hierarchy, responsibility, rationality, achievement orientation, specialization and differentiation, discipline, and professionalization of the civil service (1963:10). But, the neutrality insisted on in the Weberian model partially conflicts with the realities of reform in developing countries.

For Riggs (in La Palombara, 1963: 120) what has become associated with public administration systems of highly industrialised and democratically pluralistic societies of

the Western World, (specifically Britain and the United States political power domains), is the habit of thinking of the bureaucracy as an instrumental apparatus for the execution of policies established through 'political', non-bureaucratic institutions. Comparably, Pfiffner and Presthus (1967:39) define bureaucracy in Western terms as a system of complex organisation(s), made up of a vast number of technical and hierarchical roles, used to carry out policies usually made by others, and peculiarly suited for large-scale operations, demanding from its members consistency, loyalty, and adaptability.

Chipeta (1997:2) defines policies as statements of objectives and the means of achieving them. Policy objectives must be translated into concrete goals or measurable targets. It entails the "use of intervention techniques known as policy instruments", and thus "policy measures are the steps used to put policy instruments into effect" (1997:2). Hogwood and Gunn (1986:14) suggest that anything meriting the title policy must contain some element of purposiveness. Nine typical usages have been presented, but only "policy as a process" fits in with the "study of public policy" as the subject of reform (1997:18-19). Policy as a purposive course of action takes place in innumerable contexts basically explicit or implicit for political, economic, social purposes or in this case study, managerial objectives within public policy reform. For our purposes, therefore, policy may be denoted as an interaction or process that takes place over a period of time (1997:22).

Further elaboration indicates that policy is "subjectively defined" and many approaches, such as policy-making (legislation), policy-implementation, policy-reform, and policy-analysis, may be purposely applied. Nevertheless, Hogwood and Gunn (1997:23) added that it is the individual observer who subjectively perceives the interaction or process. From this view, the following must be benchmarked in this pursuit, that:

> [P]olicy is often the cumulative outcome of many operational decisions or responses to problems first perceived at relatively very low levels of the organisation (Hogwood and Gunn, 1997:23)

Adomolekun (1993:38-39) questioned the applicability of the Weberian conception of a "career bureaucracy" whereby:

> [C]ivil servants are expected to be politically neutral that would normally make them acceptable to a new set of political leaders taking over governmental powers in succession to a defeated incumbent leadership team. The obvious advantage here is that governments…political leadership teams…change, [but] the administration with its security of tenure remains, thus ensuring some measure of continuity and predictability in the contact of government business.

The advantageous application of the Weberian neutrality is prone to radical criticism from proponents of "rationalisation", that is restructuring and staff reduction and streamlining of functions of the civil service. It is bound to come into conflict with the reformist view that inefficiency and ineffectiveness are due to "overlap and duplication of functions", and unsustainable size of the public serves (NDP-1, 95-2000: 443). Thus, neutrality implies that the bureaucracy remain passive in the implementation of policies articulated by the political executive rather than proactive to influence change in the internal and external environments. The executive bureaucracy would, therefore, seek to maintain the status quo, where power "symbiosis" continues to guarantee them a professional relationship with the political leadership.

The review in this section covers the gap that leaves the dialogue incomplete and thus confusing if not defined. A few more concepts need further elaboration at issue level to capture relevant intervention techniques or instruments common to contemporary structural transformation in both technologically highly advanced and developing countries. While the review may not intensify the rounding up of every technique and instrument for definition, a wide range of descriptions is essentially given to zero-in on government measures planned or in place to implement executive decisions.

3.2.3 Meritocracy

Defined in Wikipedia (2007:1) as the system of distinction, with pure democracy based on merit, that is demonstrated ability and competence, not nepotism, which is the backing of wealth or family connection and class privilege, the meritocracy conception refers to

government or other organisations and competitive societies. Radical views opposing the meritocratic conception have emerged lamenting that a meritocratic class monopolizes merit and amasses power, social status and privileges in societies that have embraced meritocracy (Wikipedia/Meritocracy, 2007:2).

Building on Ruhil and Camoes' (2003) study of the "political roots of state merit system" in the United States of America (USA), merit in our definition differs widely from the merit pay system linked to individual employee performance in a given Human Resource Management (HRM) structure. Accordingly, merit system is conditioned by either political or economic dynamics in the given state. In turn election competition and migration (inflows of foreign-born white immigrants) raise transition rates for merit systems (Ruhil and Camoes, 2003: 8-10). The Pendleton Civil Service Act of January 16, 1883, that laid foundations for the merit system in the USA, was based on the British model requirements: competitive examination, relative service tenure, and political neutrality (Ruhil and Camoes, 2003:3).

As per Merit System Protection Board (MSPB, October 24, 1997) definition, present day USA merit system, likewise based on the British model, suggests that:

> [T]he public's expectations of a system that is efficient, effective, fair and open to all, free from political interference, and staffed by honest, competent, and dedicated employees…implies that change in the management of human resources (centralisation, deregulation, delegation)…becomes increasingly important that line supervisors and managers incorporate the merit system principle[s] into every decision they use.

The principles are:

- Recruit qualified individuals from all segments of society and select and advance employees on the basis of merit after fair and open competition, which assures that all receive equal opportunity;

- Treat employees and applicants fairly and equitably, without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or handicapping condition, and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights;

- Provide equal pay for equal work and recognise excellent performance;

- Maintain high standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest;

- Manage employees efficiently and effectively;

- Retain and separate employees on the basis of their performance;

- Educate and train employees when it will result in better organisational or individual performance;

- Protect employees from arbitrary action, personal favouritism, or coercion for partisan political purposes;

- Protect employees against reprisal for the lawful disclosure of information in a 'whistleblower" situation (i.e. protecting people who report things like illegal and/or waste activities) (USA/MSPB, October 24, 1997)

The principles and their definitions are far reaching in as much as their contribution adds meaning to the process of reform. In order to ensure that the necessary structures are in place and composed of the competency categories and professional levels capable of efficient and effective delivery of quality services to the general public, a standardized recruitment practice should be incorporated and be a part of any given but comprehensive employment policy.

3.2.4 Spoils System

Partisan politics of patronage dominate the spoils system. Again the American experience provides the backdrop for examining what spoils is all about. Economic dynamics were listed as values at the centre of spoils. Political parties campaign for support before going to election mostly with promises of better jobs and improved public services such as Social Welfare, and with the passing of time the Keynesian model. Ruhil and Camoes (2003:2) wrote that:

> For much of the nineteenth century the spoils system dominated the personnel policy in American government, largely because politicians recognised the benefits associated with staffing public offices with loyal individuals of the

same political persuasion. In particular, politicians deemed a forced [pecuniary] interest to be necessary if executives were to implement their pet [party] programs in the face of legislative resistance…Consequently, technology, expertise, training, and competence did not guide recruitment, retention and promotion of civil servants.

In the end, American politics had changed with competitive economic conditions that compelled federal and state administrations to adopt the merit system. Patronage became costly, and politicians no longer value the electoral benefits of spoils politics (2003:2). Whilst spoils in America are presented in historical perspectives, the image captured is vital for the argument put up in defense of the competency-based system. It is, nevertheless, imperative that we reinforce the renouncing of spoils in the older periods and contemporary reform processes. The renouncing of spoils should be commensurate with relevant legislations.

3.3 ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM CONCEPTS

Administrative concepts and reform concepts should be defined separately to provide the basis for explicit analysis of the reform process. Post-colonial administrations posited in historical perspectives as developmental states, have experienced functional inadequacies as a result of inherent weak public institutions and incompetent public bureaucracies. Exacerbated by donor community reform conditionality, African governments were unable to implement strategies and displayed lack of commitment to the reform process (Pohjola in Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 2003: ix).

Post-colonial civil services in Africa had mostly adopted structures deemed compatible with a developmental state. The executive officials in the Public Service, the bureaucracy, spearhead the implementation of development policy through the administrative functions. However, the serious lack of capacities in individual countries has derailed institutional reforms. Kayizzi-Mugerwa (2003:5) pondered on the reform in Africa as primarily focussed on: improvement of incentives (salaries) by reducing the

size of civil service, and performance in the public sector; improvement of management systems and raising accountability in the civil services; and, training for skills required for the developmental state to create an enabling environment for growth. These strategies which supposedly supported the institutional capacity building often were crippled either by political turmoil, economic crisis or social strife associated with internal instability.

La Palombara (1967:17), studying the succession of colonial bureaucracy in newly independent countries of Africa, noted that:

> Colonial administration[s], which …did not recruit large numbers of Africans to positions of policy responsibility, [have] been replaced by public administration[s] that … [are] closely tied to goals of national development … [But the new bureaucracy at most lacked competency requisite for] the top of the hierarchy, where they are expected to advise ministers and politicians regarding major programs of economic and social development.

The resulting ineffective structures in the long run undermine good governance and engender corruption (Nze and Nkamnebe, 2003:281). Any remedial consideration should thus embrace structural transformation whilst taking a generic competency creation approach as the key objective of civil service reform. Kamoche (1997:270) argues that:

> Creating human resources functions that are able to focus attention on the selection, develop[ment] and retention of individuals who can contribute to organizational functioning will be an essential part of public sector reform.

Adding the author's view, Public Service Reform is not unique to Africa alone nor exclusively associated with developing countries' paradox in adapting to new systems. Adaptation is the process, rather than spontaneous results, of adjusting organizational culture and practices along external trends. It is inherent in organization structures to respond when prevailing conditions, internal political, economic, and social dynamics and external trends of a given era present a new environment to operate from. Organizational change strives to match the reality of internal environment, hence, the imperative for reform. One case in study is the developmental state in the Post-colonial Era.

The imposition of the International Monitory Fund (IMF) lending conditions on developing countries, with the prescription of Structural Adjustment, has adversely impacted emerging economies. The impact from IMF conditions compounded with unstable internal social, economic and political "ambiance" essentially undermined the search for viable solutions to the public service crisis of newly independent states. Nze and Nkamnebe (2003:283) suggest that:

> To enhance the effectiveness of civil service bureaucracies [particularly] in Africa the political and career executives who lead these organizations should adopt strategic planning as an important management tool…The shifting [internal and external] environments in which public sector executives work today, suggest that these executives must be effective [achieving objectives or goals] strategists if their organizations are to fulfill their mission and satisfy the public they serve, in the years ahead.

With this indispensable message African political and bureaucratic elite should be able to face the challenges of reform to guarantee the effectiveness of state apparatus and public institutions that ought to efficiently serve the public. The search for a solution to the problem of weak public institutions has led African states to adopting, in 2001, realistic approaches aimed at public service reform, which pre-empted the inception of the Charter for the Public Service in Africa. The principles of this charter have been adopted in a uniform manner pertaining to institutional capability in Africa in the post-cold war era:

a) *Article 5*: Principle of Neutrality:

- The public service that serves the interests of the public shall not discriminate against its employees because of their personal traits;
- The public as a whole remains neutral in respect to the government of the day and all administrators will respect this fundamental principle;

b) *Article 15*: Recruitment and promotion:

- Public service employees shall be recruited, appointed and promoted on the basis of their competence and professional skills and in accordance with transparent and objective procedures that guarantee equal opportunities for all, women, disabled and particularly disadvantaged groups.

c) *Article 17*: Staff training and development:

- Considering that public service employees are entitled to training and development, the public service administration shall provide an enabling environment and the necessary resources for enhancing and adapting, on an ongoing basis, their knowledge and skills, including through allowing them to specialise and become versatile.

d) *Article 18*: Motivation:

- The organisation and functioning of the public service administration, as well as the management style and quality of management of managers, shall address the aspirations of public service employees for self-fulfilment and development in the leadership capacities, responsibility and a sense of initiative;

- The public service administration shall foster dialogue between subordinates and management, not only with regard to improving working conditions, but also to prospective reforms (OPM/InWEnt, 2002: 49-51).

Every country that participated in the second conference at Rabat-Morocco from 13 –15 December, 1998, and the third conference held under the aegis of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), predecessor of the African Union (AU), in Windhoek on 5th February 2001, was encouraged to peg their public service reform endeavours and service delivery improvements to the new practical principles.

In historical perspective, each country in Africa went its separate way to effect public sector reforms. Post-colonial transformations were under experimentation, and Egypt was the first country in Africa to introduce radical reforms in the Public Service as early as the 1950s. According to Coutsoukis (2004), the Egyptian Prime Minister heads the Egyptian policy implementation process through the public bureaucracy encompassing thirty ministries and 600 public agencies and companies. The *Nasser Era* civil service is composed of First-undersecretary, Under-secretary, and Manager. Reform focussed on achieving the raised professional qualifications of senior civil servants, wider recruitment from the educated middle class, seniority as the main criterion for advancement in the civil service, and bureaucracy as a catalyst for providing employment for university graduates. The *Sadat Era* negated the revolutionary ideology of the Nasser Era, and reform of the public service collapsed under rampant corruption, favouritism, nepotism,

overlapping and duplication of functions, and general lack of day-to-day governance at lower and middle levels of the civil service structures. The *Mubarak Era* pursued a limited but moderate Nasserite restoration of the public sector. A balanced power structure became necessary under Mubarak, where Arab socialism and nationalism advocated by Nasser and Sadat respectively, came to a collision that produced a polarised political elite. The Egyptian example presents a reform process that could be progressive for the era or produce disastrous consequences for the civil service when the new dispensation favors the opposite.

For courtesy purposes, the full names and short details of the three Egyptian presidents are presented as follows:

- Hosni Muhammad Mubarak – elected President since 1981 (re-elected 2005)

- Anwar Mohammed El Sadat – former President since 1970 (assassinated 1981)

- Gamal Abdel Nasser – former President 1956 until 1970 (died in office 1970)

The importance of the Egyptian system as a reference is the type of administrative structure functioning under different successive political leaders who initiated civil service reform to implement their ideologically based or free policies.

Looking at the American example, from Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan to George Bush administrations, the American civil service has seen major transformations with similar purposes of enhancing efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the provision of public services. Restructuring of the Federal department was necessary to make the initiatives work. When Jimmy Carter (a Democrat) "became President of the United States of America in 1977, his first step sought to restructure the civil service" for the reason that:

> … the federal service was unnecessarily complex, unrepresentative of society, inefficient and unaccountable, unable to reward merit and excellent performance, and unable to provide sound policy advice at its top levels for politicians (Massey, 1993:88-89).

The Civil Service Reform Act (CSRA) was passed to outline the aims, and the President's Reorganization Committee (PRC) was set up with President Carter himself as its Chairman to implement the Act. Of its eight provisions, only the following three were selected for this research and will be part of this discussion:

- The abolition of the Civil Service Commission [CSC] and the creation of the Office of Personnel Management [OPM], the Merit System Protection Board [MSPB], and the Federal Labour Relations Authority [FLRA];

- [C]reation of the Senior Executive Service [SES] … that was intended to create a top level of elite generalist managers on the model of the British high civil service. Membership of the SES would become part of a rank-in-person system, would compete for financial rewards, would be eligible for training and development opportunity and would participate more actively in the policy formation and design activities.

The commissioning of the MSPB, SES, and PRC has kick-started two notable reform initiatives. The SES functioned as the catalyst for efficiency and measuring performance of public officials through the instigation of performance indicators and annual review (Massey, 1993:90). The political executives controlled the bureaucracy through SES procedures that mandate top managers to discipline or dismiss those non-performing, whilst rewarding excellence with merit payment or promotions (1993:90). The Reagan and Bush (Republicans in office from 1981 to 1992) administrations were pragmatic in realising the SES principles. Nonetheless, implementing the CSRA remained the central focus for the Republicans, although this resulted in most of the reform programs initiated by the Democrats being suspended.

Universal power structures and categories of professions are "dominated by the [b]ureaucratic and political high-level decision makers whose main function is to implement and interpret policy mandates" (Balk, 1996: 22-23). This profession constitutes the *policy elite*. In relation with the political leadership, their function is to "suggest, maintain and develop initiatives for [leaders] such as presidents" (1996: 22-23). In this group you find under-secretaries, directors and deputies, and professional managers. The power structure extends down to "middle layers of managers and

specialists [with technical competencies] largely called *bureaucratic professions* because advanced education and special experience are necessarily requisites" (1996:22). This group provides support services to the policy elite basically involving activities that

perform liaison duties and propose new policies at designation levels of Counsel, Budget Director, Policy Analyst, Chief Economist and Public Relations Director (1996: 22).

3.4   NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

The New Public Management (NPM) or managerialism, is a new 'paradigm for public management' which emerged in the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries in the 1970's (Ocampo, 2007: 249; Kickert, 1997:733). OECD sought a universal solution to inefficiency in public administration by adopting a model with both an "internal" and "external" environment outlook (Ocampo, 2007: 249). The NPM principles are borrowed from private sector managerial techniques originally founded on Scientific Management and Human Relations approaches (Barry and Dent; Pollitt, 1990; and, Ranade, 1997). Adopting NPM principles entails change in the composition of the bureaucracy and liberalization of civil service roles.

A New Public Administration (NPA) doctrine was developed in the early periods attempting to make changes to traditional Public Administration principles of "life long careers and legalistic procedures" followed in western bureaucracies (Ocampo, 2007: 252; Hood, 1995: 408-409). But with the paradigm-shift from public administration to public management, organizations including governments initially in western countries, have adapted to managerialism as their new doctrine of public administration reform.

Managerialism, first introduced to the public services of Britain in 1979 and the USA in the 1980's, is a new philosophy of governance (Horton, 2002). It implies less government control and more private sector initiative in the economy to maximise profits and generate wealth (Horton, 2002). Applied to public service from private business, the

approach proved effective and efficient, and thus worked better for respective democratically elected administrations ultimately replacing the traditional merit systems (Horton, 2002).

Exponents of NPM conceptually contrast this model with Reinventing Government and the Business Process Reengineering (BPR), which are radical models of reform in the public administration. Differing views exerted held that each model constitutes the solution approach or appeals to the serious reformist better than the other. What distinguishes NPM is its distinct principles "aimed at reengineering the policy making process and public administration [along] management and controlling techniques from private-sector and successful strategies of enterprises rather than on bureaucratic rules" (Steiner, 2007; Osborne and Plastrik, 1997). Ocampo (2007) shared Hood's (1996) view that "NPM is in many ways a reflection of the reinvention model, but emphasizes certain crucial areas more than the later does" (Ocampo, 2007:250). Further elaborations reflect Hood (1996) insights that the "first dimension of NPM is 'active control of public organizations by visible top managers wielding discretionary power'; hence, the professional managers should be in control. For the OECD 'a new paradigm for public management' had emerged, with eight characteristic trends:

- Strengthening steering function at the center
- Devolving authority, providing flexibility
- Ensuring performance, control, accountability
- Improving the management of human resources
- Optimizing information technology
- Developing competition and choice
- Improving the quality of regulation; and,
- Providing responsive service

(Ocampo, 2007: 249; Kickert, 1997; Bouvaird and Hughes, 1995)

Reinventing government or entrepreneurial government conception emphasizes the promotion of environment where public and private competition enhances efficient

service delivery; community empowerment to limit bureaucratic control of public affairs; outcome oriented performance of public agencies; goal driven, rather than rules and regulations, mission; customer care principles; value for money; decentralization of authority and embracing participatory management; discerning market mechanisms over bureaucratic mechanisms; and, adopting Public Private Partnerships (PPP) to resolve community problems (Ocampo, 2007: 248, citing Osborn and Gaebler, 1993: 19-20).

Business Process Reengineering (BPR) redesigns the government to change traditional public administration carried out by bureaucracy to 'businesslike' styles peculiar to private business. Principally, BPR is concerned with the "internal" environment of the private business institution. Critics dismiss the applicability of BPR as not compatible with government structures and operations citing downsizing of the civil service staff and a cost-cutting budget. BPR disregards the rent seeking motives of the bureaucracy and the value placed on security of tenure in the public office (Ocampo, 2007: 250).

A broad array of public sector management reform concepts is being alluded to for the purpose of providing a focus on professionalization and restructuring of civil services. NPM, as a new model adopted in the OECD with a unified purpose, provided further insights needed in changing the structure and functions of the organization as well as its members (Ocampo, 2007:250). Because there is no specific guiding principle for reform, adapting to NPM should be regarded as a paradigm-shift in configuring the public sector reform process.

The managerialism philosophy that underlies the system of New Public Management (NPM), was first introduced in contemporary history in Great Britain under the Conservative Government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher shortly after she came into power in 1979 (Farnham and Horton, 1996: 259-260). The Americans were second to adopt the system at the peak of east-west ideological rivalry in 1980. Assumingly, former Communist Eastern Europe was inspiring Trade Unions in the West to press for more improvement in the welfare state. Managerialism was to ensure that privatization

prevailed over social welfare systems. The rest of Western Europe started to introduce civil service reforms slightly late, as the European Union became the undisputed option for economic integration in the post-cold war era. On the periphery, tangible civil service reforms in non-European commonwealth governments were only realized long after the end of Cold War. African states, South Africa and Namibia included, who retained the legacy of British Westminster Model of administration were most likely to "replicate" the British style of civil service reform (Halligan, 1997). Similarities were nevertheless noted in the commonwealth civil service systems so far cited for the purposes of this research. The citation was meant to obtain clarity on similarity of conditions that might lead to the adoption of NPM to diverse civil services.

3.4.1   Management Development

McNamara, (1999) noted that historically, "[o]rganizations developed managers in strong occupational positions to posses knowledge about the organisation's products or services that included work direction as a basis for promotion". Martin (1998) on British experience noted that "[i]n public service management, managers need to balance the competitive environment of new market with traditions based in the past and with expectations of consumer choice". It means that knowledge of organizations need a complement of competency to articulate management strategies. For the same reason, British emphasis on critical management development initiatives include the development of standards of competence required of any system of managerialism.

Flanders and Utterback (1985:403) wrote that:

> …the USA developed the Management Excellence Inventory (MEI) at federal level in 1984… [It] was designed to assist organizations in identifying managerial job requirements and skills [and] to help in assessing individual and organization[al] management strengths and needs. MEI is [a] competency-based model [that]   covers the functions common to management jobs, for example planning, coordination, supervising, monitoring, and generic skills, attitudes and perspectives (e.g. communication, leadership, strategic orientation) needed to perform these responsibilities.

Dixon (1996) has alluded to the "development of required administrative capabilities in civil servants" as a perspective of managerialism system in Australia. Nze and Nkamnebe (2003) concluded that:

> African governments recognise that most public services tend to be [too] huge to embark on New Public Management (NPM) reforms. The challenge is too high and soon[er] or later discrepancies will destabilise the reform process. The viable solution is for the African governments to assimilate those practicable values in the new public management and integrate with national policies for implementation.

Farnham and Horton (1996: 259-260) say that NPM is about generic application of private sector management system and techniques into the public service. Additional values have been identified as the actual transformation of the public service from the Social Welfare State to one more cost effective, efficient and responsive to their users (1996:62). The American Federal Civil Service under the Carter, Reagan and Bush administrations, discussed under Public Administration Systems earlier in the chapter, had emulated this kind of transformation closely. Farnham and Horton (1996:260) have advanced eight key features of Managerialism but only six fit for discussion on a comparative basis:

- Adopting a rational approach to managing, which emphasises the role of strategic management in setting objectives and clarifying policy issues;

- Changing organisational structures designed to separate policy from administration and creating executive units with delegated responsibility for service delivery, whether internally to other parts of the organization or externally to the 'public';

- Changing organisational structures, which are designed to shorten hierarchies, devolving managerial responsibility for achieving set targets of performance and holding individual managers responsible for achieving them;

- Measuring organisational achievement in terms of the criteria of economy, efficiency and effectiveness; developing performance indicators enabling comparisons and measures of achievement to be made and providing information upon which future decisions can be determined;

- Developing active policies for changing the cultures of public organisation from ones dominated by traditional public service values to ones attuned to the market, business and entrepreneurial values of the 'new' public service model;

- Implementing human resources management (HRM) techniques aimed at weakening collectivist approaches and introducing individualist ones, including seeking to mobilise employees' support and commitment to continuing structural and organisational change;

The Canadian Federal Public Service has established an Advisory Committee on Senior Level Retention and Compensation (appointed in 1997 for a three-year term) with a mandate to recommend strategic initiatives with an emphasis on reviewing Human Resources responsibilities. The committee suggested what initiative planning needs:

- An agreed definition of future skills and competencies to use throughout the core Public Service;

- A regime for evaluation of all incumbents (on the same status as the PMS in Namibia);

- A Human Resource Information System to ensure that the information can be effectively collected and used; and,

- Agreed future needs (Advisory Committee on Senior Level Retention and Compensation, 1997).

The Canadian example has helped to isolate issues that produce similar approaches elsewhere without necessarily contradicting the variation in the environments of their application being North America, Europe or Africa. The benefit we are gaining from the above sources, first of all is the generic nature of issues presented and the attached assumption that the Canadian Committee might have arrived at these initiatives using the Organization Development (OD) approach, which is not necessarily the theoretical grounding of this research. Secondly, the areas of activities in essence are related to some of the initiatives taken with the aim of enhancing efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in the Public Service of Namibia introduced in Chapter four of this

research. Effectiveness, as a term featuring in this research and used elsewhere in the study, is in essence the goal sought for at all stages of public service reform. The reason for consulting the above literature is, however, none other than relevancy to the discipline of "New Public Administration" in general and new public service management practices in particular.

3.4.2   Competency-Management

Kamoche (1997:272) defines competency management as the process involved in cultivating the requisite stock of knowledge (the pool of skills and expertise) which the organization has built up over time, and which constitutes its stock of knowledge. Fidello (2004) says that:

> [C]ompetencies are the knowledge and skills required [in the organization] to achieve desired performance … thus, Competenc[y] management [entails]   the organization that takes care of its employees and offers them the best opportunities to develop both personally and professionally will get the best employees – and it will have a better chance of training [and developing] them.

While recognizing that competency management is a strategic part of "integrated Human Resources [HR] processes and systems", its application in this research is more of strategic consideration and policy intervention for Public Service Reform (Fidello, 2004).

Stuart-Kotze (1972:56) defines competency concepts in terms of organizational change as follows:

> A powerful variable determining types of organizational change is the level of competence of the organization's members, that is the degree and type of skill, or competence, possessed by the managers of the organization…[classified as] intellective, rational, technical competence" referring to the ability to plan, control, design, schedule, produce…and "interpersonal competence" function of the degree to which organizational members are aware of their impact upon others and, they upon them…[, that are] "interrelated but analytically separable components…"

The competency-management process should, thus, be interpreted in two dimensions: first, the *technical competencies* concept compatible with *public service managerialism or New Public Management* paradigm for strategic change, and second, the *interpersonal*

competencies paraphrased as developed consciousness or professionalism required of members of organizations at operational levels. Each dimension represents a level of competence, which can be classified as a recruitment standard for merit-based appointments.

Although competency-management is peculiar to private business practices, similar values are also found in the merit system that is common to public service practices. Nonetheless, both approaches stress competence as an ingredient of the organization's performance. According to Stuart-Kotze (1972: 56) competence is two-pronged: technical competencies and interpersonal competencies. Their analysis should take *technical* as concerned with management and *interpersonal* as concerned with staff awareness of impacts and accountability for their work related activities. Basically, interpersonal competencies are the human resource area that underlies employee motivation for individual performance and staff development, and technical competencies are managerial functions strategically aimed at achieving the organization's goals.

Although the recruitment and selection stage of staffing does not prescribe how competency-management differs from competency-based staffing, in essence they have different meanings not only by mere words, but also certainly in their application. For this research, technical competencies are the rational basis for the study of competency-management, where the interpersonal competencies are to be incorporated in the analysis of a skills gap in the bureaucracy. A relevant assumption is that the competency-management process guarantees a culture for attracting, employing and retaining professional (developed conscious) managers in the organization. Competency-management approach can help organizations to build necessary capacity to address issues of globalization, which is in essence the liberalization of world-economic markets. The "organizations [operating under managerialism systems] must adapt to changing environments in order to survive… [world-economic] dynamic and highly competitive marketplace" (Wiley, 2003:18).

The Merit System can be described, in the author's view, as the administrative setting where loyalty to political ideology and cadre principle-based appointments to high posts are relished. Its culture (normative practices) of appointing new staff members in entry-posts, disregarding flexible procedures of competency–based appointments, and induced bureaucratic neutrality, are basic characteristics that help to cultivate and maintain the status quo for the bureaucratic elite. Thus, merit-based appointments combined with cadre-principle are equal to *spoils* where patronage is a practice. Therefore, Competency-Management fits in with managerialism, whereas the Merit System falls short of required values.

3.4.3   Recruitment and Selection

Baroukh and Kleiner (2002) have defined public service as work being done for the public good. In their view, it is important that the concept is defined to provide a better understanding of what is meant by the recruitment process in the public service. Barton and Chappell (1985:100) strategize that the personnel administration process could be divided into three categories, namely: recruitment and selection to bring employees into the public agency; in-service personnel process for workforce / employee development; and, separation procedure that cares for employees departing from the organization. These categories are discussed to support evidence of how in practice the staffing and promotion of individual public officials is executed in the public service.

Appointments in the Public Service are supposedly merit-based because the objective is to ensure quality, effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of services. It implies that the requisite for reforming the public office is the appointment of competent, and strategic oriented professional management cadres. However, the employee selection criteria with a *pragmatic* emphasis, which is operational in the Public Service of Namibia, overlooks the inevitable skills-gap in the bureaucracy that may inhibit the competency-based approach from being the best practice for retaining a professional public service. This differentiation could be problematic when measuring competencies essential for quality service delivery. The *Competency-Management* concept is,

nevertheless, being widely adopted as the most effective approach to contemporary transformation of civil services. For this approach to take root as an organizational culture, a comprehensive reform process must embrace New Public Management paradigm and cause public organizations to address adaptive changes.

3.5   PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTIONS

Philosophy as a discipline concerned with ethics –how one should live – is an important element of social science studies. Since philosophy is fundamental to the understanding of what sort of things exist and their essential nature or metaphysics, scientific knowledge (epistemology) and principles of reasoning (logic), philosophy should be the starting point in the review of social science literature (Wikipedia, 2007:1). Research methodologies need to reflect the philosophical conception of the existing things being investigated. This reflection is referred to as phenomenology, which the author has applied in this research as one variant in the analysis of qualitative data.

3.5.1   Phenomenology

Phenomenology refers to the "study of how human phenomena are experienced in consciousness, in cognitive and perpetual acts" without pondering on "questions of their causes, their objective reality, or even their appearances" but derived "values" (Wilson, 2007:1). Hegel, Husserl and Heidegger, German philosophers, held a common conception that phenomenology is a philosophical exploration, approach, and vision of phenomena, but had advanced different interpretations representing separate schools of thought.

Hegel is associated with:

> 'dialectical phenomenology' interpretation of phenomena (what presents itself to us in conscious experience) as a means to fully grasp the absolute, logical, ontological and metaphysical Spirit that is behind phenomena.

Husserl, a mathematician, developed:

a 'transcendental phenomenology' notion of intuitive experience of phenomena (what presents itself to us in phenomenological reflexion) from which attempted to make sense of the essential features of experience and essence of what we experience.

Heidegger, critical of metaphysics, created:

'existential phenomenology' suggesting that the phenomenological vision of a world [of] beings must be bypassed towards the apprehension of the Being behind all beings (Wikipedia, 2007:1).

The understanding derived from these philosophical outlooks is that investigations are based on established theory, which is approximate to the truth, and seek scientific knowledge of the phenomenon through observation. This study is examining a problem in social science, which cannot be measured, and it is critical to interpret the cadre appointment phenomena under the philosophical spotlight before the intended investigation. Thus, on the basis of these outlooks, one should consider using the phenomenological values to understand the object being investigated.

3.5.2   Philosophical Realism/Metaphysical Realism:

Realism is, in modern philosophical terms, asserting that objects in the external world (outside the human mind) exist independently of what is thought about them (Rausch, 2007:2). Developed from Platonic (School of Plato's thought) theory of Forms, realism was for classic and medieval:

The theory of knowledge that "universals" (general concepts representing the common elements belonging to individuals of the same genus or species---such as red or man) have a separate existence apart from individual objects. Nominalism…in contrast held that universals had no reality apart from their existence in the thought of an individual (Rausch, 2007: 2)

Conceptualism holds that universals exist, but only insofar as they are instantiated in specific things – they do not exist separately (Wikipedia, 2007:3).

3.5.3   Scientific Realism: Boyd (2002:1) defined scientific realism as:

[T]he common sense (or common science) conception that, subject to a recognition that scientific methods are fallible and that most scientific knowledge

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is approximate, we are justified in accepting the most secure findings of scientists "at face value".

Scientific realists hold that scientific research produces knowledge, and scientific theories are the approximate truth about both unobservables and observables (Boyd, 2002:7). Pragmatists reject this scientific realist conception of theory, contending that scientific knowledge is the product of experience, and certain methods lead to truth or high probability (Conant and Zeglen, 2002:2). Other pragmatic views assert that beliefs are dispositions, which qualify as true or false, and, thus, truth is what works---any idea that has practical utility is true (Wikipedia, 2007: 1-2).

3.5.4   Structural Realism: Proponents favor the theory that reflect on structural relations (causal structures), and leading thinkers such as Worral caution that the most serious departures from the truth in scientific theories tend to be errors about the natures of basic phenomena (Boyd, 2002:8).

3.5.5   Critical Realism: Proponents of the critical realist paradigm held that:

> [S]omething is real if it can bring about visible/material consequences – real if it is casually efficacious (eg. a magnetic field, unemployment, poverty) (Kaboub, 2007).

> Critical realism is the theory that some of our sense-data (those of primary qualities) can and do accurately represent external objects, properties, and events, while other of our sense-data (those of secondary qualities and perpetual illusions) do not… (Wikipedia, 2006:1)

> Critical realism [encompasses two of Bhaskar's works:] a general philosophy of science that he described as transcendental realism---refers to the fact that in order for scientific investigation to take place, the object of that investigation must have real, manipulable, internal mechanisms that can be triggered to produce particular outcomes [eg.] when we conduct experiments; and,

> [A] special philosophy of the human science that he called critical naturalism---[which] prescribes social scientific method which seeks to identify the mechanisms producing social events, but with a recognition that these are in a much greater state of flux than they are in the physical world (as human structures change much more readily than those of, say, a leaf) (Wikipedia, 2006:2).

In its broad sense, realism offers many ways in which public service reform can be experienced. Critical realism can be advocated to support the phenomenology view against pragmatic rejection of scientific knowledge. Nevertheless, this research must now seek to explain in realistic terms what the underlying causes of public service appointments phenomena are.

3.5.6   Pragmatism

Pragmatism as an intellectual construct can be contrasted in organization studies. Wicks and Freeman (1998:8) have looked at the development of a pragmatic approach to organization studies built around the pragmatist criterion of usefulness and argued that:

> [P]ragmatic value of usefulness simply requires that those engaged in research or decision-making scrutinize the practical relevance of a set of ideas as defined by their purposes and those shared by their community (e.g., within a country, a corporation, a research stream). There are a number of challenging problems that emerge from this approach, particularly sorting out which values or purposes can be morally defended and (especially in pluralistic society) which values can be used to guide the interactions of people in organizations.

The question why pragmatism is so useful to researchers remains unanswered beyond Wicks and Freeman's (1998:8) perception that:

> A pragmatist approach fosters an environment in which people see the relevance and importance of values to the study of organizations and the need to engage in discussion about which purposes are advanced and why.

Pragmatism is inexhaustible, but like all other theories needs practice. Binswanger, (2004:1) argues that:

> Pragmatism is not realism… the philosophy, which dispenses with reality. Their primary is "experience"---a package deal of existence and consciousness, of facts and feelings. Pragmatists deny that there are any absolutes… scorn the conceptual level---rejecting anything that gets very far above the sensory experience.

Blair, (2004:1) critically observes that:

> Pragmatism holds that theoretical knowledge is true when it works 'in practice'. If…theory or principle leads to certain predictions, and those predictions turn out to be true in reality, then your theory is true. [But] then just because you learn that

[prediction] is true does not mean that [theory] is true --- there could be many other reasons why [prediction] is true.

Public administrators and theorists have debated the relationship between the theory and practice interdependent variables, but found "the theory/practice gap" (Chatelaine Press, 1999:1). For its public characteristic and program "practical value", the theory could be substituted for government theory (1999:1). The gap in finding and using theoretical insights does, however, pose a challenge to "practicing administrators" and "scholars of organization theory" (1999:1). The problem comes also from the "diversity of theoretical perspectives on organization" particularly where scholars presumed correctness of their own particular perspectives (1999:1). These difficulties are a limitation to the effective application of theories.

Programatic activities seek to resolve a perceived problem by constructing the social environment around a problematic area. Relevant models must be adopted or constructed for a program and tested if they are applicable in practice. The resulting action plan must be rational to produce tangible outcomes. While dealing with theoretical ambiguity, public administrators and scholars alike employ the Rational Science Models (e.g. in theory and practice) that partly enables them to be rational. Nonetheless, the ethical dimension and practical relevance of organization studies provide the common ground for these arguments. A critical perspective advanced for organization development approach elaborates that:

> Once researchers drop the notion that organization studies need to model   reality and research for essentialist underlying structure via scientific study, they can embrace a more diverse and interpretive approach (Wicks and Freeman, 1998:16).

Pragmatism does not morally distinguish between 'science' and 'nonscience' values or usefulness. Unlike the realist notion of explaining phenomena in their natural occurrence (as they are), and or social setting (construct), and the rationalist (normative – ought to be) moral-laden view kinds of inquiries, the pragmatist ethically emphasizes practical usefulness of programs and workable solutions in policy interventions. Pragmatists,

precisely regarded as equivocal because of their study of organization combining 'descriptive' and 'prescriptive', 'science' and 'nonscience', "better and worse metaphors", reject the "separate…view of normative and empirical research" over [their] various forms of symbiosis (Wicks and Freeman, 1998:16). Pragmatic foundations are as follows (Wicks and Freeman, 1998:16):

- *Positivism* – Sharp and categorical divisions across three distinctions (making versus findings; descriptive versus prescriptive; science versus nonscience); [Where] Science as the only basis for generating knowledge; Concepts/ Terms as Value- neutral (stripped of moral content); Reality as Unequivocal.
- *Anti-Positivism* – Relativizes, but retains, the categorical distinction of positivism; No basis for determining which accounts are better than others; Concepts/Terms as Value-Neutral (stripped of moral content); Reality as Equivocal.
- *Pragmatism* – Rejects the categorical distinction of positivism (no privileged status, as such, to science); Can [and does] draw useful (pragmatic) distinctions among methods and forms of evidence in terms of what is useful (e.g. between "descriptive" v. "prescriptive", "science" and "nonscience"; better and worse metaphors); Concepts/ Terms as Value-Laden; Reality as Equivocal, but grounded in terms of languages, history, [and] culture.

By contrasting pragmatism with positivist theories, the researcher means to explain the ambiguity of the former theory. Pragmatism equivocally draws values from both positivist and anti-positivist concepts. Wicks and Freeman's differentiation shows that pragmatism is balanced between the two other approaches. Evidently, the resulting hybrid requires and leads to qualitative and quantitative methods of research.

The author chose to contrast the pragmatic concept with realism and rationalism in order to capture the ambiguity that the former brings to organizational study. The contradictions found in pragmatism invites a debate on a new platform devoid of ambiguity of "state capitalism" but a free-market economy system is necessary. Pragmatism is susceptible to external pressures to move public service management in an undesired direction. This research refers to pragmatism only where the approach to reform in the Public Service of Namibia is ideologically based on mixed economy to realize the implementation of National Reconciliation and Affirmative Action policies.

The theoretical integration of pragmatism conceptually is too low to support the assumptions in the research statement and the research question. Realist conceptions by comparison are philosophical and, thus, could hold scientific facts.

3.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Phenomenology implicitly applies theories that underlie facts about the phenomena being investigated, in this case study the behavioral theories. In the research context, the focus is on the theoretical grounding of the study. Because application of theory to the research is realized in varying degrees relative to the phenomena and research model, it was imperative to present this variation in an explicit way in paragraphs below.

3.6.1 Public Service Motivation

In theory, Public Service Motivation (PSM) is concerned with "an individual's predisposition to respond to motives primarily or uniquely grounded in public institutions and organizations" (Perry, 2000). It was further elaborated that the "public nature of the service…appeals to the unique and particular mission of government" (Hondeghem and Lens, 2005:1). Putting it in a broader perspective or practical context, the definition implies that the public sector has a capacity to attract people with competencies into its services. This statement should not be construed as dogmatic because it was literally built on the observation that the "term motives is used in a sense of [individual] psychological needs" (Hondeghem and Lens, 2005:1). People are self-interested as individuals, hence "attracted to and self-select particular organizational settings as functions of their own particular interests and personalities" (Wiley, 2003:17 and Schneider, 1987).

The choice is not an end in itself, but procedurally serves as a prelude to the selection process. The organization does the selection within its "prerogative" to appoint the most suitable candidate for the job. Thus, organizations "predictably…admit only those who fulfill a need and who are perceived" as compatible with organizational expectations

(Wiley, 2003:18). Therefore, the new 'right type' of people must at most share some primary and secondary characteristics with the old 'right types' to show that they have something in common with the organization culture (Wiley, 2003:18).

3.6.2 Self-determination

The Hondeghem and Lens (2005) study reveals that no specific theory is precisely dedicated to public service motivation. Borrowing theoretical perspectives could be one possibility in many that seek to find a conceptual solution to the phenomenon. To further the introduction of public service motivation, Hondeghem and Lens (2005:3) propose the "socio-psychological approach…focused on individual action and motivation". With this approach researchers could make sense of why individual 'self' is the sum of different identities.

Nonetheless, the authors concluded that the "lack of a theoretically founded explanation" of the motivation phenomenon indicates that there is "no comprehensive theory on PSM [but] empirical concept in the current literature". Therefore, a pragmatic notion of building theory about the phenomena holds in this instance.

Perry's (2000) study took the public service motivation concepts further towards formulating a theory. After a long review of literature on the subject Perry (2000) arrived at the conclusion that:

> The primary motivators for public-sector employees are the interests that attract them to public service…likely different from those of people who self-select into the private sector…It follows that those who seek to manage the affairs of government have a primary interest in helping to realize the common good. Such persons are likely to be motivated by fulfilling obligations, maintaining trust, and obeying rules.

In his arguments, Perry (2000) insisted that individual values and identities emancipate in exposure to institutions and mechanisms of social development. Combined, self-concept built on value and identities of the individual, and the latter are at the core of the motivation theory. The study did not produce a theory but, nevertheless, provided

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insights in the theoretical direction. The theory would contribute to understanding the role of "specific institutional setting" in shaping the "individual behavior" that is conceptualized as "motivation" (Hondeghem and Lens, 2005:3).

3.6.3   Organization Theory

The Organization Theory is a multi-approach theory requiring careful selection of paradigms associated with its application. It inter-sects with the Critical Theory, Postmodernism and Social Construction approaches or paradigms determining the "different dimensions and different means of analyzing organizations" (Budhwar et al., 2002: 95). Since the social scientists and researchers in organizational behavior are using theories to explain a phenomenon and approaches to "examine the knowledge of an organization", any practitioner can generically apply these theories as long the "intended methodology is to search for examples of previous research [in] organizational analysis".

Taylor and Anderson (2000:13-16) contemplated that the quest to understand organizations' behavior in given situations necessitated the development of models to explain the way real organizations work. In a case study in Public Administration, the two authors alluded that bureaucracy is the dominant organization model for both public sector and private sector. Based on the Weberian bureaucratic organization model with a hierarchical structure, real organization work characteristic scans its environment for changes. Successful scanning must determine and precisely understand the nature of the organization's environment, kind of strategy employed, kind of technology used, kind of people employed and dominant culture/ethos within the organization, how the organization is structured and dominant managerial philosophies adopted. Accordingly, the organization responds and adjusts to a new equilibrium point.

Wiley (2003:45) and Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) conceptualize organization's as environmentally interactive systems, "open systems" that are influenced by and interrelated with the external environment. Thus, the contingency approach of organization design is that different environments are characterized by different economic and technical attributes, each requiring a different competitive strategy to

maximize organizational effectiveness. The issue of organization-environment fit, therefore, comes in, hinged on the ways organizations are structured and managed (2003:45).

Behavioral change, advanced in Wiley (2003:18), presents recruitment and selection of 'right types' of people with new and innovative ideas as characterizing structural changes in response to changing operational environments. As a proponent of motivation sub-set

of behavior theory, Wiley (2003) cited Holland (1985) arguing that people are attracted to organizations because of the believe that their own particular interests and personalities will fit into a particular occupational environment. Alternatively, adding organization culture as a characteristic for behavioral change as per Wiley (2003,18), behavioral change is a prelude to structural change. Hence, organizations must adapt to changing environments in order to survive in a dynamic and highly competitive marketplace (2003:18).

3.6.4   Contingency Theory

In Donaldson (2001:7) a definition of *contingency* "is any variable that moderates the effect of an organizational characteristic on organizational performance". The theory is about organizations: a subset of the contingency approach says that the effect of one variable on another depends upon some third variable (Donaldson, 2001:5). The conception includes *size contingency*: affects decentralized bureaucratic structure that fits large organizations as opposed to simple-structure that is centralized and fits small organizations; *strategy contingency*: affects divisional structure that fits a diversified strategy with diverse activities serving various product-markets where effectiveness is enhanced by coordinating each product or service in its own division [e.g. O/M/A], as opposed to functional structure that fits an undiversified strategy focussed on single product or service resulting in efficiency enhanced by specialization by function such as departments of production or marketing (2001:2-3); and *structural contingency* that deals with organizational change (2001:9).

Donaldson (2001:9-13) argues that organizations devise *strategies* in response to changes in the *environment* – technology to improve performance. In order to remain compatible with change, "organizational size, structures need transformation to fit high performance" and thus effectiveness. Thus, organizations whose structures "remain static would experience a misfit, causal to performance loss" (Donaldson, 2001:9-13). Basically, organizations are established with "functional structures" so that when diversified through strategic changes, "divisionalizing", adoption of "divisional structures" should be a must if they are to survive. The measures taken to bring structures to the level of contingencies for performance fit, therefore, is known as adaptive change.

Donaldson (2001) contributions included citations from leading contingency theorists on the subject among them: Burns and Stalker 1961; Lawrence and Lorsch 1967; Pennings 1992; and, Woodward 1965. Thus, for conceptualization in this chapter, the terms borrowed and adopted guide the empirical analysis of the reform process. Therefore, testing Donaldson against other contributions for logical position of the arguments would be an unjustified exercise.

Organization Theory and Contingency Theory have been associated with profit-making organizations. Lawrence and Lorsch are said to have conducted studies of such organizations in 1963, and the outcome was widely market or technological environments based (Wiley, 2003:45). Application of these theories to public sector organizations and their behavior has thus assisted the transformation of civil services from "traditional administrations implementing policy directives of political elite" (Wiley, 2003:45), into public management systems adapted to private sector practices. Policy initiatives and relevant interventions for public service reform in Namibia have followed similar patterns with vivid success.

3.6.5   Grounded Theory

Rogelberg (2002) presented grounded theory as a sociological approach in the study of life at work through direct contact with the social world. Rogelberg (2002) and Blumer

(1976) saw logic in linking the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism to a process view of social reality that views human interaction with the world process of meaning-making and interpretation: understanding situated meanings and experiences. As a means to explain action in context, the grounded theory is better applied to the analysis of data with the purpose of assessing the impact of interventions on managerial behavior. In analyzing the merit system, the analysis should produce an explanatory framework for the findings in Chapter five. In essence, using sociological methods as a basis for analyzing recruitment and selection, albeit in bureaucratic context confined to professional group-interaction, is not as implicating as the obvious alignment of the cadreship principles to pragmatism in terms of filling public service posts.

Locke (2001) identified the Grounded Theory with the American pragmatism that originated from the symbolic interactionist school of thought in the 1960s. The theory is applied in both quantitative and qualitative research approaches such as Action Research, Case Study and Ethnography. Its philosophical base is in modernism realist ontology, which Locke (2001:7) presented as:

> [R]ealist ontology…[that] supposes that an objective world exists as a knowable observable reality and that the facts of and laws governing that world are given and independent of those who might observe them. [The underlying] emphasis is on explanations how the world works that ultimately could be harnessed towards its prediction and control. [Meaning that] inquiry is directed towards the discovery of empirical facts and universal laws of cause and effect that are to be embedded in an explanatory or theoretical framework.

The grounded theory research application in social process takes a pragmatic view of knowledge as an experiential process, that is, knowledge grounded in particular experiences (Locke, 2001:20-21). Accordingly, the pragmatist supposition is that:

> [K]nowledge or understanding of events is possible by focusing attention on them and rendering them problematic.[Thus,] knowledge derives from intimate acquaintance with the events studied and form close experiential connections with them.

Contrasting between these theories eliminates inconsistence with the qualitative research paradigm that might render the investigation non-scientific. Organization theory is useful

to build a theory around the phenomena – issue being investigated within the organization environment. The contingency theory is applicable in the analysis of the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables to determine the factual reality about the phenomena. The grounded theory applies to the whole research process from data collection to data analysis. It is useful to articulate investigations to solve social science problems which cannot be measured as occurs in management and organizations. For this reason, the grounded theory is chosen for this research having considered its consistence and possibility of introducing other relevant theory within its domain.

3.7   THEORETICAL APPROACHES

The advent of new public management or managerialism has stimulated more thinking on how best to transform the public service to be efficient and effective. Cunningham and Weschler (2002:105) wrote about Public Administration Theory, that:

> *Theories in use*…are ontologies, epistemologies, or paradigms that are inherent in the way we frame the phenomena we study or we explain to others; or, *Reconstructed theories* about how organizations function, alternative leadership styles, or decision-making process …[are] consciously constructed beliefs   and understanding about the reality we observe.

The usefulness of these theories is in public administration practice as they can be created and tested for value.

3. 7.1 Pluralist Approach

Reynolds (1996:4) observes that the final characteristic of pluralism is consensus or wide agreement on democratic principles and values among top American politicians and individuals who make policy. The branch of pluralist theory that seeks to limit public participation to a "multitude of groups" as influencing political issues and policy

decisions contradicts the notion of direct democracy and favors a representative democracy.

According to Corcoran (2003:1) pluralism has more recently become a focus in liberal theory critique. A debate that produced this outlook is based on European and North American experience and may not necessarily apply to developing countries in the South. However, being aware of the degree of adaptation to post-cold war political theories mainly based on Western concepts of governance, public administration practitioners believe that:

> On a practical level, the pluralist agenda is to adjust or hybridize a Euro-centric body of liberal political and ethical ideas in the face of cosmopolitan pressures.
>
> It is an acknowledgement of the challenges of globalization, migration, ethnic dispersion and resettlement, multiculturalism, and the considerable power of non-democratic states and non-Western cultures (Corcoran, 2003:1)

A contribution made towards this case study is that "Euro-centrism" underlies democratic principles adopted worldwide after the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and allied proponents of socialism elsewhere. But the manifestations of globalization challenges in cultural difference, migration trends, and internal displacement of populations rendered western democracy ineffective to resolve societal problems in developing countries. One should, therefore, take cognition that whilst bi-polar rivalry has come to an abrupt end, its legacy will take generations to disappear from the world political arena. At societal level, pluralism continues as in the past to safeguard unequal interest groups dominating public representation.

3.7.2 Public Choice Approach

The Public Choice Theory, in part developed by James M. Buchanan (1995:4) as "Theory of public bureaucracy – how bureaucrats behave under certain constraints and incentive structures," can offer alternative frameworks for the analysis of Public Service employment motives. However, its application would ignore the vestiges of apartheid still imbedded in the post-colonial race relations, and as a rational construct, impedes

realistic approaches to policy making and implementation. The theory, generally defined as "the study of politics based on economic principles" implies application of economics to politics that quantifies the results. As applied to the measurement of merit adoption in America in the nineteenth century, the politicians and the bureaucracy they appointed were according to Felkins (1997:1) "self-interested" in initiating public programs appealing to their constituencies:

> Public Choice…recognize that politicians are motivated by self-interest. The … Founding Fathers of the U.S.A understood that and tried to organize government in such a way as to minimize the impact of self-interest…[hence] so much trouble with our government today results from our losing sight of the reality that politicians are self-interested.

Felkins (1997:2) further identified "rent seeking", that is maximizing the budget to meet policy objectives:

> … 'rent-seeking' by [c]oalitions of voters, bureaucrats, politicians, and recipients of public funds [, that is]…managers of the 'bureaucratic firms' seek special advantages from the state [and] join together to get favorable legislation enacted.

> [Noted to be] 'free-riding'…these groups are likely to be those whose big stake in a benefit arouses them to more effective action than is taken by the taxpayers at large over whom the costs are spread…public sector bureaucrats…supposed to work in the public interest, putting into practice the policies of government as efficiently and effectively as possible, [but tend to be] self-interested utility maximizers, motivated by such factors as: large salaries… 'requisite of office, public reputation, power, patronage…and the easy of managing the bureau'…[Hence] [b]udget maximization [that] results in high government spending…

In order to escape from the theory trap, this researcher also admits that there is no specific theory that deals with public service motives outside "rational choices" that must be supplemented by the *self-determination concept* advanced in both the Perry, and Hondeghem and Lens studies. Particularly, Perry (2000:10) emphasizes that socio-historical context, that is to "identify the source and nature of the influences that motivate the individual", should be taken as a basis for the "critical step in developing a theory of public service motivation".

The character elimination referred to does not intend to testify theory *A* against theory *B* but to categorically state how a set of contradicting approaches may not work for research on public service reform in the Namibian setting and its socio-political context. Basically, lengthy quotations on two or three citations serve to build a body of theories that in whole forms the theoretical-grounding of the research.

3.8   ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

The existing knowledge found in literature provides theoretical basis for understanding public service motivation, cadre-ship principles in merit selections and competence management initiatives as they underlie the Public Service Reform process.

Adopting new public management or managerialism transforms the organizational culture, philosophy of operations, organizational values, individual values and above all environmental (internal and external) monitoring (Wiley, 2003:7-8). The presumption here is that outmoded traditional practices in management are transformed whilst retaining similar meritocratic conceptions in redefined terms. In a meritocratic public service, which is usually compounded with cadreship principles of appointments, considerations for competency-based (knowledge, skills and attitudes) selections of suitable personnel sometimes are high for promotion to posts of responsibility, but do not necessarily serve to empower the bureaucracy to fill the skills-gap. Besides competency-based selections being traditionally an element of the merit system, adapting to competency-management is desired to ensure that professional, motivated, and ethic driven management cadres are retained and sustained for the central government.

From the American experience under the Republican Party Administration, and British experience under the Conservative Party government in the 1980s through the early 1990s, we learn that the New Right ideology of managerialism in the public sector has transformed power structures. The new 'professional management' concepts, therefore,

sought to "highlight the different motivations of those who design the policies [policy formulation] from those who are charged with executing them [policy implementation]" (Massey, 1993:28). Accordingly, new breeds of professional managers have thus emerged from the bureaucratic elite as reformed public services and public corporations adapted to privatization processes.

The particular types of reform discussed below, emphasize Toonen and Raadschelders' (1997) paradigm shift defined as:

- Business-oriented approach to government;

- Quality and performance oriented approach to public management;

- Emphasis on improved public service delivery and functional responsiveness;

- Institutional separation of public demand, public provision and public service production functions;

- Linkage of demand and supply units by internal contract management, 'agencyfication', or contracting out; and, whenever possible

- Retreat of government institutions in favor of the commercial market enterprises (deregulation, privatization and mercerization);

For our purposes this global paradigm shift provides the basis against which the assessment of reform impact will be made. However, the categories remain fundamental to our analysis of the Public Service reform in Namibian.

The study in 1997 by Toonen and Raadschelders – Western Europe, Halligan – Australia, Mascarenhas – New Zealand, and Mishra – India, is not to set off a debate requiring substantial citations but to lead the outline of reform categories crucial to the assessment of reform impacts in Namibia against possible best practices in the Commonwealth grouping. The assessment is concentrating on the holistic approaches identified: neo-managerial reform, new public management reform, comprehensive reform, and welfare state reform as applicable to the civil service systems of the countries under this study.

3.8.1 Western Europe and Britain

Toonen and Raadschelders (1997) have presented a number of reform categories: neo-managerial reform; new public management reform; comprehensive reform; welfare state reform (holistic); regional reform; regime reform; gradualist reform (piecemeal); non-reform; and, transformation without reform (stagnant). According to the same study, the United Kingdom (UK) of Great Britain has been the leading example in public sector reforms focusing on *managerial reform* as a brand of the modernization campaign in Western Europe (Toonen and Raadschelders, 1997). Equated to the United States of America (USA), the UK had for the first time applied a business management science approach to government when the public administration reform was launched under Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s (Toonen and Raadschelders, 1997). The French approach has reportedly embraced regionalization by adopting decentralization policy: the technique of public sector marketing and entrepreneurship in the 1980s, in other words, *regional reform* approaches that considerably increased flexibility of a rather massive sub-national level administrative system quite well (Toonen and Raadschelders, 1997).

Further indication produced from Toonen and Raadschelders' (1997) study is that other continental European countries that had successfully adapted to regionalization of the unitary state are Belgium, Italy and Spain. *Regime Reform*, another reform category of administrative modernization using notions such as service responsiveness and citizen orientation has been standard for the above states but taking a different dimension associated with the South-side of Europe, namely Greece, Portugal and Spain (Toonen and Raadschelders, 1997). The latter presents special cases of public sector reform: regime transformation from dictatorial or semi-dictatorial systems to civil democracies; administrative culture change for more quality and output oriented approaches and, administrative structures modernization by building up and expanding public sector activities, mostly within a highly politicized (regionalized) context (Toonen and Raadschelders, 1997).

The *gradualist reform* category is usually characterized by consensual and step-by-step experimental proceedings rather than by comprehensive state reform policies, or sweeping reforms focusing on managerialism and new public management (Toonen and Raadschelders, 1997). In Toonen and Raadschelders' (1997) analysis such apparent features are inhibiting the incorporation of the former East Germany into the overall state and administrative system of the Germany federation. *Non-reform*, associated with Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Luxemburg reform approaches, lacks managerial issues and structural reform initiatives otherwise taken for granted in the administrative or public sector reform (Toonen and Raadschelders, 1997). The last of the categories in the (1997) study is the *transformation without reform*, comparatively not very common with modernization in the European setting, but was regarded by the study as evolutionary transition of traditional institutions" (Toonen and Raadschelders 1997). Whilst transformation could mean modernizing, the lack of reform characteristic would not stimulate realistic assumptions of how government changes ought to take place (Toonen and Raadschelders, 1997).

3.8.2   Irish Civil Service

Ireland, as presented in the Millar and McKevitt study, is a parliamentary democracy, with a greater role in the OECD particularly because the Irish economy was the best performing in the group during the 1990s. The analysis of the civil service brought the two authors to the conclusion that the "contemporary conditions of the civil servants are rooted in the reforming measures introduced under British Rule in the late 1800's" (Millar and McKevitt, 1997). The study reported that recruitment was largely dominated by political patronage until the 1830's, but the open competition entrance examination was then introduced as the accepted mode of entry to the civil service by 1871. Present day formal structure of the public administration organization was fundamentally established in accordance with the *Ministers and Secretaries Act, 1924.* Currently, it is the *Civil Service Regulation Act of 1956* provisions that guide the effective running of the Irish civil service. As for appointments of civil servants, usually by Commissioners at operational level, the *Civil Service Commission Act of 1956* applies in full. However, the changes in 1984 "transferred the responsibility for high posts promotions to the Top

Level Appointment Committee, and merit-based considerations for majority promotions"
to the Minister (Millar and McKevitt, 1997).

The British colonial past in the Republic of Ireland has made the contemporary relations
between the two nations comparatively unique, unlike in the Commonwealth brotherhood
where fraternity prevails. Their European setting, that is membership in the European
Union, is another factor that differentiates British and Irish approaches to NPM reform
from the Anglo – Saxon camp of the South Pacific Rim and Canada in North America.
The geo-political location of Ireland provides somewhat different economic conditions
and political environment prevalent in the northern hemisphere or Europe, and thus
external influence from neighboring Great Britain is supposedly much higher than the
United States of America or Continental European countries. Nevertheless, the
Constitution of 1937, and the *Republic of Ireland Act 1948* that severed the last
administrative links with Britain, has been conditioning administrative changes internally
(Millar and McKevitt, 1997). The importance of the Irish Civil Service is to provide a
contrast in the approaches so far looked at in this chapter for possible similarity in reform
impacts to civil service recruitment. The severance of administrative links between the
Republic of Ireland and former colonial master, the United Kingdom of Great Britain,
could fit in with the approach adopted in Namibia at independence for a holistic
transformation from then apartheid-South African lines of administration.

3.8.3   Australian Civil Service System

Historical ties with Great Britain have caused Australia to adopt a liberal democracy, and
its membership in the Organization of Economic Development Co-operation (OECD)
facilitated the transformation of the public administration system to the new public
management (NPM) system. NPM in practice renounced the Weberian notion of
bureaucracy to introduce private sector management techniques in the management of the
public sector. Importantly, the global level paradigm shift in traditional administration for
"managerialism" has caused many countries including Australia to change from an
administrative culture to a management one, moving increasingly towards a market and
contractual-based system (Halligan, 1997).

Halligan (1997), focusing on the national civil service system of Australia, identified the "*comprehensive reform* and *welfare states* as periods of greater transformation of the public sector". Accordingly, the welfare state was linked to the government active role in economic development entailing a broader implementation of welfare programs to the citizens particularly during the post-World War-Two period, and the comprehensive reform was distinguished in the application across the public service and entire public sector with measures that ensured all areas of public management have been transformed. Halligan (1997) asserted that change must take place in terms of organizational philosophy, culture, structure, personnel and operational style.

Halligan (1997) further disclosed that the Victorian legislation for personnel administration in 1883 instituted central control through a Public Service Board or Commissioner to prevent the affects of political patronage from influencing public service appointments. The legislation provided for independent control of the public service, open competition for entrants, promotion by merit, grading and classification of all personnel and salaries based on work value. For the first time public service recruitment took a face of open competition rather than patronage, promotion by merit albeit recognized seniority as a central element, and free from pressures of patronage, at least lasted for the modernization period between 1883 and the mid 1910s (Halligan, 1997).

Incremental administrative changes have marked the period from Post-World War I 1920s to the 1960s. Experimentation with reforms – political direction and extensive managerial change to government sanctioned processes and administrative standards for the public service were quite short lived in the 1970s (Halligan, 1997). However, as Halligan (1997) stressed, continuity of reforms under successive Labor governments, which produced a new model for governance in the early 1980s, were thus more comprehensive, rapid and systematic than the former in terms of paradigm change in the

sense of an interpretive framework of ideas and standards. In the process, Australia's public sector reform being highly influenced by the American and British approaches did away with a traditional way of administration and dynamically replaced the old practices with reforms based on management.

The relationship between politicians and the bureaucracy, until the Labor government came to power in 1983, was based on the traditional Weberian model. Appointments to the high civil service were apolitical, though. With the exception of the most senior appointments, career officials from the ranks would fill high civil service posts without political considerations. Political executives have only the responsibility of confirming senior level recommendations to fill top posts but following an advisory process. The 1970's witnessed change in the civil service autonomy, as political influence encroached on the bureaucracy for more responsive public service (Halligan, 1997).

The changes introduced under the Labor government were structural to enable political directives at the cabinet and ministerial levels without seeking to institute political appointments to top positions. Previously, top civil servants had enjoyed autonomy in the policy process but duly reversed to enhance more political influence (Halligan, 1997). For policy coordination purposes, the "ministerial capacity was strengthened to place the control of policy direction firmly in the hands of political appointees within the public" (Halligan, 1997:XX) on the same principle such as practiced in the United States of America at federal level. Halligan (1997) defined the move as a political tier in the upper-echelon of the public service comprising all heads of departments or first divisions. In addition, a post of Ministerial Consultant on policy issues has been added to the structure, thus reducing the senior civil servant to more managerial responsibilities, reflecting the preference of the political executive (Halligan, 1997).

Breaking with the tradition, measures were taken such as creating a ministerial staff assisting the minister in advisory matters. The traditional practice of senior public service career autonomy – a career system where top civil servants acquired the status of

permanency position in the public service – would be weakened and systematically transformed. New considerations essentially involved the following: abolition of permanency by designing the head of department as department secretary and making fixed term appointments; establishing the Senior Executive Service for greater flexibility in the use of senior staff; providing for greater competition by increasing the opportunity for external entry – where the fixed term engagement was established for the senior executive service in order to facilitate the entry of outsiders; and, inducing greater provision for displacement, redeployment and retrenchment of the senior executive service, as accomplished in the 1980s (Halligan, 1997).

An amendment to the *Public Service Act 1922* in 1994 was intended to provide for fixed-statutory appointments of secretaries based on a five-year contract with a salary increase in lieu of the job tenure. Consequently, the relationship between the political executives and senior public service officials or bureaucrats has been based on a new control mechanism: demanding responsiveness from the public service; committed to retention of a career public service including the Senior Executive Service (SES); and, greater recognition of the case for mobility among the most senior jobs at federal or Commonwealth and state levels (Halligan, 1997). At agency levels, structures were reformed through the Office Structure Implementation exercise of the 1980s to provide "greater efficiency and flexibility including agency broad banding – a range of position levels with a classification structure – so that staff progress upwards through the structure according to competency" (Halligan, 1997).

The Australian reform process has been described as the most radical and holistic of the western liberal democracies. Although maintaining some of its Westminster model of legislation and executive structures, both federal and state levels of government have transformed their civil services to become more responsive to public demands and market competitive in a rather efficient way reminiscent of the private sector techniques. The bureaucracy would still acclaim to "career service" – professionalism, but with limited autonomy in the policy making and implementation process. Appointments to SES currently get political consideration as department secretaries are by Act required to be

accountable to the political executives in a relationship that is amenable to redistributed power between ministers and public servants (Halligan, 1997).

3.8.4   New Zealand Civil Service

New Zealand has been a liberal democracy system since the 1980s reform along the American experience. Mascarenhas' (1997) study on historical development disclosed that the period between 1850 and 1912 was dominated by political patronage, which is political representative in the recruitment, promotion and remuneration of public servants (Mascarenhas, 1997). For much of this period until 1946, the only systematic personnel management known was the competitive examination for entry into the civil service system in accordance with the *Civil Service Act of 1886* (Mascarenhas, 1997). The new *Public Service Act of 1912* introduced some liberal changes, thereby ending the political patronage of the Spoils System and adopting the Merit System in the civil service that saw ministerial authority waning and the new measures of systematic personnel management effectively becoming the responsibility of the independent Public Service Commission (Mascarenhas, 1997).

New dimensions in the management of the public service marked the period from 1962 to 1988, particularly when the central personnel agency or the Public Service Commission was reconstituted into the States Services Commission (SSC) with a single commissioner and four other members responsible for the management of the public service (Mascarenhas, 1997). As Mascarenhas (1997) indicated, the SSC significantly took initiatives espousing performance measurement systems in government departments for improvement to the public service management, and setting up of the Prime Minister's department, to assist the Prime Minister in the administration of the government business and state affairs. Thus, prompted by the structural deficiency, and the absence of a proper system of performance management, the SSC embarked on sweeping managerial reforms of the civil service in 1988 (Mascarenhas, 1997).

Mascarenhas, 1997 reports that the radical restructuring of the public sector, which took place between 1988 and 1996, responded to the Labor government policy of economic

liberalization – program of privatization of the economy, low economic growth, and high levels of inflation and unemployment. As the global trend of "reducing the role of the state in the economy" (Mascarenhas, 1997) gained momentum, the sweeping reform imperatives became apparent to enhance efficiency and performance in the public sector of New Zealand. Achievements recorded include a drastic reduction in the civil service size, restructuring the core public service, commercializing some activities of the government into independent state-owned enterprises, and establishing Crown Agencies (Mascarenhas, 1997). By comparison, the conservative governments in Britain and the United States excelled in adopting modern management practices on private sector lines (Toonen and Raadschelders 1997). When the SSC succeeded to improve the civil service operations with greater successes by adapting to new public management (Mascarenhas, 1997), gradual reform and moderate transformation of programs (Toonen and Raadschelders 1997) had thus become a thing of the past in New Zealand.

3.8.5   Indian National Civil Service System

Historically India had experienced transformations from ancient *personal servants* of rulers, through medieval age *state employment*, and the colonial British-India by the first *Indian Civil Service Act of 1861*, where the "civil servants acquired the complexion of *public servants* with privileges such as recruitment, promotion, termination, pension, and payment of salaries" (Mishra, 1997).

According to Mishra, modern India initially adopted the British model, which is based on the Weberian tradition, but becoming realistic with its own internal and external environment, "the Indian civil service had by 1997 already started to professionalize itself" (Mishra, 1997). The standard qualifications for civil service appointments, promotions and retention were by then professional and performance-based. The analysis continued to look at categories of reform peculiar to the Indian socio-political conditions and good sense of bureaucracy. Mishra's view, partly adopted from the Farrel Heady configuration, is that the "Indian civil service system has a majority-party responsiveness and is mixed corporatist" (Mishra, 1997). Conscious of the civil service reforms world

wide (external environment) the "Indian policy-makers have adapted to sweeping reforms that are people-oriented, productive, and yield the value for money" (Mishra, 1997).

The historical perspectives provided show that the civil service in independent-India has traversed quite a number of reform approaches beginning with *welfare-orientation* in the 1940s, *development-orientation* during the 1960s through the 1980s to culminate into the *facilitator's* role in the 1990s. The national challenges, mainly the "obligation to meet the needs of teeming millions of citizens and the collective choice mechanism reflected in the [election] manifestos of various political parties in the 1996 general elections" (Mishra, 1997), caused internal environmental changes creating conditions for continuity in the reform process. The socio-political conditions shaping the Indian civil service size and government structures, as presented by Mishra (1997), are: the large population of over 880 million people; multi-cultural cum multi-religious society guaranteed under the country's Constitution; a union of states each with its own three-tier administrative system – central, provincial, and local administrations; a Constitutional democracy based on a pluralistic political system; and, the mixed economy where the public and private sectors are in competition.

3.8.6   South African Public Service

The reform process in South Africa originates in the country's history in that for too long the nation experienced division along racial lines and institutionalized separate development for different race groups. The democratically elected government that come to power in South Africa in 1994 almost instantly removed all racist structures and transformed institutions by changing the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*. Accordingly, the *Public Service Act of 1994*, particularly *Schedules 1 and 2*, and other statutes were "promulgated as fundamental legislation for post apartheid governance" (Public Service Review Report 1999/2000). The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Section 196 of the new Constitution* stipulates the powers and functions of the Public Service Commission (PSC) as those advancing values and principles guiding the proper management of the Public Service, and promoting sound personnel procedures for recruitment, transfers and promotions in the public service.

The Public Service Review Report, 1999/2000 describes the Public Service of South Africa as the organization made up of public employees in the central government and all nine provincial administrations, but excludes the local governments, parastatals (state-owned corporations) and quasi-government institutions that are autonomous public sector. The key functional "status" of the South African public service is the planning of "human capital" and ensuring that the "political mandate of government will be executed" (Public Service Review Report, 1999/2000). The introduction of managerial reform since 1994, was particularly enhancing the key strategic initiatives and connections between resources (human, financial/capital, technological) and the tasks at hand, and, continually reviewing initiatives against changing realities in the South African context (Public Service Review Report, 1999/2000). The public managers are to "advise the policy makers (political leadership) on emerging issues and plausible scenarios" (Public Service Review Report, 1999/2000).

Importantly, democratic South Africa had to transform policymaking and replace apartheid legacy at all levels of the state and embark on a holistic reform of the central government and provincial structures. Change in the political environment took cognition of the public service role as crucial to national development. The report singled out the importance of having a professional Public Service, which is "representative and developmental in orientation to enable addressing the needs of the society as a whole" (Public Service Review Report, 1999/2000).

The Public Service Review Report (1999/2000) notes that the challenges confronted in the transformation process involve the need to improve the capacity to coordinate between policy formulation and policy implementation. The Presidential Review Commission Report (PRC) in February 1998, made recommendations on how to improve organization and management of public service. Thus, the Public Service Reform was "given an important place in public debates meant to improve the quality of policy discourse and decision-making" (Public Service Review Report, 1999/2000).

The experiences of commonwealth countries does not suggest a uniform Public Service Reform approach as each country has opportunities that are unique to its political environment and economic conditions or just pertinent to the geopolitical region of its location. However, an assessment of the civil service reforms impact in the Commonwealth states is set to provide an overview of administrative reforms in their respective public sector systems. Based on the economic conditions of geo-political regions, each country would be expected to follow either of the "agencyfication - models or global paradigm shift" (Raadschelders and Toonen, 1997) as fit their reform motives.

3.9   SUMMARY

The literature review has guided the researcher with the conceptual study background and literal sources. Literature sources in this study have been categorized to give a sustained choice of citation throughout the research. The objective is to consult the existing material on administrative reform concepts around public service appointments, the merit system and competency management approaches as manifested in public service reforms represented in the case study.

Administrative systems forms the basis for contextual data analysis. However, democracy has emerged to be the best system for providing an internal environment conducive to reform. Depending on the type of democracy (liberal or direct) adopted for the society, the political imperatives for reform will differ from country to country. The social organization laden with cultural values is rather hard to compare between nations. But government structures and institutions for internal development tend to adopt models that are generic across the field of public administration. Economic dynamics are conditioned by the political economy of regional integration and globalization trends.

The existing knowledge was highlighted in terms of its relevancy to this research, thus enabling the incorporation of a valid citation of British and American experiences with civil service reform under the Conservative and Republican administrations, respectively.

Contrasting pragmatism with other approaches essentially unveiled how heavily Western liberalism bears on post-Colonial state politics, and to a lesser extent, explained what values pertain to the Public Service Reform. Consequently, Pluralism (contemporary perception of liberalism) and Public Choice (application of economic perspectives to politics) are regarded as "theories in use", but fundamentally permeated with cultural norms. Their practical application in the public service of a developmental state such as Namibia could be mere rhetoric of the post-cold war era. Admittedly, defining and critiquing of theory *A* against theory *B* validates arguments around the issues. But it should be noted that every theory is in essence supportive of a set of discourses in terms of debate although not necessarily practicable in all given socio-political environments.

This review of literature has avoided a literal debate and concentrated on theoretical relevance to the assumption of the research statement that cadre-appointments in the public service of Namibia are merit-based. Those theories that simultaneously enlighten the question of this research were also given attention. Individual citations are purposely limited to a few authors to allow blending and adoption of such theoretical discourse in this research study.

3.10   CONCLUSION

The review of literature in this chapter includes both conceptual material and previous studies relevant to the topic. Philosophical conceptions that are fundamental to the study have been used to provide comprehensive theoretical grounding for the methodology of research. The objective was half completed by arriving at a documentary consensus that there is no specific theory in place as yet to explain the public service appointment

phenomenon. But as summarized in the preceding paragraphs, the Grounded Theory features prominently as a conceptual tool in analyzing the facts.

Public service reform process in the OECD member countries prompted adaptation to NPM. The Commonwealth countries' experiences cited have guided the research focus on generic application of best practices in the reform process.