

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES


ASSESSMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE
THREE POLYTECHNICS IN NORTHERN GHANA

BY

UMAR HUSSEIN

(BA. Integrated Development Studies)

(UDS/MDM/0241/12)



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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information in this dissertation has been obtained and presented in accordance with approved academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare this piece of work as the outcome of my humble effort and that neither a part nor its entirety has been produced elsewhere toward the fulfilment of any degree. Publish and unpublished literature that was reviewed is duly acknowledged accordingly.

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I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation was Supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University for Development Studies.

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Name:



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DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my lecturers, family and friends as well as members in Millar hostel whose efforts and encouragement has brought me this far



ABSTRACT

In recent years, Ghana has rapidly developed into a dynamic knowledge base economy. Along with this development is the issue of human resource management practice in public institutions which have witnessed numerous challenges in recent years. Government faces a lot of difficulties of having to address these challenges in the context of increasing competition in the global knowledge economy. This research was conducted to assess and clarify the nature of human resource management practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative research approaches to gather data, based on which conclusions and recommendations have been made. The study found that current human resource management practices are characterised by: insufficient empowerment of workers; insufficient career development opportunities; inadequate compensation; weak training and development; and lack of supportive policy culture for institutions. The study recommends the development of a national framework on human resource practices that transcends into effective human resource governance in Polytechnics. The results also provide a practical guide to managers as well as policy makers, to enable them recognize, comprehend and initiate measures that will make the workplace a more pleasant one for workers, and so awaken employees' intent to enhance performance.



ACRONYMYS

DBS	Diploma in Business Studies
HND	Higher National Diploma
HR	Human Resource
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management
HRMP	Human Resource Management Practice
LSPs	Logistical Supply Programme
MBO	Management by Objective
NCTE	National Council for Tertiary Education
NR	Northern Region
OD	Organizational Development
PM	Personnel Management
POS	Perceived Organizational Support
POTAG	Polytechnic Teachers Association of Ghana
QTM	Quality Time Management
SET	Social Exchange Theory
UER	Upper East Region
UWR	Upper West Region



TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION i

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTSii

DEDICATIONiii

ABSTRACT.....iv

ACRONYMYS v

CHAPTER ONE..... 1

INTRODUCTION 1

 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY..... 1

 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT 3

 1.3.1 Main Research Question 7

 1.3.2 Sub- Research Questions..... 7

 1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES 8

 1.4.1Main Research Objective 8

 1.4.2 Sub- Research Objectives 8

 1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY 9

 1.6 JUSIFICATION OF THE STUDY 10

 1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY 11

 1.8 ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS 11

CHAPTER TWO 13

LITERATURE REWIEW 13

 2.1 MEANING OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENET PRACTICE 13

 2.2 CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES 15

 2.2.1 Employment security 16

 2.2.2 Self-managed teams/team working 18



2.2.3 Performance Appraisal	20
2.2.4 Extensive training and development	21
2.2.5 Employee Empowerment	24
2.2.6 Compensation	25
2.3 LOGISTICAL ISSUES	27
2.4 SKILLS AND CAPACITY BUILDING	29
2.4.1 The Concept of Capacity Building	29
2.5 POLICY ISSUES AFFECTING HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	30
2.5.1 Economic policy	32
2.5.2 Technological Changes	33
2.5.3 National Culture.....	33
2.5.4 Legislations /Regulation.....	34
2.7.5 Actions of Union.....	34
2.5.6 Globalisation	35
2.6 ENHANCEMENT OF PERFORMANCE IN INSTITUTIONS.....	36
2.6.1 Measures of performance.....	37
2.6 THEORITICAL FRAME WORK (Institutional theory).....	40
2.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	43
.....	44
CHAPTER THREE	46
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	46
INTRODUCTION	46
3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN	47
3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH: MIXED METHODS	47
3.3 SAMPLING	49



3.3.1 Sampling Technique	49
3.3.2 Sample Size	49
3.3.3 Sample Share.....	50
3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS.....	51
3.4.1. Primary Data Collection Methods	51
3.4.2 Questionnaire	51
3.5 INTERVIEWS	52
3.5.1 Interview Transcription	53
3.6 SECONDARY DATA	53
3.7. DATA ANALYSIS	54
3.7.1 Quantitative Analysis	54
3.7.2 Qualitative analysis.....	54
3.7.2 Measurement of Institutional (Polytechnic) Performance	54
3.7.3 Measurement of HR Practices	55
CHAPTER FOUR	56
DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	56
INTRODUCTION	56
4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	56
4.2 ANALYSIS OF CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	57
4.3 CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE THREE POLYTECHNICS IN NORTHERN GHANA USING MULTIPLE REGRESSION MODEL.	58
4.4 HUMAN AND LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS IN THE THREE POLYTECHNICS IN NORTHERN GHANA.	68
4.5 SKILLS AND CAPACITY BUILDING ISSUES IN THE THREE POLYTECHNICS IN NORTHERN GHANA.	70



4.6 POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES IN THE POLYTECHNICS IN THIS STUDY..... 75

4.7 THEORETICAL IMPLICATION..... 81

CHAPTER FIVE 83

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 83

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 83

5.2. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES 83

5.3 HUMAN AND LOGISTICAL FACTORS 84

5.4 SKILL AND CAPACITY BUILDING..... 85

5.5 POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS 85

5.6 CONCLUSIONS 86

5.7. RECOMMENDATIONS 87

5.8 EXAMINING THE CRITICAL ELEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE POLYTECHNIC SYSTEM 87

5.8.1 National strategies and support for human resource management practice and development 87

5.8.2 Creation of National Legal Frame Work for Minimum Standard 87

5.8.3 Institutional strategies and management of human recourses..... 87

5.9 EXPLORING THE HUMAN AND LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS AFFECTING HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES..... 88

5.9.1 Creating attractive working conditions 88

5.9.2 Staff Motivation through incentives 88

5.10 SKILLS AND CAPACITY ISSUES MILITATING PERFORMANCE 88

5.10.1 Encouraging Private Provision of Training 88

5.11 POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE THREE POLYTECHNICS IN NORTHERN GHANA..... 89



5.11.1 Creation of Leadership culture	89
5.12 EXAMINING HOW PERFORMANCE CAN BE ENHANCED IN THE THREE POLYTECHNICS IN NORTHERN GHANA.	89
REFERENCES	91



LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Sample Distribution50

Table 4.1 multiple regression model on element of human resource practices58

Table 4.2 Multiple Regression Model on Human and Logistical factors 68

Table 4.3 Multiple Regression Coefficient Analysis 71

Table 4.4 multiple regression on policy and institutional factors in the three Polytechnics.... 76



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

All organizations are under an obligation to their stakeholders to perform well. To do this they depend on the quality, dedication, enthusiasm, expertise and skill of the human resource working in them at all levels. Yet, developing appropriate practices and policies to the management of this human resource is becoming a key challenge in higher education institutions worldwide. Complex academic communities need appropriate career management procedures, as well as national policies, which support higher institutions in recruiting, motivating and keeping qualified staff (Altbach, 2006). In developing countries, higher education particularly, Polytechnic institutions face numerous challenges linked to economic transition processes and globalisation (Jackson, 2003). These challenges are linked to quality, level of state spending in Polytechnic institutions, the need for labour market and society, the need for appropriate governance mechanisms and structures and finally, practices or policies for identifying and keeping talented human resource in the Polytechnics institutions (Jiang et al., 2012).

As experienced in many countries, modernisation of Polytechnic education is not only a matter of policies and strategies, institutions and structures but also a question of behaviour and the attitudes of individuals to be able to adapt to and accept modern practices. On-going reflections and analyses by experts and practitioners about Polytechnic education highlight among many other obstacles, the human constraints and the difficulty to make people change their attitudes and adhere to new approaches and methods. Structural reforms often fail because of the lack of commitment and motivation to attract individual actors in the Polytechnic educational sector in Ghana (Barnes, 1997).



In Ghana, Polytechnic education institutions are confronted with a shortage of staff (academic and support staff) in quantitative and qualitative terms. These institutions are lacking the appropriate human resource practices to properly address the challenges at stake (Wood, 1999). Unsatisfactory working conditions and perfect human resource practices coupled with other factors such as logistical issues, skill and capacity issues, policy and institutional factors in the Polytechnics create an adverse impact on the attitudes and behaviour of staff and these create obstacles to the achievement of goal and objectives in the Polytechnics (Zalina, 2005).

Developing proper practices to manage the human resource is therefore becoming a key challenge within Polytechnics and also at national level (Paul and Anantharaman, 2003). New approaches to human resource management practices are currently being introduced in many countries to support the modernisation of governance of Polytechnic (Barney and Wright, 1991; Price, 2003). In addition, the emphasis on continuing upgrading in the Polytechnics through global ranking further forces these institutions to focus greater concern on employee performance practices (Altbach, 2006).

To illustrate further, an employee will be motivated to carry out his job if given sufficient guidance through training and development, appraised through effective performance standard and compensated equally according to performance standard, provided with adequate logistical factors and supported with policy and institutional factors (Dessler, 1980). An effective human resource management practises can be the main factor for the success of Polytechnics (Stavrou, 2005). As supported by Lee et al., (2007) HRM practices in the Polytechnics, namely training and development, teamwork, compensation/incentives, HR planning, performance appraisal, and employee security help improve institutional performance including employee's productivity, product quality and institutional flexibility.

Without adequate human resource, the Polytechnics will be unable to achieve their goals and this is why managing human resources is crucial to institutional success. In order to sustain and enhance the country's global competitive edge (Tight, 2000; Humphreys and Hoque, 2007), it is therefore imperative for Polytechnics to engage and retain highly committed and experienced academic talents. Academics, as knowledge workers are the backbone of every higher education institution that contributes to a large extent the national and global education quality, along with institutional reputation (Rowley, 1996). Losing these academics will jeopardise human capital quality through their replacement, and work disruption.

Though the importance of human resource (HR) practices and their effectiveness in the Polytechnics has since received remarkable attention, not much empirical research has been conducted in this discipline in Ghana, as compared to researches on teaching and learning academic excellence (Quansah 2003). In order to reduce the losses of human resource in Polytechnics and retain this talent human resource therefore, it is crucial to study how academics perceived the effectiveness of HR practices. Subsequently, this would be further justified with their level of career commitment. The study also would capture the performance dimensions and other factors, so as to explore whether these HR practices are congruent with knowledge management philosophy and practices. This preliminary move is expected to improve academics tenure and quality in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana, as well as, assist in the development of human capital in the Polytechnic educational institutions.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Following the reforms of 1987, demand for tertiary education (TE) rose astronomically. For instance, enrolments into universities rose from 11,857 in 1992-1993 academic years to 31,460 in 1998/9 (Effah 2003). By 2008-2009, enrolment in public universities (PUs)

reached 139,158; it witnessed another increase in 2009-2010 academic year to 162,460 students (NCTE 2011). Polytechnics were established as part of Ghana's tertiary network, first and foremost to provide an alternate route of tertiary education (TE) and secondly to make TE more accessible to the high numbers of qualified youth waiting to be educated at the door-steps of the then few tertiary institutions, finally and most importantly to provide highly competent middle level manpower for the country.

The PNDC government established six regional polytechnics in 1993 to train high-quality, multi-skilled units of human capacity relevant to the national needs of Ghana. There are currently ten regional polytechnics and each region is provided with its own polytechnic. Between 1993 and 2011, polytechnics have since expanded in both their scope and numbers. For instance, enrolments have risen from 1,385 in 1992-1993 to 45,934 in the 2009-2010 academic years representing an increase of 3,316 and projected to increase at 7.6% per annum between 2000-2020 (NCTE 2011; and Effah and Hoffman 2010; JICA 2001). Currently, polytechnics are the second most sought tertiary option (28.3%) after universities (66.2%) in the tertiary network (NCTE 2011).

Ghanaian polytechnics have created a niche in the HE subsector by providing career focused programmes with emphasis on hands on experience. As tertiary institutions, the polytechnics continue to face some challenges that are seriously affecting the performance. One major problem faced by polytechnics is staffing. The Polytechnics face serious staffing problems when they were upgraded from second cycle institution to tertiary institutions. Inadequate qualified and professional staffing presented problems for teaching, learning and research (Nyarko, 2011). At the beginning of the Polytechnic upgrading exercise in 1993/94 academic year, only 2% of the academic staff had postgraduate qualification but by 2002, the number had risen to 28% (Afeti, 2004). In the 2003/2004 academic year, the ratio of Principal lecturers to Senior Lecturers was less than one percent (0.4%) compared to NCTE



accepted norm of twenty percent (20%), that of Lecturer and Principal Instructor was about forty percent (39.8%) compared to National Council for Tertiary Education standard of 50% and for Senior Lecturer and Instructor, with a standard ratio of 30%, the category recorded 59.8% (Afeti 2004).

Also, polytechnics are plagued with a problem of underfunding; poor service conditions; negative public perception; incessant strikes by various stakeholders; under representation at national level; high staff turnover; lack of physical and infrastructural facilities; academic progression of Higher National Diploma (HND) graduates; poor institutional management, job placements of HND graduates to encroachment in its mandate by analogous institutions. These factors have culminated in the mass migration of disillusioned faculty to universities, the public and private sectors as well as NGOs in search of greener pastures. Therefore, the attraction and retention of a satisfied human resource to enhance performance becomes crucial if polytechnics expect to be successful.

Indeed, the ability of Polytechnics to perform their lofty functions and stay as centres of excellence is dependent on the quantity and quality of its human resource, especially the academic staff (Keller 1983; and Tarpeh 1998). Shattock (2011), in turn argues that as HEI's are engaged in a labour concentrated business, their might as institutions lie in the quality of staff they employ. The national attrition rate in 2004 was an average of 20 per polytechnic while that of Accra Polytechnic alone was 25 for the same period. Because of the intensity of faculty turnover, between 2000-2005 academic years, the marketing department of Kumasi Polytechnic was operated by only one fulltime lecturer while the other compliment were part-timers. From 1993-2011, a total of 111 academic staff representing an average of six staffs per annum left Kumasi polytechnic; 21 for Wa Polytechnic and 17 for Bolga Polytechnic. Tamale Polytechnic recorded over 90 percent resignations since its inception. For instance, 43 senior members left the polytechnic



between 2008-2011(Planning Unit 2011). The frequencies of the departures are threatening the sustainability of the polytechnics as it affects performance in the Polytechnics as replacements are done with novices who take time to pick up on the job and in turn do not stay.

A noticeable worrying trend is the fact that Polytechnics invest training resources on employees only to lose them to other employers as a result of improper human resource practices to motivate and keep them. Lochhead and Stephens (2004) assert that when a business loses employees, it is not only robbed of skills and experiences but essentially its ‘corporate memory ‘and affects organizational performance. They further argue that, the scale and nature of staff losses is a critical management issue since its effect does not only affects productivity and profitability but extends to product and service quality (performance). Replacing experienced workers as they depart with a high dose of novice workers affects productivity in Polytechnics. However, due to high faculty turnover coupled with a high replacement drive by novice workers, the performance of polytechnics is threatened.

Furthermore, the academic environments of Polytechnics are highly unstable. Major stakeholders such as Unions and students within the Polytechnics have taken turns to strike in order to press home one demand or the other. Effah (2010) noted that Polytechnics Teachers Association of Ghana (POTAG) and students accumulated 27 weeks between 2003 and 2009 of inactivity due to strike actions. Though the situation is getting stable, there are still pockets of industrial action being witnessed on Polytechnic campuses. For instance, on the 1st of August 2010, Polytechnic Teachers Association of Ghana (POTAG) called a strike for six weeks as a result of unpaid allowances, compensations and increased in salary among others. The series of industrial disputes that characterise Polytechnic education has dented its image and scared away foreign students and other prospective



investors (Effah 2010). The instructional time lost due to strikes cannot be quantified. These factors threaten the performance of the Polytechnics since it affects service quality in the Polytechnics.

In the context of this thesis, ‘performance’ means both behaviours and results. Behaviours emanate from the performer and transform performance from abstraction to action. Not just the instruments for results, behaviours are also outcomes in their own right – the product of mental and physical effort applied to tasks – and can be judged apart from results. As perpetual corporate entities, Ghanaian polytechnics should have the capacity to thrive on and deliver on its mandate by providing competent middle level manpower to the country. The thesis identifies the various constraints that threaten performance of polytechnics in Northern Ghana and competitiveness to performance. For polytechnics to accomplish this mandate (training high quality manpower) they require sufficient numbers of suitably high calibre faculty to enhance performance, perfect human resource practices to motivate and keep these talented staff, skill and capacity building and physical infrastructure, among others to flourish (Dzimbiri 2006). Given that sustainable Polytechnics is a function of many variables, the sustainability of Polytechnics in Northern Ghana is threatened with many factors including performance rate of its faculty.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.3.1 Main Research Question

What factors accounts for the ineffective performance of the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana?

1.3.2 Sub- Research Questions

1. What critical elements characterise HRM practices in the three Polytechnics in northern Ghana?



2. What human and logistical problems affect HRM practice in the three Polytechnics in northern Ghana?
3. What skill and capacity issues militate against performance in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana?
4. What policy and institutional factors affect HRM practice in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana?
5. How can performance be enhanced in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 Main Research Objective

To ascertain that which factors accounts for the ineffective performance in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana.

1.4.2 Sub- Research Objectives

1. To examine the critical elements that characterise HRM practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana.
2. To explore human and logistical problems affecting HRM practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana.
3. To investigate skills and capacity issues militating against performance in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana.
4. To understand policy and institutional factors affecting HRM practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana.
5. To examine how performance can be enhanced in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana.



1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The high patronage for polytechnics in Northern Ghana makes it imperative for government to provide an enabling environment of their sustainability. For instance, adequate and stable financing see polytechnics being able to attract the best talents i.e. look after them so well so that they will be induced to stay with the network in the long term. The outcome of this study would inform polytechnic management on the best strategies to evolve so as to maintain a stable and satisfied human resource whose collective efforts will lead to the strengthening of the competitive advantage of polytechnics in the retention of its top talent and enhance performance (Nagadevara, Srinivasan and Valk,2008).

According to Hackman and Oldham (1975) a satisfied human resource correlates positively with increased productivity, lower absenteeism and turnover. Similarly, Griffeth, Hom and Gartner (2000) also reported a negative association between job satisfaction (JS) and performance. As argued by Braham (2005) a dissatisfied workforce is typically uncommitted, exhibit high rate of absenteeism and in very extreme situations work against the interests of their employers. Employee dissatisfaction opens the door to quitting (Tseane 2008). Consequently, it is important for organisations to hone up the satisfaction levels of its human resource so as to increase their level of commitments as commitment levels are directly linked to employee satisfaction hence, their high performance. Employees who are highly committed tend to perform better, expend higher levels of effort on their assigned jobs resulting in increased job performance, exhibit high retention and punctual to work attendance (Meyer and Allen, 1997).

Retaining a highly satisfied human resource would propel polytechnics to achieving higher performance and sustained growth in a long run. This study will therefore inform management of Polytechnics on the type of performance strategies that should be



implemented in order to incentivise staff that in turn would stay to propel polytechnics to greater heights.

1.6 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

As mentioned above, the polytechnic sub sector of the tertiary system in Ghana has witnessed unprecedented growth and expansion from the 1990s when they were established to date. For instance, polytechnic enrolments have risen from 1,385 in 1993 to 45,934 in 2009-2010 academic years, while faculty turnover is also on the ascendancy i.e. threatening the performance of Ghana's polytechnic network. Present and past governments have continued to support Polytechnics through Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) i.e. by providing infrastructure, logistics and most of all staff development through its faculty development window. Through this window, GET Fund has sponsored faculty members of Polytechnics and other HEI's to undertake further studies both within and outside Ghana in a bid to beef up the strength and quality of staffing. This is against the backdrop that, the vigour and quality of Polytechnic faculty is crucial to its survival and competitiveness (Keller 1983).

Unfortunately, it is when the staff are developed that they leave. Ghana's HE systems have been afflicted with a myriad of problems which have affected their ability to function as centres of excellence. Consequently, morale and commitment is low leading to low performance among the various staff groups especially the faculty due to a variety of push and pull factors including inadequate and non-competitive salaries and other non-monetary factors. There is an epidemic of low performance in Polytechnics to which Polytechnics management as well as stakeholders should pay attention. The constant and consistent strikes and turnover of faculty affect performance in the polytechnics. The Polytechnics lost immeasurable depth of knowledge to other competing sectors of the economy. Additionally, the total costs of turnover and strikes can be exacting. This study ascertains factors that



accounts for the low performance in the Polytechnics to national development, their challenges with a focus on performance in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana.

The findings of this study are expected to broaden our knowledge and understanding of polytechnic management as well as HR practices and other work related practices used in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. Understanding the constraints and their relationship and how they influence performance enables Polytechnics to evolve best management practices especially HR that improves performance and thus incentivise staff to stay. Findings of the study also increased the theoretical understanding and knowledge especially in the African context and also form the basis for further research and teaching. As such, the findings of this study shows the best HR management practices and other work related practices, which can be useful to both public and private institutions of higher learning in Ghana

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

The main limitation for this study relates to the representativeness of the study sample given not all participants in this research could represent all the employees in the three Polytechnics. This means that the results may not be transferable to employees in Polytechnics in other regions. Another plausible limitation relates to respondents' bias. For instance, respondents tend to be biased in answering the questionnaire provided by the researchers because the respondents were chosen from the same geographical region. The views of lecturers may be different in different Polytechnics in other regions.

1.8 ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS

This thesis is organized into five (5) chapters. The first chapter gives the general introduction and includes the discussion of the problem statement, research questions and research objectives, limitations of the study and the significance of the study. Chapter two focuses on the theoretical and conceptual framework for human resource practice and a



review of the extant literature on Human Resource practices in educational institutions. Chapter three presents the research design and methodology. Data analysis and discussion of the research findings are captured under chapter four while the last chapter presents a summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of human resource management practice is articulated differently by different scholars. This chapter therefore reviews the relevant literature relating to the meaning of human resource management practice, functions of HRMP, elements of HRMP, logistical problems of HRMP, skill and capacity building factors of HRMP, policy and institutional factors of HRMP and conceptual framework relating to the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana.

2.1 MEANING OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

Human Resource Management Practice (HRMP) can help an organisation improve on areas such as staff commitment, competency and flexibility, which in turn leads to improved staff performance (Chew and Chan, 2008). HRM practices refer to organizational activities directed at managing the pool of human resources and ensure that resources are employed judiciously towards the fulfilment of organizational goals and objectives (Schuleret and MacMillan, 1984). HRM practices may differ from one organization to another and from one country to another.

In recent years, there has been a considerable degree of interest in the notion of ‘best practice’ human resource management (HRM), inspired, at least in part, by the work of Jeffrey Pfeffer (1994, 1998). In two of his books, *Competitive Advantage through people* (1994) and *The Human Equation: Building Profits by Putting People First* (1998), Pfeffer argues that a particular set of human resource (HR) practices can increase company profits, that the impact is more pronounced when complementary groups (or ‘bundles’) of HR practices are used together, and that this conclusion holds good for all organisations and industries irrespective of their context. Pfeffer’s work has been complemented by many other American studies (e.g. Arthur, 1994; Huselid, 1995; MacDufe, 1995) and by some in



Britain as well (Wood, 1995; Patterson et al., 1997; Guest and Conway, 1998; Wood and de Menezes, 1998). Unfortunately, it is difficult to draw generalised conclusions from these studies due to differences in the HR practices which were examined, in the proxies which were constructed for each of these practices, in the methods which were used to collect data, and in the respondents from whom information was sought; as Guest (1997: 263) argues, there is ‘little additive value in these and whilst statistically sophisticated, they lack theoretical rigour’. However, this has not prevented wide-ranging conclusions being drawn on the basis of these studies.

This has been most apparent in studies analysing the links between HRM and performance. The results from some of these, most notably that by Patterson et al. (1997) published by the Institute of Personnel and Development, have been widely quoted in the media and put forward as evidence for the importance of HRM as a driver of, and contributor to, improved performance. More interestingly, it has been claimed – on the basis of that research (Patterson et al. 1997) – that HRM had a greater impact on productivity and profits than a range of other factors including strategy, Research and Development, and quality. The research was based on longitudinal studies of sixty-seven UK manufacturing firms which were predominantly single-site and single-product operations (Patterson et al., 1997: 19), with 17 per cent of the variation in company profitability being explained by HRM practices and job design, as opposed to just 8 per cent from research and development, 2 per cent from strategy, and 1 per cent from both quality and technology. Similar results were indicated for productivity. Huselid (1995: 667) also concluded that the impact of what he called ‘high performance work practices’ on sales, market value, profit, and labour turnover was significant, with specific figures to substantiate these claims. Since then, other researchers (e.g. Delery and Doty, 1996; Wood and de Menezes, 1998) have made use of various statistical methods to examine other data sets, with rather more mixed conclusions.



Instead, this thesis is focus on an area which has been relatively neglected in this debate, and subject the literature to much closer scrutiny by examining the assumptions which are made about the nature, meaning, and universal applicability of the HR practices included in these lists of best practice. These are considered both for individual HR practices and in combination with each other as bundles of best practice. Rather than analyse each of the authors who have contributed to the debate about best practice HRM or high-performance (commitment/involvement) management, this study focus on the seven practices outlined by Pfeffer in *The Human Equation* (1998) as a framework for the analysis. The study endeavour to show that there are a number of problems with this notion of ‘best practice’, both in terms of the meaning of specific practices and their consistency with each other, as well as in the claims that ‘best practice’ HRM is universally applicable. The study also makes explicit the unitarist assumptions which underpin much of the literature and debate. In essence, this study argues that HR practices, such as team working, which appear superficially attractive may not offer universal benefits and empowerment, but actually lead to work intensification and more insidious forms of control; in other words, quite different and more worrying interpretations from that which is portrayed in the ‘upbeat’ literature – such as that by Pfeffer.

2.2 CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

There is no agreement on what constitutes HRM practices let alone a prescribed set of them (Boxall 1996). Researchers have over the years proposed countless varied lists of practices however; there is no agreement on what or which practice qualifies as an aspect of HRM (Boselie et al. 2002: Storey 2001: Guest 1997). Many studies on HRM practices have been conducted from time to time and researchers have identified different practices by different names. But according to Chandler and McEvoy (2000) one of the lingering questions in HRMP is whether or not there is a single set of policies or practices that represents a

‘universally superior approach’ to managing people. Theories on best practices or high commitment theories suggest that universally, certain HRM practices, either separately or in combination are associated with improved organisational performance. Researchers have also found that those well-paid, well- motivated workers, working in an atmosphere of mutuality and trust, generate higher productivity gains and lower unit costs (Boxall, 1996 and Pfeffer, 1994).

Guest (1997) however puts forward seven practices namely, selection, training, appraisal system, rewards system, job design, involvement and status and security. However, since this approach to labour management involves very real costs in investing in employees, it is far from fashionable. Essentially, Pfeffer (1998) also identifies six practices of successful Organisations, reduced from his earlier (1994) list of sixteen by combining several of these together, as well as drawing upon the results of other studies. However, the study focuses on these six practices in its analysis. Selection of the practices for this study is based on its recurrence in the literature reviewed, its significance and measurability. The following is a list of the practices in relation to this study.

2.2.1 Employment security

The first element of human resource management practice in this study is employment security. Reports in the popular and business literature suggest that many U.S. higher learning institutions are experiencing difficulty recruiting new personnel, notwithstanding the sluggishness of the expansion following the “Great Recession,” and continuing high unemployment rates (David, 2002). While factory managers attribute hiring difficulties to a shortage of qualified workers, many analysts have suggested that the alleged skills-gap is a mirage arguing instead that employers could attract the new personnel they need if they increased pay and other job attributes that are attractive to workers (UNDP, 1999).

HR practice on job security is ranked the third important factor that influences job satisfaction while job employment relates more to job dissatisfaction. Probst (2005) states that, HR practices in the Polytechnic institutions on job security correlates with high needs to leave the institution as a result of lower job satisfaction and job performance. When workers feel that they are going to lose their jobs they need to make adjustment and one of the ways is through withdrawal in their job either physically or psychologically (Gupta and Jenkins, 1982). Heany et al. (1994) in their research among 207 automobile workers found that job satisfaction decreases when HR practice on employment insecurity is prolonged. Ahmed et al. (2002) in their research among 5729 managers found that, there was a negative relationship between HR practice on job security and level of economic uncertainty. While De Cuyper and De Witte (2007) in their study among permanent staff and non-permanent staff in Belgium high educational institution found permanent staff showed higher job and employment security compared to non-permanent staff.

Silla et al. (2009) in their research among 639 workers from six higher learning institutions also found HR practice on employment security to relates with well-being but job insecurity did not and also the high perception of HR practice on job security will also result in higher job satisfaction. Thus, here it can be said that HR practice on employment security can affect life well-being (Silla et al., 2009). Research by Wolff (2008) reported that HR practice on job insecurity showed a strong relationship with negative physical health such as fatigue, insomnia and pain in the body. Wagar (1998) in their research found a positive relationship between employment insecurity with back pain.

Individuals who feel that their job is in jeopardy will report psychosomatic problems and those who report low HR practice on job security will show higher depression and anxiety level (Mac Neil, 1994). In a research carried out in Canada, France, United States, Japan, Italy, German and United Kingdom educational institutions, Wolland et al. (2011) found



that there was a relationship between individual who is unemployed with decrease in psychological well-being and physical health.

It is noteworthy that the term ‘employment’ security is used; this mirrors the situation in Japanese knowledge- based institutions where employees are offered some degree of security in return for agreeing to mobility and flexibility in their employment. A further reason for providing employment security is offered by Pfeffer (1998: 66) in relation to costs and competitors: laying people off too readily ‘constitutes a cost for knowledge-based institution that have done a good job selecting, training and developing their workforce . . . layoffs put important strategic assets on the street for the competition to employ’. In addition, laying people off will only produce a negative goodwill to an institution of higher learning.

2.2.2 Self-managed teams/team working

Another important element of human resource management practice in this study is self-managed team/team working. There is consensus that self-managed teams facilitate information sharing and knowledge in the Polytechnic institution (Combs et al., 2006).

Whilst HRM models and teamwork procedures have a positive effect on the performance of Polytechnic institutions (Jackson and Schuler, 2003; Huselid, 1995). A study examining different bundles of HRM practices linked teamwork to positive work relations, innovation and performance (Guest, 2004). Nowadays, Polytechnic institutional leaders assign more team projects to employees with opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and develop their skills (Hartenian, 2003). Recent study shows that employees working within a team in the Polytechnic institution can produce more output as compared to individual (Johns, et al., 2001).

Thus, teamwork and participation is also believed to enhance work engagement due to its motivational nature that is facilitated by positive attitudes (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008). A



research study concluded that teamwork is necessary for all types of institution including non-profit organisations who also embraced teamwork for effective engagement of employees (Pfaff, 1998). Team members enhance the skills, knowledge and abilities while working in teams (Froebel and Marchington, 2005).

In Polytechnic institutions, leaders who emphasise more on teams have results in increased employee performance, greater productivity and better problem solving at work (Cohen and Bailey, 1999). In study by Crosby (1991) it concluded that to teach individuals on how to work in teams is not an easy task because to teach individuals regarding to work in teams is inappropriate (Crosby, 1991). Bacon and Blyton (2006) highlighted two important factors of teamwork such as self-management team and interpersonal team skills. These factors enhance the communication as well as interpersonal relationship between team members and also boost the employee performances.

Teamwork is a precise measure for higher institutions that shows many different features in all type of institutions including non-profit (Mulike, 2010). Ingram (2000) study revealed that, the good manager is the one who assigns the responsibilities to his/her employee in a form of group or team in order to take maximum output from employees (Ingram, 2000).

Another study concluded that it is possible to design a system of team building within every Polytechnic institution for employees in order to promote and distribute best practice and maximize output. The main emphasis for designing and implementing such a system is ultimately to improve employee knowledge (Washer, 2006). Polytechnic institutions need to look at strategies for improving performance in the light of increasingly competitive environments. Higher institutional leaders need to have the vision to introduce teamwork activities within the institutions, the sensitivity to nourish it and the courage to permit teams to play an important part in decision making. Conti and Kleiner (2003) concluded that teams



offer greater participation, challenges and feelings of accomplishment. Institutions with teams will attract and retain the best and talent people. This in turn will create a high performance.

2.2.3 Performance Appraisal

Furthermore, performance appraisal is one of the elements of human resource management practice which is considered as paramount in this study. A section of the literatures suggests that an employee's decision to leave employment may depend on his or her reaction towards an institution's HRM practice. Despite the attention and its immense evolvement across sectors and occupations, major researchers claim that most appraisal systems fail (Deming, 1986; Anderson, 2002). Rees and Porter (2004) added that, many of performance appraisal flaws are intractable. Hence, an ineffective PA is often a source of unmet expectations for workers (Murphy and Cleveland, 1995). By putting HR practice on PA policy on paper in Polytechnic institution is no guarantee that it will be followed in the manner intended (Rees and Porter, 2004). As far as HR practice on PA is concern, there appears to be no appropriate way of appraising employees in the Polytechnic institution to effectively achieve goal and objectives. But Deming (1986) suggest that, one appropriate way of perfect performance appraisal, is an appraisal system associated with clear institutional goals and be attached to specific performance criteria in the Polytechnic institution and well-accepted by both appraiser and appraisee

With this type of appraisal system in mind (one associate with institutional goal), raters are expected to be well-trained to conduct the appraisal process and discuss employee performance effectively (Ritter and Nunnally, 2002). Also, an effective HR appraisal on feedback must come from relevant sources in the Polytechnic institution and not multiple sources, since multiple lines of reporting and communication can greatly cause cross dysfunctional collaboration among superior (Barnes, 1997). Frequent HR practice on PA



and feedback upholds an effective open communication between superior and subordinate on expected performance behaviours, ratings and areas of improvement for the development and growth of the professional intellect (Quinn, Anderson and Filkenstein, 1996). Unfortunately, only few Polytechnics own well-structured PA systems (Quinn et al., 1996).

Bondarouk and Ruel (2008) contend that measuring employee performance is the basis of performance appraisal policy and performance management. Accurate and efficient performance measurement not only forms the basis of an accurate performance review but also gives way to judging and measuring employee potential (Cohen and Bailey, 1999). For the purpose of measuring employee performance, different input forms can be used for taking the feedback from the various sources like the supervisor, peers and the employee (Maria et al., 2009). According to Rudman (2002:4), all the perspectives thus received should be combined in the appropriate manner and to get an overall, complete view of the employees' performance. Bititci (2001) state some suggestions and tips for measuring employee performance are:

- Organizational outcomes or the achievement of organizational goals should also be kept in mind;
- If possible, collect the feedback about the performance of the employees through multi-point feedback and self-assessments; and
- Also take note of the skills, knowledge and competencies and behaviours of the employees that help the organization to achieve its goals.

2.2.4 Extensive training and development

Next in the list to consider in this study, is Training and development. Training and development practices have shown to increase employee motivation and to have a tremendous impact on Polytechnic institutions performance (Jiang et al., 2012). It is also



among the most frequently studied incentives in the HRM research field (Boselie et al., 2002). The motivation effect in employees is explained by the continuous development in knowledge that they receive from training initiatives. These HRM initiatives help employees in coping with job tasks and teach them how to master futures roles (Jiang et al., 2012).

The motivation effect in employees due to training and development initiatives can be seen as related to employee engagement, since engagement is understood as a motivational construct (Wollard and Shuck, 2011). Polytechnic Institutions need to prioritize resources for these HRM practices in order to increase employees work engagement through training and development initiatives (Bakker and Demerouti, 2008). According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), work engagement is more likely to increase when the skills and talent of an employee fit the job demands. A meta-study on HRM practices supports this notion, as selective staffing techniques in the Polytechnic institution were shown to enhance motivation of employees and institutional performance (Huselid, 1995).

Appropriate training can develop higher institutional leaders at all levels including the knowledge and skills required to gain competency in order to manage change in their institutions and in any environment (Stewart, 1996; John, 2000). Hellriegel and Slocum (2001) states that training of employees in the Polytechnic institution increases higher productivity through better job performance, more efficient use of human resources, goals and objectives more effectively met, reduced cost due to less labour turnover, reduced errors, reduced accidents and absenteeism, more capable, and mobile workforce and retention of the existing staff.

Similarly, Huselid (1995) further added that, effective training techniques can produce significant performance results especially in customer service, product development, and capability in obtaining new skill set. Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on



training and development enhance employee skills, knowledge and ability which in turn enhance task performance of individual and in the long run increases the overall institutional productivity (Huselid 1995).

However, Wood, (1999) argues that HRM practices are universal across higher institutions and whether the effectiveness of human resources management is contingent upon factors influencing performance or not, training is still a necessary condition for higher institutional growth. While (Asgarkhani, 2004) argues that the success of training is contingent upon the effectiveness of performance planning and measuring. The fact of the matter is that the three fundamental aspects surrounding training and development are process classification, selection of proposed methods, and delivery. Training practice is one of the most important aspects of HRM that is needed to keep Polytechnic institutions ahead of their competitors Koch and Steers (1978). Similarly, a rigorous study conducted by Mcgrath (1982) demonstrated that higher institutions that engage in systematic training of their workforce are more likely to enjoy the rewards of a more productive workforce.

Boxall (1996: 67) views this as one element in 'human process advantage', that is the idea that Polytechnic institutions aim to synergise the contribution of talented and exceptional employees. Sillas et al., (2009) added that, there has been a growing recognition during the last decade of the importance of training and development and learning, as a source of sustained competitive advantage as employers introduce more skills-specific forms of training in some areas. In this regard, training should impart new knowledge and skills if the training is relevant, meet employee and institutional needs, efficiently and effectively designed and delivered (Sillas et al., 2009). When the results of training is reflected in improvements in relevant knowledge and the acquisition of relevant skills, employee job performance should improve provided that the skills learned in training transfer to the job (Buck and Watson, 2002). Improvement in performance such as productivity, quality, and



services are the training outcomes provided that the job is strategically aligned to the institution's needs. For individual, if the desired needs of employee are fulfilled through the training program provided, the desired outcome by the institution will be reached.

Huselid (1995) suggested that perceptions of HR practices such as providing training and job security by Polytechnic institution are important determinants of employee performance. Moreover, some studies also state that HR practices such as benefit and training are positively related to performance because the practices motivate employees and "lock" them to their jobs (Grote, 2002). Grote (2002) further suggested that, training is a valuable activity for enhancing skills and improving staff performance, and that training can address some of the factors contributing to staff performance, such as perceived support from the supervisor, the agency, and community.

2.2.5 Employee Empowerment

Last but not the list in this study on the element of human resource management practices, is employee empowerment. Generally, empowerment in the context of this study refers to delegating the power of decision and action to the employees and giving more responsibility and authority to complete their task (Benson, 2006). It means that employees have sufficient authority to determine how they perform their tasks. In a broader view, HR practice of empowerment includes involvement of employee in goal-setting, decision-making and motivational techniques and enabling employees to work in a participative environment (Osborne, 2002). Undeniably, empowered employees are identified as a powerful drive in the higher institution's success (Kaye and Jordan, 2001). HR practice on employee empowerment can create sense of belongingness and ownership towards the current institution (Osborne, 2002).

Human resource practices must focus on gaining more self-governing to the employee to avoid turnover and job burnout (Chandrakumara and Sparrow, 2004). Becker and Huselid



(2000) found that HR practices play a strategic role in employee performance through stimulating skilled labour. The goal-setting process that involves employee can enhance employee empowerment as the employee considers himself more empowered knowing his or her job (Stanfield and Longenecker, 2006).

Theorists like Conger and Kanungo (1988) have ascertained that HR practice on empowerment deals with creating motivation. Conger and Kanungo also consider empowerment as the process of increasing self-efficacy in individuals through identification and elimination of the conditions which have caused inability in the employee (Abdollahi and Naveh, 2011). Furthermore, Conger and Kanungo, Thomas and Velthouse (1990) introduced psychological empowerment as the process of increasing inner motivation towards the duties which involve three other cognitive areas besides self-efficacy: self-determination, meaningfulness and impact.

2.2.6 Compensation

Compensation is the last element of human resource management practice in this study. And in the context of human resource management practice, compensation refers to all forms of payments or rewards given to employees which arise from employment (Dessler 1980). Compensation is one of the basic reasons why employees seek employment. Employees are compensated for their services and efforts they exert in their work. Dessler, (1980) affirm that reward is the centre piece of the employment contract-after all it is the main reason why people work. This includes all types of rewards, both intrinsic and extrinsic, that are received as a result of employment by the employee. Intrinsic rewards include rewards within the job such as responsibility, autonomy appreciation from the boss and feelings of accomplishment among others. Extrinsic rewards are tangible rewards such as pay bonuses and fringe benefits.



Rowley (1996) states that when employees feel their efforts are appreciated in the Polytechnic institution and the institution introduced a system of fair compensation and satisfaction, the institution will have optimised motivation and hence increased employee performance. Cascio (2003) opines that, because of the importance that compensation holds for people's lifestyle and self-esteem, individuals are very concerned about what they are paid a fair and competitive wage, while Polytechnic institutions are also concerned about what they pay because it motivates and influences important decisions of employees about taking a job, leaving a job and on the job performance.

A well designed and functional HR practice on compensation system is an efficient way to increase employee work motivation (Cascio, 2003). HR practice on compensation leads to better performance and keeps workers focused on their jobs. Lack of appropriate HR practice on compensation is one of the main reasons behind the employee turnover in the Polytechnic institutions (David, 2002). It is important to know that employee compensation include all forms of pay and reward received by employees for the performance of their job (Stewart et al., 1991). Failure to design appropriate HR practice on compensation system in Polytechnic institutions will have unfavourable impact on productivity and job satisfaction of employees and overall effectiveness of the institution (Patton, 1999).

The study survey results in 1996 conducted by Mclean and Tanner (Hays, 1999) revealed that 70% of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and 58% of human resource managers said that an organisation can implement compensation programs to improve performance of employees. Patton (1999) states that, "If you heard that money does not provide the motivation to do better or if the compensation in the form of money was ranked low, it is the result of a disability survey". In addition, he said that it is funny if a person is not motivated to excel by money.



In the higher institution, legally required benefit include social security, workers compensation while discretionary include health benefits, pension plans, paid time off, tuition reimbursement, recognition award, foreign service premiums, responsibility allowance, child care, on campus accommodation, promotion, annual increment and a host of others (Cascio, 2003; Dessler, 1980). Various studies have established that salaries and benefits are closely related to job satisfaction and job satisfaction can bring about motivation which in turn affects employee job performance and institutional commitment (Locke, 2004; Lifer, 1994). If employees are satisfied with how the Polytechnic institutions operates and communicates its compensation policies; they remain committed to the institution. Furthermore, an institution's reward system can affect the performance of the employee and their desire to remain employed (MacDuffie, 1991). There are also numbers of researchers who demonstrate that, there is a great deal of inter-individual difference in understanding the significance of financial rewards for employee performance (Pfeffer, 1998, Guest, 1992).

2.3 LOGISTICAL ISSUES

Recent study on logistics management has indicated an inadequate logistics for professionals in the field of human resource and has become an issue that can no longer be ignored if Polytechnic institutions objectives are to be achieved in this competitive knowledge-based economy (Hyde et al., 2008). In addition, the Asia Pacific Logistics Higher Institute in Singapore in association with the logistics Higher Institute of the Georgia Technology in the USA confirmed that both international and domestic LSPs identified inadequate talent as one of the key challenges of operating supply chain services (Bolton and Wei, 2003; Hyde, et al., 2008).

The results of the works done by Yang and Marlow indicated that logistical factors had a significant positive effect on HR practices both the service and innovation capabilities of the

logistics institutions (Yang and Marlow). The capability of a Polytechnic institution is its ability to perform the tasks using resources available. The results also highlighted the positive effects of logistic service capabilities on HR practices (Ching-Chiao et al., 2009).

This was supported by Wong and Karia (2010) who concluded that logistic in Polytechnic institutions can create an inimitable capability through bundling of physical, human, information, knowledge and relational resources for developing a perfect HR practices in these institutions (Wong, and Karia2010). Besides that, skilful and competent human resource practices were identified as an inspiration to quick service and performance achievement. These competencies can be developed using the 4 skills sets – social, decision, problem-solving and time management skills suggested by Myers and Allen (1991).

Some recent literatures suggested that collaboration of human, physical, knowledge, relational resource and information could be one of the Polytechnic institutional core competencies that encouraged effective performance on HR practices (Wong, and Karia, 2010). On the other hand, the core competencies of the logistic Polytechnic institution, VRIO (value, rareness, imitability, institution support) (Maria and Theotokas,2010) can be created through strategic management of HR skills, talents and organisation supports such as team spirit creation, rewards and HRM practice Maria and Theotokas., (2010). In this context, VRIO representing the combination of logistic service resources and capabilities of an institution (Maria and Theotokas, 2009) and this is where corporate institutional strategies are built upon (Ching-Chiao et al., 2009).

This study, argues that HR practices should complement logistic strategies such as infrastructure facilities, attractive working environment, training plan and communication or information to facilitate the implementation of a perfect HR practices in the higher institution. Theoretical developments on lateral linkages between functional strategies are



scant. Many scholars have considered the logistical factors markedly in the institutional growth and development.

2.4 SKILLS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

2.4.1 The Concept of Capacity Building

Human beings have distinct qualities and needs. When the Human Capital is recruited in an institution training starts the same day, workers bring in their knowledge, skills and experience related to the jobs they perform. Managers who invest in the employees to change and adapt their behaviour, skills and knowledge concerning the business would experience high positivity and employee performance (Fullan, 2007).

According to Hughes (2006), capacity building refers to the factors that act as requisites for the emergence of a learning society for employees. Fullan (2007: 58) defines the “capacity building as a collective aspect in terms of strategic steps adopted to enhance group efficiency showing high improvements in performances, expansion of resources and more motivation among working persons”. The results of the studies done by these researchers explains capacity building as a simple concept incorporating strategic actions taken to enhance human and technical resources in order to develop learning skills (Al-Roubaie, 2010: Hghes, 2006).

Joseph et al., (2009) suggested that higher institutions should provide capacity development programs for employees to increase new and improved knowledge for the enhancement of institutional growth. He also suggested that, in this dynamic knowledge economy, capacity development programs play important role of retaining and enhancing employee performance. Al- Roubaie (2010), have also suggested that impact of capacity building boost up human capital, physical infrastructure and new dimensions for Research and development as value addition to local economy.



In a research conducted by Abdollahi and Naveh, confirmed that, higher institutions who invest in the employees to change and adapt their behaviour, skills and knowledge concerning the institutional issues would experience positive result in employee performance (Abdollahi and Naveh, 2011). Higher institutions who cultivate the habit of providing employees on job training to learn new things would have dedicated and trustworthy workforce (Benson, 2006). The training programs and its course modules should pay the institution in terms of more skilled, learned, disciplined and punctuality of workers otherwise stop the training (Achard, 1938). Colleagues should also be acquainted with self-development training to groom their talent and improve knowledge, skills and attitude (Bonson, 2006). Managers must acknowledge each and every employee's specific abilities and ideas to generate productivity and creativity.

2.5 POLICY ISSUES AFFECTING HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The term organizational policy can be defined as: principles established for leading an organisation, a general course of action in which some practices are developed collectively, in a constructive way, aiming to reach certain objectives (Singar & Ramsden, 1972). HRM policies define the attitude, expectations and values of the organization concerning how individuals are treated, and still serve as point of reference for the development of organisational practices and for decisions made by people, besides resulting in equal treatment among individuals (Armstrong, 2009). In this study the term HRM policy means an institutionally articulated proposal, with theoretical and practical constructions within human relations aiming to reach the desired results. Thereby, HRM policies define theoretical and practical referential built to make possible the reaching of an institution's objectives and purposes, operating as thinking and acting guides for the HRM area.



Some research results have pointed out positives relationships between HRM policies and variables like commitment, productivity, profitability and quality, among others (Guest, 1987; Ulrich, 1994). In the meta-analysis performed, Combs, Liu, Hall, and Ketchen (2006), found that relationships between Human Resources practices and organizational outcomes are stronger in manufacturing companies than in service organisations.

Studies have also been conducted in cultures other than the American and European ones. Majumder (2012) verified strong relationships between HRM practices and employee satisfaction in Bangladeshi private banks, and Kim and Lee (2012) found evidence that HRM policies and practices improve strategic capabilities and firm performance in management consultant firms in South Korea.

The study by Demo (2010) showed positive and strong relationship between HRM policies and organisational justice in both private and public Brazilian organizations. Similarly, other researches have shown that HRM policies and practices favourably affect organisational performance (Boselie, Dietz, & Boon, 2005; Menezes, Wood, & Geladi, 2010; Subramony, 2009). Guest and Conway (2011) confirmed the association between both more HRM practices and higher HR effectiveness and a range of performance outcomes.

Besides, ALDamoe, Yazam and Ahmid (2012) concluded that employee retention is likely to mediate in the relationship between HRM practices and organizational performance. Employee perceptions of HRM policies and practices also influence discretionary work effort and co-worker assistance (Frenkel, Restubog, & Bednall, 2012). On the other hand, the effectiveness and acceptance of HRM policies are related to organisational values and culture (Stone, Stone-Romero, & Lukaszewski, 2007).

There is indeed a consensus that HRM practices produce higher organisational performance when integrated into business strategy (Guest & Hoque, 1994). This is also true for small



firms. The study conducted by Katou (2012) showed that HRM policies have a positive effect on organisational performance through employee attitudes (satisfaction, commitment, motivation) and employee behaviours (absences, turnover, disputes).

In summary, HRM policies assume special connotation in development, appreciation and retention of talents. They also promote employee commitment and, as a result, goodwill on their part to act in a flexible and adaptive manner towards excellence in organisations (Legge, 2006). An entrepreneurial strategy aiming at production and supply of added-value products and services must concern the development and the implementation of HRM policies resulting in well-qualified employees (Legge, 2006). In this study, the policy factors include economic policy, culture and politics, legislature and action of the union.

2.5.1 Economic policy

Changes in the national economy directly or indirectly affects human resource activities in higher institutions, in terms of recruitment, employment, redundancy implications, compensation and rewards/salaries. Any recession in national economies might create a difficult situation in implementing HR practices hence leading to the reduction of workforce, or at least significant cuts in wages or salaries and social support spending. Rosman and colleagues (2013) stressed the significant interference of national economy on HR policies on higher educational institutions. In the same way, Mello (2006) points out that, higher institutions should predict the future of economy and plan their HR practices. Accordingly, economic conditions might have an important effect on labour force, by changing the type and number of personnel demanded. In other words, when an economy stabilises, competition for qualified human resources increases. The position of national economies, in terms of stability and wealthiest might attract qualified people from other countries which give better recruitment opportunities to the higher institutions (Kabene and Leduc, 2006).



2.5.2 Technological Changes

Technology affects HRMP in higher educational institutions to a greater extent because of high degree of interaction between technology and HR. Technology changes the way we work, the roles we undertake and the interactions through which work gets done. DeFillippi (2002) and Verkinderen and Altman (2002) argued that technology facilitates the growth of a multinational enterprise but generates simultaneous problem of “unpluggedness” among a geographically dispersed workforce. Garavan et al., (2008) suggested that technology lies at the heart of educational institutions. It provides a series of academic advantages. Technological developments alter the context of HR practices in the Polytechnic institution. As pointed out by Garavan et al., (2008) technological developments require flat institutional structures to allow highly qualified personnel demonstrate their creativeness. Accordingly, higher institutional managements employ staffs who are knowledgeable about information technologies; as a sign of changing HRM policy and strategy. Similarly, Kane and Palmer (1995) pointed out that, especially the prevalent usage of microprocessor based technology, affects recruitment, staffing, knowledge, skills and abilities of workforce in the higher institutions. In addition, Jackson and colleagues (2003) stated that producers, which use flexible specialisation, require fewer skills than manufacturers that use mass production. Tiwari and Saxena (2012) pointed out that, technology provides new methods for HRM practices. DeFillippi (2002) suggests that, technology alters the roles of human resource in the Polytechnic institution.

2.5.3 National Culture

Chandrakumara and Sparrow (2004) found that culture is crucial in higher institutions preferences in developing appropriate structure and methods for HR practices. As Charvatova and Der Veer (2006) stated that, higher institutions should consider the values, myths, behavioural types, rituals, and expectations of society, when they are identifying HRM policy and strategies. Thus, higher institutions would be stronger in competition.



Equally, if higher institutions put the ethics of people into account, it would be easier for them to behave in socially responsible way. In relation with this, Kane and Palmer (1995) cite the linkage between the differences of HRM practices and national cultures. Tsui and Milkovich (1987) examined the multiple constituency approach, which explains the practice of human resource department through client expectations. Tiwari and Saxena (2012) argued the link between national culture and HRM activities in higher educational institutions. Chandrakumara and Sparrow (2004) achieved the result that, national culture is one of the important elements which determine institutional perspectives in establishing structure for effective HRM practices.

2.5.4 Legislations /Regulation

All the policies for human resource management in any institution should be in accordance with legal necessities. Institutions should behave in the framework of regulations which are the implementation of law or putting it into practice. To put it more simply, law structures HRM practices. Accordingly, Tiwari and Saxena (2012) pointed out that, HRM implementations in Polytechnic institution should consider the regulations of countries. Therefore, the differences of HRM practices also depend on these legislation and regulations. Equally, Kane and Palmer (1995) discussed that equal opportunity, occupational health, and industrial relations can be influenced primarily by the legislation. Also, Mello (2006) argues that, legislation and regulation have impacts on every function and activity of organisation, so, on human resource management decisions. Similarly, Mabey and Salaman (1998) identify the importance of government policies and legislation on strategic training and development activities in higher institutions.

2.7.5 Actions of Union

Unions also affect other higher institutionby threading them (Mabey and Salaman, 1995), in terms of the level of wages and salaries, physical conditions, and compensation. Therefore,



the actions of institutions in terms of human resource management are realised under the impacts of unions. In relation to this, it was found by Jackson and et al., (2003) that, higher institutions with a union use more formal performance appraisals, and appraisal results to identify training needs. Moreover, the compensation or bonuses of personnel were tied to the performance of the union in the higher institution (Jackson et al., 2003). Furthermore, Tsui and Milkovich (1987) affirm that, human resource related activities such as industrial relations, security and health are mostly realised responding the demands of unions. In addition, unions limit the flexibility of managements, in terms of adopting HR policies (Rosman, et al., 2013). Finally, the findings of Rosenzweig and Nohria (1994) also support the link between unions and HRM practices.

2.5.6 Globalisation

Higher education drives, and is driven by, globalisation, a phenomenon of increasing worldwide interconnectedness that combines economic, cultural and social changes (IMHE, 2010). Higher education trains the highly skilled workforce and contributes to the research base and innovation capacity that increasingly determines competitiveness in the knowledge-based global economy. With its central role in cross-cultural encounters, higher education fosters mutual understanding and helps to build global networks for the future. At the same time, cross-border flows of ideas, students, faculty and financing, coupled with developments in information communication technology human resource practices, are changing the environment for higher education. This implies both increased collaboration and competition between countries and institutions on a global scale (IMHE, 2010). This has created a challenge for the institutions in terms of management of human resources (Tayeb, 1998). Some organizations have tried to transfer the HRM practices from one country to another but it has been found that some practices can be transferred across nations almost without any change but some must be modified to become workable in



another setting and some are more deeply culture-specific and may not always be transferable (Van der, 2001). Tayeb (1998) support the argument that in HRM practices are more prone to local cultural influences than are their overall policies and strategies.

2.6 ENHANCEMENT OF PERFORMANCE IN INSTITUTIONS

The majority of work examining the relationship between HR practices and institutional performance originates in US private-sector firms (Arthur, 1994; Huselid, 1995; MacDuffie, 1991; Guest and Conway, 1997). But it could be noted that, consistent with the stream of US research, the private sector has remained the dominant context for those studies. The lack of research conducted in public-sector higher institutions seems to suggest that improving on institutional performance is not of strategic importance to public higher institutions. (Osborne and Pasterik, 1997). However, Polytechnics have been subjected to progressively tighter financial regimes, increased competitive market forces and close monitoring of institutional performance (Afiti and Badu, 2003).

Trust is becoming increasingly recognised in the workplace as a critical factor for enhancing institutional performance (Guest, 1997). As a norm, 'high commitment' HR practices are expected to communicate to employees the extent to which institutions trust them (Guzzo and Noonan, 1994). It is therefore surprising to find that, as a distinct individual outcome, trust does not feature in the orthodox HRM models (Guest, 1987). This is acknowledged by Pollitt (1986) who states that 'too much is assumed on the process connection', with the link between HR bundles and output measures 'taken for granted'. However, to a larger extent the importance of trust as a mediating factor between HR practices and performance in the higher institutions has indirectly been captured in studies examining the changing state of the psychological contract, of which trust is an integral part (Guest, 1997). Guest (1997) states that, many private-sector institutions are developing 'high trust' institutional cultures



by adopting HR practices and are intended to reinforce trust between employees and employers.

According to Arthur (1994) 'high commitment' HRM systems has shaped employee behaviours and attitudes by developing a 'psychological links between higher institutions and employee goals. Arthur argues that managers using 'high commitment' practices are essentially endeavouring to 'develop committed employees who can be trusted to use their discretion to carry out job tasks in ways that are consistent with institutional goals' (Arthur, 1994: 672). The normative HRM models build on the 'high commitment' thesis and provide intermediate links between bundles of HR practices and institutional performance (Guest, 1997; Marchington and Grugulis, 2000; Wood, 1999). In doing so, these models go some way towards explaining why HR practices impact on institutional performance by highlighting their effects on employee attitude (job satisfaction and commitment) and behaviour (exerting oneself on behalf of the institution, intention to quit the organization).

2.6.1 Measures of performance

There are essentially three types of performance data available (Locke and Latham, 1990); these are measures of output of goods and services, which may be quantitative (units produced, customers served) or qualitative (number of errors, customer complaints); measures of time, including lateness, absence, lost working time, failure to meet deadlines); and financial indicators, which include a large array of possibilities. Lock and Lathan (1990) further explains that, these may be interrelated; thus absence reduces institutional performance. Where 'hard' quantitative data are not available, we may wish to resort to measures of behaviour. Ideally, we observe people at work, noting whether they approach customers and offer help, or noting whether they observe safety procedures. Failing to do that, we can obtain reports either from an 'observer', such as the superior or a peer or subordinate, or from the person under study.



The same perspective can be adopted for performance data of interest to other stakeholders, for example those concerned with the environment. The measurement becomes more complex when applied to employees, since we will need to add subjective evaluations. The important point is that they should be collected systematically, perhaps through mechanisms such as attitude surveys. Of course, an analytic framework for considering the range of performance data cannot hide biases and preferences – perhaps for financial measures – nor can it prevent subjective interpretation and weighing of the information. The simple point is that as researchers we should perhaps be aware of the range of types of data that might be collected to indicate performance. There is also an implicit judgment about preferred priority, starting with the ‘hard’ measures, followed by behaviour followed by reports or ratings.

We may of course wish to balance the post-modernist view that all performance measures are social constructions, open to a variety of interpretations, against recognition that broadening the definition of performance and providing evidence about any link between HRM and performance may be one of the more effective means of ensuring that policy makers take HR issues seriously. HR practices are the levers or mechanisms through which employee skills can be developed Human resource practices are the primary means by which firms can influence and shape the skills, attitudes, and behaviour of individuals to do their work and thus achieve organizational goals (Clark and Warr, 1996).

HR practices are designed to improve the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees; boost their motivation; minimize or eliminate loitering on the job and enhance performance of an organization or institution. Those practices consist of employee recruitment and selection procedures; incentive compensation and performance management policies; and extensive employee training, participation and involvement in decision-making. According to Harel and Tzafrir (1999), HRM activities can influence an organisation’s performance



through improvement of employees' skills and quality (selection and training) and through the increase of employee motivation (incentive compensation).

HRM practices enhance organizational effectiveness and performance by attracting, identifying, and retaining employees with knowledge, skills, and abilities, and getting them to behave in a manner that will support the mission and objectives of the organisation. Thus, the effectiveness of HRM practices depends on how it creates an appropriate attitude and molds the behaviours of employees, in addition to its implementation. HRM practices influence employee skills through the acquisition and development of a firm's human capital. Human capital corresponds to any stock of knowledge or characteristics the worker has (either innate or acquired) that contributes to his or her productivity (Gruman and Saks, 2011).

Recruiting procedures that provide a large pool of qualified applicants will have a substantial influence over the quality and type of skills that new employees possess. Providing formal and informal training experiences, such as basic skill training, on-the-job experience, coaching, mentoring, and management development, can further influence employees' development. HRM practices can influence employee skills through the use of valid selection methods to hire appropriately skilled employees and through comprehensive training to develop current employees. Even high skilled workers will not perform effectively if they are not motivated. Managers can use HRM practices for the motivation of employees to work both harder and smarter.

The HRM practices, systems or strategies have often been referred to as high-involvement or high-performance work practices (Lussier, 2002). No one has consistently defined, or even uniformly named High Performance Work Practices HPWPs (Baker and Demerouti, 2008). They have been called high performance work systems, alternate work practices, and



flexible work practices (Delaney and Huselid, 1996). Becker et al., (1997) contend that, despite the name variances, many of these programmes share common elements including rigorous recruitment and selection procedures, incentives based upon performance, and extensive training programme focused on the needs of the business. Appelbaum et al., (2000) believed that, the widely accepted theoretical basis for the relationship between human resource management and organizational performance is the high-performance work system framework provided the core of a high-performance work system, according to Appelbaum et al. (2000), is an organization that enables non-managerial employees to participate in substantive decisions.

The high-performance work system also requires supportive human resource practices that enhance worker skills and that provide incentives for workers to use their skills and participate in decisions. Although high performance work practices (HPWPs) have often been touted as being good for both employers and employees, these practices require significant investments in human capital via training, coordination of initiatives, and time for managerial and employee input (Appelbaum et al., 2000).

Because of the large investment in human capital, the value of these practices may be lost if the investment is not offset by increased efficiency and effectiveness. Many researchers such as (Guest 1995) argued that while high performance HRM increases a company's productivity and profits (e.g., Ichniowski et al., 1997), the effect is even more pronounced when complementary bundles are used together (e.g., Ichniowski et al, 1997).

2.6 THEORITICAL FRAME WORK (Institutional theory)

The study of institutions traverses the academic fields of economics, sociology, political science and organisational theory. The common denominator for institutionalism in various disciplines appears to be that of, 'institutions matter' (Kaufman 2011). An underlying assumption in the study of institutions is that organisations are deeply embedded in the



wider institutional context (DiMaggio and Powell 1991). Thus, “organisational practices are either a direct reflection of, or response to, rules and structures built into their larger environment” (Paauwe and Boselie 2003:59). This institutional environment is the source of legitimisation, rewards or incentives for, as well as constraints or sanctions on, organisational activities (Meyer and Rowan 1977). The relevance of institutional theory to Human Resource Management (HRM) was initially derived from this view (Rosenzweig and Nohria 1994).

The institutional approach used in organisational analysis is referred to as organisational institutionalism (Greenwood et al. 2008). Organisational institutionalism deals with the overall question: ‘What does the institutional perspective tell us about organisational behaviour?’ Institutional theory is a useful lens to analyse organisational behaviour because it can respond to empirical mismatch, where, ‘what we observe in the world is inconsistent with the ways in which contemporary theories ask us to talk’ (March and Olsen 1984:747). The theory is credited with its emphasis on the contextual, historical and processual aspects in which organisational actions take place (Currie 2009). Human Resource Management (HRM) scholars started to recognise the applicability of institutional theory to HRM research in early 1990s. Wright and McMahan (1992) were first to note this. Following this, Oliver (1997) and Purcell (1999) incorporated elements of the institutional framework in relation to HRM in their research.

Research on institutionalization (Scott 1987, Zucker 1987) focuses on pressures emanating from the internal and external environments. Internally, institutionalisation arises out of formalised structures and processes, as well as informal or emergent group and organisation processes. Forces in the external environment include those related to the state. For instance, in the Polytechnic institutions, the external forces are: legislation and regulations, national culture, globalisation, information technology and human resource practices within the same



institutional enterprise. The Polytechnic institution has little or no control over these forces, however, they can influence it to some extent. On the other hand, the internal forces in the Polytechnic institution from this study are: the union such as, Polytechnic Teacher Association of Ghana, human and logistical factors within the Polytechnic institution, such training policy. But regardless of the source of institutional pressures, two central assertions of this perspective are (a) institutionalised activities are resistant to change and (b) organisations in institutionalised environments are pressured to become similar (Meyer and Rowan 1977, DiMaggio and Powell 1983). Thus, in this theoretical perspective, context is the major explanation for both resistances to change and the adoption of new HRMP approaches in the Polytechnic institution. The first assertion suggests that HRMP activities have deep historical roots in the Polytechnic institution, so they cannot be understood completely without analysing the institution's past. From the second assertion it follows that HRMP activities may be adopted by the Polytechnic institution simply because other institutions have done so. Thus, "managerial fads and fashions" ebb and flow in part because a few legitimate institutions become fashion leaders that are imitated by other institutions that view imitation as a low-risk way to gain acceptance (Abrahamson 1991). Tolbert and Zucker (1983) showed, for example, that institutionalisation resulting from imitation partially explained the rate at which reforms in civil service selection procedures spread throughout the country at the turn of the century.

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) further elaborate this latter assertion with the concept of "institutional isomorphism" defined as: "a constraining process that forces one unit in a population (or organisational field) to resemble other units that exposed to the same set of environmental conditions". (Boxall et al. 2007: 174) In line with this, the study builds on the institutional theory by assessing the human resource management practices in the three Polytechnics in the Northern Ghana. Human resource management practices are adopted

and practiced in the Polytechnics because, other institutions do same. Furthermore, the Polytechnic institutions are pressured by employees for better condition of service. Hence the need to adopt a practice that best satisfy the demand of employees' whist at the same time enhances their performance. This is consistent with the institutional theory.

2.7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

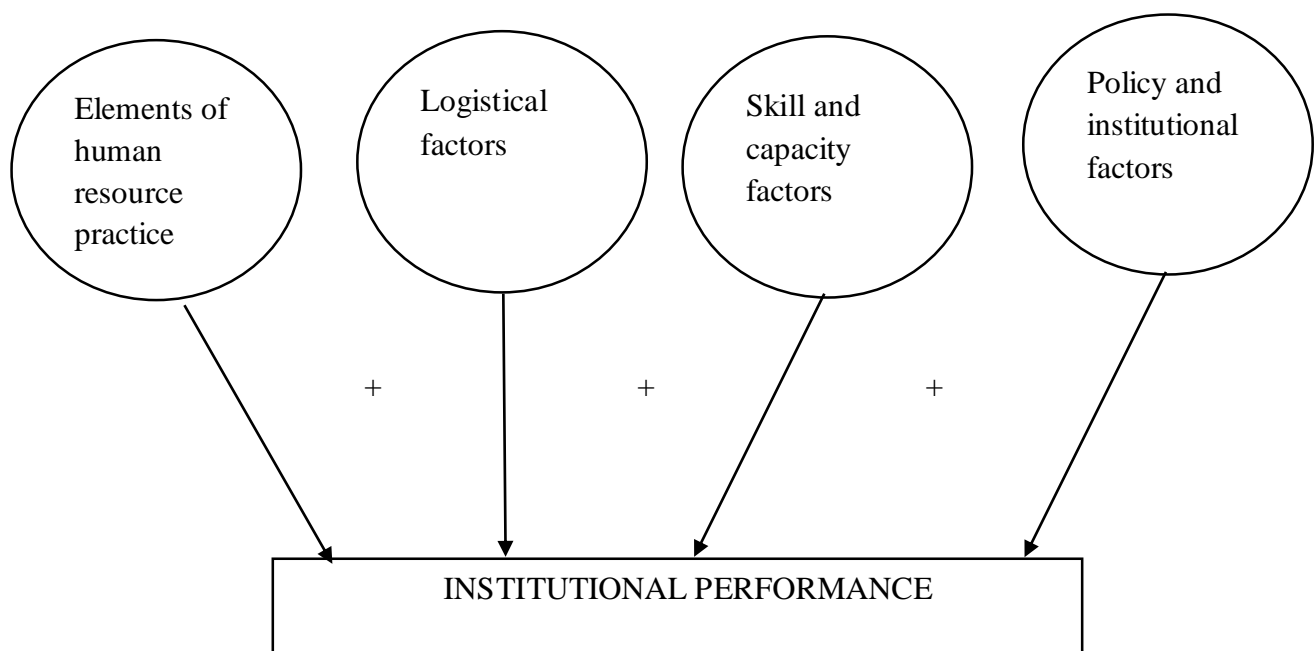
This study is framed with key ideas that explain intersections between major pillars in this research. The conceptual framework lays out a comprehensive set of options for each 'circle'. The first circle contains the bundle of human resource management practices. These include: job security, performance appraisal, self-managed team, training and development, employee empowerment and compensation, which is described as element of human resource management practices in this study. This is followed by logistical factors, skills and capacity factors as well as policy and institutional issues indicating that, if they are implemented positively by the Polytechnic institution, positive results would be achieved. It further presupposed that when employees are satisfied with and committed to their jobs, the performance of the Polytechnics understudy tend to improve.

This means that when human resource management practices which contain the first circle is positively adapted and implemented; a better outcome will be achieved. The strong association between the performances of an individual to a higher institution's aims is to adapt and implement a best HRM practices, logistical factors; capacity building and institutional policies that are in consistent with Ghanaian legal, national culture and institutional policies in achieving result. Furthermore, institutional theory posits that, society plays a key role in determining HRM practices through the influence of certain institutional structures such as the country's legal framework; attitudes; cultural beliefs and practices (see for example Heneman et al 1983, Scott 1995; 2001). It further explained that, new policies are difficult to be embraced by an institution of higher learning. Means, Polytechnic



institutions are resistant to change but also, Organisations in institutionalised environments are pressured to become similar. Within this theoretical perspective, context is a major explanation for both resistances to change and the adoption of new HRM practices. Meaning, HRM practices are rooted in the history of organisation and its environment, the study of which gives useful insight to the human resource practices. Again, HRM practices may be adopted by these institutions simply because others have done so. For example, an institution who feel that their goal and objectives are not been met, may adopt a practice that other institutions have adopted and be successful (Wong and Karia, 2001).

Proposed Theoretical/ Conceptual Framework



Author's construct, 2013

The research aims to study the interrelationship between the independent variables which are: element of human resource practices, logistical factors, human and capacity issues and the influence of policy and institutional factors and employee performance as a dependent variable by conducting research on how these four variables that affect the performance of



Polytechnic lecturers and non-lecturers. To illustrate, the study tries to figure how appraisal aligns to compensation and how training helps employees to gain empowerment.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

In most research endeavours, it is important to adopt the most suitable research methodology to assure the soundness of research findings Cresswell (2003). Hence, this chapter presents a detailed description of methods that were used to gather and analyse data for the study. Hussey and Hussey (1997:111),

offers a distinction between methodology and methods by explaining that “research methodology refers to the overall approach of the research process, from the theoretical underpinning to the collection and analysis of data whilst methods refer to the various means by which data can be collected”. More broadly, there are assertions that research methodology defines the domain within which a study can be framed (Jonker and Pennik, 2010; Wahyuni, 2012). Furthermore, research methodologies can also be aligned to research paradigms, and that is why most social science research have ontological and epistemological standpoints especially with regards to their aims and objectives, relationship between the researcher and the respondent and the role of a researcher are concerned (Lee, 1992).

The study seeks to answers fundamental questions that every human resource manager is confronted with in relation to the level of loyalty, job satisfaction and commitment, human and logistical problems, skills and capacity building, policy and institutional problems and how performance can be enhanced in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. The theoretical foundation of this research incorporates various concepts as discussed in Chapter two. This research includes a detailed analysis of the HR-related data obtained from both primary and secondary sources.



3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Even though research designs that are employed in investigating social phenomena abound, this study was designed in the form of a case study (Yin, 2009). Several reasons informed this choice of study design particularly because it involves real-life phenomena and because case studies are suitable for understanding a phenomenon under study in-depth (Yin, 2012). In addition, this research design facilitates questions that take the form of how and why a particular phenomenon is being investigated (Wahyuni, 2012). Case study research could use a single case or multiple cases. This study adopts an exploratory case study design by analysing HR practices in the three Polytechnics (Cooper and Schindler, 2005). It also combines different sources of data to understand Human Resource Management Practices and employee performance in the Polytechnics involved in this study. The process of obtaining data includes in-depth interviewing, participant observation, elite or expert interviews and document analysis. When the above approaches are combined, two exploratory techniques emerge with wide applicability for the researcher (Cooper and Schindler, 2001):

1. Secondary Data analysis – the first step in an exploratory study which is the search for secondary data.
2. Experience surveys – when interviewing research participants, the researcher seeks their ideas about important issues or aspects around the subject at hand for the purpose of discovering what is important across the subject's range of knowledge.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH: MIXED METHODS

This research used a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques. Quantitative research techniques are employed to gather numerical data and involved the use of statistical analysis to arrive at conclusions while qualitative techniques are used to meaningfully interpret and understand respondent's experiences and views about HR practices in the



polytechnics under study. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods was adopted because qualitative techniques allow researchers to comprehend and appreciate the views of people about a phenomenon under study (Punch, 2005). Obviously, a mixed methods approach was deemed appropriate for this study because it incorporates different types of data in answering research questions (Karami et al., 2006).

There are assertions that a mixed method approach is best suited for exploratory research, as the questions posed may not have been answered before (Karami, Analoui, and Rowley, 2006; Scandura and Williams, 2000). A mixed method approach also strengthens the credibility and reliability of research as the quantitative components is supported by qualitative aspects of the study (Scandura and Willims, 2000). According to Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989), mixed-methods approach offers five main benefits, namely:

- (1). Triangulation—using different sets of data and methodology in order to test hypotheses and consistency of findings;
- (2). Complementarity —confirming the validity of results from one study by employing a different research method;
- (3). Development—applying results from one method in the design for further research;
- (4). Initiation— challenging research results from one method;
- (5). Expansion—developing methods in order to explore them further and garner additional detail.

It is generally recognized that a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods provides the most reliable insights and research findings.



3.3 SAMPLING

3.3.1 Sampling Technique

Kerlinger, (1986) has stated that sampling is taking any proportion of a target population or universe as a representative of that population or universe. In this study, a systematic random sampling method was used to select respondents from each department of the three Polytechnics. An employee list was obtained from the HR department, and the first employee was selected randomly and with a sampling interval of two (2), every second individual was selected. In all, a total of 274 people were interviewed.

In addition, human resource managers were included in the study. The human resource managers were purposively chosen because of the purpose and focus of the study on human resource issues. Furthermore, in all the three institutions, there were one Human Resource Manager and his Assistant. This means that, in all, there were six human resource personnel who were also interviewed.

3.3.2 Sample Size

Malhortra and Peterson (2006) and Zikmund (2003) stated that, the larger the sampling size of a research, the more accurate the data generated but yet, sample sizes differ due to different circumstances. In this research, the sample size was determined by using Krejcie, et al, (1970) sample size determination formula and table. The total number of targeted population in this research is obtained by collating the number of Polytechnics staff on the existing directory. There are approximately 973 lecturers and non-teaching staff from the three Polytechnics under study (Tamale Polytechnic, Bolgatanga Polytechnic and Wa Polytechnic). An employee list was obtained from the Human Resource Managers in each institution. Based on the sample size table used, the sample size in this research was 274. But Krejcie and Morgan, (1970) also has a formula for determining the sample size for any given population. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size:



$$S = X^2NP(1-P) \div d^2(N-1) + X^2P(1 - P)$$

S = required sample size.

X^2 = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level

(3.841).

N = the population size.

P = the population proportion (assumed to be .50 since this would provide the maximum

Sample size)

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05).

3.3.3 Sample Share

After the total sample size was determined, the study used ratios and proportions to share the sample sizes for the three institutions considering the total population from each institution. This was necessary for the researcher to clarify the number of respondents to be interviewed from each institution. Below is a table showing the proportionate share of the sample size. These are determined based on the total population from each institution, multiply by sample size of 274 from Krejcie, et al, (1970) sample size determination table and divided by the total of the three institutions.

Table 3.1 Sample Distribution

INSTITUTIONS	Total Population	Ratio
Tamale Polytechnic	520	146
Bolgatanga Polytechnic	220	62
Wa Polytechnic	233	66
Totals	973	274

Source: Field Survey, 2013.



3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

3.4.1. Primary Data Collection Methods

The researcher collected both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected through the use of the following tool: questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, observation and survey. An explanation of the research instruments is presented below.

3.4.2 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are a simple and effective research tool (Zikmund, 2003). They are cost-effective and reduce distortions in data collection from any ‘interviewer biases introduced during the interview processes. Since this research is aimed to discover deeply held personal attitudes, actions and beliefs of an institution, some of the questions may be sensitive in nature, the anonymous nature of the questionnaire would give the respondents the opportunity to express their inner beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions freely. Additionally, open-ended questions and closed questions were used to elicit questions on age, gender, and occupation among others. Multiple choice questions were also employed.

The questionnaire was divided into five parts. Part one (1) sought respondent’s demographic details notably age, gender, the state their work, their experience and qualifications. The second section posed questions on the effectiveness of human resource practices based on the conception of employee security, compensation, appraisal system, good and safe working conditions, training and development, equal employment opportunities, and recruitment and selection among others (Pfeffer, 1998; Guest, 2001). The third part explores human and logistical problems that affect the polytechnics in the study while part four (4) examines skills and capacity building issues that militate against performance in the various institutions. Last but not least, the fifth section composed of questions purposely designed to understand the policy and institutional factors affecting HRMP in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana.



3.5 INTERVIEWS

Interviews are the most common method of gathering data in qualitative research. Properly executed interviews are a practical method of data collection because they help the researcher to understand participants' reactions, insights, and interpretations of relevant situations under study (Punch, 2005). Kvale (1983:174) defines qualitative interviews as a process for; "gathering descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of meaning of the described phenomena". Interview could be carried out face to face interviews or by telephone, and in recent times, via the internet.

Sanders et al (2003) categorize interviews more generally into structured interviews, unstructured interviews and semi structured interviews. The first category involves the use of questionnaires based on predetermined set of questions while unstructured interviews do not have any formalised or predetermined structure because the perspectives of the respondent is the main focus of such interviews. In conducting unstructured interviews, the interviewees express themselves freely so far as what they say fall within the topic under study. The third category, the semi structured interviews combines structured and predetermined questions with questions that are deemed relevant but may not be included in the set of prepared questions. Semi structured interviews enable both the researcher and the respondent to explore a wide range of pertinent issues in an attempt to answer the research questions. In this study, semi structured interviews were appropriate as a result of its flexibility. The semi-structured interview used in this study was divided into three sections. The first was to investigate the impact of HR upon the rate of job satisfaction and commitment and considered its efficiency through open-ended questionnaires. The second discusses factors that influence employee's performance such as logistical factors, skill and capacity issues, policy and institutional factors in the institutions. The last segment covered issues concerning the performance outcomes in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana.



3.5.1 Interview Transcription

The most important elements of quality in qualitative research include the severity and dependability in the data analysis process. One way to achieve this is through transparency in the research process. Interview transcripts form a crucial part of qualitative research (Oliver et al. 2005; Witcher 2010). Transcription of interview transcripts can be natural or denatural. Natural transcription involves the verbatim reproduction of an interview with every utterance including stutters, pauses, mannerism and other nonverbal cues all captured. Denaturalism on the other hand, is a transcription approach where non-standard accents are eliminated (Oliver et al. 2005).

To ensure the integrity of the data collected, transcription was done using denaturalism, however, since the interviews were taped recorded into computer-compatible formats, the files were kept and resorted to whenever the naturalism orientation was sought. In essence, the approach adopted was a hybrid of the two orientations (Oliver et al. 2005). Each interview was transcribed and stored up with the identical code as the original sound file. The transcription was done following the question and answer format.

3.6 SECONDARY DATA

In this research, secondary data which was mostly archival or documentary information that existed prior to this study was used to complement primary data collected purposely for this research. They were obtained from the Polytechnics. Sanders et al (2000) asserts that secondary data can either be documentary data, survey based data and data from multiple sources. The main advantage of using secondary data is because it requires less time to collect given that they already exist prior to collecting primary data. More often, secondary data complements primary data, making up for the shortfalls of the other or providing confirmation. This complementarity is seen as data 'triangulation' with a potential of increasing the credibility of research findings (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias 2007).



3.7. DATA ANALYSIS

3.7.1 Quantitative Analysis

In analysing data obtained from the survey, the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 16v) software was used to present descriptive and inferential statistics. Basic patterns of descriptive statistics such as means, frequencies, and standard deviations were gleaned from the dataset to present and report key findings and make informed conclusions (Lawrence, 2006). Chi-square tests were used to determine significant relationships between variables of human resource management practices. One-way analyses of variance were performed to test for the significant performance of the current and desired practices of the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana.

3.7.2 Qualitative analysis

Qualitative content analysis is defined by Mayring (2000: 5) as ‘an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, content analysis, rules and step by step models’. It is a means by which data are explored to understand the meaning of individuals or groups confronted with social or human problems (Creswell, 2007). In this study, data was obtained through primary sources such as, interview and questionnaire.

3.7.2 Measurement of Institutional (Polytechnic) Performance

Multiple measures of performance have been used in some of the recent studies (Flavian, Fuentelsaz and Polo, 1998). In this study, institutional performance was measured in one dimension, thus, operational performance. According to Harvard school Approach to HRMP, Operational performance was defined in terms of employee productivity as well as societal well- being and their behaviour and attitude about their work (satisfaction and commitment).

Employee productivity is an important performance criterion for a service organization such as academic institution where human resource is its biggest asset (Mehra, 1996). Each of the



Polytechnic institutions in Northern Ghana was asked to rate their performance on each parameter for a period of five academic years (2005-2010). But they did not like to reveal their Performance data.

3.7.3 Measurement of HR Practices

In this research, the researcher has adopted those HR practices most consistent with the prior theoretical and empirical work in the field (Arthur, 1994: Pfeffer, 1997). These practices included aspects like employee security, compensation, performance appraisal, training & development, team work and employee empowerment. Therefore, using a five - point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), respondents (both employees and key informants) were asked to indicate their perception on these HRM practices and HRM outcomes. Reference can be made to appendix A Part B.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

The analysis has been divided thematically according to the four research objectives namely: to examine the critical element of human resource practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. To explore human and logistical problem affecting human resource management practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. To investigate skills and capacity issues militating against performance in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. To understand policy and institutional factors affecting human resource management practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana and to examine how performance can be enhanced in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. In all, 146 participants completed questionnaires at the Tamale Polytechnic, 62 participants at Bolga Polytechnic and 66 participants completed questionnaires at the Wa Polytechnic. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 16v) was used to analyse primary data that was collected from the three polytechnics. Descriptive and inferential statistics were computed from the results to draw substantive conclusions.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Research such as this demands a high degree of objectivity when drawing conclusions, so measures were taken to ensure that the sample of respondents in the survey not only represented the three Polytechnics but also justified the requirement of random selection. In total, 274 respondents participated in the survey, 90%. Males made up 51.9% of the overall sample, and females 48.05%. Of the respondents, 30.5% supervised others in an official capacity in addition to their normal duties as lecturers while the other 69.5% were employees discharging specific duties. The respondents differed in their work experience:



25.3% had less than 1 years' experience, followed by 16.9% with 3 years, 35.1% with 2–5 years, 15.6% with 6–10 years, and 7.1% with over 10 years.

When profiled by age, respondents under 26 made up 43.5% of the sample; 26–35 years, 44.8%; 36–45 years, 7.1%; 46–55, 3.9%; and 56–65 years, 0.65%. Of the respondents, 35% of employees said they had worked under their immediate superior for less than 2 years, 25% for 2–5 years, 31%; 5% for 6–10 years as a non-teaching staff, and 4% for over 10 years. The respondents also represented various levels of academic attainment 3.3 % were PhD holders, 5.3% constituted Second degree holders, Bachelor degree holders were 53.3 %, while 16.7 %constituted Diploma holders, 21.3 per cent did not indicate any qualification.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

In this subsection, multiple regression analysis was used to determine whether independent variables (X_1 , X_2 , X_3 , X_4 , X_5 and X_6) simultaneously impact the dependent variable (Y). As a result, the subsection examines whether the multiple regression equation can be used to explain the various factors of human resource management practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. To investigate the influence of element of human resource practices, the variables are defined as: (X_1) employment security, (X_2), compensation, (X_3), team work (X_4) performance appraisal (X_5) extensive training (X_6) employee empowerment, the model used for the regression analysis was expressed in the general form as given below: $Y = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2 X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + b_5X_5 + b_6X_6 + \epsilon$. For this model, performance was used as the dependent variable (Y) and independent variables included X_1 , X_2 , X_3 , X_4 , X_5 and X_6 . The relationships between the dependent variable and independent variables, and the results of testing significance of the model have been respectively interpreted. In interpreting the results of multiple regression analysis, the three major elements considered



were: the coefficient of multiple determinations, the standard error of estimate and the regression coefficients. These elements and the results of multiple regression analysis were presented and interpreted accordingly.

4.3 CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE THREE POLYTECHNICS IN NORTHERN GHANA USING MULTIPLE REGRESSION MODEL.

In this section, the study addresses the first research objective by using multiply regression to examine critical elements of human resource management practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. These elements include employment security, teamwork, performance appraisal, training, empowerment and compensation. Details of these elements of human resource management practices are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 multiple regression model on element of human resource practices

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.179	.498		2.365	.020
Employment security	.307	.060	.384	5.158	.000***
Compensation	.102	.080	.094	1.269	.007***
Teamwork	.546	.160	.261	3.413	.001***
Performance appraisal	.355	.071	.344	4.629	.000***
Training	.089	.075	.084	1.180	.004***
Empowerment	.065	.067	.71	.971	.334

Source: Field Data 2013

Dependent variable: Performance. *** Significant at 0.001 level

Multiple Regression equation:

$$Y = C + \beta X_1 + \beta X_2 + \beta X_3 + \dots + \beta X_n$$

Y= Prediction relationship of types of variables toward performance.

C= Constant value.

β = Unstandardized coefficient.

X= Dimension of independent variable (employee, compensation, team work, performance appraisal, and training and development).

Based on the above table, we able to derive the following equation:



$$Y = 1.179 + .307X_1 + .102X_2 + .546X_3 + .355X_4 + .089X_5 + .065X_6$$

Table 4.1 above shows that, the employment security, compensation, team work, performance appraisal and training and development are significant at one percent. Whiles empowerment is not significant. The findings show that the explanatory variables significantly influence the performance of polytechnic staff in Northern Ghana. For instance, the results show that employment security has a positive and significant effect on the performance of polytechnic staff. That is one percent increase in employment security will lead to 38.4 percent increase in performance of polytechnic staff and vice versa. The findings did not support the findings of Clark (1996) which revealed that employment security did not influence the relationship between job security and performance. This may be attributed to subjects feeling that their chances of getting other jobs are higher even if they were retrenched from their jobs now. Thus, because of that, they were not worried about their job security and it did not affect their job satisfaction. Furthermore, Gupta (1994) noted that in reality, workers actually feel little or no risk about job loss. Similarly, Clack (1996) contend that workers are often confident about their employability whereby only two thirds of those interviewed in her research were willing to think about looking for other jobs while only 10% will look for other jobs actively. Thus, it can be concluded that, if the workers were confident about their employability, they did not really have to worry about looking for other jobs if the need arise, and thus it did not relate directly with their job satisfaction.

For instance, a research participant confirmed as follow:

“Given that employment security is an important dimension of quality of employment and that, secure employment is the main means to secure income. Employment security is the means to income security. It enhances worker welfare” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for teaching staff, Upper west Region Polytechnic, UWR]



This is corroborated in the literature by Heany et al. (1994) who in their research of 207 automobile workers found that job satisfaction decreases when employment insecurity is prolonged. Ahmed et al. (2002) in their research added that, among 5,729 managers found that, there was a negative relationship between job security and level of economic uncertainty. Silla et al., (2009) in their research among 639 workers from six higher institutions found that, employment security relates with well-being but job security did not and also the high perception of job security will also result in higher job satisfaction.

Moreover, the regression coefficient for team work of the employees (β_3) = .261 or 26.1 % which means that, one per cent increase in team work increases by 26.1% in employee performance if other variables are kept constant. The T value is 3.413 which are significant at .001. So the research study confirmed that team work has significant positive effect on employee performance but strongly weak. A respondent from the teaching staff confirmed that:

“Part of the difficulty in achieving teamwork in problem solving is that members sometimes have different perceptions of what teamwork is. Differing perceptions cause different expectations. Thus in attempting to achieve teamwork, leaders and members often deal with a wide spectrum of views and sometimes rigid, inaccurate perception” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for teaching staff, Polytechnic in the UER]

Cohen and Bailey (1999) opined in the literature that, higher institutions which emphasize more on teams have results in increased employee performance, greater productivity and better problem solving at work. On other hand, insufficient teamwork will adversely affect the institutional performance. Recent study shows that employee working within a team in a knowledge base institution can produce more output as compared to individual. Another study concluded that to teach individuals on how to work in teams is not an easy task because to teach individuals regarding to work in teams is inappropriate (Crosby, 1991).



Furthermore, table 4.1 depicted the independent variable of performance appraisal in the regression coefficient as (β_4) .344 or 34.4 % and T value of 4.629 with significant level of .000.

The study revealed that there is a positive relationship between performance appraisal and employees' performance. The study reveals also that, effective performance appraisal in workplace brings about improvement in the performance of employees. Employees are most likely to show commitment to set goals when they are aware that their performance on the job would later be reviewed. The study further shows that the Polytechnic institution has not been able to achieve its objectives resulting from weak evaluation of employees' performance. Thus, the study understanding of performance appraiser and how to utilise the results should change. Measuring employees' performance should move away from the traditional methods of internal performance management way of describing to a more sophisticated performance appraisal system, which was often implemented to provide a rating to drive a pay result, to a series of processes which enabled both institutions and individuals to focus effectively and in depth on the creation and sustenance of high performance culture. As the study is aware that, old ideas and concepts take time to die and appraisal is no exception. Respondents from the HR department confirmed that, their performance appraisal was performed by the Head of Department:

“We don't have an internal appraisal system, as we have a ready appraisal from the Head of Department. Both the immediate superior and the second level superior had the right to appraise us, adding, ‘we send the form to the supervisor of the employee, and he fills the form and then sends it to General Director for his signature. After that, we send it to administrative control department for their information” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for Administrators, Polytechnic in the UER]

Another HR Administrator suggested changes that could be inculcated to improve the performance appraisal. He contends that:



“Appraisal system is not based on competencies but is mainly anchored on attendance, a point that leads to contention among many employees. Most of the employees do not agree about their performance appraisal. Its categories are ‘Excellent, Good, Poor, Very poor’. Furthermore, it depends on their attendance. Therefore, there is the need to increase the sense of equity perceived by employees on the performance as some of the supervisors evaluate their staff unfairly. The staff do not have chance to discuss his performance appraisal with the Head of Departments. In general, the objectivity of the performance appraisal system lacks a mechanism for feedback and the lack of competency-based criteria for assessing performance” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for Human Resource Administrators, Polytechnic in the NR]

A considerable section of the literature asserts that employment and recruitment procedures and proper performance appraisal linked to incentive compensation, is likely to lead to effective performance at all levels of a higher institution (Delaney and Huselid, 1996; Delery and Doty). The results from this study support some of these findings. The results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis revealed the insufficient and improper performance evaluation system, showing a negative relationship between HRM practices and their influence to enhance performance in the three Polytechnic system in Northern Ghana. One Registrar in a closed discussion opined that:

“A fair appraisal system is essential in any higher institution to retain valuable employees and improve on performance. It enables employees to understand their job responsibilities and show them the path towards individual growth. Employee participation in the appraisal process, equity, fairness and justice will give benefits to institutional commitment” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript from Registrars, Polytechnic in the UER]

The study reveals that, appraisal system is a big challenge in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. A fair appraisal helps in extracting the best from workers. An unfair appraisal system can result in unrest and dissatisfaction amongst employees. Scholars usually argue that, performance appraisals that are conducted properly can produce positive institutional results (Pollitt, 1986).



The above inserted table 4.1 also depicts coefficient regression analysis between six independent of which, the regression coefficient for extensive training (β_5) = .089 or 89 %. The T value is 0.180 with a significant level of .002 levels which is less than the confident level of .05. It implies that the training has a strong and positive contribution to employee performance. This is consistent with the views of Human Resources Administrators that:

“Institutions mostly invest a lot on their human capital to fulfil their training needs and improve their skills generally by organising training programs/modules to make their competencies in accordance with the needs of changing world which finally contributes to gain the competitive advantage. Training and development has traditionally been used to ensure that the right person is in the right job at the right time. The impact of training on work performance is excellent because, training content is relevant to achieving their personal needs, goals and self- development”
[Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for Human Resource Administrators, Polytechnic in the NR]

Training employee progress completely is linked with managerial competitive advantage. A good chance of training motivates worker's contribution and promotes capabilities. In review, the present study shows that focus on training and development promote competitive advantage in context of job satisfaction and performance, decrease non-attendance and lower suspend intention to leave the Polytechnic institution. This is buttressed by Helliriegel et al, (2001) that training of employees in Polytechnic institutions increases higher productivity through better job performance, more efficient use of human resources, goals and objectives more effectively met. From the literature, effective training and development improves the culture of quality in institutions, workforce, and ultimately the final product. Huang (2001) further content that, an educated and well trained workforce is considered to be essential to the maintenance of an institution's competitive advantage in a global knowledge economy. Huselid (1995) suggested that perceptions of HR practices such as providing training and job security by the higher institution are important determinants of employee performance. Moreover, some studies also state that HR practices such as training and development are positively related to performance because the practices



motivate employees and “lock” them to their jobs (Gruman and Saks, 2011). The employee training in this study was sufficient but since the other elements are insufficient, performance will be affected.

Besides, the regression coefficient for employee empowerment is $(\beta_6) = .71$ or 71 % which means, one per cent increase in employee empowerment bring on average 71. Percent increase in employee performance level if other variables are kept controlled. The T value is 0.971 with a confident level of 003. It implies that the employee empowerment has positive significant effect on employee performance and contributes very greatly towards performance with 71 per cent. The findings are consistent with responses of lecturers, one of who stated that:

“In our institution we are allowed to get involved in cession of activities, so that we play a role in choosing job and condition of its implementation. Because in this case, it is more possible that we accept their delegated tasks eagerly, perform the jobs with competence and experience because we are empowered to do better” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for teaching staff, Polytechnic in the UWR]

The result of the study exhibited that the level of employees’ empowerment is favourable from the respect of competence. Therefore, it can be stated that, the employees have enough competence to perform their assigned duties and have the confidence to perform those duties efficiently. In the same vein, they believed they mastered the skills necessary to perform their career responsibilities; they are assured of their capability to perform their work; overall, they feel the work is in the domain of their capabilities and workmanship. Further, from the aspect of independence, the employees are in a favourable state. In other words, they feel they possess freedom of action and the requisite independence for initiation and consistency of behaviour and processes, decisiveness in regard to the manner of performing their career duties and finally the personal ingenuity while performing their responsibilities.





In terms of impact, the employees thought that they have enough power to penetrate in the executive, official and strategic outcomes of their work and also have a great control over whatever takes place in their field. They believed their opinions are observed in the relevant work area. Moreover, in respect to meaningfulness, the employees are in a favourable state and this signifies that the employees consider their career goals valuable and have a noticeable inner motivation about their works. They suppose what they are doing is meaningful and significant to the growth and development of the Polytechnic institutions. High performance employees are formed in an empowered institution, and eventually they will improve the institution's efficiency and productivity (Hammuda and Dulaimi, 1997). Employee empowerment could provide an impact to the institutional commitment. A teaching staff suggested that:

“Institutions should use employee empowerment as a tool to enable their employees delivers the right kind of service quality the institutions stand for. Employees should be given a high degree of autonomy, regarding decisions affecting their performance. These empowered employees should be motivated to provide greater service that would enable them to ‘own’ the job, exercise freedom while controlling the service process and individually respond to institutional need in an excellent fashion. They should promote teamwork amongst employees so that every staff irrespective of gender would work towards a common vision to achieve the objectives of the institutions” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for teaching staff, Polytechnic in the NR]

Another member of the teaching staff from the three Polytechnics added that:

“The individuals in the higher institutions should be more responsible and self-sufficient. For that reason, training should be an inseparable section of empowerment processes. Thus, the policy makers as well as heads of departments should provide an atmosphere which allows each individual to improve, to develop and to participate in the work. The institutional structure should be designed according to the institutional goals and the level of employees’ empowerment” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for teaching staff, Polytechnic in the NR]

Finally, it can also be deduced from table 4.1 that the value of beta for compensation practices is (.094), significant at .007 level. It shows that compensation practices are positively and significantly associated with employee performance of the institutions. Findings are supported by the studies done by Becker et al. (2001). One of basic objective of any higher institution is that to compensate employees in every possible way the institution can. In fact, Polytechnics are launched to create jobs and technical human resource for the country. Ghana is a country where people come to work to fulfil their basic needs not due necessarily to their interest. People having degree or expertise in one field and may be working in other field due to different reasons. Therefore, compensation is the major entity which affects employee performance. This is buttressed by the words of a Head of department interviewed that:

“Compensation with indicators of salaries, incentives and benefits plays important role to increase employee motivation in the higher institution. It reflects achievement and affiliation needs. Compensation is capable of strengthening commitment of employees at the institutional level hence increase job performance and intent to stay longer with the institution”
[Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for Head of Departments, Polytechnic in the UER]

As Lifer (1994) argued, employees may feel that they are appreciated by the institution for their performance and contributions if they get good salary. Hence, they are motivated to contribute more or perform better for the institution. Ahmed et al., (2002) also added that, compensation is not only the return and benefits for the work done, but it also reflects their accomplishments. Lifer (1994) concluded that, compensation system is particularly important for intelligence-intensive industries like educational institutions because competent employees are the core capabilities or resources to the institution.

The study reveal that, the role of the Human Resource Management practices is evolving with change in the competitive knowledge base-economy therefore, Human Resource Management practices must play a more strategic role in attracting talented employees for the success of the higher institutions. Higher institutional staffs are always regarded as a



powerful resource in any educational system (Golhar, 1997) and therefore any successful educational system must be able to attract talented and skilled teachers.

The above findings also observed that, the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana do not leverage the soundness of their HR practices, as current practices are not so much effective. The practices involved high commitment system focus on giving more to employees. This is noted from the institutional theory which postulated that, HRMP can be said to be people management practice that delivers results in terms of seeking employee welfare in consonance with driving higher institutional goals and success. A high involvement approach to management makes use of practices that allow workers to be responsible for their own development and smooth running of the institutions (Lawler et al., 2003). Through high commitment practices, workers are able to develop their skills, ability, and confidence, gain information, deepen motivation and innovation and achieve a greater sense of performance (Thomas et al., 1990; Pfeffer, 1998).

Despite these possibilities, positive outcomes are expected from HR practices that consider both intrinsic and extrinsic factors in the three Polytechnics. A study conducted by Huselid (1995) involving more than 900 organisations in the US found that human resource management practices are of two types. First are those that focus on skill improvement; second are those that focus on enhancing interest and motivation. It was discovered that financial effectiveness and a positive change in employees' attitudes followed from skill enhancing practices, because employees were more effectively selected, trained and encouraged to develop. Therefore, activities that enhance motivation, such as performance evaluation, also increased the rate of productivity.



4.4 HUMAN AND LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS IN THE THREE POLYTECHNICS IN NORTHERN GHANA.

In this section, the study addresses the second objective by using multiply regression model to explore human and logistical problems affecting HRM practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. The human and logistical problems include infrastructure, working environment, training plan and information. Details of these human and logistical problems are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Multiple Regression Model on Human and Logistical factors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.863	4.570		.627	.0565
Infrastructure	.264	.389	.298	.677	.005***
Working environment	1.56	.434	.171	.360	.007***
Training plans	-1.283	1.522	-.486	-.843	.447
Information	.279	.479	.253	.583	.591

Field Data (2013) Dependent variable: HRMP. *** Significant at level at .001

Multiple Regression equation:

$$Y = C + \beta_{X1} + \beta_{X2} + \beta_{X3} + \dots + \beta_{Xn}$$

Y= Prediction relationship of types of variables toward HR practices.

C= Constant value.

β = Unstandardized coefficient.

X= Dimension of independent variable (infrastructure facility, working environment, training plans and communication/ information).

Based on the above table, the study derived the following equation:



$$Y = 2.86 + 0.26x_1 + -1.56x_2 + -1.28x_3 + 0.279x_4$$

The above inserted table 4.2 shows that, consideration the model infrastructure and working condition are significant at one percent. Whiles training plan and information technology are not statically significant. The findings show that all the explanatory variables significantly influence the performance of polytechnic staff in Northern Ghana except training plan and information technology. It also shows that, the coefficient of regression analysis between four independent variables which are considered in this sub-section of the study as logistical factors including: infrastructure, enabling environment, training plans, communication / information and a dependent variable namely HR practices. Table 4.2 also shows that in constant, the value of B is 2.863, the value of standard error is 4.570, the value of T is .627, and the significance value is .005. In infrastructure facilities, the value of B is .264, the value of standard error is .389, the value of Beta is .298, the value of t is .677, and the significance value is .005. For working environment, the value of B is -1.56, the value of standard error is .434, the value of Beta is -.171 the value of t is .360, and the significance value is .007. Training plans, the value of B is -1.283, the value of standard error is 1.522, the value of Beta is -.486, the value of t is -.486, and the significance value is .447. Communication / information, Beta is .279, the value of standard error is .479, the value of t is -.583 and significance value is .001.

Furthermore, table 4.2 contains both positive as well negative values. It is indicated from the finding that, working environment and training plans has a negative relationship on HR practices, but the highest beta indicates that, the independent variable has greater significant influence toward it dependent variable. From the table above, it is only the independent variable of training plans that has the highest positive beta of 0.4570, this mean that the independent variable of training plans has contributed the most and has stronger effect toward the HR practices if compare to others independent variable. This means that, an



increasingly attractive approach in creating superior competitive advantage relied upon higher institution's logistic factors to influent the implementation of HR practices. In conclusion, the results of Yang et al (2009) have indicated that a logistical factors have significant positive effects on HR practices in both the service and manufacturing industries. Furthermore, the capability of the higher institution to perform its core tasks depend on how effective HR practice are observed using resources available. The finding of the training plans in this objective is consistent with a participant among the heads of department interviewed from the three Polytechnics who added that:

“In order for the institution to remain strategically positioned in the competitive knowledge environment or to be efficient in providing quality outputs to the society, there is need for both existing and new employees to be trained regularly. Approaches used to train employees should be selected after careful consideration of the trainees and the institution's needs. Strategies must be developed pertaining to training and development of employees in the institution before carrying out the training programme”

[Fieldwork, Data, 2013. Interview transcript for Heads of Departments, Polytechnic in the NR]

Another participant added that:

“The training strategic approaches should be adopted to ensure that training programmes are consistent with the overall objectives of the institutions. There should be clear and reliable linkage between training effectiveness and the fulfilment of strategic institutional objectives. The strategy should be based on developing appropriate training programme of data gathering, problem identification, and cause and effect analysis and solution development” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for Heads of Departments, Polytechnic in the NR]

4.5 SKILLS AND CAPACITY BUILDING ISSUES IN THE THREE POLYTECHNICS IN NORTHERN GHANA.

In this section, the study addresses the third research objective by using multiply regression to investigate skills and capacity issues militating against performance in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. The capacity issue includes information technology,



organisational mission, and organisational strategy and employee skills. Details of these skills and capacity building issues in the three Polytechnics are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Multiple Regression Coefficient Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.470	.480		3.061	.923
Information Technology	0.014	.139	.026	.098	.005**
Organisation mission	.155	.135	.328	1.146	.262
Organization strategy	.096	.140	-.203	-.685	.499
Employee skill	.097	.125	-.188	-.777	.444

Source: Field Data (2013). Dependent variable: Performance. Significant at .001

Multiple Regression equation:

$$Y = C + \beta_{X1} + \beta_{X2} + \beta_{X3} + \beta_{X4} \dots + \beta_{Xn}$$

Y= Prediction relationship of types of variables toward performance.

C= Constant value.

β = Unstandardized coefficient.

X= Dimension of independent variable (information technology, organisation mission, organisation strategy and employee skill).

Table 4.3 above shows that; the findings show that all the explanatory variables significantly influence the performance of polytechnic staff in Northern Ghana.

In estimating the contribution of each explanatory variable in the study, it established that all the capacity issues significantly contributed in variance to the performance at confident level of 0.005. However, the relative importance of each variable was different. Also, since the confident level is less than 0.005, the coefficients are significant and therefore the regression equation would be:



$$Y = 1.470 + 0.48x_1 + 0.63x_2 + 0.155x_3 + 0.97x_4$$

Information Technology was positively related to performance systems with $\beta = 0.014$ ($\alpha < .05$). This evidence indicates that employees' skill in information technology has an influence on performance systems. It therefore implied that the better the empowerment on training and development in information technology, the more successful the performance in the three Polytechnics. In the literature Garavan et al., (2008) opined that technology lies at the heart of educational institutions. It provides a series of academic advantages. Technological developments alter the context of HR practices and the way they are implemented. Bingöl (2006) added that, technological developments require flat institutional structures to allow highly qualified personnel to demonstrate their creativeness. Furthermore, institutional managements employ staffs who are knowledgeable about information technologies; as a sign of changing HRM policy and strategy. Similarly, Kane and Palmer (1995) pointed that, especially the prevalent usage of microprocessor based technology, affects recruitment, staffing, the knowledge, skills and abilities of workforce.

Besides, the Polytechnic institutional mission was positive and significant with $\beta = 0.328$ ($\alpha < .05$). The study indicates that; the Mission statements demonstrate the framework that the higher institution should operate on. Therefore, it also determines the human resources policies, indirectly. As a mission statement shows the basic reason behind the foundation of institutions, it gives a base, in terms of orientation, to any function of it. Accordingly, human resources policies and practices should be consistent with this mission statement. On the other hand, these types of mission statements integrate functions through purposes. As Littrel (2007), pointed out, by presenting values and philosophy, mission statements facilitate both management's and employees' non routine decision making. The study reveals that, an ideal mission statement can be a source of policies to motivate or inspire employees, with a content including words about excellence and societal benefit.



Organisational strategy was positive and significant with $\beta = 0.155$ ($\alpha < .05$). Like the previous factors, evidence was found to indicate that, organisational strategy has an influence on performance systems. This is supported by the literature that; every unit or function of an institution should adapt its strategy to the institutional strategy. This is the necessity of strategy implementation for achieving goals (Mintzberg et al., 2003). Therefore, human resource strategy or implementation should fit higher institutional strategy in order to achieve performance. Establishments should consider targets, purposes, policies and strategies when they are designing and practicing their HRM functions (Mello, 2006).

Employee skills were also positively related to performance with $\beta = 0.97$ ($\alpha < .05$). An employee skill was therefore found to have an influence on performance systems. Therefore, all the four factors (x_1, x_2, x_3 and x_4) have an influence on the performance.

The study revealed that a significant positive relationship exists between employee skills and performance in the higher institutions. Acton and Wilie (2002) noted that job-related training can enhance the ability of problem solving of employees. Once they are confident and motivated to perform a task, they are more likely to be committed to their job, thereby reducing labour turnover and increasing performance. Mitchell et al., (2001) suggests that institutions should provide appropriate training and development programs to keep them confident and updated on current operation. Through training and development, they are able to work with little or no supervision and more committed to the institution (Mitchell, 2001). According to American Public Transportation Association in 2009, it suggested that institutions should give sufficient training programs for employee development to retain employees and improve on performance. Hence, it can show that employee training is important for increasing performance in an institution of higher learning.





The findings revealed that, skill and capacity issues has a greater influence in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana, however, it is not sufficient to increase performance. As Appelbaum (2000), suggested that higher institutions should provide capacity development programs for employees to increase new and improved knowledge and for the enhancement of institutional growth. They added that, in this dynamic knowledge-based economy, capacity development programs play important role of retaining and enhancing employee performance. Al- Roubaie (2010) also opined that, the impact of capacity building boost up human capital, physical infrastructure and new dimensions for Research and development as value addition to local economy.

As revealed in the findings, the respondents' technical skills, knowledge and understanding of their task are strongly affected. The result of the study is supported by the findings of Michie (2003) who stated that, the staff of higher institutions perceived that the greatest assets of performance management was its ability to highlight and act on staff development needs. Armstrong and Bacon (2006) commented that nowadays most performance management systems had shifted emphasis towards continuous staff development and self-evaluation. This finding revealed that, for performance to improve in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana, then capacity building need to be improved. A participated in this research from the teaching staff suggested:

“Employers should provide capacity development opportunities for employees to gain new and advance knowledge and application for institutional development. In the changing and dynamic nature of the knowledge base-economy, human work force is the source of competitive edge. So training and development not only enhances employee’s capabilities but also improve institutional performance. In employee performance, capacity development plays an effective role which management should practice” [Fieldwork Data,2013. Interview transcript for teaching staff, Polytechnic in the NR]

Another participant from the three Polytechnics added that:

Employee empowerment is important strategy which if applied carefully can lead to the performance of key employees. Employees are responsible to implement management policy and programs so their suggestions and ideas could help managers to take practical and relevant decisions. Employee capacity building exercises and programs should be introduced to increase knowledge, skills and abilities of employees. These things add the efficacy power of the employee and he performs to the best of his abilities. Employees work hard to make an institution successful so they should be given full autonomy and empowerment to make job decisions which would yield better result “[Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for teaching staff, Polytechnic in the UER]

On that same issue of human and capacity building issues, one Registrar from the three Polytechnics lamented that:

“The development of systematic knowledge about and related to institutional improvement requires a change in the prevailing culture of administration and teaching in the Polytechnics institutions. Cultures do not change by mandate: they change by the specific displacement of existing norms, structures and processes by others; the process of cultural change depends fundamentally on modelling new values and behaviour that you expect to displace the existing ones” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for Registrar, Polytechnic in the UER]

4.6 POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES IN THE POLYTECHNICS IN THIS STUDY.

In this section, the study addresses the last but not list, the fourth research objective by using multiply regression to understand policy and institutional factors affecting HRM practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. The policy and institutional factors include economic policy, national culture, legislature and action of the union. Details of these policy and institutional factors are presented in Table 4.4.



Table 4.4 multiple regression on policy and institutional factors in the three Polytechnics

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.205	.389		-.527	.563
Economic policy	.301	.151	.293	1.994	.001***
Culture and politics	-.061	.130	-.162	-.469	.043
Legislature/ Regulation	.110	.189	.113	.582	.003***
Action of the union	.657	.192	.602	3.422	.002***

Source: Field Data (2013). Dependent variable: HRMP. *** Significant leave at 0001.

The table evaluates and interprets the standardized coefficients of correlation (beta). In estimating the contribution of each independent variable in the study, it was established that all independent variables significantly contributed in variance to the HR practices at significance level of 0.005. However, the relative importance of each independent variable was different. Also, since the confident level is less than 0.005, the coefficients are significant and therefore the regression equation would be:

$$Y = -.205 + .301X_1 + -.0601X_2 + .110X_3 + .657X_4$$

Economic policy was positively related to performance systems with $\beta = .293 (\alpha < .005)$. Furthermore, national culture and politics was negatively related to HR practices with $\beta = -.062 (\alpha < .05)$ the study found that, culture and politics has a negative influence on HR practices. Besides, Legislature / Regulation was positively related to HR practices with $\beta = .113 (\alpha < .05)$. It is clear that top management priorities are the elements that are considered as positives in the multiple regression table 4.4. Similarly, legislation is also a necessity that every institution has to take into account and obey. Therefore, these findings reflect the reality that establishments experienced. On the other hand, changes in the national economy directly or indirectly affect any function of HR practices in an institution. So, again it should be considered, and should be responded effectively. Then again, action of the union characteristics also shapes higher institutional functions with regard to HR practices. At the



same time, the “qualities of employees” is an important variable that determine the frame of HRM activities. Moreover, “the size of the institution”, and “institutional structure” are among the internal factors that the management of the three Polytechnics give priority while deciding their HRM plans and implementing it. From the institutional theory, studies have shown that society plays a key role in determining HRM practices through the influence of certain institutional structures such as the country’s legal framework; attitudes; cultural beliefs and practices (see for example Heneman et al 1983, Scott 1995; 2001).

In the literature Chandrakumara and Sparrow (2004) found that, culture is crucial in institutions preferences in developing appropriate structure and methods for HR practices activity. Bingöl (2006) added that, higher institutions should consider the values, myths, behavioural types, rituals, and expectations of society, when they are identifying HRM policy and strategies. Thus, higher institutions would be stronger in competition, if institutions put the ethics of people into account, it would be easier for them to behave in socially responsible way. Chandrakumara and Sparrow (2004) achieved the result that, national culture is one of the important elements which determine institutional perspectives in establishing structure for effective HRM practices. The findings of this study sub-section imply that, national culture was considered important in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. This may also come as a result of the similarities of cultural practice in the Northern Ghana.

Like the previous factor, evidence was found to indicate that legislature has a positive influence on HR practices. Accordingly, Tiwari and Saxena (2012) in the literature pointed out that, HRM practices and its implementations should be adapted considering the regulations of countries. Therefore, the differences of HRM practices also depend on these legislation and regulations. Equally, Kane and Palmer (1995) discussed that equal opportunity, occupational health, and industrial relations can be influenced primarily by the



legislation. Also, Mello (2006) argues that, legislation and regulation have impacts on every function and activity of an institution, so, on human resource management decisions. Similarly, Mabey and Salaman (1995) identify the importance of government policies and legislation on strategic training and development activities.

Action of Union was positively related to human resource practices systems with $\beta=.293(\alpha<.005)$. This is supported in the literature that, Unions also affect other sectors by threading them (Mabey and Salaman, 1995), in terms of the level of wages and salaries, physical conditions, and compensation. Therefore, the actions of institutions in terms of human resource management are realised under the impacts of unions. In relation to this, it was found by Jackson and colloquies (1989) that, institutions with a union use more formal performance appraisals, and appraisal results to identify training needs. Moreover, the compensation or bonuses of personnel were tied to their performance, in institutions with a union (Jackson et al., 1989). Furthermore, Tsui and Milkovich (1987) affirm that, human resource practices and its related activities such as industrial relations, security and health are mostly realised responding the demands of unions.

On the issue of strategic contribution of recruitment and selection procedure in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana, one Human Resource Administrators confirmed that:

“To be honest, I’ve never interviewed any job seeker. The selection is from the general director. Sometimes they applied at my department but no action will be taken. On the other hand, if we have a vacant position, we the Human Resource Department place an advertisement for that job. Directorate of Human Resources usually nominates candidates for a job, and then our general director interviews them. Whoever qualifies and fits the job, we ask him/her to complete his/her documentation. The Administrative Control department ‘must approve the vacant [position] before we recruit any candidates” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for Haman Resource Department, Polytechnic in the NR]



While recruitment procedures are in place in the Polytechnic institutions, a participant described the lack of specific selection criteria in the Polytechnic institution. He contends that:

“There are no criteria on selection and recruitment. We just interview them and send all completed documentation such as qualifications and medical check up to the Administrative Control Department for approval. It sometimes takes a couple of days to hear from them” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for Human Resource Department, Polytechnic in the UER]

Mani (2002) suggested that, as a professional HR manager, it is vital to have the competency and ability to select appropriate employees and place them in suitable work position in an institution. But in this study, human resource manager rather conducts the interview and the final selection will then be done by Administrative Board of Directors.

In all, some participants illustrate that, there are formal recruitment procedures observed in the three Polytechnics in the form of the job seeker being interviewed by the HR Director and completion of documentation. However, the study reveals that, there are no concrete selection criteria, and no committee is mandated to oversee the selection process. Charvatova and Veer (2006) contend that, there is the need for written criteria by which to select human resources for a particular post. The study also seeks to ascertain the procedure used to recruit the right person at the right time. One common theme that emerged during the interview process was the constrain in the hiring a qualified candidate by the pay grades offered by public higher institutions. A participant expressed concern over this constraint that:

“The procedure does not help sometimes, because some of the experienced candidates are looking for a high salary as well as compensation compared to what they gain with other organisations. In this case, we can't recruit them, although the institution needs their valuable experience. The degree to which the procedure helps depends on the candidates, sometimes it could help and sometimes not. Honestly, many of the candidates we select fit



certain positions, but decide to leave. They are disappointed with the grade that we assign to them. We don't have the right to place the candidate at a higher grade, and if we do it, the Administrative Control Department will refuse it" [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for Human Resource Department, Polytechnic in the UER]

This suggests that even if the recruitment specialists think that a higher salary is deserved by an applicant, they cannot change the salary prescribed by law, and only the Administrative Control Department or its head can make such a decision. Because of the difficulty of hiring applicants who are both fit for a post and willing to accept the salary being offered by the government, a participant from HR department opined that:

"It is better to consider applicants who may lack competencies initially and just give them an in-service training to ensure that the person is fit for the job. This will make the recruitment process both expeditious and effective. Further, the procedures for determining the salary offered to new applicants may be satisfactory for fresh graduates but not for experienced professionals who already have a wealth of experience and well-developed competencies"[Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for Human Resource Department, Polytechnics in the UER]

The study findings indicate that, new applicants are neophytes and may not be too particular about the salary being offered to them, but as applicants gain experience, however, they become more discriminating about the compensation package being offered to them. This is difficult for the Recruitment Department because salaries need to be competitive. Clearly, these responses indicate that salary scales act as a constraint in recruiting and may be a prospective contributor to the frequent industrial actions in the country which culminated in low performance. A study has shown that an offer extended to an employee sends a message about the employer's commitment to motivate, recognize, and reward performance (Bititci et al., 2001). Although the right procedure to achieve this is in place, the present study reveals that scales of pay in public higher institutions are not at par with other companies. A participant lamented on the barriers to effective policy functioning in the three Polytechnics. He confirmed that:



“The overall quality of supervision I receive in my work is not substantial, the feeling of worthwhile and accomplishment I get from doing my job is not great, the amount of independent thought and action I can exercise in my job is not enough, the amount of pay and fringe benefits I receive not satisfactory. HR Department should be at the topmost priority of the institutional structure because as HR directors, we will have the chance to practice HR roles but our situation is different. It would be appropriate to have an internal HR policy which supports us to retain and improve performance which was the hallmarks of these institutions. But, the policy to support is weak” [Fieldwork Data, 2013. Interview transcript for Haman Resource Department, Polytechnic in the NR]

4.7 THEORETICAL IMPLICATION

Studies have shown that society plays a key role in determining HRM practices through the influence of certain institutional structures such as the country’s legal framework; attitudes; cultural beliefs and practices (see for example Heneman et al 1983, Scott 1995; 2001). The institutional theory explanation to HRMP in the higher institutions examined in this study using evidence from the three case studies presented revealed the following:

To begin with, in the entire three Polytechnic in Northern Ghana, conformity to the law is seen as essential for the survival of the institutions, however the influence of other societal factors such as national culture is not totally supported by the evidence from the study. The Ghanaian constitution for instance enjoins all institutions in operation in the country to conform to the country’s labour laws. In the case of the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana, there are public higher institutions, therefore HR policies are enshrining in the Polytechnics’ practices, though, the study fails to support some of these practices.

From the study, the institutions did not blindly conform to the country’s specific practices but rather adjust to environment taking in what is feasible and what is not feasible and this determines what they practice. For instance, lack of clear recruitment system prevents the institutions to perform the pre-requisite screening in recruitment process however this is



compensated in their extremely stringent selection method that ensures the best candidates are recruited.

Again, the concept of isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) that suggest that with time institutional structures and pressures will create similarities in the higher institutional practices is fully supported by the evidence from this study. The three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana show signs of conformity by renaming their Personnel department to HR departments but from all evidence practices are yet to change to reflect the change of the name.

Over all different factors come into play in the kind of HRM practices found in an organisation. The chapter reviewed the various factors that influence HRM and also takes a second look at the literature reviewed in the light of findings made in the three Polytechnics that were used as case studies in this research. From all indication, HRM is given different interpretations in different higher institutions. It is however revealed that one cannot judge best practices from interpretations given, from the three case studies both do have an efficient HRM practices that delivers results. Therefore, HRMP can be said to be people management practice that delivers results in terms of seeking employee welfare in consonance with driving higher institutional goals and success.

Furthermore, the view of country specific HRM is supported here, however this is in relation to institutional structures that enhance practices and those that restricts. From the study it can be concluded that a shared environment does impact HRM but this impact can be realigned with the Polytechnic goals and objectives. This reinforces Smith and Meiksins (1995) view that societal embeddedness does affect higher institutional practices but does not restrict them. Thus, even in the same country and the same sector there are different interpretations and approaches to the same HRM practices



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of research findings and results generated from the study.

It is structured in line with the objectives of the study. This implies that the summary of key findings in this chapter addresses the research questions outlined in Chapter one. Based upon the results of the study, conclusions and recommendations are made.

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to conduct an assessment of human resource management practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. To accomplish this objective, both quantitative and qualitative research approaches have been used. A non-experimental survey, using a semi structured interview, was employed as the primary instrument to gather data. Based on the results of the study, answers to the research questions are discussed below:

5.2. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The study reveals the following critical elements of human resource practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. The study contends that recruitment is based on qualification and experience. Furthermore, participants affirmed that the Polytechnics in Northern Ghana lack compensation benefits such as allowances for cars, housing, and telephones among others. The bonus established by the labour law in Ghanaian civil service is not enough to attract staff such as PhD holders into the Polytechnics. The study revealed that, the most desirable option to attract and influence an employee to put their best in achieving goal and objectives, is by planning for the future needs of employees and providing sufficient initiatives to attract suitable personnel. Respondents in this study called for the establishment of departments within the institutions to plan for both present and



future needs of the human resource. They saw a need for staff to be taught the differences between administration management and human resource management.

The pay policy structure and the working environment together form strong elements in creating job satisfaction. In this study, the level of job satisfaction seems to be the topmost priority in employees' decision to enhance performance and this is woefully inadequate. Communication pattern with their colleagues in this regard play intense role in their decisions to again improve productivity in these institutions but was also found to be insufficient.

5.3 HUMAN AND LOGISTICAL FACTORS

The study revealed that, an attractive environment is a major challenge to Polytechnics in Northern Ghana. The lack of interest in employee's jobs is evident in the fact that, they are dissatisfied with the environment in which they worked; this has adverse returns on their work. Their ambivalence toward their jobs and the institutions is further manifested in their frequent industrial actions and hence, an indication of their dissatisfaction with the degree of respect they receive from other institutions and organizations across the country.

Some areas of the study elicit a neutral reaction from employees, such as attitudes towards the institutional job description and the effects on performance. In this regard, employees seem not to have the crystal idea whether they would make the effort to change their job if changes were made in their personal responsibilities, and if they would prefer to wait for some major HR policy modification to occur. They appear disinterested in the institutional success and growth, an indication that they lack a sense of belonging to a worthwhile enterprise or valued group of co-workers. Only when employees look up to the Polytechnic institution as a 'higher entity' will they feel compelled to follow HR principles. The failure by employees to comprehend the Polytechnic targets is an indication of dissatisfaction, as does, the lack of motivation to accomplish those targets. The same applies to the sense of



belongingness towards the Polytechnics and the desire to put effort for goal achievement within it. This study shows that effective commitment is directly proportional to the emotional attachment to the feeling of employees towards the Polytechnic institution, such that committed employees spread their values to colleagues.

5.4 SKILL AND CAPACITY BUILDING

The study reveals that, staff of Polytechnics participating in this study does not have enough training to improve the ability to generate innovative ideas. In addition, they have limited opportunities to discuss training modules that should be taken to improve their knowledge and skills. Courses are made only for the HODs and not for entire teaching staff —although they also need it more. The study further confirmed that, some of the workers throughout their six years stay in their institutions they haven't been through any training. Moreover, training budget is limited to the Training and Development Department. This means that, the training and development department determines the type of training for the Polytechnic institutions. Sometimes these force the institutions to hire incompetent people when it's very clear that they will not help the Polytechnics to grow. There are no requirements for skills and development in these institutions.

5.5 POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS

In line with literature reviewed on human resource practices, it emerges that leadership is a by-product of cultural factors; it entails a good rapport between employers and employees, leading to an enhanced performance in the institutions. To gain employee's cooperation, there is the need for a transformational leadership strategy that is currently lacking in the Polytechnic system. The outcome of the study reveals there is woefully inadequate support of policy and institutional factors in the three Polytechnics in the study area. This is manifested in the current industrial actions going on in the Polytechnic system in the



country. These policies both internal and external affected the implementation of the logistical factors and HR practices in the institutions.

5.6 CONCLUSIONS

The current ineffective functioning of the human resource management practices in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana as the study reveals is worrisome (Afeti and Badu, 2003). The roles of HRM departments need to satisfy the needs of employees through the provision of training, rewards systems, equality of treatment, and benefits, among others, to foster employee commitment and enhance performance. This research presents a study of those aspects that HRM has to perform in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana to achieve these goals.

There is a clear need for the improvement in the human resources management practices and style of Polytechnic institutions in order to ensure employee satisfaction. This will greatly help improve performance levels. The workplace environment needs to be made fully suitable for the needs of all employees by ensuring environmental sanity and leadership styles that encourage decentralization and delegation of duties, equality in the implementation of employee evaluation and appraisal systems, and provision of sufficient employee benefits, rewards, and structures for recognition.

Heads of Departments need to look into the various factors that influence employee performance in their various departments. Key among them are the leadership style, fairness in the treatment accorded to employees by their supervisors, a clear understanding of what is expected of them, and being made to feel good about their work. Discrimination, on gender or on the grounds of experience, still remains a problem in the Northern part of Ghana and need an urgent solution. To deal with this, HR departments need to come out with a practice that consider the future needs of all employees, eliminating discrimination and bias, installing a systematic and fair job opportunity for women and reward system for all.



5.7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study upon the findings stated above has the following recommendations base on the research objectives.

5.8 EXAMINING THE CRITICAL ELEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE POLYTECHNIC SYSTEM

5.8.1 National strategies and support for human resource management practice and development

There is a dire need for a national strategy and national level support for the development of human resources management practices, structures and methods across the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana and the country at large. Countries which have set up financing schemes as parts of their national strategies, have managed to reverse some negative trends, such as brain drain, aging or the inadequate skills levels of staff for their countries. National strategies and support should however be coupled with sufficient independence and autonomy, for institutions to find the best ways to meet their own institutional mission and objectives.

5.8.2 Creation of National Legal Frame Work for Minimum Standard

National level legal frameworks are often appropriate to maintain minimum standards across higher learning institutions, to protect the employees and to make sure public funds are used effectively and efficiently. At the same time, Polytechnic institutional autonomy in issues relating to staff recruitment, promotion and implementation of financial and other incentives, may be an important way to ensure the attractiveness of the Polytechnic institutions and to motivate their leaders to develop institutional strategies and schemes to support the institutions, as well as national objectives in terms of human resources management.

5.8.3 Institutional strategies and management of human recourses

The study suggests that, it is important for the Polytechnic institutions to create their own strategies on human resource management system. These strategies should be translated into



the mission and vision of the institutions and they should make reference to a wider concept of human resource management, as and not limited to one set of structural approaches.

5.9 EXPLORING THE HUMAN AND LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS AFFECTING HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES

5.9.1 Creating attractive working conditions

The environmental and working conditions in the Polytechnic institutions is not friendly for the attraction of staff on a competitive salary alone, but creation of good working condition in these Polytechnics may improve their chances of attracting more and better staff. While financial conditions are very important for all staff categories, they are also sensitive to other aspects, such as working conditions, academic freedom, flexibility and a sense of accomplishment.

5.9.2 Staff Motivation through incentives

Staff at the Polytechnic institutions often feels a close connection and a dedication to their institution and its work. However, unfavourable working conditions and a lack of incentives and encouragement may easily lead to a diminishing degree of motivation and opposition to change. Possibilities to offer financial and other incentives to staff with high performance, may lead to positive results in this regard.

5.10 SKILLS AND CAPACITY ISSUES MILITATING PERFORMANCE

5.10.1 Encouraging Private Provision of Training

Non-governmental Organizations training provisions are growing in the country. Many state governments are trying to encourage private training providers while still “protecting” consumers from high prices and malpractices. International experience suggests that to do this successfully:

Firstly, laws must be clear and lenient. Constraints on setting-up training institutions should be removed. In Chile for instance, streamlining the legal requirements governing private training providers led to the rapid growth of unsubsidised private training. In India,



requirements for setting up recognised private training institutions vary from state to state, so it is difficult to generalize – but keeping procedures simple will ensure a vigorous private sector response. Secondly, employment growth should lead the demand for private training. Technical training is said to be costly to set-up, causing private entrepreneurs to shy away; on the other hand, training for commercial fields (e.g., languages and secretarial skills) is said to be cheaper and more willingly supplied by private providers. But international experience shows that when private providers are not discouraged by stringent laws, rapid industrial growth can lead to a strong private supply of technical training. In the Czech Republic, where manufacturing employment has grown rapidly since 1993, all new technical training programs were privately provided. Even in India, while the private sector is more heavily engaged in training in commercial areas, an increasing number of private providers (up to 15 per cent currently) is now providing technical training.

5.11 POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE THREE POLYTECHNICS IN NORTHERN GHANA.

5.11.1 Creation of Leadership culture

In line with contemporary HR literature, it emerges that leadership is the end product of cultural factors; it entails a good rapport between employers and employees, leading to employee retention. To gain employee's cooperation, there is need for the creation of a leadership strategy that they can approve of.

5.12 EXAMINING HOW PERFORMANCE CAN BE ENHANCED IN THE THREE POLYTECHNICS IN NORTHERN GHANA.

In Northern Ghana the articulation of the poor performance in the Polytechnic institutions may be perhaps the result of “youthful territoriality.” Apart from Tamale Polytechnic, the other two are still on the growth stage. More importantly, it could be a reflection of the absence of a national policy dialogue regarding the appropriate shape and size of the Polytechnic system. Higher National Diploma oversight bodies such as the NAPTEX for



Polytechnics system should ideally spearhead this national agenda-setting discussion on ways of enhancing performance and the actual reason for which the Polytechnics were set-up. The main a gender to produce technical personnel who could become self - employed after completion has been deviated totally. These need to be revisited from the policy document of the Polytechnic system.

Furthermore, the introduction of Government “subversion” where the Polytechnics will now have to generate internal fun to run the institutions will further lower performance. An interaction with some Administrators reveals that, if the Polytechnic are to reject certain grades like D7s which they consider as a weak grade, then, none of the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana will be able to meet their quota, hence impossible to generate internal fun to run the Polytechnics. They therefore have to enrol them and to organize an Access course for further screening.

The study suggests that, Government should tax the manufacturing companies to support the Polytechnics; this should be enshrined in the Polytechnic policy. More so, companies should be made to accept Polytechnics products for an Industrial attachment, this should be monitored and evaluated by the Polytechnics lecturers. Finally, the study suggests that, weak student should be made to mixed with the good one for assignments, class presentations as well as seminar presentations, this will improve their confidence level and also boost their moral to study harder



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APPENDIX A
UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
FACULTY OF PLANNING AND LAND MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

I am an MPhil candidate from University for Development Studies, and I am currently undertaking a study on “Assessment of the Human Resource Management Practices (HRMP) in the three Polytechnics in Northern Ghana”. This research is fully endorsed by the Faculty of Planning and Land Management, Wa Campus and my supervisor, Professor, Dr. David Millar

The findings would benefit both the Institutions and employees in the area of HRMP. Results from this study will assist in the development of an effective HRMP. The sharing of your knowledge and experience as you answer the questionnaire will be valuable to me and as such will be treated with the **strictest confidence**. No reference will be made to any individual and the information will be reported in an aggregated form. A summary of my findings will be provided upon your request.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR POLYTECHNIC STAFF

To examine the critical elements that characterizes HRM practices in the Polytechnic system.

Part (A) Demographic Questions

The following questions concern your position and other personal information. Completion of this information is voluntary and confidentially assured. No individual data will be reported.

THANK YOU!

1. Where do you work?

- Tamale Polytechnic
- WA Polytechnic
- Bolgatanga Polytechnic

2. What is your Sex?

- Male
- Female

3. What is your Job Title?

.....

4. Do you supervise others?

- Yes
- No

5. How long have you worked for the institution?

_____ Years _____ Months

6. How long have you worked for your Immediate Supervisor?

_____ Years _____ Months

7. What is your Age Group?

- under 25 30 to 55 56 to 60
- 61+

8. What is your highest level of Education?

- Did not complete High School
- High school degree/equivalent
- Diploma
- Bachelor’s degree
- Master’s degree
- PhD



Part (B) HR Practices

Please give your perception of how well you believe the following human resource management systems are practice in your institution. Please tick the box that best reflects your choice.

Human Resource Management Practices		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
1	EMPOWERMENT I have the opportunity to determine how I do the job.					
2	I take appropriate action without waiting for approval.					
3	My work makes good use of					
4	I make decision about implementation of new program in the Polytechnic					
5	I believe that I am empowering student.					
6	COMPENSATION I am satisfied with the pay that I receive.					
7	TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT I am sent to extend higher qualification program.					
8	I have received sufficient training at firm to do my job effectively.					
9	I am trained in quality improvement skills					
10	I am arranged with a mentor to facilitate career planning.					
11	I am given training at a regular basis.					
12	APPRESAIL SYSTEM The quality of my work is an important factor in evaluating my job performance. I am regularly given feedback on my job performance.					
13	I am satisfied with existing performance appraisal system.					
14	The performance ratings were done periodically.					
15	EMPLYEMENY SECURITY I plan to make this Polytechnic own career.					
16	I feel a lot of loyalty to this Polytechnic.					
17	This is the best Polytechnic for me to work for.					



13. What actions could the institution have taken to keep their human resources attracted to other applicants?.....
.....
.....
.....

14. How would you rate the compensation and benefit of the institution?.....
.....
.....

15. How would you describe the training programs provided by your institution?.....
.....
.....
.....

16. Identify specific aspects in this institution that you would wish to change in order to improve the workplace environment?
.....
.....
.....

17: There are differing models and perspectives regarding the constituents of 'effective practices' in management development. However, listed below are some common constituents of 'effective practices' found in both public and private sector organizations? Please place tick/ticks next to the common constituents that are practiced in your institution and that has contributed to the achievement of goal and objectives. Note that you may select more than one constituent.

- 17.1 Identification of Training Needs
 - 17.2 Participant selection linked to institutional policies and programmes
 - 17.3 Top management support and supporting infrastructure in place
 - 17.4 Organization learning culture (support for all forms of staff)
 - 17.5 Evaluation of program effectiveness
 - 17.6 Rewarding success and improving on deficiencies
 - 17.7 Having regular Retreat Workshops/Training
 - 17.8 Opportunity for skill utilization
 - 17.9 Other (please specify)
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Part (C) Job Satisfaction

The following statements describe your feelings toward certain job related issues regarding the institution you currently work for. For each, please indicate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the statement by circling the appropriate number on the scale.

1	Job satisfaction statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral
2	My salary/wage is fair considering what other people are paid					
3	The amount of pay and fringe benefits I receive is satisfactory					
4	The feeling of worthwhile and accomplishment I get from doing my job is great					
5	The amount of support and guidance I receive from my supervisor is satisfactory					
6	The degree to which I am fairly paid for what I contribute to this institution is great					
7	The amount of independent thought and action I can exercise in my job is enough					
8	The amount of challenge in my job is great					
9	The overall quality of supervision I receive in my work is subtidal					

If you answer in the negative to any of the above, please explain why?

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Part (D) Organizational Commitment

Listed below are series of statements that represent possible feelings that individuals might have about the institution for which they work. With respect to your own feeling about particular institution for which you are now working with, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement.

	Job Commitment statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure
1	I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this institution be successful					
2	I talk up this institution to my friends as great institution to work for					
3	I feel very little loyalty to this institution					
4	I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this institution					
5	I am proud to tell others that I am part of this institution					
6	I find that my values and institution's value are very similar					
7	I would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this institution					
8	I am extremely glad that I chose this institution to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined					
9	There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this institution indefinitely					
10	I really care about the fate of this institution.					
11	For me this is the best of all possible institution					
12	Deciding to work for this institution was a definite mistake on my part					

If you answer in the negative to any of the above, please explain why?

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APPENDIX B

To explore the human and logistical problems affecting HRMP in the Polytechnic system

Part (D) Human and Logistical Problems

Please give your perception as to whether you believe that, the following human and logistical factors are available in our institution. Please tick the box that best reflects your choice.

	Human and logistics factors	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No sure
1	There is increased investment on human and logistics factors for the teaching staff in our institution.					
2	The organization has all the relevant HR Policies such as Training Plan and Policy, and Equal Employment Policy available that are used in development of the teaching staff.					
3	Capabilities and requirements of staff are clearly defined in the Job Descriptions.					
4	The laws, policies and criteria in HR Policies are strictly adhered to in our institution.					
5	All forms of logistics programs are supported by the organization					
6	Our organization has short-term development programs.					
7	The short-term development program has a more positive impact on me.					
8	The short-term institutional development programs have a more positive impact on my division/unit.					
9	All programs leading to human development are linked to organization goals and objectives.					
10	Evaluation is conducted at post-program stage to determine the impact of the program on the individual.					
11	Evaluation is conducted at post-program stage to determine the impact of the program on the division/unit.					
12	Evaluation is conducted at post-program stage to determine the impact of the program on the institution.					
13	Enabling environment such as structures, systems and facilities is conducive for the transfer of learning to students.					
14	Capabilities in my Job Description consist of personal behavioral capabilities, knowledge or skill capabilities and technical capabilities.					



15	An appropriate selection process is used in selecting of teaching staff to undertake in-service programs.					
16	There is opportunity for skill utilization					
17	The capabilities and requirements in my Job Description help me to evaluate my own weaknesses					
18	The capabilities and requirements in my Job Description help me to evaluate my own developmental opportunities					
19	There is continuous mentoring, coaching and up skilling from the top management after training.					

Apart from the above human and logistics factors stated, what do think in your opinion is important for the development of your institution.....

.....
Please, give reason or reasons...



APPENDIX C

To find out the skill and capacity issues militating against performance

Part (D) Skills and capacity Building

Please give your perception of how well you believe the following skills and capacity building factors in your institution militate against performance. Please tick the box that best reflects your choice.

	Skills and Capacity Building	Strongly disagree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
1	Recruitment without seeing the employee's qualifications.					
2	Some programs are expensive so we don't have them.					
3	Courses are made only for the HODs and not the teaching staff —although we need it more.					
4	No opportunities to discuss the training with the Heads of department because they are too busy.					
6	No opportunity to discuss the training that we should take.					
7	There are no requirements for skills.					
8	During my stay in this institute I haven't been through any training.					
9	Training budget is limited to the Training and Development Department.					
10	Sometimes incompetent people are hired when it's very clear that they will not help the institution to grow.					
11	We don't have our own independent training budget, which negatively affects the quality of training obtained.					
12	Not enough training which could improve ability as employee					



The following question requires you to evaluate your skills and competencies 'before' undertaking an appointment in this institution.

For each statement, place an 'X' on the response scale which best indicates your beliefs about the statement in so far as your skills and competencies are concern.

(The response scales are numbered from „ 1 – Very Low“ to „7 – Very High“)

Statement

I would rate my skills, competencies and behavior 'before' job as follows:

1. Very Low
2. Low
3. Slightly Low
4. Neither High
Nor Low
5. Slightly High
6. High
7. Very High



	I would rate my skills, competencies and behavior	Very low	Low	Slightly low	Neither high nor low	Slightly high	High	Very high
1	Utilizing different ways to approach work problems.							
2	Written and Oral communication skills.							
3	Communicating with networks within my field of expertise.							
4	Computer skills							
5	Establishing relationships with stakeholders to assist in achieving the institutional goals and objectives.							
6	Interpersonal skills and using different techniques to establish good working relationships with people within and outside the institution.							
7	Developing a cooperative unit in the institution to achieve the optimal contribution of all staff members.							
8	Motivating staff towards achieving quality results							
9	Contributing to the delivery of public services to our clients.(capacity building workshops)							
10	Influence towards positive attitudinal change of our clients							
11	Contributing to organization's ability to influence and inform policy decision by the Government.							
12	Strategic in my thinking to longer term forward planning to achieve Government objectives and departmental goals							
13	Managing budget and finances within my unit and organization to achieve results within available funding.							
14	Managing physical assets in my							

	division and organization to contribute to results while protecting their value.							
15	Having confidence in my work.							
16	Punctuality and attendance to work.							
17	Attitude to work							

18. In your opinion what do think should be done to improve capacity building of the human resource in your institution?.....



APPENDIX D

To better understand the policy and institutional factors affecting HRMP in the Polytechnic system

What are the selection and recruitment procedure in the Polytechnic system?.....

Do the procedure help in recruiting the right person at the right time?.....

Is importance placed on the performance appraisal system?.....

What barriers affect HR practices in the institution.....



APPENDIX E

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HUMAN RESOUCE MANAGERS ONLY

To examine how performance can be enhanced in the Polytechnic system. To what extent are the following issues considered as a problem in relation to the enhancement of performance in your institutions?

Please grade the issues according to the importance you give them: 1 Problematic, 2 Not very problematic, 3 Highly Problematic, 4 Not sure 5 Prevents the higher education system from performing as it should.

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Insufficient attractiveness of jobs in higher education institutions					
2	Aging staff					
3	Need to hold multiple positions (to have more than one job)					
4	High frequency of internal recruitments (public higher education institutions mainly recruiting staff already working or having studied in the institution)					
5	"International Brain-drain" to work abroad					
6	Competition from private higher education institutions in attracting and recruiting academic staff					
7	Insufficient autonomy given to staff Organisational strategy:					
8	Insufficient flexibility / adaptability of staff					
9	Insufficient professional skills of staff					
10	Insufficient foreign language skills of staff					
11	Insufficient IT skills of staff					
12	Resistance to change and reforms of staff					
13	Gender imbalance					
14	Need to hold multiple positions due to low salaries in the institution					

15. Please, in your opinion, what are the others factors that can be encourage to enhance performance?

.....

16. Please, give reason/reasons

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