KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI

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SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

ASSESSING HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN DISTRICT

ASSEMBLIES IN THE ASHANTI REGION

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BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the Master of Business Administration (Human Resource Management Option) and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project work to my lovely family, especially, to my wife Ernestina Osei, my mum, Catherine Fowah and my daughter Angela OwusuWiafe whose continuous encouragement motivated me to persevere in finishing this programme. I am grateful and proud of you all.

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ABSTRACT

Developing the human resource capacity of local assemblies to enable them formulate development policies for socio-economic growth of local communities has engaged the attention of stakeholders for some time now. Available literature on the significance of human resource development shows the important role human resource management practices and strategies play in developing the skills and competencies of employees in organizations. Such practices include recruitment, selection and placement, training and development, performance appraisal, and job rotation. Metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies ought to also employ such human resource management practices and strategies to improve the capacity of their employees. However, in-spite of its impact on the performance of organizations, the available literature has not looked at how the human resource management practices at the local assemblies relate to the formulation of development policies for the communities.

It is this gap in knowledge that this study sought to fill, using the Bekwai Municipal and Bosomtwe District Assemblies in the Ashanti Region as case studies. The study adopted quantitative approach; collecting data from ninety-six (96) workers from the two assemblies. The results showed that District assemblies in the Ashanti region have not been using laid down processes of employment and rather rely on partisanship and nepotism in the recruitment of staff, leading to people being placed in positions they ought not to occupy. It was also discovered that the assemblies have neither been conducting performance appraisal of their staff, nor upgraded their system to adopt and apply Information Technology (IT) in their human resource management processes. It is therefore recommended that much meaning be attached to the human resource practices in the assemblies so as to equip the staff with skills and competencies required for the formulation of appropriate community development policies.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Since 1919 when Sir Gordon Guggisburg formulated a 10-year development plan to develop certain areas in the then Gold Coast, all subsequent governments have sought to institute some sort of a plan or policy aimed at developing the communities and districts within the country. The human resource base required to develop such plans were initially few, therefore lending credence to the wisdom in centralising local government policy formulation to Accra, where experts could be found at ease (Mensah-Bonsu, 2003). However, in 1994, the National Development Planning (system) Act, 1994 (Act 480), was passed which demanded that the formulation of local government policies be spearheaded by the people working and living in these communities. This meant that the various district assemblies had to adopt and implement appropriate human resource policies that will equip the officers working within the districts with the knowledge and skills required to carry out this legal mandate. A straight jacket type of human resource policies for all the districts was avoided, but rather, the districts were allowed to formulate and implement their own human resource policies according to the peculiarity of their staff strengths and weaknesses.

In the formulation of human resource policies for an organisation, various approaches can be adopted and implemented for varying results. This can be done through a number of strategies including training, coaching, mentorship, performance appraisal, and job rotation. The use of the Balanced Score Card has also been used with some measure of success in other organisation. The ultimate aim of whichever approachthat is adopted will however be to improve and at the same time, manage the output of the employees

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concerned. Consequently, each organisation that adopts any particular approach or a mix of approachesthus recognises the need for the approach(es) so adopted.

The Bosomtwe District and Bekwai Municipal, both in the Ashanti region, form part of the two hundred and sixteen (216) assemblies found in Ghana presently.The core staff strength of both assemblies is one hundred and twenty-seven (127). The Bosomtwe District Assembly has fifty-seven (57) staff strength;whereasBekwai Municipal Assembly has seventy (70) staff. All these core staff of the assemblies, made up of the chief executives, co-ordinating directors, budget officers, planning officers, finance officers, district engineers and others are involved in the formulation of local government policies for the districts. It is therefore important that the human resource policies that exist in the assemblies are those that can equip the officers with the necessary knowledge and skill to carry out their mandates as expected.

From above, it is realised that both assemblies have sizable staff strength that should be able to undertake the assigned functions. However, the effective and efficient performance of functions is not solely dependent on the size of the staff. Other factors such as the type of human resource management practices that exist to regulate the performance of the staff is equally important. It is for this reason that the type of human resource management practices that exist in the assemblies ought to be investigated to assess whether such practices are apt for the achievement of the goals and objectives of the assemblies.

1.2 Problem statement

The development of a country is said to be sustainable only where the agents of the development can identify with members of the beneficiary communities. Where the

community see the agents of the development as coming from outside the communities, the acceptability and commitment to the development project cannot be guaranteed. Subsequently, the sustainability of the project cannot also be guaranteed. Thus, in moving away from the situation where local government development policies are planned and implemented by outside agents such as the central government, it becomes necessary that the local assemblies have the human resource capacity to formulate and implement their development agenda. To do this, the prevailing human resource policies at the assemblies should also be the type that facilitates the acquisition of the requisite knowledge and skill to perform the assigned mandate. It is however not known whether the human resource policies that exist and are applied at the district assemblies in Ashanti region really imparts the skill and knowledge that is needed by the core officers of the assemblies. It is only presumed (not empirically established) that the districts do have and have been implementing the appropriate human resource management practices for its officers to function as expected.

This gap regarding whether the requisite human resource policies actually exist in the districts (or it is merely presumed) therefore ought to be investigated. This is because not much information is available, empirically, when it comes to understanding the extent to which present human resource capacity at the districts have been shaped by existing human resource policies adopted and applied in the districts. It is therefore important to assess the human resource policies at the district assemblies, and establish how the policies impact on the capacity of the district officers in formulating local government policies for the districts.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to assess the human resource management practices in building the capacity of district assemblies who formulate local government policies in

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Ghana, with special reference to some selected districts in Ashanti region.The specific objectives that will be used to achieve the general aim of the research are:

1. To determinethe nature ofhuman resource management practicesof district assemblies in the Ashanti region.

2. To identify the existinghuman resource management practices of district assemblies in the Ashanti region.

3. To identify howdistrict assemblypolicies influence human resource management practices in the Ashanti region.

1.4 Research questions

In view of the above stated objectives, the following relevant questions would be asked:

1. What is the nature human resource management practicesofdistrict assemblies in the Ashanti region?

2. What are the existinghuman resource management practices of district assemblies in the Ashanti region?

3. How dodistrict assembly policiesinfluence human resource management practices in Ashanti region?

1.5 Significance of the study

For some time now, a number of activities have been undertakenaimed at developing the human resource capacity of district assemblies in the Ashanti region. These have included capacity building meetings, workshops, and seminars. Other strategies at developing the capacity of the employees at the assemblies have also included training, performance appraisal, and job rotation. The adoption and implementation of these practices and strategies over the years is presumed to have endowed the stakeholders with the knowledge and skills

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required to formulate local government policies for a sustained development of the communities. It is also presumed therefore, that the officers at the local councils have developed their human resource capacity to the required levels.

It is now appropriate for a study to be conducted to assess the human resource management practices at the district assemblies, and how these practices have impacted the capacity of the district officers in formulating district development policies. It is believed that the final work may serve as a significant document for human resource managers, practitioners, and other professionals who are engaged in developing and managing the human resource capacity of officers working in the district assemblies. Also, the finished work may serve as an invaluable tool for the district assemblies who may rely on the findings and recommendations to improve the deliverables of its officers. Finally the finished work may be used as a secondary source of information for students, as well as other persons working on related dissertations.

1.6 Scope of the study

In terms of geographical scope, the study focused on the core and decentralised district officers at both the Bosomtwe District and Bekwai Municipal Assemblies. In terms of time too, the study considered human resource information at the district assembly spanning a period of five (5) years. A period of five (5) years was chosen because it is believedthat five years is not too distant for respondents to recollect what has been happening to the human resource development of officers at the assemblies, and the type of human resource meetings, trainings, and workshops that have been going on. It would also be relatively easier in getting enough participants who have been working at the assembly for the past five years than to seek for participants who have worked there for 10 or more years.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The researchidentified two (2) limitations. These were financial and time constraints. The financial limitation was observed in respect of the coverage that the study had wanted to cover in order to draw a relatively more reliable conclusion. The study had wanted to cover more districts than it actually did. This is because it has been established that the greater the population used in a study, the greater the reliability and generalizability of the results (Yin, 2003). However, the costly nature of such an exercise did not allow for more districts to be included in the study. To address this constraint, the research rather selected two assemblies from the population of district and municipal assemblies, and used the case study approach to get as much information as would enhance the reliability of the final results.

The other limitation of the study was that of time. The study is expected to be completed and submitted within a given period. Therefore, even though the study could have been extended to cover a wider population, doing so would invariably lead to an increase in the time spent on the study. This may lead to missing the deadline for the submission of the final work. To address this limitation, however the study made sure that the cases that were chosen to be studied (Bosomtwe District and Bekwai Municipal Assemblies) were close (proximity) and convenient enough to gather the needed information timely.

1.8 Organisation of the study

The study is divided into five (5) chapters. This is made up of chapter one, which focuses on the background of the study, the statement of the problem, and the objective of undertaking the study. Research questions, significance of the study, the scope of study, limitations of the study, and the organisation of the study are the other parts that make up chapter one. Chapter two on the other hand consists of a review of literature that arerelated

to the subject matter of the study.In doing so, the study will analyse the writings of other authors on the subject and their approaches. The study will then attempt to compare theviewpoints of the various authors and draw the appropriate conclusions. The third chapter captures the methodology and the profile of the study areas used in the study.Chapter four of the study focuses on the analysis of the data collected during the study. The final chapter, chapter five, covers the findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study. There are also supplementary pages that include references that were used for the study, and samples of the questionnairesthat were used in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to selected literature on human resource management (HRM) practices that impacts on the capacity of employees in the performance of their assigned duties. The chapter begins with a review on the conceptsof human resource management, personnel management (PM), strategic human resource management (SHRM) and the use of human resource practices in developing the capacity of employees. An overview of the governmental systems, theeffects of human resource management policies on local government institutions and the perspectives of other authorsregardingchallenges for HR capacity development at the local government level are also presented. The chapter concludes with the development of a conceptual framework for the assessment of human resource management.

2.1 The concept of human resource management (HRM)

Human resource management is the science dealing with overall dimensions of human resources including its evolution and capacity development (Garvin, 2003).The human resources are multidimensional in nature.To be thriving in today's crisis-intensive world, organizations' managers must change and cultivate new skills; skills that are harmonious with the standpoint of business organizations as human-based systems that are basically covered in a highly changeable, interactive, systemic working condition, rather than firm, machine-like operations (Shelton and Darling, 2001). Human resource management (HRM) can be explained as an intrinsic part of management, which is concerned with the human resources of an organization. Its goal is the maintenance of better human relations

in the organization through the improvement, application and evaluation of policies, procedures and programmes relating to human resources to optimize their contribution towards the realization of organizational objectives(Baron et al., 2009). In other words, human resource management (HRM) is concerned with getting better results with the collaboration of people. It is an essential but unique part of management, concerned with people at work and their relationships within the organization (Jacob, 2003). Human resource management (HRM) helps in attaining maximum individual development, desirable working relationship between employees and employers, and effective modelling of human resources as contrasted with physical resources (Baron et al., 2009).

Rodwell and Teo (2000) hold the view that human resource management (HRM) could be achieved through the cultivation of an external orientation to customer's demands and a commitment to employees. Human resource management (HRM) is the function within an organization that focuses on recruitment of, management of, and providing direction for the people who work in the organization (Garvin, 2003). The discipline that concentrates on the management of people in organization has witnessed a great deal of change over the past twenty years. According to Baron et al. (2009), these changes can be discussed as two major transformations; the first is the transformation from being the field of personal management to being the field of human resource management, the second is the transformation from being the field of human resource management to being the field of strategic human resource management.

To Jacob (2003), the first transformation incorporated the recognition that people are one important asset in organization that can be managed systematically. Managing them systematically involve co-ordinating the shape and substance of the several traditional

personnel policies and practices. The need for this orchestration was based upon the increasing evidence that all these policies and practices substantially affect human behaviour in the same way. According to Schuler et al. (2006), this required insight and knowledge about and professionalization among the professional engaged in dispute of managing people. The second transformation is based upon recognition that, in addition to co-ordinating Human Resource policies and practices with each other, they need to be synchronized or linked with the needs of the organization. The strategy of the firm, the transformation of human resource management came to be known as strategic human resource management (Schuler and Jackson, 1999).

Effective human resource management (HRM) should help managers make plans and hire trained staff, and help employees find meaningful work with avenues for career development. A comprehensive human resource management (HRM) structure provides managers with a framework and tools to better plan, recruit, hire, deploy, motivate and retain employees, human resource management (HRM) involves developing local government institutions strategies, policies and practices to ensure a workforce that is balanced in numbers of staff, qualifications and placement (Garvin, 2003).

Baron et al. (2009) further went on to explain that, it is the recruitment, selection, development, utilization, compensation and motivation aspect of human resources management in an organization that gives it features such as; pervasive in nature as it is present in all organizations, Focus is on results rather than on rules, it also help employees develop their potential fully, then encourages employees to give their best to the organization, It puts people on assigned jobs in order to produce good results, Help

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organizations meet their goals in the future by providing for competent and well-motivated employees, human resource management (HRM) helps to build and maintain cordial relations between people working at various levels in the organization, then also a multidisciplinary activity that utilizesknowledge and inputs drawn from psychology, economics, etc., human resource management (HRM) is all about people at work, both as individuals and groups.

2.2 Definition of human resource management (HRM)

From the nationwide point of view, human resources may be defined as the knowledge, skills, creative abilities, talents and aptitudes obtained in the population; however from individual enterprise point of view, they represent the total of the inherent abilities, acquired knowledge and skills as exemplified in the talents and aptitudes of its employees (Shelton and Darling, 2001). This is because, human resource management is the integrated use of systems, policies and management practices to recruit, maintain, and develop employees so the organization can meet its desired goals (MSH 1999). In spite of these views, a number of theories have given various definitions of human resource management. Some are presented below:

a) Wright and McMahan (2002) define human resource management as *a pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable an organization to achieve its goals.*

b) Heathfield (2000) defines human resource management as *the organizational function that deals with issues related to people such as compensation, hiring, performance management, organization development, safety, wellness, benefits, employee motivation, communication, administration, and training.*

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c) According to Noe et al. (2003), human resource management (HRM) refers to *the policies, practices and systems that influence employees'behaviour, attitudes, and performance.*

d) Lipovec (1987) defines human resource management (HRM) as *the system of relationships between members of a social unit, which assures the existence, development and characteristics of the social unit and rational achievement of its goals.*

These various definitions make it possible to identify the difference between human resource management and personnel management (PM).

2.3 Personnel management (PM) and human resource management (HRM)

The distinction between personnel management (PM) and human resource management (HRM) is in the underlying public management concepts from which they originate. As shown in Table 2.1,the summary of the differences between human resource management and personnel management as presented by Guest (1987).

Table 2.1: The distinction between HRM and Personnel Management

	PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT	HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
Time and planning perspective	Short-term • Reactive • Ad hoc • marginal	Long-term • Proactive • Strategic • Integrated
Psychological contract	Compliance	Commitment
Control systems	External controls	Internal controls
Employees relations perspective	Pluralist • Collective • Low trust	Unitarist • Individual • High trust
Preferred	Bureaucratic/mechanistic	Organic

structures/systems	• Centralized • Formal defined roles	• Devolved • Flexible roles
Roles	Specialist/professionals	Largely integrated into line management
Evaluation criteria	Cost minimization	Maximum Utilization • Human asset accounting

Source: Guest 1987

The generally agreed principles of human resource management that set it apart from traditional personnel management have been identified as; integration, employee commitment, flexibility and adaptability, and quality (Fowler, 1988). It could be argued, therefore, that human resource management (HRM) represents a paradigm shift from traditional personnel management, which is perceived to be bureaucratic and not linked to organizational strategy (Storey, 1995). Daley (2002), for instance, opines that it is through the strategic approach and its linkage with human resources that personnel management has been transformed into Strategic Human Resource Management.

2.3.1. Strategic human resource management (SHRM) concept

Taylor (2001) discerned that humanresource management (HRM) principles correspond in a significant manner with the new public management model (NPM) with regard to their practices and values, and together they provide a coherent set of principles. Taylor outlines the key elements of both models as follows: importance of line manager; emphasis on performance and its measurement; employee commitment through individualization/incentivization; strategic integration; and flexibility.

According to Taylor (2001) it is to the linkages of public sector managerialism and the origins of strategic management that the introduction of human resource management can

be traced. Under the new public management (NPM) model, human resource management is usually applied within the framework of management by objectives (MBO), which according to Poisteret al. (1995) entails:

a) The definition of a limited number of organizational goals and corresponding performance indicators;

b) Delegation of performance targets to subordinate levels of the organization;

c) Flexibility in the sense of low density of generally binding bureaucratic rules and procedures. Managers and operating units at regional and local levels are relatively free in their choice of strategies and programmes to achieve the agreed performance targets for their units; and

d) Monitoring and controlling of performance against targets. In contrast to traditional bureaucratic administration, the emphasis is on outputs/outcomes against targets rather than on controlling inputs and adherence to detailed regulations.

It is within the scope of the principles outlined by Taylor (2001) and Poister et al.(1995) that human resource management (HRM) policies and practice have to be developed if human resources (HRs) are to integrate with public sector organizational strategy.

2.4 Human resource management and strategic human resource management

Human resource management(HRM) is a distinct term from strategic human resource management (SHRM) (Phirinyane, 2009). Price (2003), states that human resource management(HRM)is seen as an all-embracing term that refers to broader employee management, while the strategic human resource management (SHRM) model is a distinctive approach different from the mere modernization of personnel management.

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The theory is premised on the assumption that personnel decisions are most effective when linked strategically to the organization's mission and strategy (McCourt and Ramgutty-Wong, 2002). Strategic human resource management (SHRM) has emerged in the private sector as a paradigm for two main reasons: growing 'global competition and the corresponding search for sources of sustainable competitive advantage' (Dyer and Reeves, 1995). The popularity of SHRM results from the belief that HRs can contribute to, and create sustainable competitive advantage (Becker and Gerhart, 1996).

2.5Human resource capacity development

Human resource capacity is about ensuring that an organization has enough people with the necessary skills to achieve its objectives (Garvin, 2003). Human resource development is one of the main goals to ensure the development of knowledgeable, well-trained, disciplined and healthy population (Garvin, 2003).

Jayagopal (1988) proposed a comprehensive framework for human resource development programme, comprising seven major areas with functions under them, and a solid network of interconnections between these functions, all aimed at developing the human resource capacity of employees. That framework includes;human resource planning, recruitment, selection and placement, training and development, performance appraisal, job rotation, salaries and wages administration and performance management. This framework is applied to the study. Therefore, the section below discusses the various components of the framework as proposed by Jayagopal (1988).

2.5.1 Human resource planning

Human resource planning is the process which assesses and determines that theorganization will have an adequate number of qualified persons available at specifictimes, performing jobs which would fulfil the needs of the organization and which would provide satisfaction for the individuals involved. It is an endeavour to catch demand and supply, which involves; calculation of net human resource requirements based on present level of human resources; based on the objectives and long-term plans of the organization, anestimation of present and future requirements and supply of humanresource; to develop the human resource of existing employees and planning anapproach that will enable the organization to get the rest of humanresources from outside the organization, initiating steps to change, mould and develop the existing human resource to meet the future human resource requirements.

The area of human resource planning receives the highest attention of the stakeholders who are involved in the formulation of developmental policies for the communities (Asare, 1986). Asare,(1986) concluded that this aspect of human resource development is higher on the expenditure pattern, compared to other practices of building the human resource capacity in the communities. To Asare(1986), such expenditure appears justifiable when juxtaposed against the reasoning that it is when the local council knows of its manpower needs, and plans adequately towards that, the expected functions of the technocrats would performed as required.

2.5.2 Recruitment, selection and placement

According to Tegene (2008), ensuring that the right people are in the right place at the right time is a critical factor in gaining and maintaining competitive advantage. Bratton

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and Gold (2007) refers to recruitment as "the process of generating a pool of capable people to apply to an organization for employment. Tegene (2008) differentiated recruitment from selection which he said is the process by which managers and others use specific instruments to choose from a pool of applicants the person or persons most likely to succeed in the job(s), given management goals and legal requirements". The act of assigning the mostsuitable job to the selected candidate is placement. Right person on the right job may produce the best results (Jacob, 2003).

Recruitment, selection and placement represent the entry point activities. Hence, emphasis may be placed on admitting only those applicants who are likely to behave, acquire skills and show attitudinal commitment in line with the requirements of the organization's strategy. Effective recruitment relies on the degree to which overall management philosophy supports and strengthens an approach to human resource management (HRM) that focuses on the deployment and development of new employees once they have gained entry to an organization. In doing this, there needs to be an intelligent uses of recruitment channel. An organization has two sources of labour supply-the internal and the external labour market (Tegene, 2008).

Internal recruitment involves words-of-mouth, recommendation or notice board advertisements. In contrast, recruitment in the external labour market involves different ways: advertising, job centres, employment agencies, walk-in and professional associations (Sisson and Storey, 2000). Merit-based recruitment and promotion is widely acknowledged as the hallmark of well performing public administration systems (Olowu and Adamolekun, 1999). They further assert that the experience of applying merit in an organization has also underlined the significance of balancing merit with other considerations aimed at ensuring some degree of representativeness like race, ethnicity and gender to ensure equal employment opportunity. Merit involves dealing with people

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based on their knowledge, skills and other capabilities rather than irrelevant characteristics (Lee, 1993).

A number of opinions have been shared by researchers regarding how recruitment, selection and placement are done. According to Bolton (1995), environments with relatively challenged expertise tend to look beyond strict technical competency requirements in their recruitment, selection and placement exercise. This conclusion is obviously seen in a number of instances indevelopingcountries where according to Ayee(2003), factors such as nepotism, partisanship and comradeship are given consideration during the recruitment, selection and placement of officers in some organizations.

2.5.3 Training and development

The two terms are quite identical to each other, but they are not the same in meaning. Training has traditionally been defined as the process by which individuals change their skills, knowledge, attitudes, and/or behaviour (Price, 2003). In this context, training involves designing and supporting learning activities that result in a desired level of performance. Training is a learning process that aims to permanently improve the abilityand behaviour of the employees by enabling them to acquire new skills, knowledge andattitude for more efficient performance (Bolton, 1995). Development, on the other hand, is the recognition of a person's ability, throughconscious or unconscious learning (Bolton, 1995). Development programmes usually include phasesofplanned study and experience, and are usually supported by a coaching or counselling facility. Development occurs when a gain in experience is effectively combined withthe conceptual

understanding that can illustrate it, giving increased confidence both toact and to perceive how such action relates to its context (Bolton, 1995).

In contrast, development typically refers to long-term growth and learning, directing attention more on what an individual may need to know or do at some future time. While training focuses more on current job duties or responsibilities, development points to future job responsibilities (Garvin, 2003). However, sometimes these terms have been used interchangeably or have been denoted by the single term performance consulting, which emphasizes either the product of training and development or how individuals perform as a result of what they have learned (Price, 2003). Training is an educational process. People can learn new information, re-learn and reinforce existing knowledge and skills, and most importantly have time to think and consider what new options can help them improve their effectiveness and performance at work. Effective trainings convey relevant and useful information that inform employees and develop skills and behaviours that can be transferred back to the workplace (Charnov, 2000).The goal of training is to create an impact that lasts beyond the end time of the training itself. The focus is on creating specific action steps and commitments that focus people's attention on incorporating their new skills and ideas back at work.

Training can be offered as skill development for individuals and groups. In general, trainings involve presentation and learning of content as a means for enhancing skill development and improving workplace behaviours. These two processes, Training and Development, are often closely connected. Training can be used as a proactive means for developing skills and expertise to prevent problems from arising and can also be an effective tool in addressing any skills or performance gaps among staff. Development can be used to create solutions to workplace issues, before they become a concern or after they

become identifiable problem (Kim, 2009).Development is a process that "strives to build the capacity to achieve and sustain a new desired state that benefits the organization or community and the world around them" (Garvin, 2003).

Development perspective examines the current environment, the present state, and helps people on a team, in a department and as part of an institution identify effective strategies for improving performance. In some situations, there may not be anything "wrong" at the present time; the group or manager may simply be seeking ways to continue to develop and enhance existing relationships and job performance. In other situations, there may be an identifiable issue or problem that needs to be addressed. Development process aims to find ideas and solutions that can effectively return the group to a state of high performance. Development implies creating and sustaining change (Marmer, 2008).

Training and development describes the formal, on-going efforts that are made within organizations to improve the performance and self-fulfilment of their employees through a variety of educational methods and programmes. In the modern workplace, these efforts have taken on a broad range of applications—from instruction in highly specific job skills to long-term professional development. In recent years, training and development has emerged as a formal business function, an integral element of strategy, and a recognized profession with distinct theories and methodologies. More and more companies of all sizes have embraced "continual learning" and other aspects of training and development as a means of promoting employee growth and acquiring a highly skilled work force. In fact, the quality of employees and the continual improvement of their skills and productivity through training are now widely recognized as vital factors in ensuring the long-term success and profitability of small businesses and in addition create a corporate culture that

supports continual learning (Marmer, 2008). For the most part, the terms "training" and "development" are used together to describe the overall improvement and education of an organization's employees. However, while closely related, there are important differences between the terms that centre on the scope of the application. In general, training programmes have very specific and quantifiable goals, like operating a particular piece of machinery, understanding a specific process, or performing certain procedures with great precision. Developmental programmes, on the other hand, concentrate on broader skills that are applicable to a wider variety of situations, such as decision making, leadership skills, and goal setting (Jacob, 2003).

2.5.4 Performance appraisal

Performance appraisal determines the efficiency of a worker in his or her job performance (Shelton and Darling, 2001). According to Shelton and Darling (2001), it provides a mechanism for the identification of merits and deficiencies observed in an employee in relation to his or her job performance. Appraisal is to determine the present state of efficiency of a worker inorder to establish the actual need for training. The process of performance appraisal include; setting the standards for performance and communicating the standard to the employees, measuring the performance, comprising the actual performance with the standard set (Shelton and Darling, 2001).

This aspect of human resource management has however been described as highly lacking in some developing countries (Mensah-Bonsu, 2003). In this context, standards in terms of goals and objectives are not set as targets to be achieved by the management. Consequently, no or at best, minimal evaluations are done periodically to assess whether pre-determined organisational goals have been achieved over the set period. Aikins (2011)

thinks this may be due to an embedded laissez faire culture eminent in the working environment where a lot of things are taken for granted. This therefore tends to have effects on the ability to build the capacity of staff who would otherwise have performed more, and possibly better, if they knew their work / tasks would be evaluated at the end of pre-determined periods. The desire to excel at the evaluation point, coupled with possible sanctions upon abysmal performance, would have motivated the staff to perform as expected thereby developing their capacity eventually.

2.5.5 Job rotation

A job rotation according to Bolton (1995)is a job design technique in which employees are moved between two or more jobs in a planned manner. The aim is to expose the employees to different experiences and wider variety of skills to enhance job satisfaction and to cross-train them.With the distribution of responsibilities, it is suggested, it will result in specialization (Bolton, 1995).However, to be able to utilize their specialization in the best possible way, the work/tasks should be rotated among the employees at least once a year, depending upon ones' qualifications and suitability to perform the new work/task, so as to broaden their field ofspecialization as well as their knowledge about the organization's operation as awhole(Huang,1999).

2.5.6Wage and salary administration

The principal need of all employees is adequate wage and salary, which shouldbe proportionate with his or her duties and responsibilities. Wage and salaryadministration refers to the establishment and implementation of sound policies andpractices of employee compensation. It includes areas such as job evaluation,development and maintenance of wage structure, wage surveys, wage incentives,profit sharing, wage changes and

adjustments, supplementary payments, control ofcompensation costs, etc. Wages and salaries are important in determining the standardof living, per capital income, productivity, moral and economic well-being of theworkers and employees.

According to Bolton (1995), the more an employee is satisfied with his or her levels of wages and salaries, the more content, generally, he or she becomes, transforming into performance on the job. Such an employee is motivated to do more in justifying the present wage and salary as well as building a firm case for an increment in the future (Bolton, 1995). In other jurisdictions, however, much of what staff receive as salaries are determined centrally by the government and thus justification for what one receives may not be that strong as the one who makes the payment decision is detached from the local environment (Milton 2008). Thus, the effectiveness of using salaries and wages to motivate and improve upon the capacity of some workers has been questioned (Milton 2008).

2.5.7 Performance management

Performance management is a continuous cycle which commences with an organizations recruitment decision and includes setting performance criteria, monitoring and assessment, feedback, action planning, learning and development activities Baron et al., (2009) .In today's workplace, performance improvement and the role of performance management has become an increasing popular topic. Why the strong focus on performance management now? This is because, business pressures are raising and organizations are now required to become even more effective and efficient, execute better on business strategy, and do more with less in order to remain competitive. Though, human resources

professionals clearly understand the importance of optimal performance management, they often face significant internal obstacles. Often when performance management is mentioned, people think of the employee performance appraisal or review. Performance management, however, involves so much more than that(Armstrong, 2006).

According to Armstrong(2006), the significant goals of performance management include: configuration of individual and team effort with organizational goals and objectives, creating a shared vision of an organizations' strategic direction, facilitating discussions on performance expectations, standards and achievements, and providing a mechanism for employees to receive regular performance feedback and guidance.An effective performance management process enable managers to evaluate and measure individual performance and optimize yield by way of: Aligning individual employee's daily actions with the strategic business objectivestherebycontributing positively to the organization's bottom line,improving employment relationships and communication, aligning individual and team performance with organizational values, goals and objectives by providing visibility and clarifying accountability related to performance expectations according toArmstrong(2006).

Armstrong (2006), continuous to explain that, Ithelps to maintain high levels of performance and identify areas for improvement, empowering employees by providing input into goal and objectives setting, providing a mechanism to acknowledge exceptional performance and address under performance , identifying learning and development needs through establishing focus for skill development and learning activity choices, helping in the area of succession planning, providing avenue for employees to provide feedback on the effectiveness of workplace systems, processes and procedures. Documenting

individual performance for legal purposes, to support compensation and career planning decisions, according to Aguinis (2005) goes to support decisions and reduce disputes. To Bowley et al.(2007), the type and complexity of the performance management system to be used would most likely depend on the industry, the nature of the work and the size of the business.Manyorganisations are taking steps to successfully address the negative view of performance management. Some are implementing innovative solutions that will ensure processes, deliver real results and improve performance (Aguinis,2005).

2.6 Employee relations

Employment relation according to Lewis, Adrian and Saunders (2009) is a social and political relationship in which employees provide manual and mental labour in exchange for rewards allotted by employers. Employee relations are associated with all the welfare measures an organization put in place to take care of the interest of employees to maintain a healthy condition at the work place and also to give a constructive feed back to the employees. The scope of employee relations covers, institutional relations, employee safety, health, employment security, working conditions and assistance to non-work problems. Government's law regulates employee safety. Apart from fulfilling the obligations spelled out under law, employers organize safety awareness programs to stress upon the organization's commitment to safety. The components of some of these programs are hazard identification, communication and education to those at risk and reinforcement of safe practices. Employee health is taken care by employee assistance programs and employee wellness programs in most countries (Bowley et al. 2007), corrective procedures, compressed workweek, flexi time, job sharing and part-time work fall under the range of employment security and working conditions, to help the employees to manage both their work and private life (Bowley et al. 2007).Most organizations in the

advance countries, according to (Marmer, 2008), have started family friendly policies to ensure the positive impact on the economic and psychological well-being of workers. These programmes help in enhancing productivity, reducing turnover and making the organization more competitive (Marmer, 2008). Employee relations are meant to develop a sense of belonging to, and oneness with organization(Garvin, 2003).

2.7 National and local governance system

National government is a coalition government, especially one subordinating party differences to the national interest in a time of crisis, as in Britain under Ramsay MacDonald (Kim, 2009).

A local government is anadministrative body for a small geographic area, such as a city, town, county, or state. A local government will typically only have control over their specific geographical region, and cannot pass or enforcelaws that will affect a wider area. Local governments can electofficials, enact taxes, and do many other things that a national government would do, just on a smaller scaleAt the sub-national level, local institutions reflect great differences in history, culture, capacity, infrastructure, styles and practices (UNDP 2007). According to UNDP (2007), local governance has four priority areas ; local governance improve service delivery ; local governance is for state and peace building; local governance is for democratic representation; local governance is for environmental sustainability.

For example, according to Aikins(2011), the local government system was conceived with the Municipal Ordinance of 1859 and followed with the Local Government Act 1961, Act 54, enacted soon after independencebut it was not until 1974 that the current local

government structure was established, essentially heralding a "Single Hierarchy Model." Concomitantly, a monolithic structure of "District Councils" was created and assigned the responsibility of the entirety of government at the local level. However, the 65 District Councils that were established had many problems, which Aikins. (2011) described as de-concentration (administrative transfer) troubles. Consequently, in 1988, the structure of local government was restructured to combine, to "improve" and facilitate decentralization. Legal backing for the reforms was enshrined in the Local Government Law, 1988, PNDC Law 207. District Assemblies (DAs) were created to forge the link between local government and decentralization (Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development 1994). Decentralized departments were established to perform functions formerly executed by central government, while District Chief Executives were assigned to DAs, to which all communication were to be addressed. Chapter 20 of the 1992 Constitution reinforces PNDCL 207 with modifications.

2.7.1. Decentralization

Literature suggests that decentralizationis one of the most important ways of promoting and improving both local and national governance (Ayee, 1996). In 1987, Ghana started the decentralization process in response to creating more effective local government (Aikins. 2011). Pursuing decentralization was probably in the right direction for Ghana, just as in many other developing countries with their economies being driven by policies of the international financial institutions and their fiscal demands attached to structural adjustment. By 2001, out of the 75 developing countries with population of more than five million, 63 were intensively pursuing decentralization policies that devolve functions and responsibilities to local governments (Helmsing 2001). A range of issues have driven the escalation of decentralization, which include poor governmental performance,

urbanization, democratic transition, shifts in international donor strategies, and societal demands (Diamond 1999). The rationale for this approach is that involving local people in the identification of their needs and using them as a tool for checking accountability goes a long way to bring people closer to a desired standard of living. For instance, the original intention of the government was to pursue devolution (Aikins. 2011).

To ensure decentralization and achieve the set intentions, a five-tier public administration has been put into place as shown in Figure 2.1. At the top is central government. Below this are the Regional Co-ordinating Councils (RCCs), which perform a hybrid role as extensions of the center and co-ordinators of activities of the local government systems. District Assemblies were considered pivotal in the decentralization program, and are located at the third level. Each District Assembly must have a number of Area/Zonal/Town/Urban Councils representing groups of villages/communities and finally, Unit Committees at the lowest level representing communities.

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        ┌─────────────────────────┐
        │   Central Government     │
        └─────────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
    ┌───────────────────────────────┐
    │ Regional Coordinating Councils │
    └───────────────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
    ┌───────────────────────────────┐
    │ District/Municipal/Metropolitan│
    │           Assembly             │
    └───────────────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
    ┌───────────────────────────────┐
    │  Town/Urban/Zonal/Area Councils│
    └───────────────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
        ┌─────────────────────────┐
        │     Unit Committees      │
        └─────────────────────────┘
```
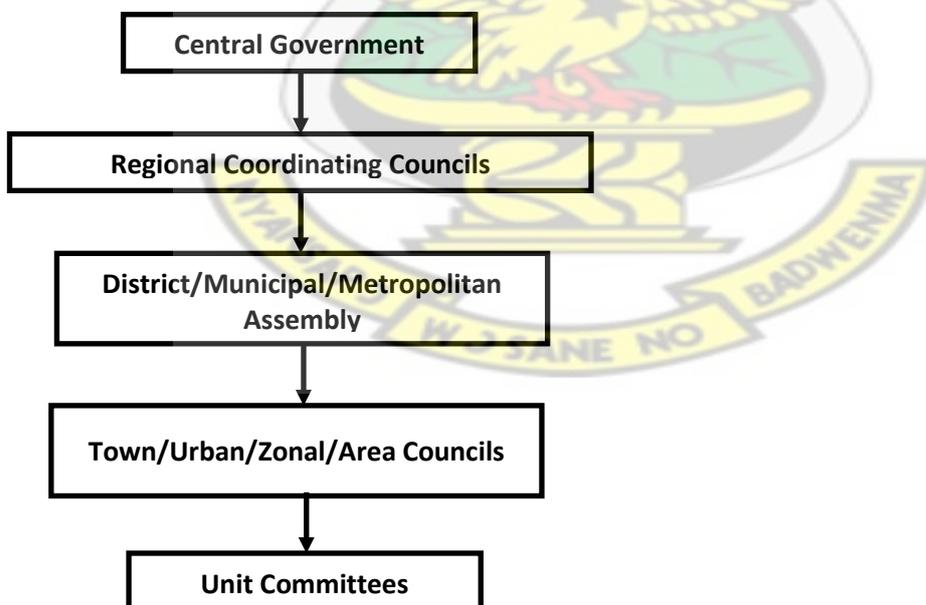
Figure 2.1: Five-tier Local Government Structure (Aikins, 2011)

Every Area Council and Unit Committee has elected members as well as members nominated by the President, where they are in existence. This structural arrangement was meant to institute a bottom-up system whereby community issues would first be discussed at the Unit level, followed up at the Area Council level before they are submitted to the District Assembly by the Assembly members (AMs). Assembly members therefore, serve as representatives of local government in their communities. The structures are also to ensure that counsellors at lower levels are able to monitor projects being implemented in their jurisdiction. There are clear lines of reporting and communication, which are expected to achieve high standards both in the delivery of development projects and accountability in the utilization of development funds (Aikins, 2011).

2.7.2. Decentralisation and human resource management (HRM)

The relationship between decentralization and human resource management (HRM) is in the various human resource management systems commonly applied in local government. These are the; integrated, separated and unified models (Olowu, 2003; cited in Aikins 2011). The integrated model is characterized by the deployment of central government officials over local governments. Under the separated model local governments are able to hire and fire their own staff, as opposed to the unified model in which there is a common civil service across local authorities. Aikins(2011) observes that the unified model is increasingly becoming popular and it allows local governments to manage their own staff with less dependence on central government. Integrated and unified systems are found where the centre does not trust local governments to employ strategically rather than as patronage (in the case of the unified system, state control is only at the appointment stage). These institutional arrangements represent the context within which human resource management(HRM) takes place in local government (Aikins. 2011). However, the

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

2.8 Human resource management (HRM) and local government policies

The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development exists to promote the establishment and development of a vibrant and well-resourced decentralized system of local government for the people to ensure good governance and balanced rural based development according to the Local Government Act No. 462 of 1993. This could be done by: formulating, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and co-ordinating reform policies and programmes to democratize governance and decentralize the machinery of government; reforming and energizing local governments to serve effectively as institutions for mobilizing and harnessing local resources for local/ national administration and development; facilitating the development of all human settlements through the participation in helping to promote a clean and healthy environment in all communities; facilitating horticultural development and improving the demographic database for development planning and management and promoting orderly human settlement development.

The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development is objected in the Medium term to pursue to achieve among others the following; To improve upon the human resources and institutional capacities for all levels of the decentralized government machinery (District, town and Unit), To improve the capacity of communities and local government institutions to mobilize, and manage resources for accelerated rural and urban development, To promote human development and sustain the orderly and healthy growth of rural and urban settlements. To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of local government institutions to improved management performance, The Ministry is to ensure that recruitment, selection and placement, training and development, performance appraisal and wage and salary administration of employees are carried out (the Local Government Act No. 462 of 1993).

2.9 Challenges for human resource capacity development

According to the World Bank (2000), policies and institutions are closely interlinked in several ways. First, policy design should take institutional capacity carefully into account. When institutions are weak or dysfunctional, simple policies that limit administrative demands and public discretion work best. Where institutions are stronger, more challenging public initiatives can be effective. Second, policies do not emerge from a vacuum but generally are the result of bargaining among contending groups-with the interplay among them shaped by the institutional and political "rules of the game." Third, the causation also works in reverse: policy choice can significantly influence the way institutionsdevelop. For example, decision to reduce tariffs or move from highly varied to uniform tax rates can dramatically shift incentives and responsibilities within customs andtax administrations, making it harder for officials toextract bribes in return for lower taxes.

This is oneexample of why economic reform is a key pillar of ananticorruption programme.The need to pay attention to the human resource development equation in local governance comes from the historical analysis that some of the developing countrieshave been ruled from the centre by non-democratic institutions for years; the local bureaucracy that had been part of a centralized scheme of things needs to be re-educated to fit into the decentralized way of local governance. Thus, building capacity of local government officials for effective administration and management must therefore, be of high priority. Recognizing inadequacy of capacity in terms of trained and competent technical and generalists' human resources on the part of local authorities to carry out their responsibilities has in the past been a significant contributory factor in the centralization of public services (Wood, 2000).

2.10 Conceptual framework

The District and Municipal Assemblies rely on their human resource management departments to manage their most cherished assets-the people working there who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the assemblies. In order to achieve the objectives of the assemblies, the following key human resource management practices need to be adhered to: human resource planning,recruitment,selection and placement, training and development, performance appraisal, job rotation, wage and salary administration and performance management(Jayagopal, 2008). These human resource management practices, when properly executed will have positive effect on the employees. The employees will become technically and economically efficient, the capacity of the staff will be enhanced, and theircompetencies improved resulting in less labour turnover. This will go a long way to

help the employeesto formulate and implement good development policies. The conceptual framework is provided in Figure 2.2 below:
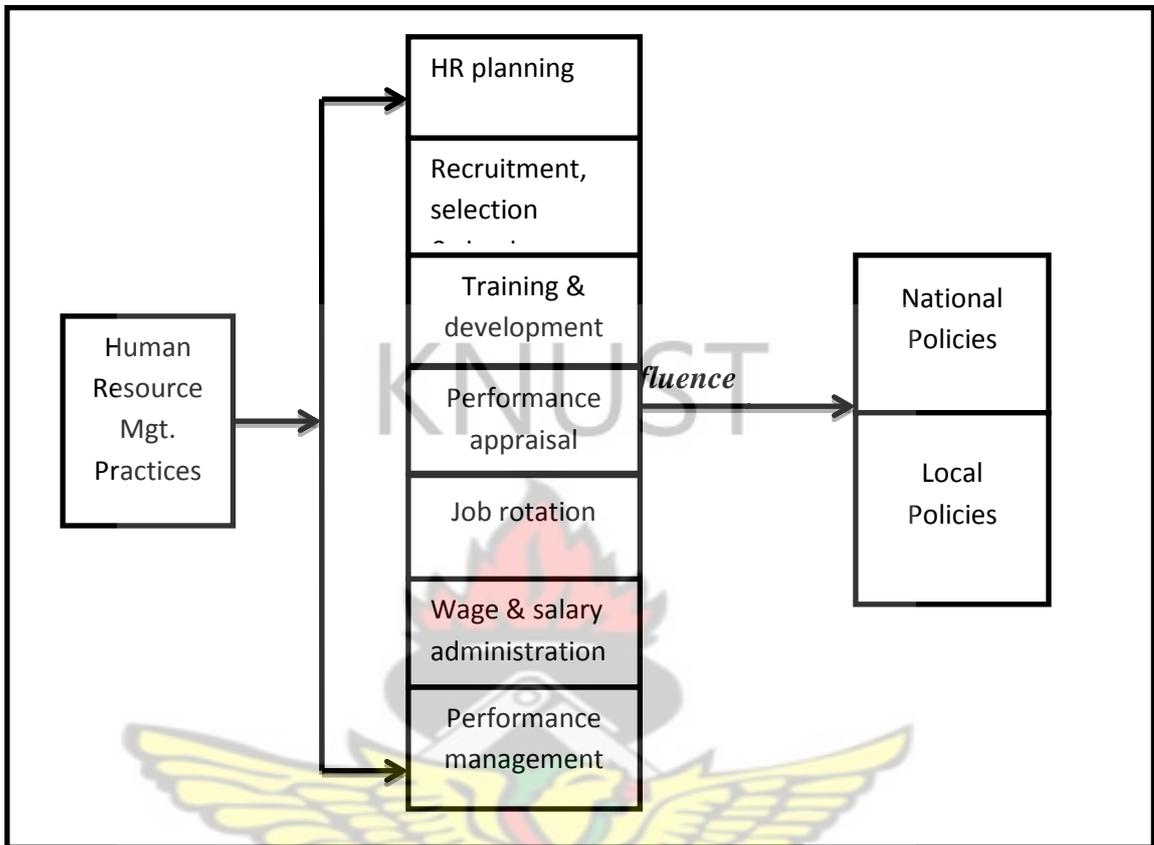
Fig. 2.2: conceptual framework

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the key concepts within the area of human resource management (HRM) in relation to the particular Human Resource capacity development needs at the Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies, and has looked in detail at the definition, concepts and perceptions of human resource management (HRM) in general. A review of selectedliteratureonHuman Resource practices, and development of human resource management (HRM) capacity at the local levels has revealed the key issues in relation to the subject matter being studied.

The key issues highlighted on include: the nature of human resource capacity available to an organization is key in achieving the organizational goal and targets; strategies which influence the development of the human resource capacity include the type of recruitment and selection strategy that is used in employing staff, performance management, the degree of training and development of employees, and the nature of compensation and rewards system in the organization; as well as the Human Resource strategies and systems that can be used to develop the human resource capacity at the local level such as effective human resource planning; training and development; recruitment, selection and placement; performance appraisal; job rotation; and effective wage and salary administration.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROFILE OF THE

STUDY AREA

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used for the study and the profile of the study area. The first section is organized into five main sections covering the research design and justification for the choice, the sampling design including sampling frame and sample size, method of data collection and the instrument for collecting the data. The unit of analysis as well as the type of data analysis to be employed are also discussed. The section concludes with ethical issues considered during the study, the reliability and validity of the methodology used. The second section discusses the profile of the study areas which are the Bosomtwe district assembly and Bekwai municipal assembly all in the Ashanti region.

3.1 Research design

A research design gives an overall view of the method chosen and the reason for that choice. It also includes the data collection methods, instruments used for the data collection, and how data collected are analyzed (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009).Quantitative research approach was adopted for the study, and in particular the case study method was used.

3.1.1 Case study design

A case study is a research approach that is used to generate an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of a complex issue in its real-life context. It is an established research design that is used extensively in a wide variety of disciplines, particularly in the social

sciences. A case study can be defined in a variety of ways, the central tenet being the need to explore an event or phenomenon in depth and in its natural context (Yin, 2003). According to Stake(1995), case studies are designed to bring out the details from the viewpoint of the participants by using multiple sources of data.Case studies are multi-perspectival analyses. This means that the researcher considers not just the voice and perspective of the actors, but also of the relevant groups of actors and the interaction between them. This one aspect is a salient point in the characteristic that case studies possess. They give a voice to the powerless and voiceless. When sociological investigations present many studies of the homeless and powerless, they do so from the viewpoint of the "elite" (Feagin, Orum, &Sjoberg, 1991).

3.1.2 Rational for case study approach

The use of the case study approach to probe the the human resource capacity of local government institutions in formulating district development policies is appropriate because the study seeks to examine and understand in detail, the human resource capacity that districts and municipal assemblies have, and how this capacity is channeled into the formulation of policies for local development. According to Yin(2003), the reliance on the quantitative research approach of case study becomes particularly useful where one needs to understand a particular phenomenon, system or situation in great-depth (rather than for generalization purpose), and where one can identify cases that have abundant information in respect of the phenomenon being investigated. Therefore, since the study intends to have a deeper understanding of the relationship between human resource capacity at the local level and the formulation of policies for local development, the case study approach becomes appropriate in gathering the detailed information required for the study.

3.2 Population and sampling

A research population is generally a collection of individuals or objects that serves as the main focus of a scientific query (Saunders et *al.,* 2009). This section looks at the population of the study as well as the sampling techniques employed in selecting the respondents for the study.

3.2.1 Population

The population of this study is all staff working at both the Bosomtwe District Assembly and the Bekwai Municipal Assembly who are 127 in all. The decision to rely on staff of the two assemblies was fundamental in getting the required information from respondents because by virtue of working there, the researcher believed they could adequately answer the research questions that will be posed for the study.

3.2.2 Sampling and sampling techniques

Due to the usually large sizes of populations involved in research works, researchers often cannot test every individual in the population because it may be too expensive and time-consuming. To address this issue, researchers usually rely on sampling techniques. For this study, the Slovin's sampling method (Guilford and Fruchter, 1973) was used in determining the sample size. This formula is presented as; $n = N/ [1+N (e)^2]$ (where n = sample size; N = sample frame; and e = margin of error/ confidence level). With a population of 127 staff, using a margin of error of 5%, a sample size of 96.39 (approximately 96 people) was obtained to serve as respondents for the study. The researcher therefore has to solicit information from the 96 respondents in order to draw reliable conclusions in consonance with the objectives set for the study.

To select the 96 respondents, the study adopted the non-probabilistic sampling method of purposive sampling. This technique is appropriate because, according to Saunders et *al*. (2009), the purposive sampling technique becomes appropriate where the researcher requires in depth information about a phenomenon, and can identify people who can adequately provide the required detailed information. Since it is not everybody at the assembly that can provide detailed information regarding the subject matter, it is proper that the study relies on those that can actually provide the required information. In this regard, the purposive sampling technique in selecting respondents for the study becomes appropriate.

3.3 Method of data collection

This section looks at the method that would be used in collecting data for the study. Emphasis would also be placed on the instrument that would be used for the collection of data. The data collection method of structured questionnaire, with the aid of a guide, was adopted for the study.

3.3.1 Data collection instrument

Structuredquestionnaire is used and where the researcher requires unrestricted, detailed information for the study, respondentsare found in that respect (Saunders et *al.,* 2009). When such respondents are found, the researcher thus poses flexible, non – restricted, and open questions to the respondents. In this research, the structured questionnaire would involve gathering information that answer the research questions in terms of:determining the nature of human resource capacity at the Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies; identifying policies which influence the development of the human resource capacity ofMetropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies; and evaluatingexisting human resource

policies of Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies, and how they influence the formulation of local government policies.

3.4 Unit of analysis

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), in a case study approach to research, the case is, "the unit of analysis". They point out that it is the duty of the researcher to determine what the unit of analysis is by finding out what it is that the researcher wants to analyse: the individual, a program, the process, or the relationship between phenomena. Answering this question can be effective in determining the unit of analysis.In this study, the researcher intends to analyse the relationship that exists between the human resource policies of the local assemblies and the formulation of local development policies.

3.5Sources of data

The study utilized both primary and secondary sources to obtain the necessary data for the study. The primary data was obtained directly from respondents through questionnaires. The secondary source of information was obtained from documents from the assembliesand other publications.

3.6 Data analysis

Since the study adopted a quantitative approach, quantitative techniques was similarly adopted in the data analysis. The responses from the questionnaires were grouped and given appropriate headings in accordance with the objectives of the study. These responses were checked against the groupings to ensure consistency. The totality of the responses were thenanalyzed under the respective headings in the form of content analysis.Quantitative analysis in the form of coding and statistical computation, of the

profile of the respondents using the statistical tool of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)was used. Such data was then presented in terms of frequency tables, percentages, and charts.

3.7 Ethical considerations

One very important consideration a researcher must not overlook is the issue of ethics in research (Malhotra and Birks, 2007). The researcher in accordance with this principle made sure that no respondent or any participant in this research was harmed in any way. First of all, the researcher avoided contacting respondents on the blind side of the management of the assemblies. The researcher made sure that permission is sought and the aims and objectives of the study are made known to the management as well as the respondents before the exercise. Both management and respondents were also assured of the fact that the study is only for the purposes of academics and not for any other use, and for that matter, the information provided will be kept confidential. Finally, participants were also not forced but rather encouraged to voluntarily participate.

3.8 Reliability

Reliability is concerned with the question of whether the results of a study are repeatable. According to Yin (2003), the role of reliability is to minimise errors and biases in a case study.The term is commonly used in relation to the question of whether the measures that are devised for arriving at conclusions in the study are consistent.This is done by ensuring the repeatability of the study in that should a similar research be conducted using the same methodology, one becomes assured of getting a very similar result.In this study, the quantitative methodology used was appropriate while the respondents chosen were the right people who could give a better view of the subject matter being investigated. The

objectivity of the content of the questionnaire and its structure gives some level ofreliability to the study. the researcher thus believes that the results of the study can be reproduced under a similar methodology.

3.9 Validity

Validity refers to the accuracy of measurements (Yin, 2003).Conscious effort was made to ensure validity of this study. The interview guides has been pretested on people who are not linked to this research for inputs to ensure validity. The choice of approach was objective and the use of documentation and questionnaire helped increased validity as more information was obtained. The questionnaireswere conducted face -to-face so that any difficulty or ambiguity could be explained easily. This increasedthe validity of the methodology adopted.

3.10 Profile of study areas

This section presents the profile of the case studies with particular attention to features or characteristics within the assemblies that have relevance to the study such as population, gender distribution, growth rate and development agenda of the assemblies.

3.10.1 Profile of case study one: Bosomtwe District Assembly

The Bosomtwe District is one of the 30 created districts in the Ashanti Region, having been carved out of the former Ejisu-Juaben-Bosomtwe District. Bosomtwe District is located at the central portion of the Ashanti Region. It lies within latitudes 6º 43' North and longitudes 1º 46' West and it spreads over a land area of 718sqkm. The District is bounded on the North by AtwimaNwabiagya and Kumasi Metropolis and on the East by

Ejisu- Juaben District. The southern section is bounded by Amansie West and East Districts. Kuntanase is the District Capital.

The District is made up of three Area Councils namely: Kuntanase, Boneso, and Jachie. The District population is 146,028 covering an area of approximately 68,179 square kilometres forming about 2.81% of the area of Ashanti Region with part of the eastern end being covered by Lake Bosomtwe. The population comprises 71,904 males and 74,124 females. The percentage of males and females population is 49.2% and 50.8% respectively. The district share of the region's population is 4%. The estimated growth rate of 3.0 % is less than the regional growth rate of 3.4%. The age dependency ratio for the district is 0.8:1 while the economic dependency ratio is almost equal to the age dependency 0.76:1. These dependency ratios on the surface look favourable but the critical issue is that the people are not gainfully employed. Hence, the capacity of the personnel at the assembly to formulate local level development policies for the benefit of the population is very important. The appropriate human resource capacity is also needed to execute the development priorities outlined by the assembly which includes: enhancing the tourism potential of lake Bosomtwe; increasing private investment in agro-processing; providing storage facilities for farm produce; constructing classrooms for Kindergartens, Primary as well as Junior High School students; constructing Quarters for Nurses in the district; to increase the number of health personnel; and to provide potable water to all communities in the district. (*Bosomtwe District Assembly, 2014)*

3.10.2 Profile of case study two: Bekwai Municipal Assembly

The Bekwai Municipal is also one of the 30 administrative districts in the Ashanti Region. The Municipal shares boundaries with Amansie West District to the west, Bosomtwe District to the north, Adansi South and North Districts to the south and the Asante Akim

South District to the east. With a population of 208, 987, and an intercensal growth rate of 3.2 %, males in the municipal constitute 52%, while females constituting 48%.

The rural population of the municipal is 88.4%, while the urban population is 11.6%.

The average household size is estimated at 7.1 persons, which is higher than the national rural figure of 5.2 persons. This implies that each household has a large number of people to feed, clothe and house. Given the low per capital income of ¢ 11.172.81 in the district, it is clear that most families are characterized by low standard of living as evidenced by the expenditure pattern where the bulk of the families income goes into food (37.2%), clothing (11.0%) and education (27.5%). With these characteristics, it is important that the human resource capacity of the assembly is assessed in order to further assess how such capacity is being used to formulate policies that will lead to local level development.(*Bekwai Municipal Assembly, 2014)*

3.11 Conclusion

The chapter highlighted on the research design, population and sampling technique for the study.Data collection and method for analysis employed for the study was also discussed. Finally ethical issues concerning the gathering of information, as well as reliability and validity of the results were also considered. All these were done to ensure accurate data that will answer the research questions posed with the aim of finding answers to the relationship between the human resource capacity of personnel, and the formulation of local development policies at Bosomtwe District and Bekwai Municipal Assemblies in Ashanti Region.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents the data gathered from the survey, as well as analyses and discussion of the results obtained from the survey. The chapter presents the results by way offrequency tables, charts and graphs. The analyses and discussions are focused on the objectives of the study, as well as the relationship between the survey results and empirical literature.

4.1 Demographic characteristics

This section presents the demographic characteristics of staff of the two assemblies who responded to the survey. The characteristics comprised of gender, age distribution and level of education. Responses on the marital status of the respondents were also collected and analysed. The result is thus presented in Table 4.1.

From Table 4.1, it was revealed that out of the 96 people who responded to the survey, 54 were male representing 56 percent with the remaining 42 - representing 44 percent - being female. This meant a male to female staff ratio of 2:1, which confirms the general perception that there were more males working in the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) than there were female staff in the Ghanaian local government set up**.**

In terms of age distribution, the survey gathered data on age beginning from the legal working age of 18 years up to the compulsory retirement age of 60 years. The categorization was also done in three ranges: 18 – 30 years; 31 – 45 years; and 46 – 60 years and was represented as 23 percent, 42 percent, and 35 percent respectively. This also meant that, using the United Nations' definition of youth being between the ages of 16 and 40 years, there were more youth working at the Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies than any other age range making theMetropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies a youthful enterprise.

Regarding the level of education of the respondents, it was revealed that most of the assemblies' staff possessed higher national diploma (HND) (36 percent) and first degrees (31 percent). This was quite expected because most of the offices at the MMDA required Higher National Diploma and first degrees as the entry points in terms of employment. The rest of the respondents were made up of post graduate (5 percent), professional (15 percent), and other qualifications (13 percent). The post graduate holders had master's degree and worked in the planning and administration offices of the two assemblies. The professional were largely made up of accounting staff with few of them holding positions in the procurement and clerical units. lastly, the 'others' category in the distribution were largely made up of artisans and junior staff like messengers and security men who either had no formal education or had their education terminating at the secondary school level.

Finally, the data on the marital status of respondents showed that majority of the respondent were married people – 75 percent. A few of them (19 percent), found within the very youthful category, were single, while an even fewer percentage - 6 percent – were

identified as being either separated or divorcees. The entire data on the demographic characteristics of the respondents from the two assemblies is thus presented in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	54	56
	Female	42	44
	Total	**96**	**100**
Age	18 - 30 years	22	23
	31 - 45 years	40	42
	46 - 60 years	34	35
	Total	**96**	**100**
Level of Education	HND	35	36
	Degree	30	31
	Post Graduate	5	5
	Professional	14	15
	Other	12	13
	Total	**96**	**100**
Marital Status	Single	18	19
	Married	72	75
	Divorced/Separated	6	6
	Total	**96**	**100**

Source: Survey Data, 2013

In order to further identify the status of those responding to the survey, a job situation analysis of the respondents were taken. This was done to identify the current job dynamics of employees at the Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies taking into consideration the current status of the respondents on the assemblies' organizational chart, their

departments and the number of years of service at the assembly. Table 4.2 presents the result from that survey.

Table 4.2: Current Job Situation of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Assembly	Bekwai	54	56
	Bosomtwe	42	44
	Total	**96**	**100**
Department	Finance and Administration	24	25
	Planning and Budgeting	10	10
	Human Resource Management	50	52
	Statistics, Research and Development	12	13
	Total	**96**	**100**
Designation	Junior Officer	25	26
	Senior Officer	53	55
	Management	18	19
	Total	**96**	**100**
Length of service at Assembly	Below 1 year	11	11
	2 – 5 years	43	45
	6 – 10 years	30	31
	Above 10 years	12	13
	Total	**96**	**100**
Any previous experience?	Yes	50	52
	No	46	48
	Total	**96**	**100**

Source: Survey Data, 2013

From Table 4.2, it was revealed, first of all, that of the 96 personnel that completed the survey, 56percent worked at Bekwai Municipal while 44 percent worked at Bosomtwe. The difference in number was to be expected as Bekwai was a municipal and geographically bigger than the Bosomtwe District, which thus implied that Bekwai will need more personnel than was required of Bosomtwe. Also, more than half of the respondents worked under the department of human resource management (52 percent), while the least number of respondents were found at the Planning and Budgeting office (10 percent). 55 percent of the respondents were senior officers while 19 percent and 26 percent of the respondents belonged to the management and junior officers' categories respectively.

The study, seeking to find out how personnel's experience affect their input on how human resource capacity of staff at the assembly level could affect their formulation of development policies, sought to find out the length of service of personnel at the assemblies as well as whether they have had any related experience elsewhere. More than two – thirds of the respondents (represented by 76 percent) have worked at the assemblies between 2 and 10 years. Relatively few respondents have worked at the assembly for less than 1 year which meant that majority of those that responded to the survey have worked at the assemblies for long and could provide in depth information on the subject matter. It was also revealed that more than half of the respondents have also had some form of experience at other places before working at the assemblies under study. This was deemed to have impacted on their understanding of the workings of the assemblies in terms of using their human resource capacity to formulate development policies.

4.2 Nature of human resource management practices at the assemblies

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As one of the objectives of the study, the nature of the human resource capacity at the assemblies was examined. This was to help in determining whether the existing capacity was adequate and sufficient in fashioning out the appropriate policies required for the development of the assemblies. Consequently, a number of statements was posed to the respondents who were then required to rate them in accordance with how they agree or disagree with the statement. The result is presented in Table 4.3 below:

Table 4.3: Nature of Human Resource Management at the Assemblies

(in percentage)

RESPONSES							
No	Statement	S A	M A	N S	M D	SD	Total
10	Recruitment and selection system at Assemblies effective and suitable for organisational needs	48	26	12	10	8	**100**
11	Placement of staff based on organisational needs	12	10	20	36	22	**100**
13	Qualification and skills of staff considered before placement	11	11	48	15	13	**100**
14	Internal recruitment and assessment process is effective in identifying the best people for the job	20	18	36	16	10	**100**
15	Staff possess the competencies and skills required for job positions	13	18	18	30	21	**100**
16	Staff not 'square pegs in round holes'	13	19	14	31	23	**100**
17	Management recognises and makes good use of employees' abilities and skills	30	32	12	16	10	**100**
18	Management is interested in developing the competencies and skills of employees	10	12	15	38	25	**100**

Source: Field Survey,(2013)

Where SA =Strongly Agree; MA =Mildly Agree; NS = Not Sure; MD = Mildly Disagree

From Table 4.3 above, the respondents generally agreed that the system, as laid down for the recruitment and selection of employees into the assemblies,was effective and suitable for the organisational needs of the assemblies. This observation was strongly agreed to by 74 percent respondents who generally agreed that the system as it exists now is appropriate for recruitment and selection into the assemblies. Their concerns, however, was with whether the system was being applied to the letter or side-lined, using other considerations that are outside the laid down requirements of the recruitment and selection system. The respondents also believed that the human resource capacity at the assemblies ought to be improved if the expertise required in formulating development policies at the assembly level is to be achieved. In particular, majority of the respondents (62%) agreed that in spite of certain shortfalls in the human resource practices at the assemblies, management of the assemblies still recognises and makes good use of employees' abilities and skills.

In confirming the respondents' earlier position that the existing human resource management practices at the assemblies requires some improvement, majority of respondents disagreed that staff possess the competencies and skills required for job positions (51%). They also generally disagreed that: management was interested in developing the competencies and skills of employees (63%); staff not 'square pegs in round holes' (54%); and that placement of staff was based on organisational needs (58%). In all cases of disagreement with the statements that projected a positive view of the human resource capacity at the assemblies, a significant percentage of the respondents were also not sure of the applicability of such statements to the nature of human resource capacity that existed at the assemblies.A significant proportion of the respondents were

also not sure as to whether qualification and skills of staff were considered before placement to their various positions (48%). These revelations are presented in Figure 4.1.
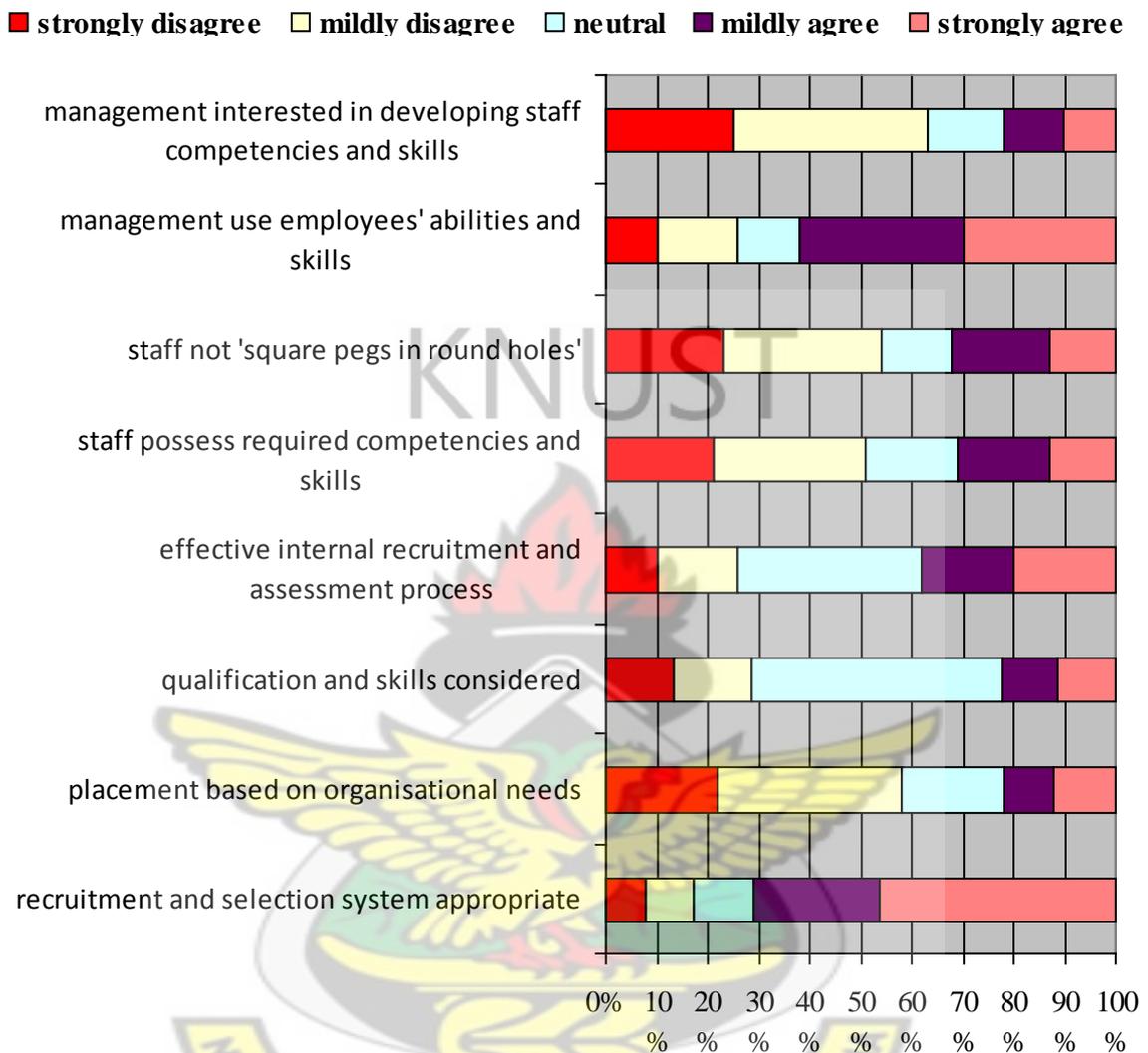
Figure 4.1: Nature of Human Resource Capacity at the Assemblies (in percentage)
Source: Field Survey, 2013

In relating the results on the nature of human resource capacity at the two assemblies, as depicted in Figure 4.1 above, to empirical literature, it can be said that with the exception of the observation regarding the appropriateness of a recruitment and selection system, the other observations was inconsistent with what pertains in other jurisdictions. As indicated earlier, majority of the respondents agreed that it was appropriate that there exist a

recruitment system for recruiting and selecting employees at the assemblies which is consistent with the general proposition regarding the importance of the existence of recruitment and selection systems. For instance, Torrington et al. (2003) argue that, it is desirable for an organization to adopt and implement recruitment and selection systems as that depersonalizes the process, guides the exercise and avoid incidences of bias. It is therefore desirable that respondents indicated that such systems already exist at the assemblies. What is not desirable is respondents' disclosure that the laid down system is rather by passed and considerations given to nepotism, partisanship and comradeship as observed by Ayee (2003).

Even though Bolton (2011), suggests that environments with relatively challenged availability of expertise may look beyond strict technical competency requirements in their recruitment, selection and placement exercise, in the Ghanaian context, this ought not be the rule of recruiters at the Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assemblies but rather the exception as concluded by (Ayee, 2003).

Furthermore, majorityof the revelations were found to be at variance with results from other studies from other jurisdictions. For instance, regarding management's interest in developing the skills and competencies of the assemblies' staff (statement 18), Barney's (1999) proposition on Resource Based View (RBV), which is supported by Boall and Purcel (2000), andRodwell and Teo (2004) requires that organizations be concerned with the human capital of the organization rather than any other considerations. Thus, since the RBV framework has implied the need for developing organisations-specific capabilities and competencies to stay ahead, management of the assemblies should therefore be

interested in the development of staff competencies and skills to impact positively on the nature of human resource capacity available at the assemblies.

4.3: Policies for the development of human resource practices at the assemblies

One other objective for the study was to assess the policies for the development of human resource management practices at the Assemblies. This was important to determine whether the existing HRM practices or strategies had been implemented with the aim of improving the capacity of the personnel at the assemblies. In order to assess these policies and practices employed at the assemblies for the development of their human resource capacity, a number of statements were posed to the respondents. They were thus required to rate each statement according to its applicability to their respective assemblies. The various responses are provided below:

4.3.1 Performance appraisal at the assemblies

In consonance with the objectives of the study, the existence and operations of performance appraisal processes as a strategy that can improve the capacity of staff of the assemblies were assessed. The study sought to first of all, find out if the assemblies have mechanisms of appraising the performance of its staff, and if so, whether they agree to certain elements of the mechanism as applied in the assemblies. These include whether they agree that the processes are transparent, encouraging, and able to achieve the purpose for which such systems are implemented. The tableon the next page presents the respondents views regarding the extent to which they agree with each of the statement posed.

Table 4.4: State of Performance Appraisal at the Assemblies (in percentages)

Opinion on Performance Appraisal System	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Other
Assemblies have some form of performance appraisal system in place	12	13	75
The current performance appraisal system is capable of encouraging good performance from staff	10	12	78
The current performance appraisal system lacks transparency	14	14	72
The performance appraisal reviews help in identifying capacity development issues	13	16	71

Source: Survey Data, 2013

From Table 4.4 above, it was revealed by majority of the respondents (75 percent)who did not agree that there was a formal and routine system of appraising the performance of staff at the assemblies. 78 percent of the respondents also did not agree that the current performance appraisal system is capable of encouraging good performance from staff while 72 percent also rejected the claim that there was transparency in the way people were appraised by the assembly whether informal or not. 71 percent of the respondents also did not agree that there was even some form of performance appraisal at the assemblies whose reviews helped in identifying capacity development issues. The observations are further presented on the next page.
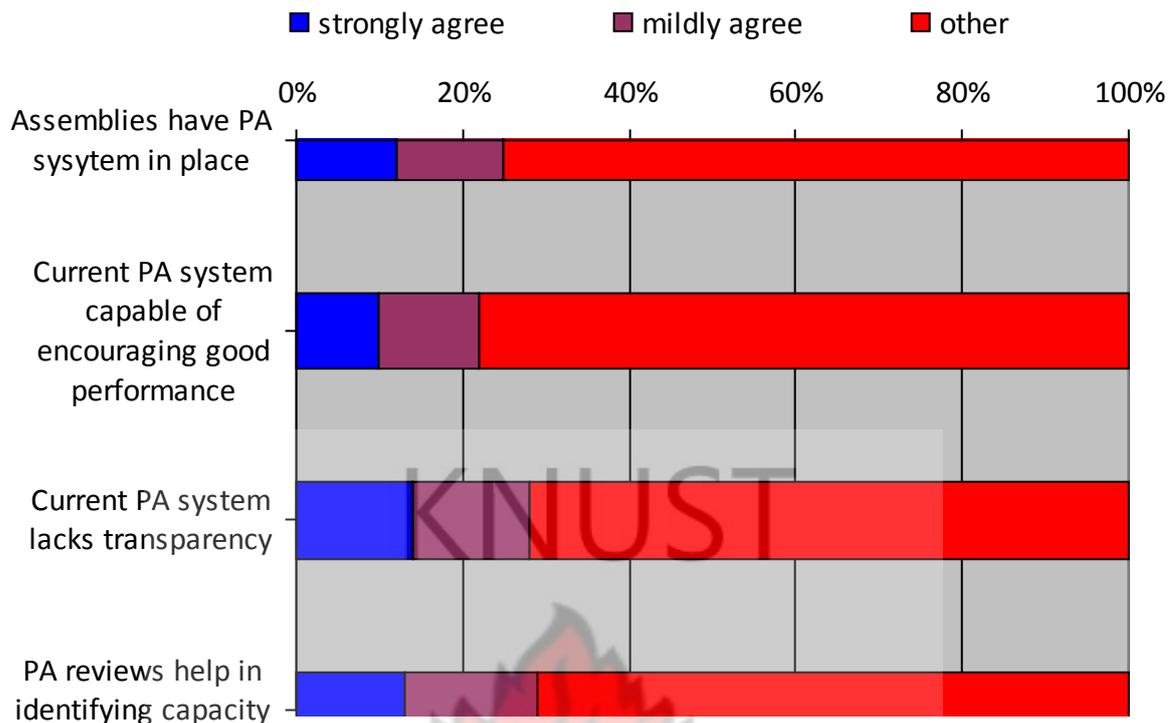
Figure 4.2: State of Performance Appraisal at the Assemblies (in percentage)

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The observations in Figure 4.2 above were inconsistent with the general propositions regarding the importance of performance appraisal for staff development in organizations. The importance of performance appraisal to the development of the capacity of staff of organizations have long been realised and insisted upon as it has been recognized as the process which: helps determine the efficiency of aworker in his or her job performance (Shelton and Darling, 2001).It provides mechanism for identification ofmerits and deficiencies observed in an employee in relation to his or her jobperformance (Lawler and McDermott, 2003).It also helps drive employees towards attainment of pre-determined goals at the end of a certain period. However, even though the observations in Table 4.4 are at variance with what pertains in other jurisdictions, they are consistent with occurrences at the local level in the Ghana (Mensah-Bonsu, 2003). In the Ghanaian

context, standards in terms of goals and objectives are not set as targets to be achieved by the district officers. Consequently, no or at best, minimal evaluations are done periodically to assess whether predetermined organisational goals have been achieved over the set period(Aikins, 2011) thinks this may be due to an embedded laissez faire culture eminent in the Ghanaian working environment where a lot of things are taken for granted. This therefore tends to have effects on the ability to build the capacity of local staff who would otherwise have performed more, and possibly better, if they knew their work or tasks would be evaluated at regular pre-determined periods. The desire to excel at the evaluation point, coupled with possible sanctions upon abysmal performance, would have motivated the staff to perform as expected thereby developing their capacity eventually.

4.3.2: Training of staff at assemblies

In order to examine the practices and policies at the assemblies that can lead to development of the human resource capacity of the personnel, trainings, including workshop sessions that have been organized for the benefit of the assemblies' personnel were examined. In this regard, statements were posed to the respondents who were required to assess staff training programmes at the assemblies and indicate whether they strongly agree, mildly agree, or disagree that such programmes ultimately lead to the development of the human resource capacity at the assembly levels. The responses from the respondents are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.5: Training of Assemblies' Staff

Opinion on Training at Assemblies	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Other
Training and workshops organized to enable staff do their jobs effectively and efficiently	42	45	13
Systems put in place to ensure that knowledge and skills obtained at trainings can be applied at work	38	47	15
Assemblies have feedback systems to know the impact of trainings and workshops	23	32	45

Source: Survey Data, 2013

From Table 4.5 above, it was revealed that the assemblies have run a number of training programmes aimed at sharpening the skills and competencies of the personnel. For example, In terms of training and workshops organized by the assemblies to enable staff do their jobs effectively and efficiently, 87 percent of the respondents (made up of 42 percent who strongly agreed and 45 percent who mildly agreed respectively) held that the assemblies have been holding training sessions and workshops for the benefit of its staff. Majority of the respondents (85 percent made up of 38 and 47 percent who strongly and mildly agreed respectively) also agreed that systems have been put in place to ensure that knowledge and skills obtained at trainings can be applied at work. Finally, more than half of the respondents also agreed that the assemblies have instituted feedback systems to know the impact of trainings and workshops on the performance of the staff. In consonance with the observations of Bolton (1995), training of staff of organizations is to lead to identification of training needs; providing requisite job skills and knowledge to employees; and applying knowledge and skills gained at training to work.

4.3.3 Job rotation and Job Enlargement for Employee Development

As part of assessing the strategies and policies applied at the assemblies to bolster the capacity of the personnel, the respondents were asked to rate whether they agree or not that the assemblies have implemented job rotation and job enlargement which has led to the development of staff capacity. The ratings revealed that 32 percent of the respondents strongly agreed, while 36 also mildly agreed that job rotation and job enlargement have led to an improvement in their capacity.18 percent were not sure about the impact of job rotation on their capacity while 10 and 4 percents disagreed mildly and strongly respectively regarding the impact of job rotation and job enlargement on their capacity. This observation is represented by Figure 4.3 below:
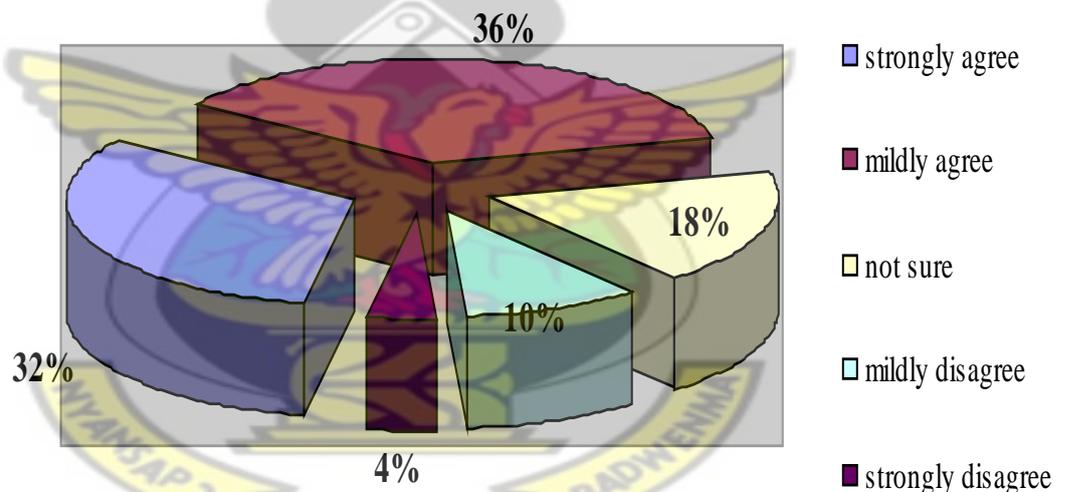
Figure 4.3: Job Rotation and Job Enlargement for Employee Development

Source: Field Survey Data, 2013

The above result is also consistent with the conclusions of Bolton (1995): where work-tasks are rotated among the variousemployees at least once a year, depending upon ones' qualifications and suitability to perform the task, it leads tothe broadening of the staff's field ofspecialization as well as their knowledge about the organization's operation as awhole. Their capacity is therefore built as observed in the results from Figure 4.3.

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3.3.4 Application of information technology (IT) in human resource managementprocesses at the assemblies

The respondents were also asked to rate the application of Information Technology in Human Resource Management practices at the Assemblies. It was also found out whether the assemblies have implemented any form of human resource information system (HRIS) in measuring the effectiveness of the human resource management at the assemblies. This was aimed at measuring the extent to which Information Technology has been adopted and operationalized at the assemblies to increase their human resource effectiveness. The result from this category of the survey is presented in Figure 4.4 below:
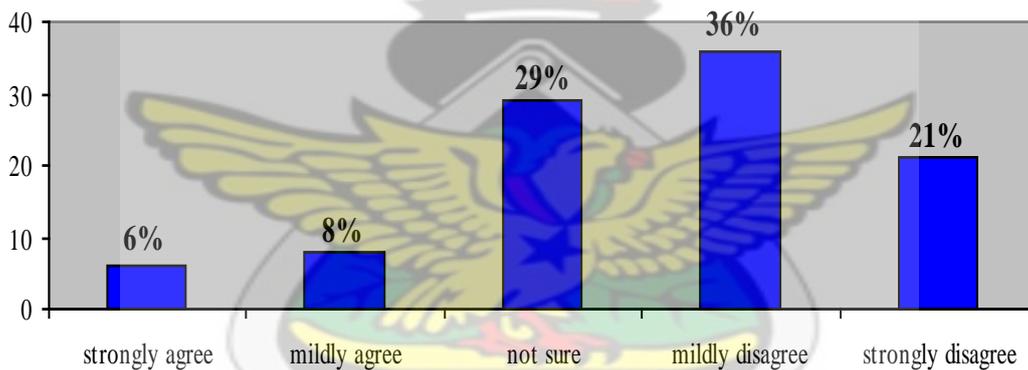
Figure 4.4: Application of IT in HR at the Assemblies (in percentage)

Source: Survey Data, 2013

From Figure 4.4, it was revealed that majority of the respondents did not agree that there was any form of Information Technology being applied to Human Resource practices in the two assemblies. Thus 57 percent of the respondents, made up of 21 percent who strongly disagreed and 36 percent who mildly disagreed that Information Technology has been adopted by the assemblies to ensure the effectiveness of Human Resource practices in the assemblies.

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4.4 Human resource management practices and formulation of district development policies

One of the objectives of the study was to assess the human resource capacity of the respondents in terms of their abilities to formulate district development policies. This was aimed at examining the Human Resource capacity as it exists now, and whether the current Human Resource policies and practices have been able to impact positively on the respondents when it comes to the formulation of development policies for the assemblies. To do this, a number of statements were posed to the respondents who were required to rate each of them according to the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statement.

It was found out that more than two – thirds of the respondents disagreed that thedevelopment policies of the assemblies are drafted outside the assemblies. This was represented as 36 percent who strongly disagreed and 38 percent who mildly disagreed, explaining that it is the assemblies who meet and formulate their annual policies to be used in developing the assemblies. 5 percent were however not sure while 11 percent mildly agreed with the statement. 3 percent of the respondents, on the other hand, also strongly agreed that the development policies were drafted outside the assemblies. Those that generally agreed with the statement (14%) explained that certain development policies were handed over to the assemblies either from the central government or the regional coordinating offices.

Table 4.6: Human Resource ManagementPractices and Formulation of Development

Policies (in percentage)

RANKING						
No	Statement	S A	M A	N S	M D	S D
30	Development policies are drafted outside the assemblies; i.e. national / regional	3	11	5	38	36
31	Assemblies' departmental staff have been drafting respective development policies	36	39	6	10	9
32	Staff do not have competency and skills to formulate developmental policies	8	10	15	35	32
33	Absence of key staff needed at assemblies to help in formulating of development plans	21	17	20	24	18
34	Capacities of assemblies' staff ought to be built to help in policy formulations	46	35	15	4	0
35	Trainings, PA, and other HRD activities have improved capacity of staff to formulate developmental plans	23	14	19	29	15

Source: Survey Data, 2013

Where SA =Strongly Agree; MA =Mildly Agree; NS = Not Sure; MD =Mildly Disagree;

SD = Strongly Disagree

The results from table 4.6 is thus broadly categorized into three where strongly and mildly agree are collapsed into 'agree' while strongly and mildly disagree are also collapsed into 'disagree'. The 'not sure' category is however maintained – giving three broad categories of opinions. This is thus expressed in Figure 4.5.
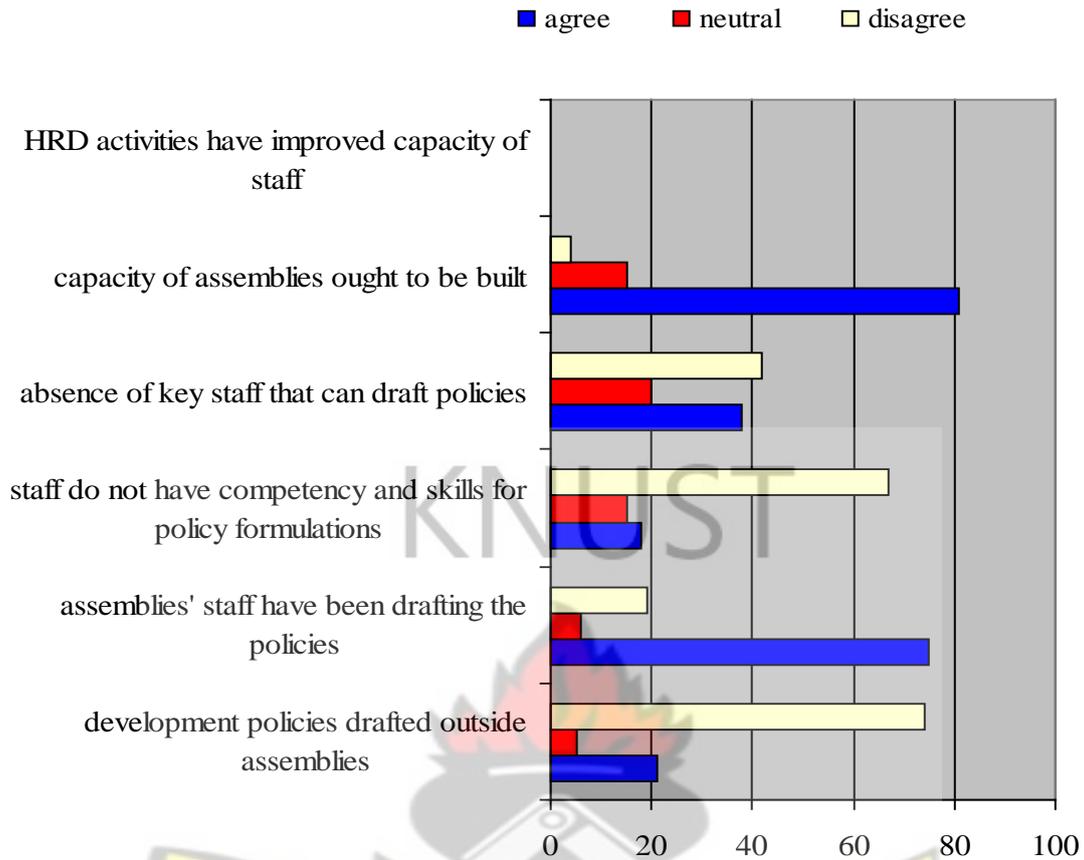
Figure 4.5: Human Resource Management Practices and Formulation of

Development Policies (in percentage)

Source: Survey Data

The study revealed, from Figure 4.5 above, that the assembly staffs have been drafting the respective development policies. This was indicated by majority of the respondents (75%) who agreed to the statement that Assemblies' departmental staff have been drafting respective development policies. It was found that this response was consistent with the responses obtained for statement '1', where majority of the respondents (74%) disagreed with statement that the district development policies are drafted outside the assemblies. Further consistency was observed in the responses provided by the respondents regarding whether or not the staff at the assemblies have the competency and skills required to

formulate developmental policies. In this respect, more than two – thirds of the respondents (67%) disagreed that the staff at the assemblies do not have the competency and skills required to formulate developmental policies.

In terms of two other statements in this category, however, there was neither consistency nor variation from the earlier responses, as it was revealed that the responses were spread across varying opinions. Firstly, in terms of absence of key staff needed at assemblies to help in formulating of development plans, 42 percent of respondents disagreed (made up of 24 and 18 percents who mildly and strongly disagreed respectively). On the other hand, 38 percent of the respondents agreed (made up of 21 and 17 percents who strongly and mildly agreed respectively) to the statement that there was absence of key staff needed at assemblies to help in formulating of development plans. Also, in response to the statement as to whether trainings, performance appraisal, and other human resource development activities have improved capacity of staff to formulate developmental plans (statement 35), the opinions were varying and spread across the respondents. 44 percent of respondents generally disagreed while 37 percent also agreed generally to the response. 19 percent were however not sure as whether the trainings and other human resource development activities have improved the capacity of at the assemblies' staff in terms of formulation of developmental plans.

Finally, it was found that majority of the respondents (81%) want thecapacities of assemblies' staff to be built to help in the formulation of policies. In this regard, 45 percent of the respondents strongly agreed while 36 percent mildly agreed that their capacities ought to be built to enable the staff improve upon their policy formulation abilities.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The study focused onassessing the human resource management practicesin district assemblies the Ashanti region. In order to fully accomplish the objectives of the study, quantitative methodologies were employed. The previous chapter provided the results and findings. This final chapter attempts to provide some conclusions drawn from the study. It covers the findings made from the analyses and discussion of the data in relation to the study's objectives and research questions. The chapter concludes with some recommendations.

5.1 Summary of findings

This section focuses on the research findings made from the analyses and discussion of the data presented in chapter four. In consonance with the objectives of the study, particularly regarding the nature of human resource management practices at the assemblies, it was found out that even though a recruitment and selection system exists which is effective and suitable in meeting the organisational needs of the assemblies, the assemblies usually rely on informal ways of recruiting employees. In this regard, it was revealed that the human resource management unit of the assemblies mostly relies on other considerations such as partisanship, nepotism and favouritism when employing staff for the assemblies. It was also discovered that the nature of the human resource at the assemblies consist of a number of workers who are positioned at where they ought not to be, and a management that is not too interested in developing the competencies and skills of the employees.

Furthermore, the study discovered, in terms of HRM practices for the development of the assemblies' human resources that, a few policies and practices that are deemed appropriate for developing the capacity of workers in organizations have been adopted while others have also been neglected. It was found out that the assemblies have not been subjecting the performance of their staff to any formal, transparent form of appraisal. Workers performances were also not reviewed. It was therefore found that workers lacked the expected encouragement that an appraisal and feed – back on targets and achievements could have offered them.

On the side of shortfalls, the study again revealed that the assemblies have not upgraded their human resource capacity to adopt and apply Information Technology (IT) to ensure the effectiveness of human resource activities of the assemblies. It was thus found that the respondents even had no idea of how IT systems are applied to manage the human resource development of organizations.

The study however discovered that other policies and practices that can positively impact on the human resource capacity of the assemblies have been implemented over time. For instance, it was discovered that a number of, mostly sponsored, trainings and workshops have been undertaken. These were aimed at improving the human resource capacity of the assemblies. Some, particularly junior staff, were also found to have been involved in job rotation also with the aim of equipping them with knowledge and experiences that can develop their human resource capacity.

Finally, the study found that even though the development policies of the assemblies are drafted by the assemblies themselves, there is still the need for the human resource

capacity at the assembly levels to be developed in order to improve their ability to formulate development policies. This, the study realized was the case because the assemblies had inadequate numbers of certain key staff with certain unique expertise which were required when it came to the development of policies for the assemblies.

5.2 Conclusions of the study

First of all it can be concluded that the reliance on other considerations such as partisanship and nepotism has not helped the assemblies in recruiting the appropriate staff with the necessary expertise vital for formulating the assemblies' development policies. It can also be said that this has led to the imposition of staffs as well as the putting 'square pegs in round holes' as far as appointments at the district and municipal assemblies are concerned.

Furthermore, it can also be concluded that the absence of performance appraisal systems to evaluate the performance of the staff against pre-determined targets, review employees' performance, as well as provide feed-back on the performance has not been helping in the human resource development of the assemblies. Performance appraisal systems therefore ought to be added to the already existing policies and practices such as trainings, workshops, job rotations, and others to fully develop the human resource capacity at the assemblies.

5.3 Recommendations

This section provides a number of recommendations arising out of the findings made and the conclusions drawn. First of all, in order for the assemblies to attract the requisite expertise and function professionally as expected, recruitment of staff should follow

professionally and lawfully laid down procedures, and rather be devoid of all other considerations that are not acceptable human resource practice.

Also, it is recommended that the management of the assemblies should be interested in developing the capacity of their staff to be able perform their mandated functions including formulation of development policies. In this regard, it is further recommended that the Resource Based View (RBV) be adopted in the case of the assemblies as this will provide the framework which leads to developing organisation-specific capabilities and competencies of the staff.

It is also recommended that the assemblies adopt a mix of human resource management policies and practices including the implementation of performance appraisal systems as well as the adoption of IT based approach in handling human resource management activities to ensure the full benefit that comes with the adoption of such policies and practices.

Finally, the study recommends that a further research be conducted into the labour turn over at the assemblies and how it impacts on the productivity of the assemblies. This is important because of the discovery by the study that recruitment and selection of assemblies' staff is largely done along partisan and nepotism lines. It thus follows that it is those who are favourites of those in power that are likely to secure employment at the assemblies. What happens to productivity when those who are not favourites leave or are replaced? It is premised on this gap in information that the study thus recommends that a research be conducted into how the labour turn over at the assemblies affect its productivity.

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5.3.1 Concluding remarks

In conclusion, this study has empirically explored the human resource management practices of district assemblies in the Ashanti region and how these practices impact on their capacity in formulating development policies. The conclusion that can be drawn is that human resource practices in district assemblies should not be taken for granted. Much effort should be expended towards a human resource development approach that leads to equipping assembly staff with knowledge, skills and competencies required for the formulation of appropriate local level development policies.

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KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

COLLEGE OF ART AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

PROGRAMME: MBA – HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

KNUST

QUESTIONAIRE FOR STAFF OF ASSEMBLIES

This questionnaire is designed to elicit information to enable the researcher assess the human resource capacity of local government institutions in formulating district development policies in Ashanti Region, using the Bekwai Municipal and Bosomtwe District Assemblies as case studies. Your time and energy used in responding to this questionnaire are highly appreciated. Please answer the questions as sincerely as possible. Your response will be treated with the utmost confidentiality that it deserves. Thanks for your co -operation.

SECTION A

PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS: Basic Demographics and Current Job Situation

Please tick (√) in the appropriate box and provide answers where spaces are provided

1. Gender: Male [   ] Female [   ]

2. Age: 18 – 30 years [   ] 31 to 45 years [   ] 45 – 60 years [   ]

3. Level of Education:

a) HND   [   ] b)Degree [   ] c)Post Graduate [   ] d) Professional Qualification [

]

b) Other (please, specify)……………………………………………………….

4. Marital Status: a)Single   [   ]   b)Married [   ]   c)Divorced/Separated [   ]

Current Job Situation

5. Assembly: a)Bekwai Municipal [   ]   b)Bosomtwe District [   ]

6. Department:

a)   Finance and Administration [   ]   b)Planning and Budgeting [   ]

c) Human Resource Management [   ] d) Statistics, Research and Development [   ]

e) Other (please, specify) …………………………………………………….

7. Designation at Department

a) Junior Officer [   ] b)Senior Officer [   ] c)Management [   ]

d) Other (specify) …………………………………………………………………

8. How long have you been working with the Assembly?

a) Below 1 year [   ]   b) 2 – 5 years [   ]   c) 6 – 10 years [   ]

b) Above 10 years [   ]

9. Do you have any previous experience from another job?

a) Yes [   ]

b) No [   ]
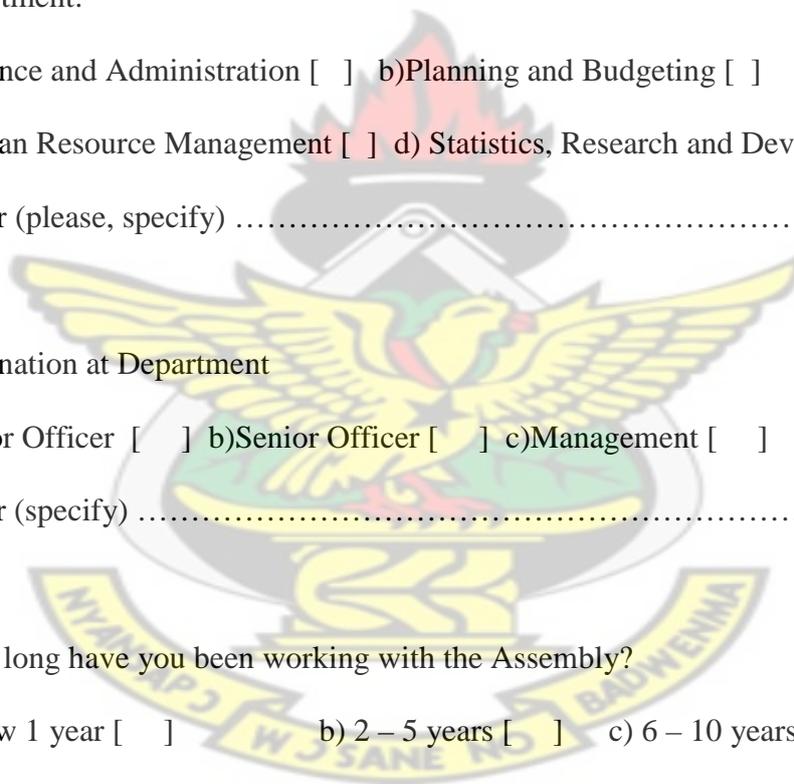
SECTION B

NATURE OF HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY AT THE ASSEMBLIES

This section examines the current nature of human resource capacity at the assemblies under study.Please show how important each of the following factors were in your decision by indicating the number that best represents your view. 1 = strongly agree; 2 = mildly agree; and 3 = not sure; 4= mildly disagree; 5 = strongly disagree

No	Factor	RANKING				
		Strongly Agree(1)	Mildly Agree(2)	Not Sure(3)	Mildly Disagree(4)	Strongly Disagree(5)
10	Recruitment and selection system at Assemblies is effective and suitable for organisational needs					
11	Placement of staff are done based on organisational needs					
13	Qualification and skills of staff considered before placement					
14	Internal recruitment and assessment process is effective in identifying the best people for the job					
15	Staff possess the competencies and skills required for the different job positions					
16	Staff are not 'square pegs in round holes'					
17	Management recognises and makes good use of					

18	employees' abilities and skills					
18	Management is interested in developing the competencies and skills of employees					

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SECTION C

POLICIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY

AT ASSEMBLIES

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This section identifies the policies employed at the assemblies for the development of the human resource capacity of the staff. Please show how important each of the following factors were in your decision by indicating the number that best represents your view. 1 = strongly agree; 2 = mildly agree; and 3 = not sure; 4= mildly disagree; 5 = strongly disagree

No	Factor	RANKING				
		Strongly Agree (1)	Mildly Agree (2)	Not Sure (3)	Mildly disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
19	Assemblies have some form of performance appraisal system in place					
20	The current performance appraisal system is capable of encouraging good performance from staff					
21	The current performance appraisal system lacks transparency					
22	The performance appraisal reviews help in identifying capacity development issues					
23	Training and workshops organized to enable staff do their jobs effectively and efficiently					
24	Systems put in place to ensure that knowledge and skills obtained at trainings can be applied at work					
25	Assemblies have feedback systems to know the impact of trainings and workshops					

No		Strongly Agree(1)	Mildly Agree(2)	Not Sure(3)	Mildly Disagree(4)	Strongly Disagree(5)
26	Job rotation and job enlargement are utilized effectively for employee development					
27	System in place to ensure that sudden exit of key staff has minimal impact on performance of assemblies attrition					
28	Implementation of Information Technology in HR for the benefit of both employees and the assemblies					
29	Human Resource Information System (HRIS) implemented to increase human resource effectiveness at the assemblies					

SECTION D

HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY AND FORMULATION OF DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT POLICIES.

This section examines the human resource policies that are employed at the assemblies vis a vis the formulation of local government policies for development of the communities. Please show how important each of the following factors were in your decision by indicating the number that best represents your view. 1 = strongly agree; 2 = mildly agree; and 3 = not sure; 4= mildly disagree; 5 = strongly disagree

		RANKING				
No	Factor	Strongly Agree(1)	Mildly Agree(2)	Not Sure(3)	Mildly Disagree(4)	Strongly Disagree(5)
30	Development policies are drafted outside the assemblies; i.e. national / regional					
31	Assemblies' departmental staff have been drafting respective development policies					

32	Staff do not have competency and skills to formulate developmental policies					
33	Absence of certain key staff that are needed at assemblies to help in formulating of development plans					
34	Capacities of assemblies; staff ought to be built to play all key parts in policy formulations					
35	Trainings, performance appraisal and other human resource development activities have improved capacity of staff to formulate developmental plans					

Any other Comments/Contributions

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Thank you

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