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## THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF PUBLIC PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT TO PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION STUDENTS

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**Dominic Shimawua Chiahemen**

Department of Public Administration,  
Faculty of Management Sciences, Veritas University  
Email: [dshimawua@gmail.com](mailto:dshimawua@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

The personnel or workforce of an organization are the key to efficient service delivery and without an adequate, skilled and well-motivated workforce operating within a sound personnel management system, the realization of organizational objectives is far-fetched, thus, as a student of public personnel management, an administrator or a manager that underrates the crucial role and underplays the importance of people in goal achievement (whether public or private sector) can neither be effective nor efficient. The recognition of the role and importance of public personnel management in the workplace has led to a demand for graduates who are trained and qualified in public personnel management who can advise organizations in this area, and the highest development of a career structure through which such an employees may rise to the highest levels of the organization.

### INTRODUCTION

The personnel of an organization combine all factors of production to produce goods and or services which are of benefit to mankind. Easily recognized as the most important of all organizational resources, the personnel or workforce of an organization are the key to efficient service delivery and without an adequate, skilled and well-motivated workforce operating within a sound personnel management system, the realization of organizational objectives is far-fetched, thus, as a student of public personnel management, an administrator or a manager that underrates the crucial role and underplays the importance of people in goal achievement (whether public or private sector) can neither be effective nor efficient.

### PUBLIC PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Public Personnel Management as a field of study has undergone considerable development in the past 40 years. Personnel professionals now have available a wide range of techniques which they can apply toward the efficient acquisition, allocation, and development of human resources – human resource planning, job analysis, selection, appraisal, training, and labour management

relations. The field of public personnel management is growing in importance as organizations of all kinds increasingly focuses on the role of employees in organizational culture and performance. Competent employees are critical to the introduction and retention of quality goods and services, customer satisfaction, and long term organizational viability.

Students of public personnel management are employed as human resource specialists, generalists, benefit administrators, analysts, trainers, because they were taught on compensation, industrial relation, recruitment, performance assessment, planning and development to enable them acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively assist organizations in changing employee values, norms and behaviours consistent with emerging or new organizational dynamics.

If one analyses the term public personnel management, it is clear that the concept consist of the following three integrated elements:

- i) **Public:** This refers to the locus of the sub-discipline, that is, the terrain or domain in which it is practiced, namely the public sector generally (including commercialized public corporations, statutory bodies and local authorities), and the public service in particular (consisting of the central, state, departments and the provisional administration).
- ii) **Personnel:** This denotes the human resources – labour, workers, personnel, etc – who are employed in the public and private sectors and who are involved in service delivery in the society.
- iii) **Management:** This refers to those practices, activities and processes related to the marshalling of the human resources of an organization in order to contribute effectively and efficiently to the optimal achievement of predetermined organizational goals.

Public Personnel Management can therefore be define as ‘the art and science of policy-making, planning, decision making, organizing, controlling, and motivating human resources for securing, maintaining, developing, integrating, involving, compensating as well as enriching human environment for the blooming of human skills and capacities in a government owned organizations, in order to secure organizational and social objectives as well as employees’ satisfaction’.



## THE ORIGINS OF PUBLIC PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

The origins of Personnel management can be traced to the concern about exploitation of people working in factories during and after industrial revolution and was introduced through law of the land in most of the countries to deal with issues pertaining to grievances and welfare of the workmen. As the dynamics in relations between trade unions and management changed, the personnel management responsibilities consequently grew beyond welfare to other areas such as ensuring amicable industrial relations and effective personnel administration. During this period the emphasis was on formulating and monitoring conformance to rules and procedures. The world in the 1970s, saw changes in the competitive human resources environment brought about by growing competition, which resulted in availability of wide choice for customers and that in turn, gave a new dimension to marketplace – customers' preference, which in effect drives companies to continuously innovate and provide the kind of value to customer that competition cannot match.

With this shift in business dynamics, the realization dawned on companies that people and their knowledge is the only source of sustainable competitive advantage, as other resources related to materials, equipment, technology, finances etc have proved short lived in the absence of human capital capable of deploying these resources effectively and efficiently. Companies now bank on people's domain knowledge combined with their awareness of markets (customers' expectations & competitors' moves in particular) for developing innovative new products & services and thus creating enhanced value proposition for customers. This marked change in attitude of managements saw the emergence of concept of Public Personnel Management which characterizes implementation of personnel policies to maximize objectives of organizational integrity, employee commitment, flexibility and quality. The recognition of the role and importance of public personnel management in the workplace has lead to a demand for graduates who are trained and qualified in public personnel management who can advise organizations in this area, and the highest development of a career structure through which such an employees may rise to the highest levels of the organization.

## THE FIELD OF PUBLIC PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT AND ITS INSTRUMENTALITY TO STUDENTS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The knowledge, skills, abilities, and commitment of the members of the organization together constitute the most critical factor in the development

and implementation of work plans and the delivery of products and services without which the organization cannot accomplish its objectives. Consequently, the attraction, recruitment, organization, placement, development and motivation of qualified manpower (the personnel function of management) is a central responsibility of all levels of management, from the chief executive to the first line supervisor.

Secondly, Public Personnel Management as a course of study exposes students to the academic disciplines that underlie the effective management of human resources, and goes on to explore both theory and practice of human management activities. Such activities range from initial manpower planning, which reflects the broad long term aims of the organization together with its technological and labour market content, through resorting and then onto the training and development of individuals and teams, which will enhance their performance. How effectively an agency accomplishes its mission is heavily determined by the skill, determination, and morale of its employees hence public personnel management as a field of study avails an opportunity for future managers and administrators to be better equipped with managerial skills and capacities with which to effectively and efficiently administer in the future.

Thirdly, public personnel management as a field of study is important because it is a science that is concerned with the study of administrative process, government activities and independent variables. It is essentially the study of various processes and specific functional activities by the institutions that must function within a particular environment to improve the general welfare of society by providing products and services to it.

Fourthly, public personnel management is important as it focuses on the application of management practices and techniques in the public sector, that is, the management of personnel in public organization hence it includes an understanding of the particular political and government environment in which decisions and actions regarding the management of public employees take place.

## CONCLUSION

The importance of public personnel management as a field of study especially in the 21st century cannot be overemphasized because the effectiveness of any organization in general is a direct function of the qualitative individuals



(employees) who make up that organization. The recognition of the role and importance of public personnel management in the workplace has led to a demand for graduates who are trained and qualified in public personnel management who can advise organizations in this area, and the highest development of a career structure through which such an employees may rise to the highest levels of the organization.

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