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Human Resource Development: The Case of the Civil Service Sector in the Sultanate of Oman

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Abstract

Human capital is a crucial element in the production equation of any organization. Since organizations are open systems that ought to adapt to their dynamic environment within which they operate, human resources should be developed, nourished and empowered to shoulder their task.

This thesis explored the issue of human resource development (HRD) in the civil service sector in the Sultanate of Oman, a country situated in the Southeastern corner of the Arabian peninsula.

The objectives behind this research were to examine the following:

- To describe and define the Civil Service policy and practice of HRD in the Sultanate of Oman.
- To find out whether the human resource development function is used as a strategic tool in the process of strategic planning in the public sector for instance:
 - A) To what extent it is used as an approach to implement the nationwide policy of Omanization- a gradual and careful process of replacing expatriate workers with Omani nationals.
 - B) To what extent the personnel functions are geared to contribute to the HRD efforts in the public organization.
- To identify the challenges facing the public sector in its attempt to develop its human resources and consider possible ways / approaches for improving this function.

In order to attend such a framework the researcher adopted a qualitative approach in which various secondary data was secured from government documents, published interviews with high ranking officials, journal articles, and books. Such sources were subjected to an inductive process to draw evidences that support or negate the preset hypotheses. Among the hypotheses are the following:

- Despite the increasing importance that the civil service sector is giving to HRD, the outcomes of HRD activities are not evaluated effectively to ensure continuous improvements.
- The process of human resource development is adhered to as an activity rather than a strategic tool.
- The human resource development activities are partially applied, focusing on certain categories of civil servants.

The outcomes of this study were supportive to the laid down hypotheses. The study indicated that the human capital development is one of the challenges that is facing the civil service sector. Emphasis ought to put on ensuring proper planning for implementing the Omanization policy that takes into consideration the development that takes place in the environment within which such public agencies operate.

Human Resource Development
The Case of The Civil Service Sector
In The Sultanate of Oman

by

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B.B.A, Columbus College,1988

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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1999

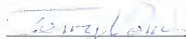
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Human Resource Development
The Case of the Civil Service Sector
In The Sultanate of Oman

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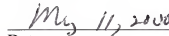


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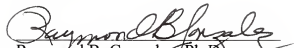


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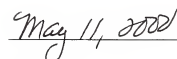


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Dedication

To those who have contributed to my education

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOELEDGMENTS	v
CHAPTER	
1- INTRODUCTION	1
2- METHODOLOGY	7
3- THE SULTANATE OF OMAN: A BACKGROUND INTRODUCTION	11
4- LITERATURE REVIEW	28
5- DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS	70
6- CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDDATION.....	112
APPENDICES	117
REFERENCES	118

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The human capital of each agency is undoubtedly an essential asset without which achieving the goals, plans, strategies and translating the mission of the agency to the desired results can not be attained. It is due to such importance that public and private organizations design the necessary recruitment strategies to attract the cream of the crop, keeping in mind not only the short-term goals but the long-term contributions as well. Because those who are appointed today are likely to be the leaders of tomorrow, organizations are setting strategies to retain their employees through various schemes such as training opportunities, career planning, motivation, and compensation and benefits geared to bolster their job commitment and create a sense of job satisfaction, hence loyalty to their employers.

For a developing country like the sultanate of Oman, a country situated in the southeastern corner of the Arabian Peninsula, with small population and formal education commencing in the late 60s and early 70s, the issue of human resource development becomes critical, especially that the country had to close the gap of the acute shortage of manpower needed to turn the wheel of development in modern Oman by seeking alternatives through various external markets. Such a decision had led to a wide diversity of the workforce since a wide range of expatriate workers of various nationalities, ethnic background and gender were employed. The country was keen to prepare and qualify the national human resources and set a long-term plan to nationalize the workforce through providing the needed education and training for the Omani employees and implementing a gradual and careful process of replacing foreign workers by national counterparts so that productivity levels don't lag. Such an effort fostered a nationwide policy of Omanization.

The issue of nationalizing the workforce however, is not limited to Oman. This issue has an immense focus all over the Gulf Countries. A seminar held in Abu Dhabi in May 1999 under the title "Nationalizing the workforce at the GCC countries: realities and ambitions" stressed that the issue of developing the human capital is one of the challenges these countries face. (Aledari, June1999)

This thesis however will focus on investigating the various activities and techniques or methods used for the purpose of developing the human capital and trace the practices adopted by the public sector in the Sultanate of Oman to achieve such a goal.

Statement of problem:

The human side of each organization is an essential asset without which achieving the goals, plans, strategies and translating the mission of the organization to tangible results can not be attained. It is because of such importance that public as well as private agencies develop the necessary recruitment strategies to attract the cream of the crop, keeping in mind not only the short-term objectives but the long-term contributions as well. Because those who are appointed today are likely to be the leaders of tomorrow, organizations are setting strategies to retain their employees through various schemes such as training opportunities, career planning, motivation, and compensation and benefits geared to bolster their job commitment and create a sense of job satisfaction hence, loyalty to their employers.

For a developing country like the Sultanate of Oman, a country situated in the Southeastern corner of the Arabian Peninsula, with a small population and its formal education commencing in the late 60s and early 70s, the issue of human resource development becomes critical, especially that the country had to close the gap of the acute shortage of manpower needed to turn the wheel of development in modern Oman by seeking alternatives through various external labor markets. Such a decision has led to a wide diversity of the workforce since a wide range of expatriate workers of various nationalities, ethnic background, and gender were employed. In addition to concern for

preparing and qualifying the national human resources and setting a long-term plan to nationalize the workforce through providing the needed education and training for the Omani employees and implementing a gradual and careful process of replacing foreign workers by national counterparts so that productivity levels don't lag. Such efforts fostered a nationwide policy of Omanization.

This thesis will focus on investigating the various activities and techniques or methods used for the purpose of developing the human capital and trace the practices adopted by the public sector in the Sultanate of Oman to achieve such goal. Therefore, in such quest it will be confined to agencies that adhere to the Civil Service Law and its relevant regulations .

Topic Relevance and Logic of Research:

The thesis was undertaken by the researcher in partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Public Administration. The purpose of the study is primarily to examine the issue of human resource development and how it is adhered to in the public sector in Oman.

Since the Sultanate of Oman is a low populated country, managing and developing the available human resources in the public sector is a matter of paramount importance .The logic behind initiating this research is fivefold:

- The researcher's interest in the issue of human resources development as well as his experience as an employee of a public agency in the Sultanate of Oman.
- The researcher's desire to incorporate the concepts and theories learned in the Master of Public Administration program to find out how such concepts which are a product of western thinking are applicable within the organizational cultures of the public sector in Oman.
- In view of the Gulf Countries attempt to nationalize their workforce to reasonable levels, the subject presents itself as the talk of the hour in the region. In addition

- Due to the accelerated changes that are taking place all over the world, HRD is attracting global attention .
- To pave the way for future comparative study of the same issue within the Gulf countries.

Objectives:

Since Oman has a small population and depends considerably on expatriate labor, the need for developing and utilizing its available human resources effectively and efficiently is an obvious and critical requirement for development. Elaborating on this statement, the objectives of this research are as follows:

- To describe and define the Civil Service policy and practice of HRD in the Sultanate of Oman.
- To find out whether the human resource development function is used as a strategic tool in the process of strategic planning in the public sector, for instance:

A) To what extent it is used as an approach to implement the nation-wide policy of Omanization -- a gradual and careful process of replacing expatriate workers with Omani nationals.

B) To what extent the personnel functions are geared to contribute to the HRD efforts in the public organization.

- Identify the challenges facing the public sector in its attempt to develop its human resources and consider possible ways/ approaches for improving this function.

Hypotheses:

- This study presumes that the human resource development ought to be considered a strategic tool which should be used by the organization to achieve its mission and the preset strategies to accomplish it. Based on such conceptual framework the hypotheses of the study are as follows:

- Despite the increasing importance that the Civil Service Sector is giving to HRD, the outcomes of HRD activities are not evaluated effectively to ensure continuous improvements.
- The process of human resource development is adhered to as an activity rather than a strategic tool.
- The human resource development activities are partially applied, focusing on certain categories of civil servants.

Delimitations and Limitations of the study:

One of the delimitations of the study is that it will initially confine itself to exploring the HRD activities in the public organizations that are governed by the Civil Service Law. Therefore, the study will exclude the following agencies:

- The Diwan of Royal Court.
- The Sultan Qaboos University.
- Agencies of a military nature.
- Quasi-governmental Organizations

The time variable has put a limitation on the outcomes of the study. Due to the geographical distance between the United States of America and the Sultanate of Oman, the researcher was unable to travel to Oman in order to carry out intensive interviews with key officials. On the other hand this study could have benefited from empirical surveys to trace the perspectives of the administrators and practitioners in this area. Therefore the findings of the qualitative approach could have been complemented by a quantitative approach.

Definition of terms:

- **Human Resource:** The employees who are working for the civil service.

- **Omanization:** The process of nationalizing the workforce by way of filling all the available jobs with national manpower. At the time being it is adhered to through an incremental and careful replacement of expatriate workers with qualified nationals employees according to preset plans.
- **Quatarization:** Steps to nationalize the workforce in the State of Qatar.
- **Saudization:** Steps to nationalize the workforce in Saudi Arabia.
- **Wali:** A district governor who is appointed by the Minister of Interior.
- **PBUH:** Peace be upon him.
- **H.M:** His Majesty
- **GCC:** Gulf Cooperation Countries: This agency was formed in 1981 to include Saudi Arabia, the Sultanate of Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and United Arab Emirates. These countries are gathered in such setup because they are similar to each other geographically and ethnically. They embrace the same religion and speak the same language (Arabic).

Organization of the remainder of the study:

Chapter two will elaborate on the methodology adopted in this study. The following chapter will provide background information about the Sultanate of Oman in order to illuminate the environment towards which the research study is tailored. The researcher is of an opinion that this section will enable the evaluators to appreciate the organizational culture within which the HRD issue is being researched.

Chapter four will be specified for the literature review. In qualitative research one of the formats is to position the literature review section at the end so that it can be compared with the outcomes of the study. Chapter five will be for the data analysis and findings while chapter six will be specified for the conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 2

Research Methodology

This study is concerned with tracing the human resource development activities within the public organizations that adhere to the Civil Service Law and its regulations in the Sultanate of Oman.

The study will be conducted based on a qualitative approach to adhere to the framework of research. "In qualitative methods (or approaches) the human and social sciences offer several traditions. These traditions may be method types for data collection, analysis and reporting, or overall designs that include all phases in the research process."(Creswell, 1994).

In the process the researcher will scrutinize various documents such as books, government documents, research studies, dissertations and published interviews or declarations of some high ranking officials in the Sultanate of Oman, in addition to relevant royal speeches of H.M Sultan Qaboos bin Said, the present ruler of Oman

(I) Data Collection Procedures:

Due to the geographical distance between the United States of America and the Sultanate of Oman, the researcher was unable to travel to Oman to collect the needed data as a result of other commitments. The researcher formed a network of friends who are working in different ministries within the public sector in Oman in order to furnish him with relevant data needed to conduct a qualitative approach in researching his topic. In addition he has conducted intensive library searches and benefited from various inter-library loan attempts.

The collected data were mostly secondary data and can be categorized in the following manner:

A) Government Documents:

Data in this category include the following :

The royal speeches of H.M Sultan Qaboos bin Said 1970-1995.

- Relevant data from the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth five-year development plans in Oman.
- The Civil Service Law and its regulations and amendments.
- Papers submitted to the State Consultative Council about the debate on the issue of Omanization in the public and private sector during the period from January 21-26, 1989 .

B) Research Studies:

In addition to the previously mentioned data, selected research studies which were sponsored by the Institute of Public Administration in Oman were chosen . The studies include the following topics:

- Selection for public sector jobs.
- Training needs assessment in the government sector.
- The development of administrative leadership in the civil service.
- Manpower utilization in the government sector.
- Performance appraisal in the government sector.

C) Articles, Studies, Published Interviews:

The study will also benefit from various articles and studies published in Aledari, a specialized periodical in administrative sciences published by the Institute of Public Administration in Oman. In addition, relevant articles and interviews were published in the local newspapers such as the Oman Daily, and Alwatan. The selection covers the following topics:

- Human Resource Development.
- Training.
- Omanization.
- Performance Appraisal
- Interviews with Officials.

D) Selected Master's and Doctoral Dissertations:

The data collected for the purpose of this study covered the selection of dissertations related to the topic being studied. The study will focus on the following dissertations, which will be fully documented in the reference section of this study:

- The Reform and Development of Civil Service in the Sultanate of Oman.
- Manpower Planning and Development in Oman.
- Human Capital Theory and the Motivations and Expectations of University Students in the Sultanate of Oman.
- The International Oil Market and the Economy of Oman.
- A Model for a New Faculty Orientation Program for the Sultan Qaboos University.
- Human Resources Management in Oman: A Comparison Between the Public and Private Sectors.
- Modern Oman: Economic Diversification and Omanization of Labor Force.

E) Books:

Among the collected data for the purpose of this study were books on the relevant subjects to this study written by Omani writers as well as others.

(II) Data Analysis:

The collected data will be subjected to an in-depth scrutiny. The researcher aims to reach certain interpretations from the data being studied that support or negate his preset hypotheses. "In qualitative methodology inductive logic prevails, categories emerge from informants, rather than identified a priori by the researcher. This emergence provides rich "context-bound" information leading to patterns or theories that help explain a phenomenon. The question about the accuracy of the information may not surface in a study, or, if it does, the researcher talks about steps for verifying the information with informants or "triangulating" among different sources of information, to mention a few techniques available." (Creswell, 1994).

Therefore, while analyzing the data, the researcher will follow an inductive logic in the process. The interpretation arrived at will be compared and contrasted with different sources as well as with the review of literature on the topic being researched.

CHAPTER 3

The Sultanate of Oman: A Background Introduction:

I- Geographical features:

Oman is comparable to the size of the State of Colorado in the USA, or the United Kingdom and Ireland (Miller, 1997).

A member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, The Sultanate of Oman is located in the southeastern corner of the Arabian Peninsula.

As a result of the unification of the two Yemens and the border demarcation with both Saudi Arabia and the Arab Republic of Yemen, the Sultanate of Oman is the third largest country in the Arabian Peninsula, with a land area of 309,500 square kilometers (Ministry of Information, 1997).

The Sultanate of Oman borders the United Arab Emirates from the northwest, Saudi Arabia from the west and the Arab Republic of Yemen from the southwest. In the northern most part of Oman “The Musandam peninsula, is separated from the main part of the country by a strip of some 80 kms, forming part of the UAE. Musandam peninsula commands the strategically important Strait of Hormuz through which oil tankers pass carrying most of the oil exported from the Gulf.” (AlYousef, 1995). From the East it borders the Arabian Sea.

The country's strategic position has put it in the attraction zone of the main powers in the sphere of foreign trade because it is distinguished by 1, 700 kilometers of coast line, not to mention that it is the gateway to the Persian Gulf. It overlooks the Arabian sea and is the meeting point of the two continents of the Indian Ocean, the Indian subcontinent and Africa.(Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry,1996).

Al Yousef,1995 , states “That Oman can geographically be divided into five main regions: The Musandam Peninsula and the areas mountainous range of the Hajar, the Batinah coast, the area between the southern end of the mountain range and Dhofar, the Salalah plain, and finally the area merging into the Rub al-Khali.”

On the other hand, according to Royal Degree No 6/91 issued by H.M the Sultan, the country is divided into eight administrative regions ; Muscat, Al-Batinah, Musandam, A'dhahirah, A'dakhliyah, Asharqiyah, Alwusta and Dhofar. Such a division was initiated in order to enhance social and economic development and improve the regional distribution of public services.

Oman is located "between latitudes 16 40 and 26 20 north and longitudes 51 50 and 59 40 East"(AlYousef,1995,Ministry of Information,1998).

Oman has a number of strategic islands such as Musirah Island, and various small group of islands called the Hallaneyat.

The Sultanate of Oman enjoys a variety of topographical features such as plains, wadis, mountains. The coastal plains stretch from Muscat,the capital city, to the boarder with the United Arab Emirates in the northwest, the remaining are the southern part of the country surrounding the city of Salalah. There are two mountainous regions: "The Hajar range runs from Musandam in the north to Ras-alhadd, the extreme limit of the Arabian Peninsula. In the south, the Qara range attracts the monsoon, which brings unique weather conditions and creates a special environment in Dhofar" (Ministry of Information,1997).

The remaining feature is mainly sand and gravel desert, which makes up part of the Empty Quarter.

The climate differs from one area to another. While it is hot and humid in the coastal areas during the summer, it is hot and dry in the interior. The higher mountains enjoy a moderate climate all through the year. Rainfall is generally light and irregular. "In Oman, temperatures reach into high 40s C in the summer months of April to September and usually do not drop below the high teens in the cooler months from October through March. In the north, average rainfall measure only 20 mm and occurs during December through March, despite limited rainfall, humidity averages 65% to 80%. Summer

monsoons create a more tropical climate in the south where rainfall reaches 45mm in July and August”(Miller,1991).

II- Historical Background:

Oman’s history extends far to the pre-Islamic past, but little is known about it. “Sumerian tablets refer to a country named Magan as a source of copper. It seems certain that they referred to Oman. Evidence from excavations near Sohar shows that the copper mining and smelting industry was developed by the year 2000 B.C.” (Ministry of Information, 1995).

The ancestors of the present day Omanis are believed to have migrated in two waves. The first was from Yemen while the other was from northern Arabia. The Omanis embraced Islam in about 630 AD.

Oman is a seafaring nation, the dhows of Oman have navigated through the Indian Ocean and reached India, Iran and even further to China. Omani merchants have also traded with the Gulf States, Yemen, and reached as far as East Africa. During their trips the Omani merchants exported dates, dried fish, limes and in return they imported food stuff, clothes and woods to be utilized for ship construction. Since 1498, Oman had been exposed to the ravage of non-regional power; thus, the coast areas of Oman fell under the control of Portuguese for a century and a half starting from 1507 to 1650 when they were driven out of country by Imam Nassir bin Murshid of the Al-yarubi dynasty which ruled Oman prior to the present dynasty.

It was in 1744 that Ahmed bin Said became the Imam. His election as an Imam signified the beginning of the rule of the Al-busaid Dynasty from whom the present ruler is descended.

During the last half of the eighteen-century Oman became involved in the British-French struggle for dominating the Indian Ocean basin. After evicting the Portuguese, the Omani stretched their domain and conquered the Swahili coast (now Tanzania and Kenya) and initiated the lucrative clove industry.(Miller,1991).

It was under Imam Said bin Sultan(1806-1856) that the Omani Empire prospered and its relations with Britain strengthened to closer ties. Oman was also the first Arab country outside of North Africa to establish relations with the United States of America in 1834(Miller,1991).

On July 23rd 1970, H.M Sultan Qaboos bin Said AlSaid, the present ruler, inherited an isolated and backward country, which was in dire need of massive development programs. The new ruler has channeled the revenue of the country's new wealth (oil) to finance the needed infrastructure projects and build a modern state out of a fragmented tribal society.

Upon his accession on July 23rd, 1970 H.M Sultan Qaboos to his people in his first royal speech expressed his desire to commence the development efforts. He stressed "I will proceed as quickly as possible to transform your life into a prosperous one with a bright future. Our country in the past was famous and strong. If we work in unity and cooperate, we will regenerate that glorious past and we will take a respectable place in the world."(Ministry of Information,1995).

III- Religious, social and cultural features :

According to the 1993 General Census of Population, Housing, and Establishments conducted for the first time in the history of the country, the population of Oman was 2.02 million. The natives form 74% of the total population, while the remaining are expatriate workers and their family members. The most populated region is the government of Muscat with a total population of 622,506 followed by AlBatinah region with a total population of 538,763.The most populated city is Salalah in the Government of Dhofar, the southern part of Oman, with a total population of 121,753. The government of Musandm is the least populated region in the country, with a population of 27,669 (AlYousef, 1995).

Arabic is the official language; however, English is widely used. The majority of Oman's inhabitants are Arabs.

Islam is the country's official religion. Most the Omanis are Muslims. They embraced Islam voluntarily in the second quarter of the seventh century A.D. "Omanis are tolerant not only of the beliefs of their Muslim brothers but also of many Christians in the foreign community who are allowed to practice their own religion." (Ministry of Information, 1998).

Oman and the Omanis are keen to preserve their culture. In 1976 a Ministry of National Heritage and Culture was established. The Ministry is keen to preserve ancient manuscripts, set museums, and restore historical sites such as forts and castles. In addition the ministry organizes numerous exhibitions at home and abroad to spread awareness about Omani heritage and culture. In 1995 an Omani cultural exhibition was held at the capitol in Washington. "In 1996, The Ministry participated in exhibitions in the United States, UK, France, Belgium, Italy, Egypt, Morocco, Abu Dhabi as well as in local cultural events and displays." (The Ministry of Information, 1998).

IV- Economic features:

After a period of isolation that led to backwardness and poverty, Oman is widely recognized in the world today . It has joined both the League of the Arab States and the United Nations in 1971. In the same year Oman also became a member of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) . Within the region Oman is also a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) as well as the Indian Ocean Rim for Regional Cooperation. (Ministry of Information, 1998).

In 1996, Oman attended the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting as an observer and expected to be a member of WTO by the end of this year. (Oman Daily News, February, 25 1999).

Oman's economy was profoundly changed by the export of oil in 1967. Until then the main exports consisted of dates, limes, and fish, in addition to copper and frankincense which were quality products to the civilized world. The principal imports then consisted of basic foodstuff, cotton goods and other essential goods such as wood which is utilized in the construction of ships.

After a prosperous period Oman went into a recession, precipitated by the introduction of steamships in 1862 among other factors, that had led to a period of poverty and isolation. With the advent of oil which was discovered in 1964 and the accession of H.M Sultan Qaboos who succeeded the throne on July 23rd, 1970, Oman found a ruler who is willing to use its newfound wealth to unlock its potential. Therefore the Sultan and his government undertook a vigorous program of modernization which took into account not only the needs of the country for the main infrastructure projects but also the long term development.

The development of Oman adopted a gradual planned process in a form of a five year development plan. Today the country is undergoing the fifth five year plan which will end in the year 2000. The fifth five-year plan is characterized as the initial plan for a long term plan set for the economy of the country; it is named the future vision plan until the year 2020.

“ In June 1995, the Vision Conference: Oman 2020 was held in Muscat with aim of moving the economy into a new phase of development leading to higher growth and prosperity. The aims are :

- Economic and financial stability.
- Reshape the role of government in the economy and broader private sector participation.
- Diversification of the economic base and sources of national income.
- Globalization of the Omani economy.

- Human resource development and upgrading the skills of Omani workforce.”(Ministry of Information,1998).

By the end of this ambitious long-term plan the country hopes to diversify its economy significantly and lessen the reliance on oil .

The country enjoys a healthy trading activity with many countries around the world and is a member of many regional and international organizations. Plans are set to make the country a reexporting center in the region.

From the inception of the development process, Oman put an emphasis on the necessity of diversifying its national income by supporting the traditional activities such as agriculture, fisheries and encouraging the exploration of potential mineral wealth which is being searched for and various sources of copper and chromate that have been already exploited. Oman has also concentrated on developing its financial sector such as banks and other financial institutions.

Oman has also introduced several policies the purpose of which is to encourage the role of the private sector in the process of development. It has also upgraded its investment rules to attract foreign investors as well (Ministry of Information,1998).

Privatization is considered one alternative for delivering public goods and services by way of delegating it to an outside source to shoulder it instead of the government.

“Privatization is a dynamic concept and means of changing from an arrangement with high government involvement to one with less; correspondingly, it means changing to an arrangement where a private sector plays a more dominant role.”(Savas, 1987,p. 88).

Bearing this in mind H.M the Sultan issued Royal Decree Number 42/96 (the privatization decree) which officially ratified the government of Oman policy of privatization. This decree authorized the establishment of plans to sell government assets to the private sector as well as offering concessions to private investors to operate and finance public services such as electricity, water, roads and telecommunications previously provided by the government of Oman.

According to such policy the government sold its shares in the National Insurance Company, Gulf Hotel Company-Oman, Raysut Cement, and Oman National Bank, and there are many others under thorough scrutiny such as Oman Aviation. The government also encouraged the private sector to establish, operate and finance projects such as sewage treatment plans, roads, and tourism-related projects.

The private sector was fortunate to get various subsidies and grants from the government to set the needed foundations to be able to participate in the development process effectively. The government has upgraded its investment regulations to attract foreign investors and encourage investment in various spheres and emphasized developing its light industry to pave the way to foreign investment and strengthen its economic relations with the rest of the world.

The government of Oman has entered into an agreement with an American company, Sea-Land, to form a joint venture, Salalah Port Services, to develop and operate a US \$ 250 million container port at the Port of Raysut in Salalah under a 30-years operating agreement. The government intends to offer 40% of the shares of the joint venture to the public on the Muscat Securities Market. This port was actually opened in 1974 as a small port in the southern region of the country but this agreement will lead to massive expansion. The port has started its operation under the new agreement in November, 1998. (Oman Daily News, July 23,1998).

Oman's economy has witnessed a restructuring process and has positively cultivated itself to the accelerated change in the new world economic order in which the open economy is widely advocated, especially in developing countries.

V- The Evolution of the Civil Service:

The Civil Service System is a product of the modern state which had emerged in Oman under the leadership of H.M Sultan Qaboos bin Said since 1970. Prior to 1970, the country's affairs were attended to through a very traditional administrative style. Oman

lacked basic administrative, social, and economic structures. AlMuharami,1993 ,stated that “before he was overthrown, Sultan Said’s civil employees totaled 1,750, including the Ministry of Interior (Nadharat al Dakhiliya), the governor of the capital’s office, expatriate advisers, walis, judges and administrative clerks. Each head of a department or agency was empowered to appoint directly the employees needed for his official office. Although the capability and skill of the applicant was indicated as a prerequisite for the appointment, selection was based on the applicant’s age, loyalty, and social conduct rather than educational qualification or generally speaking, the merit principle.” (AlMuharami,1993).

In 1973, a Civil Service Department was formed and was attached to the Sultan’s Diwan. To bolster this unit with a professional backing, an expert in personnel administration was seconded to the government of Oman from the United Nations.

In 1975 H.M the Sultan issued Royal Decree No. 3 in January 1975 in order to set up a special committee to study and organize the country’s administrative institutions . The outcomes of this study resulted in two drafts, one with regards to the administrative structure of the government, while the other was on a civil service law, both of which were approved and issued. The existing civil affairs are attended to through the Civil Service Council, the Ministry of Civil Service, and the Institute of Public Administration. (AlMuharami,1993).

A- The Civil Service Council:

This Council was established by Royal Decree No. 28 of 1975. The law emphasizes that the Council’s duties, apart from its other main functions, are to modernize and improve the civil service rules and the regulations of government ministries and other public agencies which operate under its supervision.

Article 2 of Royal Decree No.18 of 1988 laid down the overall responsibilities of the Civil Service Council:

- (a) Establishing the general policies of Civil Service activities in the light of the country's development requirements, and passing them on to the Council of Ministers for ratification.
- (b) Ratifying the proposed laws and regulations of the Civil Service as well as its programs, and unified salary scales submitted by the Ministry of the Civil Service.
- (c) Carrying out the modification of the Executive Regulation of the Civil Service law according to Article 4 of law 8 of 1980
- (d) Ratifying administrative development plans and job reforms put forward by the Ministry of the Civil Service.
- (e) Ratifying the appointment of the Special Scale personal governed by Civil Service Law and determining their levels, grades, and salaries.
- (f) Ratifying the grant of the extras stipulated in Article 57 of the Executive Regulation of the Civil Service Law in accordance with the procedures and conditions therein.
- (g) Raising the minimum level of pensions and granting exceptional pensions in accordance with individual cases stipulated in the law pertaining to pensions and post-service rewards.
- (h) Investigating the complaints of employees and writing reports thereon.
- (i) Preparing annual reports to be put before the Council of Ministers on the condition of the administrative apparatus in the state in the light of the laws and regulations of the Civil Service, with any proposed modifications.

The same Royal Decree defined the responsibilities of the Chairman of the Civil Service Council as:

- (a) The formation of the Central Disciplinary Council and investigation of complaints against its rulings in accordance with the law and regulations of the Civil Service.
- (b) Fixing the dates of vacations and public holidays and the start and the end of the working day in accordance with the Civil Service law and Regulations.

(c) Heading the pension and rewards fund as specified in the pensions and post-service rewards law.

Article 1 of Royal Decree No.18 of 1988 defines the membership of the Civil Service Council as follows:

Chairman : The Minister of the Diwan of the Royal Court

Deputy chairman : The Minister of the Civil Service

Member: The Minister of Education and Youth

Member: The Minister of Social Affairs and Labor

Member: The Minister of General of the Legal Bureau

Member: The Deputy of the Minister of Palace Affairs

Member: The Secretary to Cabinet

Member: The Secretary-general of Civil Service Council.

B- The Ministry of Civil Service:

This ministry was formed in 1988 to succeed the Bureau of Personnel Affairs. In 1992 a Royal Decree identified the functions of the Ministry of Civil Service. As a public agency this ministry adheres to the following functions:

(a) Implementing public policies of the Civil Service.

(b) Proposing draft laws pertaining to the Civil Service and preparing regulations and unified scales for salaries, increments, and expenses to be put before the Civil Service Council.

(c) Formulating administrative development plans and those of job reforms and putting them before the Council of Ministers for ratification.

(d) Planning administrative training programs in co-operation with the responsible authorities.

(e) Investigating the problems of the Civil Service and suggesting solutions for them in the light of current laws and regulations and the dictates of public welfare.

(f) Providing technical assistance and advice to the government apparatus in personnel affairs, e.g. the classification of jobs, their scales and the simplification of procedures, in-service training, etc.

(g) Supervising the implementation of the Civil Service Law and regulations by all government units under its jurisdiction.

(h) Implementing the superannuation and pension laws and regulations.

(i) Distributing graduates and study grants holders in accordance with the laws, also other graduates and school leavers, according to their specialization and the actual needs and priorities which serve the goals of the state's development plans.

(j) Other responsibilities specified for the Personal Affairs Bureau.

(k) Ensuring the training of Omani employees of the ministry.

(n) Functioning through its various units in accordance with its laid down rules and regulations.

C- The Institute of Public Administration:

The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) was formed by Royal Decree 1977. This Institute is an independent agency, under the supervision of The Ministry of Civil Service since 1988.

This Institute provides training programs directed toward enhancing the knowledge, skills and abilities of the national employees. In addition it provides research and consultancy services to various government agencies and conducts and participates in conferences dealing with the prevailing administrative issues.

The Institute also publishes a periodical journal called "AlEdari" in which various studies on administration sciences are published. This agency plays a vital role in the efforts made to meet organization targets in the public sector. "Training programs for senior civil servants, including under-secretaries and directors general are arranged as well as courses for staff at lower levels in government. Courses in accountancy, statistics

and English language proficiency are some of the subjects offered by the IPA.”(Ministry of Information, 1998).

Even though IPA is located in Muscat and has no branches outside, it conducts training courses in Salalah, Sohar and Burial as well. IPA plans to conduct 110 training programs in 1999. The training activities cover areas such as public administration, financial administration, writing skills, information technology, English, scientific research, statistics and library science. (Institute of Public Administration, 1999).

IPA main objectives are:

- (a) To set up and implement training programs for all levels of government officials.
- (b) To conduct theoretical and practical research in the field of public administration and to provide administrative advisory service to government ministries, and to other public authorities.
- (c) To hold seminars and conferences in order to discuss and exchange ideas and knowledge about administration problems and to provide special recommendations which suit the local environment.
- (d) To establish a specialized library with emphasis on administrative science as well as to provide material needed by readers and researchers.
- (e) To exchange administrative literature, ideas and experience with relevant institutes within the Sultanate and abroad.
- (f) To issue periodicals, bulletins and other publications concerning the activities of the Institute and to promote administrative awareness in the Sultanate. (Al Muharami, 1993).

VI- The Current Government Structure

The system of government in the Sultanate of Oman is monarchical. His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said AlSaid has been the Sultan (ruler) since 1970 and the administrative system of his Government is comprised of the following:

- (1)The council of ministers

It is considered the highest executive authority, getting its executive power from His Majesty the Sultan who is also considered the prime minister as well as the in charge of defense, foreign affairs, and finance. H.M the Sultan authorizes laws and decrees and in turn, international treaties, agreements and charters signed and approved by His Majesty the Sultan become law from the date of their publications in the official gazette.

The public administration was established according to ministries to cover all aspects of socio-economic development. The Council of Ministers consist of 29 agencies. Each one is responsible for setting the necessary policies and regulations, which organize the process of achieving the main objectives for which they were established. In addition both the governor of Muscat and the governor of Dhofar are members of the Council of Ministers.

The preparation of royal decrees and reviewing all draft laws, regulations and ministerial decisions before being published in the official gazette falls under the responsibilities of the Ministry of Legal Affairs which was established in 1994. It also drafts international agreements and government contracts.

The most important piece of legislation to be enacted in 1996 was the Basic Statute of the State which is intended to provide a solid basis for political and social stability in addition to guaranteeing the rights and freedom of individuals. (Ministry of Information,1988).

The Specialized Councils

Several specialized councils were introduced to facilitate interministerial relations such as following:

- (1)Financial Affairs and Energy Resources Council.
- (2)The Tender Board.
- (3)The Defense Council.
- (4)The Civil Service Council.

The council of Oman

This council was established by royal decree 86/97 in accordance with the basic statute of the state. It consists of two branches:

(1) State Council:

This council consists of members who are appointed by H.M the Sultan. The members are authorized to examine legal, economic, and social issues. The council offers advice to H.M.the Sultan and works in coordination with Majlis Alshura. In this regard the council conducts meetings periodically to discuss the issues scheduled in its agenda. Members of the council are free to express their opinions during the meetings. The council organizational structure consists of the following:

- President of the Council.
- Executive Office.
- Committees
- The Secretariat.

Unlike Alshura Council's discussion, the State Council's discussion remains limited to its members only; therefore, it is not announced publicly.

(2) Majlis Alshura (Consultative Council)

Majilis Alshura came to succeed the state Consultative Council that was in effect from 1981 as a channel of more participation in the government. The first Consultative Council was inaugurated with 59 members who were appointed by royal decree. The council members have increased in the 1994 election as a result of the national census held in December 1993. Districts with a population of 30,000 people or more elected four candidates from whom two were selected to serve as members of the council but districts with lower population continued to nominate two of whom one is selected to represent that particular district. Since 1994 women entered the arena of political participation for the first time and two women were selected to represent their districts. The duties of this council are as follows:

- (a) Reviews all social and economic draft laws prepared by ministries before their enactment.
- (b) Participates in the efforts towards the conservation of the environment.
- (c) Gives its opinions on general policies presented by the Cabinet of Ministers.
- (d) Participates in the preparation and implementation of government plans.
- (e) Reviews public service utilities and makes recommendations regarding their modifications and development.
- (f) Identifies obstacles to economic development and recommends methods to solve them.

Local Government in the Sultanate of Oman

The structure of the local government in the Sultanate of Oman has witnessed a rapid advancement. Royal Decree No. 6/91 for the approval of the administrative division of the country reveals that there are eight regions. The motive behind this step as indicated in the decree is to energize the economic development in the country, facilitate the process of spreading the services all over the country and introduce measures for disciplined selection of members of Majlis Alshura (Consultative Council) who will eventually represent their respective districts.

These regions are as follows:

- Governate of Muscat
- Governate of Dhofar
- Governate of Musandam
- Albatinah Region
- Aldhakilia Region
- Alsharqia Region
- Aldhahirah Region
- Alwusta Region

Under each of these regions came several districts. (The Official Gazette, 1991).

The pattern of local government in the Sultanate of Oman has two distinct features:

- Administrative organizations in the form of governates and regions that differ in the scope of their authority in accordance to their geographical location, size of the population, and the local government traditions, in addition to the requirements of the socio-economic development.
- Municipal organizations through which municipal services are rendered to the citizens in their respective place.

CHAPTER 4

Literature Review:

Each organization, public or private, has a human factor as a component of the productivity equation. An organization is defined as “A deliberate arrangement of people to accomplish some specific purpose” (Robbins and Coulter, p.1999). It can be inferred from the previous definition that an organization has the following characteristics:

- A specific purpose: This element is usually expressed in terms of goals that a particular agency seeks to accomplish.
- People : Each organization must have people to achieve the preset goals.
- Structure: Each organization must design the structure that suits its purpose so its employees can do their work. The structure can be flexible and open or it could be traditional but regardless of the type of organizational structure arrangement, an organization must have a deliberate structure to clarify its employee’s relationships.

(Robbins and Coulter,1999 p.18).

The key element of an organization is not a building or a set of policies and procedures; organizations are made up of people and their relationships with one another. An organization exists when people interact with one another to perform essential functions that help attain goals. Recent trends in management recognize the importance of human resources, with most new approaches designed to empower employees with greater opportunities to learn and contribute as they work together toward a common goals. (Daft, 1998 p.8).

In stressing the continuous need for organizations Drucker assures that “organization will be needed even more than before. Precisely because there will be much ambiguity, so much flexibility, so much variation, far more clarity will be needed in respect to mission, values, and strategy ; in balancing long range and short range goals in defining results. Above all, absolute clarity will be needed as to who makes ultimate decisions and who commands in a crisis.” (Drucker Foundation, 1997 p.4).

Drucker reiterates the importance of organization and stresses that “ the organization is however, more than a machine as it is in Fayol’s structure. It is more than economic,

defined by results in the market place. The organization is, above all, social. It is people. Its purpose must therefore be to make the strengths of people effective and their weaknesses irrelevant.” (Drucker Foundation,1997 p.11)

Groves,1998 states that organizations are likely to achieve their objectives when their manpower is highly trained and motivated. Without such attention to their manpower, their efforts will go in vain.

As a result of such emphasis on people , each organization specifies a department, a section, or a unit within its organizational structure to shoulder the task of managing the human resources of the organization. In addition each organization has its own culture that distinguishes it from other organizations. Corporate culture is defined as “the system of shared values, beliefs, and habits within an organization that interacts with the formal structure to produce behavioral norms.” (Mondy and Noe, 1990 p.189).

The issue of organizational culture is a crucial part for the achievement of an agency’s mission and goals. This element evolves from the example set by the leaders in the organization, from their actions rather than their talk. Factors that shape organizational culture include communication, motivation, leadership, organizational structure, administrative processes, organizational characteristics and management style.(Mondy and Noe, 1990).

Human resources management literally has several definitions. To illustrate the meaning and the scope of human resources management the following definition was selected:

Human resource management (HRM) is the organization function that focuses on the effective management, direction, and utilization of people, both the people who manage, produce, market, and sell the products and services of organization and those who support their organizational activities . It deals with the human element in the organization- people as individuals and groups, their recruitment, selection,assignment,motivation,empowerment,compensation retirement.(Tracey, 1994 p.13).

Approaches for carrying out the HRM functions vary from one agency to another. While some agencies have a centralized HRM department to adhere to such tasks supported by highly specialized staff, others have a decentralized set up to shoulder the same task. HRM functions can be classified into primary functions such as:

- Recruiting and selection.
- Compensation and benefits.
- Employee (labor) relations.
- Human resource planning
- Equal employment opportunities.
- Human resource development.

As well as secondary functions such as:

- Organization / job design.
- Performance management systems.
- Research and information.

(DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

Others classify such processes in a different fashion; for instance, Barton and Chappell, (1985) indicate that it can be classified into three categories as follows:

- Recruitment and selection.
- In-Service personnel processes which includes activities such as promotion, evaluation, training and pay or compensation.
- Separation: This category includes firing, dismissals, and voluntary separation.

Within the parameters of the non-military public organizations, human resource management functions are governed by civil service law and regulations.

In the public sector, human resource management in the USA is characterized by the following factors:

- Their motive is not driven by profit and they are not subjected to the competitive pressures due to the fact that their service is of a monopolistic nature.

- Due to the way power is distributed, managers are caught in a struggle between the chief executives and the legislative branch for controlling the bureaucracy.
- Policies that govern personnel affairs are set through an open process. The outcomes of such policies are normally influenced by the many players such as judicial, legislative and some executive branch organizations in addition to other players within its socio-economic and political environment. (Tompkins,1995).

A historical review of the evolution of the civil service in the USA reveals the following developments:

The early years after 1789 were a period of new beginning. “ In general terms the development of personnel administration has moved from a patronage system, dominated by the use of public jobs to reward political support, to a merit system, with emphasis on ability to perform effectively on the job.” (Barton and Chappell 1985 p.94).

During the formative years of the Republic, personnel needs were determined by both political loyalty and employee’s competence. “Traditions were established that the public workforce should be representative (geographic and partisan) and that chief executives have the right to select their own management and policy team” (Dresang, 1984 p.24).The Spoils System emerged in the Jackson Era. During that time the whole government workforce was continually changing after each presidential election. In addition public jobs were used as both an incentive to motivate the party workers and a means through which to collect campaign contributions from the appointees (Barton and Chappell,1985).

In 1883, the Pendleton Act set a firm ground for the merit system. Therefore, functions such as selection, promotion and retention were no longer based on a patronage basis; rather, they became based on open competitive examinations. The outcomes of such examinations determined the competence and the ability of an employee to perform (Dresang,1984, Barton and Chappell,1985).

Dresang,1984,stressed that “in part, the acceptance of the merit system concept was acceptance of Woodrow Wilson’s basic argument that there should be a basic distinction between politics and administration. He contended that politics involved values, conflict, and compromise and that the output was public policy. Administration, on the other hand, was technique, process and science. The task of administration was to implement public policy.” (Dresang,1984 p.26).

The adoption of the scientific management in the public domain led to a system of position classification, which was aimed at introducing equitable compensation. (Dresang,1984).

“ Beginning with the New Deal, professionals were relied on to provide directions to government agencies, new and old. These professional were needed by chief executives both because of their substantive knowledge and for their sympathy with the policy directions of the government.” (Dresang,1984 p.34).

The merit system had some negative effect , which called for a response. It has made it difficult to take needed actions to employees. For example, chief executives had difficulty transferring their employees to the most suitable places within the organization or remove those whose performance is unsatisfactory. (Barton and Chappell,1985).During President Carter’s era, the national government replaced the US Civil Service Commission in 1978.The commission was succeeded by three agencies. They are as follows:

- The Office of Personnel Management, which was assigned the administrative responsibilities of the commission. It was put directly under the supervision of the president.
- The Merit Systems Protection Board, which was assigned the task of attending to employee appeals.
- The Federal Labor Relations Authority which was assigned to shoulder labor management relations.

- In addition, the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 attempted to alleviate the negative impact of the merit system and illuminated prohibited personnel practices. Furthermore, it included provision for upgrading performance appraisal, merit pay as well as made it easier to dismiss those whose performance was not satisfactory. (Barton and Chappell,1985).

Another development was the Equal Employment Opportunity which was geared to overcome employment discrimination based on sex, race and other factors. Another development was “collective bargaining, the practice of involving employee organizations in making personnel policy.”(Barton and Chappell,1985 p.).

The1990s are witnessing a call for reinventing government. Advocates of such a movement call for giving managers more discretion to enable them to make things happen. They call for advocating an entrepreneurial spirit in order to transform the public sector. For such a goal to be realized government should be “ steering rather than rowing, encouraging competition rather than monopolies, being mission-driven rather than rule-driven, meeting the needs of customer not the bureaucracy, focusing on investing, not spending, decentralizing authority, not centralizing power, and so forth.” (Stillman,1996 p.42).

As one of the primary function of human resource management, human resource development (HRD) came a long way to be a distinctive field. “ HRD is the part of human resource management that grew out of the training function.” (Robert, 1999 p.3). HRD’s definition varies from one researcher to another. “The term human resource development has come to be used in many different contexts. This has led to confusion, with various groups and individuals applying the level to widely different activities.” (Nadler and Nadler, 1994 p.14).

Groves (1998) stated that often the departments name change but their functions remain the same. This is one of the problem HRD faces. Many yearsago personnel management was assigned “the responsibility of developing and implementing policies

and procedures related to the recruitment, selection, placement, classification, compensation, and appraisal of all the employees in an organization. If anything had to be done with regard to employee issues, it was commonly referred to the personnel department.”(Groves,1998)

By the mid 1980s this department’s name was changed to become the Employee Relations Department. In most cases such step was taken without changing the functions of the department. This marked the start of the name game. In the past few years, the title was replaced once again to become Human Resource Development. “The problem with the name game is that it sounds as if the department is being progressive, but actually no change occurs. The result is confusion in the minds of most company employees.” (Groves,1998).

The literature review reveals the following definitions for the term human resource development:

- “A planned, continuous effort by management to improve employee competency levels and organizational performance through training, education and development.” (Mondy and Noe, 1990 p.21).
- “An organized learning experience provided by the employer, in a specified period of time, for the purpose of increasing the possibilities of improving job performance and providing for growth of individuals.” (Nadler and Nadler, 1994 p.40).
- “The identification of needed skills and active management of employee learning for the long-range future in relation to explicit corporate and business strategies.” (Armstrong, 1988 p.47).
- “A holistic and integrated approach to improving work-related behavior, using a range of learning techniques and strategies.” (Megginson et al 1996 p.38).
- “ The organizationally based unit responsible for providing planned adult learning activities, services, and programs to members, individual and collective, of the

organization, for job or skill training, education and development.” (Chalofsky and Reinhart, 1988 p.13).

- “An approach for dealing with the human system in a company which emphasizes a flexible, human asset based, growth oriented approach for integrating various organizational functions for the purpose of improving individual, group, and organizational efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.” (Groves, 1998 p.5).
- The American Society for Training and Development concluded that HRD is “the integrated use of training and development, organizational development of individual, group, and organizational effectiveness.” (Grove, 1998 p.5).
- “A process of developing and /or unlearning human expertise through organization development for the purpose of improving performance.” (Swanson, 1995 p.208).
- “Set of systematic and planned activities designed by an organization to provide its members with the necessary skill to meet current and future job demand.” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.21).

As an activity HRD doesn't begin until the employee joins his or her organization; however, it continues throughout the particular employee's career regardless of his or her position. Its programs must be devoted towards job changes and it should integrate and utilize its resources effectively and efficiently. (DeSimone and Harris, 1998). The human resources development (HRD) process begins from the strategic plan of the agency which describes in detail the direction in which it is going, and the resources needed to achieve such goals. Human resource planning transfers these strategies to specific aims by determining the quantity and quality of people need in the future. After such steps have been identified, human resource development transforms such plans and raw materials furnished by recruitment and basic training through development programs to attain the organization's present and future requirements (Armstrong, 1988).

When tracing the evolution of HRD as a distinctive field, the literature reveals the following:

Miller stressed that “it is generally thought that human beings began amassing knowledge at the beginning of the Stone Age; as they invented tools, weapons, clothing, shelter, and language, the need for training became an essential ingredient in the march of civilization.” (Miller,1987 p.20).

For HRD, the pressures of the early years of World War II might be considered the era of the emergence of the field. Even then, the field was seen as “training ,”and it was not until 20 years later that it was broadened to “training” and “development” . It is only toward the end of the 60s that some recognition of a broader concept of HRD was seen. (Nadler, 1979 p.28).

HRD activities have always been with us. Most of the architectural achievements were made by one generation teaching another. Without such practice pyramids of Mexico and Egypt or the construction of roads and aqueducts by the Romans would be impossible to achieve.

HRD activities differ; while some were on-the-job, others took a formal instructional approach in order to reach the desired results which was transferred to us through the centuries. (Miller, 1987, Nadler and Nadler, 1994).

The beginning of HRD dates back to the early efforts of apprenticeship training activities in the eighteenth century. The “apprenticeship system was developed whereby an experienced person passed a long knowledge and skill to the novice, who after a period of apprenticeship became a journeyman or yeoman.” (Miller,1987).

In the absence of vocational or technical schools, the shopkeeper found it inevitable to educate and train their own workers. These workers embarked on their training to learn the particular craft for little or no pay until they mastered their assignment and became proficient in it. Such a training system was not restricted to artisans, rather, knowledge was transferred from generation to another in all walks of life. In fact this model was used in training physicians, attorneys and educators. In the case of lawyers, it was as recently as the 1920s that those who are apprenticing in a law firm were eligible to practice law after they successfully complete a state-supervised exam. (Miller,1987, DeSimone and Harris,1998).

The emergence of manual schools began in 1809 when Dewitt Clinton founded a vocational school that was privately funded in New York City. Such a school was devoted to provide the unskilled young people who were unemployed or had criminal records with occupational training. (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

It was in 1917, when Congress passed the Smith-Hughes Act, that the importance of vocational education was noticed. This act granted funds that were aimed for state programs in teacher training, home economics, agricultural trade and industry. (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

The advent of the industrial revolution during the late 1800s initiated the emergence of the factory schools. During this period scientific management principles stressed the importance of machines in producing better products efficiently. Although factories led to increase in production through the utilization of machines and unskilled workers, there was a significant demand for the engineers, machanicsts and workers and “skilled mechanics needed to design, build and repair the machines.” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.).

Toward the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the United States experienced an unprecedented wave of immigration. Some immigrants brought with them the skills they had learned in the old country. (Nadler,1979).

Both the apprenticeship as well as the factory school emphasized training skilled workers, hence very few companies offered such training opportunities for semi-skilled or unskilled workers. This phenomenon was not meant to last long. As a result of the introduction of the model T car, by Ford in 1913 as well as World War I more training opportunities were offered. In the case of the Ford model T car it was the first car to be mass produced using an assembly line, in which production required only the training of semi-skilled workers to perform several tasks.” (Desimone and Harris, 1998 p.40).

On the other hand, the outbreak of World War I had created a huge demand for military equipment; therefore factories had to retool their machinery and retrain their

workers, including the semiskilled, to meet the new demand. For instance, the U.S shipping board was responsible for coordinating the training of shipbuilders to build war ships. To facilitate the training process, Charles Allen, the Director of Training instituted a four-step instructional method referred to as “show, tell, do, and check” for all the training programs offered by the ship board. This technique was later named job instruction training (JIT) and is still being used today for training workers on the job. (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

- “From this time on, HRD was established under the label of training. In subsequent periods of economic difficulty, HRD was one of the first activities to suffer, creating the paradox in time of economic distress when there is a greater need for increased and improved performance, budgets for HRD have been reduced.” (Nadler, 1979).

As a result of the abuse of the unskilled workers including the children who worked in the factory system, four individuals advocated the importance of human factor to the organization. “They are Robert Owen, Hugo Munsterberg, Mary Parker Follett and Chester Bernard”(Coulter and Robbins, 1999 p.42).

This human relations movement continued to advocate a more humane working conditions. “The movement provided a more complex and realistic understanding of people instead of “cogs” in a factory machine.” (Desimone and Harris, 1998).

- The scope of inquiry of the movement expanded to the importance of human behavior to an organization’s success (Coulter and Robbins, 1999).

- The human relations movement continued in the 1940s. Abraham Maslow published his theory on human needs in 1943 and stated that employees can be motivated by noneconomic incentives. “He proposed that human needs are arranged in terms of lesser to greater potency (strength), and under conditions of equal deprivation, the proponent needs are the most urgent and persistent. Maslow also distinguished between

lower order (basic survival) and higher order (psychological) needs.”(Harmon and Mayer,1986 p.145).

- Douglas MacGregor who is associated with theory X and theory Y, on the other hand, was optimistic “about possibilities for merging individual and organizational needs in ways that would satisfy both.” (Harmon and Mayer, 1986 p.29)
- Chris Argyris “sees a lack of congruency between the needs of healthy individuals and the demands of formal organization. Management may consciously alter those demands in order to make them more congruent with the needs of healthy individuals.” (Harmon and Mayer, 1986 p.25). Theorists like Maslow, MacGregor and others emphasize the notion that organizations can motivate their workers if they appreciate and tap their worker’s varied needs and desires.
- Larger organizations established new training programs as a response to the emerging demand as a result of the outbreak of World War II. This period witnessed the establishment of training within industry (TWI) by the federal government. TWI was meant to be a service that coordinated training programs across defense related industries as well as allowing “trained company instructors to teach their programs at each plant.”(Miller,1987, DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.49). “By the time (TWI) ceased operation in 1945, it had been instrumental in training 23,000 persons as instructors and had awarded nearly two million certificates to supervisors who had gone through TWI programs in more than 16,000 plants, services and unions.”(Miller, 1987 p.29) Various defense-related companies established their own training departments with instructors trained by TWI. These training departments were assigned the role of designing, organizing and coordinating the training across their organizations. (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

The American Society for Training Directors was established in 1942 to set some standards within this emerging profession. In order to be a member in this organization a person had to meet the following requisites:

- A college or a university degree plus two years of experience in training or a related field or
- 5 years of experience in training.

Those who were working in a training function or attending college were permitted to be associate members (DeSimone and Harris 1998).

During the 1960s and 1970s there was a move toward more employee participation in many agencies. Such a move necessitates that trainers put emphasis on coaching and counseling workers. Furthermore, the training and development function expanded to include interpersonal skills such as problem solving, coaching and group process facilitation. “This additional emphasis on employee development inspired the ASTD to professionally designate itself as the American Society for Training and Development ” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.56).

Greater changes took place in 1980s impacting the training and development, which has led ASTD to approve the term human resource development to encompass this growth and change. (DeSimone and Harris,1998).

Since recruitment and selection is the cornerstone of the process of attracting qualified and skilled employees, it is very essential for strategic human resources management (SHRM). Organizations have many alternatives to fill their existing vacancies .They can either recruit new blood or attract skilled incumbent employees through promotion or transfer. In addition they can provide a low-level employee with the required training or educational opportunities to prepare them for the future needs (Pynes, 1997).

Recruiting filters both who joins the agency and applicant’s search process as a result of who applies for the job. “ An organization might try for the cream of the crop by setting stringent qualifications and spending a good deal of time and money looking for the best candidate. Or, because of a very tight labor market or the desire to reduce recruiting costs, the organization may consider lower-quality candidates, creating a larger

applicant pool. Research has found that although increasing qualifications reduces the number of applicants, it can increase their quality”(Milkovich and Boudreau, 1997 p.138).

In the public sector Peters, 1995 states that “Merit recruitment appears to imply the more mechanistic conception of administrators or bureaucrats as value-free administrators of programs who oversee public policies regardless of their intentions or impacts on society. It is assumed that sufficient technical criteria guide their choices and that commitment to a program or rejection of it has little influence on behavior.” (Peters, 1995 p.89).

Recruiting for HRD positions is faced with difficulties such as:

- The definition, for example, many manage budgets. Thus for recruiting HRD managers-managing people and developing budget out to be clarified at the outset.
- It is difficult to judge the quality of the graduate when the organization wants to recruit HDR professionals.
- Diversity of the backgrounds of potential candidate makes the HRD field peculiar. This makes recruiting difficult when a comparison is made among candidates.
- It is difficult to evaluate the work that a prospective employee should have done.
- Another peculiarity in the field of HRD is the temporary nature of many training positions. This makes it difficult to determine whether applicants are true professionals or they want to be in the position until they get promoted.
- Usually it is very difficult to assess HRD people in an interview because of the nature of their jobs, especially that they can communicate well, dress well, and be aware of the significance of body language. Such factors necessitate taking further steps to assess their capabilities accurately. (Brinkerhoff, 1987).

After the recruitment process is over, selection is the last filter prior to offering employment. At this stage an applicant’s characteristics are measured. Such a process helps in forecasting which applicants could be successful future employees.(Milkovich and Boudeau, 1997).

The organizational structure of the HRD function varies from organization to another. While some organizations adopt a centralized approach, others prefer to decentralize it. Organizational structure is suggested appropriately by the major strategy the organization embraces. Organizational structure will, hence, specify positions needed in addition to their responsibilities and reporting relationships and the relevance of HRD function to other functions in the organization. Validating the chosen structure is an essential step which ought to be examined based on principles such as “ specialization of work, span of control, impact of technology on required resources, necessary authority and responsibility to perform identified activities-formal authority, line authority, staff authority, functional authority, informal authority, unity of command, centralization versus decentralization” (Pittam, 1987 p.86).

As a final confirmation that the selected organizational structure is the most suitable to accomplish the mission and objective of the HRD functions, it should be subjected to the following questions :

- Whether it is appropriate to the size of the organization.
- Whether it addresses the need of a suitable employee population.
- Whether it avails itself of quality outside resources.
- Whether it eliminates weaknesses of existing structure.
- Whether it is designed to adhere to the present and future objectives of the organization.
- Whether it provides the means to accomplish the HRD mission and key objectives.
- Whether it is compatible with relevant organization policies and procedures.
- Whether it reinforces or supplements, existing HRD programs or should sit.

(Pittam,1987).

DeSimone and Harris,1998 identify three primary functions of HRD; they are: training and development, organization development, and career development.

(1) Training and Development (T&D)

This aspect of HRD concentrates on the improvement of the training on the trainee's knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs). While the training process addresses the issue of providing KSAs that concern a specific task or job, development, on the other hand, has a long-term focus that is aimed at preparing for future responsibilities and increasing the trainees' capacity and enhancing their current job performance. Training and development (T & D) activities start as soon as a new employee joins the organization. The initial T & D intervention is provided by way of employee orientation and skills training.

During the process of employee orientation the employee is briefed on important organizational values and norms. Work relationships are explained and the employee learns how to function in his job.

Skill and technical training provide the employee with a narrow scope focused on teaching him or her a particular skill or area of knowledge.

Once the employees master their assigned jobs, HRD activities should concentrate on development, especially coaching and counseling. In the coaching process, employees are encouraged to be responsible for their action, solve any arising work-related problems and strive to improve their level of performance. This process also involve treating employees as partners in achieving organizational and personal goals. Counseling, on the other hand, involves helping employees to tackle their personal problems that may impede their achievement in the work place. Such program may include addressing such topics as substance abuse, weight control, smoking cessation, and stress management. HRD developments should coordinate management training programs to provide managers and supervisors with the knowledge and skills they need to excel in their positions.

(2) Organization Development

Organization development (OD) is defined as "the process of enhancing the effectiveness of an organization and the well-being of its members through planned interventions that

apply behavioral science concepts.” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.43). This function of HRD focuses on both macro and micro levels of organizational changes.

Macro changes focus on the ultimate improvement of the organization’s effectiveness, while micro changes concern small groups and individuals. HRD professionals play the role of a change agent in this context. They consult with and advise managers on suitable strategies to achieve desired results so that change can be facilitated. “The HRD professionals may also be directly involved in carrying out the intervention strategy such as facilitating a meeting of the employees responsible for planning and implementing the actual change process.” (DeSimone and Harris,1998).

3) Career Development

Career development can be defined as an “on going process by which individuals progress through a series of stages, each of which is characterized by a relatively unique set of issues, themes and tasks.” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.45).

This function of HRD involves career planning and career management.

Career planning is concerned with tasks performed by an employee, with a help of a mentor and others who evaluate his or her skills and abilities so that a realistic career plan is formed, whereas, career management focuses on taking the needed action to achieve the preset plan. Career plans can be implemented through the agency’s training activities.

HRD programs can be used to “ address a wide range of issues and problems in an organization. They are used to orient and socialize new employees into the organization, provide skills and knowledge and help individual and groups become more effective.” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.48).

Mondy and Noe, (1990) state that organizations adopt a change strategy to adapt to the trends and developments in their external and internal environments. Once the need for change is agreed upon the HRD process adheres to the following steps:

- Determine HRD needs.

- Establish specific objectives .
- Select HRD methods.
- Select HRD media.
- Implement HRD program.
- Evaluate HRD Program.

On the other hand, DeSimone and Harris (1998) provide the following stages for designing HRD programs.

- Needs assessment phase.
- Design and implementation phase.
- Evaluation phase.

1) The Needs Assessment Phase:

An HRD needs assessment is defined as “a process by which an organization’s HRD needs are identified and articulated.” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.112).

It is an initial stage in the HRD process. At this point the focus is on identifying the difference between what the agency expects to take place and the actual performance of the employees. The outcomes of such assessment will set the stage for taking the necessary remedies to avoid such shortcomings. Needs can arise at three levels : the organization level, the job level, and the individual level. Therefore, the needs assessment efforts should take place at these three levels. Each of these levels measures a different aspect of the agency.

While analyzing the organizational needs calls for identifying where in the agency HRD efforts are needed and under what circumstances will they occur, “the firm’s strategic goals and plans should be studied along with the results of human resource planning” (Mondy and Noc,1990).

The job analysis clarifies what must be done so that the task is performed successfully. On the other hand, the employee analysis provides a clear picture about who

needs HRD intervention and what kind of HRD activity the particular employee needs.(DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

“An organizational analysis should identify : organizational goals, organizational resources , organizational climate, and environmental constraints . Each of these factors provides important information for planning and developing an HRD program ” (DeSimone and Hassis, 1998) .

Task analysis , which is sometimes referred to as operations analysis, is a systematic way of gathering information about a particular job or group of jobs to identify in what the employee involved needs to be trained in order to achieve the desired level of performance. The required data can be obtained through looking at the job descriptions, job specifications, standards of performance, observing the job, asking questions, reviewing literature about the job, and gathering inputs from training committee or conferences. Mondy and Noe, 1990 stressed that “if job descriptions are not sufficiently comprehensive, they may have to be expanded by adding job information. In obtaining task analysis data, managers may also refer to job performance standards as they observe work group performance. In addition, both managers and operative employees may be interviewed or surveyed to obtain suggestions.” (Monday and Noe, 1990 p.31).

The third level of analysis is directed toward the person. This level of analysis aims at answering two persisting questions of who needs to be trained and what sort of training he or she needs. The person analysis is compared with a preset standard. If the employee's performance is acceptable, he or she may not be in need of training. However, if the employee's performance is not satisfactory then further investigation will be required in order to determine the specific skills and knowledge needed to enhance his or her performance. Various other methods can be used for this particular analysis such as tests, assessment centers, and role playing. The outcomes of career planning can be quite helpful in this regard (Mondy and Noe, 1990).

Person analysis is best performed by someone with the opportunity to observe the employee's performance regularly. Traditionally, person has involved an employee and that employee's immediate supervisor. Depending on the nature of an individual's work, that employee's peers, customers, and subordinates may be in the position to provide information that can be used to identify person-level needs. In fact an increasingly common performance evaluation approach, called 360 degree performance appraisal, uses as many of these sources as possible to get a complete picture of an employee's performance (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.124).

Since HRD efforts have financial implications, the management and HRD staff have to prioritize the outcomes of HRD analysis. They will have to make a decision with regard to the needed resources to start their HRD intervention such as what equipment, materials, facilities, skilled employees, travel, and consultant fees (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

The process of prioritizing the HRD needs should adopt a participative approach, hence, inputs ought to be gathered from the various areas of the organization. This approach is likely to result in more employees' support since they will perceive the HRD efforts in a positive manner and will favor it because they will think that it is beneficial for them and the organization (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

“ One way to continuously reflect the need of the employees and assist in prioritizing needs is to establish an HRD advisory committee. The role of such committee is meet regularly and review needs assessment and evaluation data and offer advice on the type and content of HRD programs to be offered” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.125).

Such a committee should be composed of members from the various departments within the organization. Such diversity provides different ways of thinking about the HRD needs and broaden the support for the HRD efforts within the organization. (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

II) Design and Implementation Phase

Based on the outcomes of the first stage in the HRD process, need assessment should reveal to the planners where an HRD program is required and what kind of HRD programs are needed, for whom it is required and conditions under which it should occur. In addition the first stage will reveal to the top management and HRD staff the priority of such needs.

The key activities involved in designing and implementing an HRD program are: setting objectives; selecting the trainer or vendor; developing a lesson plan; selecting a program methods and techniques; preparing materials; scheduling the program and implementing the program (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.127).

The objectives must be stated clearly and concisely to avoid misinterpretation and eventually lead to effective evaluation. The HRD professional must therefore determine the particular program's objectives. An objective is defined as a "description of a performance you want the learners to be able to exhibit before you consider them competent" (DeSimone and Harris,1998).

Since need assessment data reveals the deficiency or the challenges that the organization ought to address, such data can be helpful in defining program objectives.

"Useful objectives describe the performance the learners (trainees) should be able to do, the conditions under which they must do it, and the criteria (how well they must do it) used in judging its success" (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.129).

If objectives lack these three elements, they would be ambiguous and will lead to misinterpretation, hence, frustration, confusion and conflict to those who interpret it differently. Even though the process of writing the objectives of the HRD programs is challenging task, it is a crucial element of effective HRD (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

After stating the HRD objectives clearly, many steps should be taken concerning the development and delivery of the programs; for instance, a decision would have to be taken whether to design the program in-house or seek outside professional assistance.

Among the factors that might influence an agency's purchasing decision of an HRD program are " Personal contact or past experience with an outside vendor,

geographical proximity to the vendor, local economic conditions and the presence of government incentives to conduct training” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p127).

Once the agency is determined to seek outside help in delivering its HRD program, a vendor must be picked. Such steps should take into consideration the agency’s needs and goals and match it with the capabilities of those who are going to be assigned the task of delivering the program. There are uncountable criteria for arriving at such a decision which in turn vary from agency to another. Generally speaking they normally cover aspects such as “ cost, credentials, background, experience, philosophy, delivery method, content, actual product, results, support, and request for proposal.” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p128).

If the agency is of an opinion that it will design its HRD program or has purchased an HRD program, the issue of selecting a trainer becomes apparent. The trainer should communicate his or her knowledge effectively and use several instructional techniques. In addition he or she should be able to motivate the trainees and enjoy good interpersonal skills (DeSimone and Harris).

To translate program objectives into excitable training sessions, the development of a lesson plan is recommended. A lesson plan is a guide for the actual delivery of the training content. Creating a lesson plan requires the trainer to determine in advance what is to be covered and how much time to devote to each part of the session (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.129).

There are many methods used to deliver the HRD programs in both on and off the job training. On-the-Job training (OJT) refers to providing training to a particular employee internally on his desk, machine and so on. This method is common in all organizations and any one-on-one training opportunity whether between coworkers or between an employee and his supervisor can be considered OJT. Such programs are assigned to a competent trainer who uses correct instructional techniques. Some of the identifiable techniques to deliver this type of programs are job rotation, job instructional training, mentoring and coaching. Among the advantages that OJT has over the classroom method are:

- OJT facilitates the transfer of learning to do the job because the trainee has an immediate opportunity to practice the work task on the job.
- OJT reduces training costs because no training facilities are needed.(DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

On the other hand,OJT doesn't come without shortcomings. As a training method it has several limitations which include the following:

- The job site may have physical constraints that could inhibit learning e.g. noise and other distractions.
- Using expensive equipment for training can result in costly damage and disruption of the production.
- Using OJT while customers are present may inconvenience them and temporarily reduce the quality of service.
- OJT involving heavy equipment or chemicals may threaten the safety of other who are working in close proximity(DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

The Classroom method on the other hand, is provided away from the job place. This method has several advantages in comparison with the OJT. Among these advantages that the class room method provides are:

- Classroom settings permit the use of a variety of training techniques such as video, lecture, discussion, role playing, and simulation.
- The environment can be designed or controlled to minimize distractions and create a climate conducive to learning.
- Classroom settings can accommodate larger numbers of trainees than the typical on-the-job training setting, allowing for more efficient delivery of training. (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

Along with such advantages that the classroom method provides there are some accompanying limitations such as "increased costs and dissimilarity to the job setting, making transfer of training more difficult. Five primary types of classroom training

include: lecture, discussion, audiovisual methods, experiential methods, and computer-based training” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

The responsibility of implementing the designed HRD program lies with the trainer . At this point several points must be resolved. In the case of the OJT a number of issues pertain to the physical environment such as distractions, and interruptions . For the classroom setup on the other hand several factors should be proactively anticipated and solved such as seating, comfort level, and physical distractions. In addition the trainer can plan the following:

- Get the program off to a good start and maintain it.
- Establish clear expectations by preparing a course outline or syllabus that explains the purpose, objective, topics, and requirements that establish class norms for relevant issues (punctuality, participation, participant interaction, and so on).
- Try to determine each trainee’s capacity and motivation to learn (i.e. conduct an initial exercise or pretest to session).
- Make every effort to build a climate characterized by mutual respect and openness. This in turn will make it easier for trainees to seek help when they need it(DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

III) Evaluation Phase:

Creating a positive image about HRD is not possible unless there are tangible results from such efforts. To build such an impression the HRD department “must document its efforts and clearly show that it provides a valuable service. The documentation should be in the form of memoranda to management, written reports of activities, and any other evidence that indicates a quality product” (Mondy and Noe, 1990 p.250).

To ensure credibility, the organization must evaluate the outcomes of its HRD efforts. HRD evaluation is defined as “the systematic collection of descriptive and judgmental information necessary to make effective training decisions related to the

selection, adoption value, and modification of various instructional activities” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

Four reasons stand behind conducting HRD evaluation; they are as follows:

- Training is functional and relevant only when it is evaluated.
- Evaluation can build credibility.
- If HRD staff cannot substantiate its contribution to the organization, its funding and programs may be cut during the budgeting process, especially when the organization faces tough times.
- Senior management often wants to know the benefits of HRD programs. (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

The reasons behind the lack of attention given to the evaluation phase of the HRD process may be:

- Those associated with HRD program may be afraid of criticism and program cut if the evaluation shows that the program was not effective.
- Conducting an evaluation is not an easy process.
- Many factors beyond the program itself (including the economy, equipment, policies and procedures, other HR efforts, and resource availability) can affect whether employee performance improves, thus making it difficult to evaluate the impact of training (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

Regardless of such reasons, the evaluation phase remains important and crucial to ensure the accountability and effectiveness of the HRD efforts carried on in the organization. From an ethical standpoint HRD specialist must prove the credibility and contribution of their program to the organization.(DeSimone and Harris,1998).

Several models are available for HRD evaluation. The most renowned one was introduced by Kirkpatrick. Based on Kirkpatrick’s model, HRD efforts can be evaluated “according to any or all of four criteria: reaction, learning, job behavior, and results” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998p.144).

In the reaction, the trainee is asked about the program and its effectiveness based on the trainee's perception. Those who have positive impressions about the program tend to encourage more employees to attend future programs. However, negative reaction toward the program may discourage potential trainees from attending future program and breed reluctance to utilize the skills, or knowledge obtained from the program. Evaluating the HRD at this level doesn't indicate whether the program met its goals beyond ensuring participant satisfaction. At the learning level, the evaluator is keen to find out whether the trainee learned what he or she ought to learn based on the preset objectives. This may require conducting a quiz or test.

Measuring the job behavior level answers whether the trainee utilizes what he or she learned from the program on the job. If the trainees don't transfer the outcomes of the program to their job there will not be any impact on the employee's or the organization's effectiveness.

The result level of this model measures whether the organization effectiveness has improved as a result of the HRD efforts. Such judgment can be obtained by way of measuring the efficiency, profitability, and customer satisfaction. This level is very challenging to assess especially that there may be factors beyond the staff's performance, which can affect organizational performance. At this level both economic as well as the other data are normally gathered and scrutinized (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

Kirkpatrick's model provides a useful way of looking at the possible consequences of training and reminds us that "HRD efforts often have multiple objectives. "Implicit in the model is that each succeeding level incorporates the one prior to it, finally culminating in what many people consider to be the ultimate contribution of any organizational activity: improving the organization's effectiveness." (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.147).

In addition to Kirkpatrick's model there are several models. DeSimone and Harris (1998) indicated that many HRD professionals suggested modifications to Kirkpatrick's four level models. These include:

- Expanding the reaction level to include assessing the participants' reaction to the training methods and efficiency.
- Splitting the reaction level to include assessing participants' perceptions of enjoyment, usefulness, and difficulty of the program.
- Adding a fifth level (beyond results) to address the societal contribution and outcomes created by an HRD program.
- Adding a fifth (beyond results) to specifically address return on investment. (Desimone and Harris, 1998).

Beside Kirkpatrick's model, there are other models such as the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) model. In this model the evaluation process focuses on analyzing the needs, checking the available resources specified for training, for instance budgets, collecting feedback to those who implement the program, and finally to what extent it was successful in meeting program objectives. Brinkerhoff, on the other hand, extended the evaluation phase to cover six steps:

- Goal Setting: What is the need?
 - Program Design: what will work to meet the need?
 - Program Implementation: is it working, with the focus on the implementation of the program?
 - Immediate Outcomes: Are the participants using what they learned?
 - Impacts and worth: Did it make a worthwhile difference to the organization?
- (DeSimone and Harris, 1998).

In order to conduct a proper evaluation multi-source data need to be collected. Such needed data can be provided by way of conducting interviews, surveys, observations, tests, and simulations or relying on archival data. The types of data

collected for such motive include economic data, system wide data and data about the individual. “ HRD professionals are often asked to justify the allocation of resources. This involves a financial assessment of the impact of HRD programs. This assessment can be done by evaluating training costs, using cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness analysis, or by translating a trained employee’s productivity into dollar terms through utility analysis” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.152).

The quality of the HRD specialist available in the agency to guide and implement the HRD policy is a crucial element. Organizations that select unqualified individuals to shoulder the responsibilities must reap the consequences and are likely not going to see tangible results from their HRD efforts.

The roles of an HRD specialist can be categorized into three major roles: learning specialist, administrator, and consultant. As a learning specialist an HRD developer has three subroles such as being an instructor, a curriculum builder, and methods and materials developer. However within his or her role as an administrator, the HRD specialist adheres to subroles such as being a developer, supervisor, maintainer, and arranger (Nadler, 1979, Nadler and Nadler, 1994).

Addison and Haig on the other hand state that the HRD manager’s responsibilities include:

- Giving work direction and providing planning for HRD function.
- Managing the performance of the HRD staff.
- Linking HRD to other groups within the organization.
- Acquiring resources for HRD.
- Managing the budget for HRD.
- Creating a productive and efficient work environment.
- Developing an HRD department strategy and structure.
- Developing long-range plans for HRD.
- Setting HRD policy (Addison and Haig, 1994).

On the other hand as a consultant, the HRD developer acts as an “expert, advocate, stimueator and a change agent” (Nadler, 1979, Nadler and Nadler, 1994).

The line managers play several roles in the human resource functions and activities such as :

- Implementer
- Information source
- Reality tester
- Human Resource Manager and employee development specialist
- Coach
- Role model
- Collaborator
- Systems supporter

(Groves, 1998)

Both line managers and HR professionals complement each other; therefore they must join hands and work together to improve the human resource systems at their organizations. Line managers must play an active role so that positive change can be achieved (Groves, 1998).

HRD professionals are operating in a challenging environment. In the United States HRD professionals are facing an environment that is characterized by :

- Changing workforce demographics;

The workforce is becoming more diverse than ever before. Such a trend is likely to continue. But such racial-ethnic shift is not going to take place uniformly. This will introduce several consequences for HRD professionals such as :

1) Addressing racial and ethnic prejudices and cultural insensitivity and language differences.

2) Providing development opportunities to prepare women for senior positions and protect them against sexual harassment.

3) Adhering to learning-related needs of older workers.

- A competitive global economy:

This will necessitate that organizations educate and train and retrain their human capital. Organizations will need to institute quality improvement processes, and adopt change programs. In addition, the employees ought to be able to appreciate cultural differences, so that they can communicate and conduct business with different countries.

- A need for life-long learning:

This relates to the gap between the education system output and the employers expectations.

- Eliminating the skill gap:

Such a need for continuous learning will lead organizations to invest in HRD. This continuous learning can be viewed differently by different employees; therefore, HRD professionals need to offer a wide selection of learning opportunities that suit various kind of employees. Some organizations are establishing multimedia learning centers to meet this challenge.

- Facilitating organizational learning:

Organizations will have to cope with the environment in which they operate. Therefore they will have to consider major changes so that they will be able to learn, adapt and change. Senge (1990) “advocates that a learning organization must embrace the following five principles: system thinking, personal mastery, mental models, building shared vision, and team learning.” (DeSimone and Harris, 1998 p.159).

“ Given the dramatic changes which companies face today, line managers and human resource professionals need to recognize that without good quality employees, they are unable to perform their jobs. People are the company. Steps which line managers and human resource professionals can make to improve the knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and behaviors of their subordinates will have tremendous payoff for the

company, for work groups and for individual employees. This the central theme behind Human Resource Development” (Groves,1998).

The shared complaints between line managers and human resource professionals may illustrate the present status of HRD. Groves, (1998) grouped line managers’complaints about HRD professional into three categories: general complaints, behavior based complaints, and complaints about the quality of HRD professionals. Each category of these complaints is briefly elaborated below.

- General Complaints:

This refers to the lack of information line managers have about HRD. They complain that human resource departments don’t express their mission, purpose, and activities well enough for them. Such lack of clarity leaves line managers unable to grasp how HRD relates to personnel management or employee relations. As a result, most line managers do not view HRD as part of their job and tend to view their role as managers of the task of production rather than being people managers. Line managers don’t consider HRD as part of their job so they pay marginal attention to HRD activities. Grove (1998 p.8) argues that “unless Human Resource Resource professionals can impress upon line managers the important role line managers play in the creation and implementation of human resource systems and activities in their company, the objectives of human resource development will never be achieved.”

- Behavior Based Complaints:

In this context line managers complain that human resource departments are not client oriented. They pursue their task as if line managers were unimportant, a matter which is a prime cause for HRD failure. Line managers are in position to influence or create demand for HRD services because they send their employees to attend training programs carried out by the training department. They also evaluate, guide, and coach their subordinates. Therefore they not only consume services but they evaluate them as

well. As a result they become hostile and uncooperative if they don't get the treatment they deserve.

Line managers view human resource development as being slow in their response to the requests which they forward to it in addition to being rigid when it comes to interpreting policies and procedures, inconsistent in actions. They tend to complicate things rather than ease them. It is such negative impressions that keep line managers away from getting involved in human resource activities because according to them human resource departments are failing to provide them the needed support.

(Grove,1998)

- Complaints about the quality of HRD professionals:

Line managers comments about HR professionals in their organizations include:

- 1) Because HR professionals lack understanding of the operational side of their organization, they have a narrow view about how things work and where they fit. This results in a gap between them and the line managers they serve. Therefore human resource departments will benefit from an intimate knowledge of their clients.
- 2) While many HR professionals are much younger compared to their line managers peers, they are mostly graduates of social science majors such as business administration, psychology, economics, liberal arts etc. Line managers on the other hand, come out of engineering programs or were subjected to several technical training programs. This educational background result in variations between these two segments.
- 3) HR professionals are “ not professionalized”; this indicates that they don't have adequate professional training in their field to enable them to perform the type of task they should (Groves, 1998).

Line managers on the other hand, don't go without complaints from their HR professionals counterparts. Among these complaints are:

- 1) Line managers do not understand what HR professionals do.
- 2) HR professionals are not appreciated by line managers.

- 3) There is a lack of involvement from line managers in human resource activities.
- 4) When dealing with HR professionals, line managers are stubborn and don't show any trust.

Whatever the complaints may be, it remains the human resource department's responsibility to educate its clients -- line managers. In addition HR professionals must take time to communicate with people and gather feedback about their clients' ideas, concerns, and complaints. They should also explore projects of mutual interest with them. HR professionals must be open to new ideas and should increase their interaction with line managers to create flexibility between both sides (Groves, 1998)

Many of the problems that HRD departments are an outcome of the models they use to attend to their task. One of these models is the "Single Fighter Model." Based on this model the HRD department performs all the HRD functions and activities single-handed. This approach breeds little communication and involvement with line managers and therefore results in failure to broaden the base of the organization-wide HRD system.

The other model which HRD departments embrace is the "Post Office Model". The approach according to this model is to serve as a middle man. This approach deprives the HRD department the chance of taking initiatives and end up being merely passing messages received from line managers and answering their inquiries. (Grove,1998)

Chalofsky and Reinhart,1988, indicate that ten elements are considered essential to the success of an effective HRD function. They are mentioned below:

- The HRD function has the expertise to diagnose problems in order to determine appropriateness of potential solutions.
- The HRD manager maintains an active network with other key managers in the organization. There is a corporate training and development mission statement or corporate HRD policy.

- The evaluation of training focuses on behavioral change or organizational results.
- The HRD manager routinely participates in corporate strategy sessions with other key staff persons and session managers.
- Training needs associated with major changes in the organization are anticipated.
- Allocation of HRD resources are based at least in part on the priorities of the organization.
- The HRD function conducts needs assessments to determine organizational requirements.
- The roles, responsibilities, and priorities of the HRD function are clearly defined.
- The HRD management and staff routinely meet to discuss problems and progress with current programs (Chalofsky and Reinhart,1988).

Alyousef states that “most economists would probably agree that is the human resources of a nation, not its capital or its material resources, that ultimately determine the character and pace of its economic and social development.” (Alyousef, 1995 p.95).

Human resources is not viewed as a mere factor of production as it use to be the case in traditional management. The modern approach views the human capital as an investment that ought to yield a return if it is managed effectively and efficiently (Altaib, 1993).

Altaib, 1993, stated six factors that lead to effective management and development of the organization’s human resources;they are as follows:

- Human Resource Planning.
- Establishing and developing an integrated motivation scheme.
- Adopt an integrated work systems and constructive measures for performance appraisal.
- Training should be an on-going process for all employees.
- Adapt a participative management approach.

- Put emphasis on the leadership role in creating the suitable environment for developing human resources. (Altaib,1993)

The USA pattern of the HRD field generally consists of components such as training and development, organizational development, and career development. It is also worth mentioning that “HRD as defined in the United State may not be an appropriate definition for all countries.” (Peterson,1997)

Peterson (1997) also stated that employees’ beliefs are shaped by multidimensional cultural frames such as national, societal values as well as organizational ones. However, she made it clear that “It is as yet improved that organizational, occupational and national cultures contributes in individualized manners to the culture of work. Rather the culture of work is a blend of all these variables”(Peterson,1997).

International HRD on the other hand has four phases that focus on “who is involved, what is to be done, how it is to be done and when it is to be done;” (Peterson,1997).In their studies of differences in perceptions of human resource development across countries, Osman-Gani and Jacobs (1996) found that differences in perceptions about HRD existed among managers in multinational enterprises and referred such differences to culture.

From an Islamic perspective the Holy Quran emphasizes the importance of HRD and means to enrich individual performance by way of education and training. The Holy Quran clearly states that there is no comparison between those who are educated and those who are ignorant. In fact the Muslim is required to seek knowledge in a continuous manner. In this context the Holy Quran says “and say: My Lord! increase me in knowledge” (the Holy Quran 20:114).

In addition, the Holy Sayings of prophet Mohammed (pbuh) also stressed on the necessity to seek knowledge. These advices encourage the Muslim by saying: “seeking knowledge is a must on every Muslim,” Also, “seek knowledge from cradle to grave.”

The Holy Sayings stress that there is a reward for the knowledgeable “ It was narrated by Abi Imamah that the prophet (PBUH) said: Allah and his Angels and the creatures of Heavens and Earth even the ant in its own nest and even the fish in the sea, do bless the one who teaches people the Good.” (Tarmazi)

In the United Kingdom HRD is looked at as a relatively young and predominantly western concept that has emerged from management thinking and has been shaped by values and events as Europe has transformed itself over the last fifty years. This view is based on the argument that as one era presents a need, solutions are created to meet that need, which create a new approach and perspective (Lee and Stead,1998 p.297).

During the post-World War II years, the European nations focused on restructuring their social, economic and political systems and their objectives were targeted towards ensuring the basic needs such as shelter, food , and warmth. Therefore, right after the war

the picture in UK is one of focused on national strategy, tight organizational structures, and hardworking individuals preoccupied with regaining stability. The nation was united at national, organizational, and individual levels in regaining stability and social care, the focus was clearly on the management of human resources rather than development. (Lee and Stead, 1998)

The 60s witnessed the implementation of the Industrial Training Act of 1964. This introduced a systematic approach towards training the workforce in job- related skills. Several professional institutes emerged during this period and participated in reinforcing this direction. The Institute of Training and Development (ITD), and Institute of Personnel Management (IPM) are examples of such professional bodies. While this approach was acceptable at the national level, it was not met with the same reaction at the organizations and individual levels because these segments were preoccupied with finding ways that might enable them to shift from processes that are geared towards settlement and stability to ones that lead to developing and achieving more. During the 1970s and mid 1980s:

the wide diversity of approach that characterizes HRD in the U.K. started to become evident. At national and organizational levels, economic recession called for greater efficiency and increased profit and productivity while retaining tight control on public spending. With the decline of manufacturing and heavy industry and the growth in service industry there was a need to pare down the workforce to economize and provide multiskilled workers who could work across functions and fill a variety of roles. There was, therefore, a need to introduce strategies and provisions that would meet the developing needs of organizations in the age of advancing technology. At the same time, in all but the large yet-to-be privatized organizations, there was a move away from in-house training and toward bringing in already-skilled labor. Individuals became important stakeholders in their own development, and in finding their voice they demanded to work that brought personal recognition and responsibilities for achievement and self-fulfillment. (Lee and Stead,1998)

The introduction of the Manpower Services Commission in 1981 called for emphasis on broadening opportunities for young and adult citizens. In view of the transition period resulting from the worldwide technological changes taking place through out the world and the fact that manufacturing was being redistributed on a worldwide scale, emphasis was geared toward an educated, trained and flexible labor force. Therefore, there was a strive to introduce a national system of vocational education and training. This vision was aiming to expand all professions within a parameter of agreed upon standards of competence (Lee and Stead,1998).During the mid 1980s to mid 1990s :

the concept of TQM acknowledged the need for strategic process rather than quick fixes and aimed to respond to the challenges and changes of the external environment through systems that would be both profit- and needs driven. It was believed that the dual approach of creating fit, lean structures and systems to maximize profit while establishing a continuous learning environment would lead to a win-win formula benefiting national, organizational, and individual needs. The need to develop, adapt, and grow with change rather than react to it also gave birth to the idea of organizational transformation and to a growing interest in the concept of the learning company (Lee and Stead p.299).

Also this period saw the merger between ITD and IPM to establish the Institute of Personnel Development (IPD) which stressed the notion of wanting to integrate and "it also reflected the increasing unease that theoreticians and practitioners had with the

difficult-to-sustain historical dichotomy between HRD and HRM” (Lee and Stead, 1998 p.299).

Also this period saw an implementation of a national system of National Vocational Qualification Standard (NVQS).

During the period from the mid 1990s a new party came into the scene and therefore “Growing concern about societal, environmental, and technological changes culminated in a dramatic change of government to one in which continuous development of human resources was stated as a strategic plank policy”(Lee and Stead, 1998 p.299).

In the case of HRD in South Africa, difficulty exists in the area of providing equal opportunity for acquiring technical and managerial skills as well as “the individual need for obtaining life skills and increased self confidence: and an organizational culture and reward system which has limited opportunity for growth.” (Horwitz et al., 1996 p.149)

In term of Gulf Cooperation Council Countries (GCCC) HRD can help planners and policy makers in “systematically planning for the replacement of expatriate personnel with national employees to higher level key positions”(Groves, 1998). As well as in the process of nationalizing the workforce in these countries at large.

In the earlier stages of development, these countries faced an acute shortage of manpower and had no choice but to close the gap through opening the door for migrant laborers from various external labor markets in order to stir the wheel of development and initiate the needed infrastructure projects.

Formal education started at different times in the GCCC. In Kuwait formal education started in the 1930s; however, primary school education was universally available in 1952. On the other hand the State of Qatar started in 1951 for boys and in 1953 for girls. The first school in the United Arab Emirates was established in Sharjah in 1953 and shortly after that schools were built until every emirate had at least one school except Abu Dhabi where formal education began in 1960. (Birks and Sinclair, 1980).

The State of Bahrain took the lead in term of their early start in formal education.

Rumaihi and Winder have observed that the first modern school in Bahrain a part from Kuttab schools, was a girls' primary school opened in 1892 by the American Arab Mission. Other commentators have seen 1919 as the time modern education began in Bahrain, when a school was financed by merchants of the community. In many events education made an early start in Bahrain relative to other Gulf States (Birks and Sinclair, 1980).

Formal education in Saudi Arabia date back to 1949-1950. Below the higher education, the Saudi educational system consists of four levels: the pre-school, elementary, intermediate, and the secondary level. (Al-farsy,1990).

Formal education in the Sultante of Oman began in the late 60s . Prior to 1970 there were three primary schools in Muscat, Mattrah, and Salalah. These schools had 909 pupils and not more than 30 teachers (Birks and Sinclair, 1980, Ministry of Information, 1998).

“There are now 958 state schools providing education at the primary level, 472 preparatory, and 168 secondary levels. In addition there are 123 schools under construction or planned for this year. In the private sector, five new schools were opened in 1997, making a total of 111 private schools regulated by the Ministry.” (Ministry of Information, 1998).

The Ministry of Higher Education was established in 1994. This agency is responsible for supervising higher education institutions and centers of scientific research. In addition it is responsible for formulating education policies and administering the Law on Grants and Scholarship. The Sultan Qaboos University was opened in 1986. The university has seven faculties: Education and Islamic Sciences, Medicine, Engineering, Science , Agriculture, Arts, and Commerce and Economics. (Ministry of Information, 1998).

With the exception of Iraq, Algeria, and the former PDRY, Middle Eastern countries have largely ignored the problem of illiterate adults, choosing instead to concentrate resources on educating children. Here the record is more encouraging, although some countries of the region still have much unfinished business (see table 5.2). Overall, 98% of children are now enrolled in primary school. Enrollment is nearly universal in all countries except Saudi Arabia, Morocco, the

Sudan, and Yemen. The most rapid progress has been in Oman, which went from essentially no schooling (3% enrollment) to nearly universal enrollment in one generation. (Richards and Waterbury, 1998).

The researcher was unable to come across relevant literature that reveals indicators about the outcomes of the nationalization of work efforts in the GCCC except for the State of Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Oman.

In the case of the State of Qatar, the literature reveals that the government sector takes the first place in employing nationals. Such a process is called Qatarization compared to the private and quasi-government sector. The nationals represent 49% in 1994. In addition the literature indicates that there is no national plan for Qatarizing the workforce. The participation of male national employees represents 30% while the female national employees represent 19%. In terms of their distribution within the various ministries that compose the government sector, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs takes the first place, 75% of its employees are nationals. The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs which was established in 1992 comes in the last place with only 29% of its employees nationals.

Among the leading forces for such low representation of national employees in Qatar, the literature reveals the following:

- Scarcity in quantity and quality of needed manpower within the population.
- Low level of female participation among the national employees.
- Lack of congruence between the education and training policies with that of the Qatarization of jobs policies.
- Lack of national plan for Qatarizing the workforce in the government sector.

(Naseer, 1995).

It is worth mentioning that the researcher was unable to secure recent publications to follow the latest development in this area since then.

In the case of Saudi Arabia the literature shows that the private sector employs 95% of the overall migrant laborers in the country. The sixth development plan included the issue of the national manpower as one of the core objectives. In addition the manpower council

has approved a long term strategy that aims to qualify and develop the national manpower. Among its short term goals the strategy aims to :

- Cut down the level of recruitment of expatriate workers.
- Limit certain categories of jobs to nationals.
- Create congruence between the outcomes of the education and training policies and the labor market requirements.
- Increase the productivity levels of the national employees.

In the long run, this strategy aims to achieve efficient and effective utilization of the national manpower.

Attempts to Saudize the private sector are faced with several obstacles such as:

- The expatriate workers are competing with the national workers.
- The Saudization process is limited to large private enterprises.
- Most of the private enterprises are small in size and have low capital and therefore can't afford to offer suitable compensation schemes for nationals.
- Apprehensions that Saudization will make the private sector unable to compete.
- Lack of congruence between the education and training system and the labor market requirements.

The literature also revealed that most of the national employees are employed by the public sector. Most nationals prefer to enroll in the government sector due to the following incentives:

- High level of pay.
- High degree of security.
- Less working hours.
- Longer annual leaves (AlSultan, 1998).

With regard to the nationalization of the workforce, Omanization in the case of the Sultanate of Oman, the literature reveals that the country is also keen to nationalize its

workforce in an incremental manner so that productivity levels don't lag. The outcomes of this experience will be elaborated in the analysis and finding section of this study.

Chapter 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:

I) The Political Determination:

Modern Oman has emerged since July 23, 1970 under the leadership of H.M Sultan Qaboos bin Said who upon his accession to power addressed his people and said “ I will proceed as quickly as possible to transform your life into a prosperous one with a bright future. Every one of you must play his part towards this goal. Our country in the past was famous and strong. If we work in unity and cooperation, we will regenerate that glorious past and we will take a respectable place in the world” (Ministry of Information,1995 - July 27,1970).

H.M embarked on modernization within the parameters of the national culture, which takes its roots from the precepts of Islam, the Omani Arab reality and the customs and traditions of the community. Van Wart states that:

Nothing is more important to human beings than their values, beliefs, and underlying assumptions. On a grand and profoundly important level, they determine our explanation for existence. They are the cultural glue of civilizations and the organizations within them, and the fundamental building blocks of culture. (Van Wart,1998).

Pertaining to the issue of human resources development H.M Sultan Qaboos set the mission clearly and stressed the importance of developing the human capital of the country. In the philosophy of modern Oman, the objective of development is to provide the citizens with decent life and good standards of living.

One can clearly trace a genuine commitment and continuous determination and willingness to developing the human resources of the country. Such an attitude is often stressed in His Majesty's royal speeches as well as being one of the core objectives of the

five consecutive five year development plans. The following excerpts from various royal speeches of H.M Sultan given at different occasions are provided to support such an observation:

- Education was my great concern, and I saw that it was necessary to direct efforts to spread education. We have given the Ministry of Education the opportunity and supplied it with our capabilities to break the chains of ignorance. Schools have been opened regardless; the important thing is that there should be education, even under the shadow of trees (Hammoudi,1993,

Ministry of Information, 1995 -Nov.18, 1972).

- “We live in an age of science and education. Education and work are our only means of progress and development within the context of our Islamic Civilization” (Ministry of Information,1995- Sep.11, 1986).
- “ We believe in the role of Omani youth in building the country, we call upon them to set a good example in adopting a responsible sense of duty and in seeking perfection in their work” (Ministry of Information, 1995- Nov.18. 1986).

Miller stated that:

Beginning at the National Day in 1987, His Majesty announced a major program to Omanize the labor force. This program, unlike that tried in many other countries, would not be at the risk of lost productivity or efficiency. In other words, Omanization would be a planned and rational process, of recruiting educated and trained Omanis into public and private sector employment and retaining them in those positions (Miller,1991).

- “ In addition to the step already taken towards Omanization we must continue to substitute Omani for foreign labour in both the government and private sectors. But this must not be at the expense of qualification and performance.” (Ministry of Information,1995- Nov.11,1988).
- “Omanization is a fundamental and vital prerequisite without which we can't secure the cherished honourable standard of living for the coming generations” (Ministry of Information,1995 - Feb.18,1990).

- “The building of the Omani nation, the shaping of their character through education and cultures, with training and qualifications, is in the forefront of our noble cause, for which we shall always strive” (Ministry of Information, 1995- Nov.18,1993).
- “We call upon Omani women everywhere, in the villages and the cities, in both urban and bedu communities, in the hills and the mountains, to roll up their sleeves and contribute to the process of economic and social development” (Ministry of Information,1995- Nov.18,1994).

In addition, the five consecutive five year development plans of the country reiterate the issue of human resources development as one of the core objectives of the plans. For instance the fifth five year development plan (1996-2000) indicates that the human resource development strategy consists of the following components:

- Achieve a balance between the population growth and economic growth by way of reducing the population growth to 3% in the year 2020 through awareness efforts.
- Provide health care and reducing mortality rate.
- Spread, encourage and develop education.
- Establish a post-secondary educational system that is capable of providing the major specialities demanded by the national economy and provide all assistance needed in carrying out research studies in the social and economic fields.
- Create employment opportunities for Omanis in both the public and the private sector, train and qualify them in accordance to the requirements of the labor market in various fields and skills, and ensure them a suitable income based on performance and productivity.
- Provide a technical education system and vocational training in order to prepare and qualify manpower that is able to adapt to the requirement of the labor market (Ministry of Development,1996).

From the above mentioned citations it is evident that:

- 1) There is a political willingness and determination with regard to the need for human resources development.
- 2) The human resources development ought to be implemented within the parameters of Omani culture which derives its roots from the precepts of Islam and customs and values of the Omani Arab traditions.
- 3) HRD efforts don't differentiate between genders; therefore both males and females are offered the opportunity to be educated and trained so that they can be productive and serve their country in a positive way. Al Maskary (1992 p.155) states that "despite Oman's characteristics as a traditional society, the enrollment of Omani female students at the college is higher than the average of South East Asian countries."
- 4) The citizens whether students or employees are called upon to:
 - A) Make use of all the education and training opportunities provided to them in order to serve their country better.
 - B) Maintain a positive attitude toward their role and responsibilities.
 - C) Benefit from the methods of science and technology and be proud of their heritage in the same time.

II) HRD: A Structural and Legislative Dimension

To translate the political will toward the HRD policy and implementation to tangible results, the structural dimension of planning and implementing the HRD policy within the civil service sector is adhered to through a process of coordination between the following respective government bodies:

- The Council of Ministers.
- The Civil Service Council.
- The Ministry of Civil Service.
- The Ministry of Higher Education.
- The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor, and Vocational Training.

- The Omanization Follow Up Committee.
- Within the various ministries and other public agencies, the Department of Personnel Affairs, the Department of Training or any other relevant department or section to which this responsibility is assigned. In addition to the Education and Culture Committee one of the specialized committee of Majlis Alshura also furnishes some recommendations with regards to issues related to HRD. Among the issues that this committee has studied was the admission policies of general and higher education(Hammoudi,1993). Also the Economic Committee which has discussed the issue of “Employment of National Manpower” in the Majlis’s recent session held in October,1999. Other specialized Committees in the State Council also contribute to this issue.

The coordination process within these government bodies takes place as follows:

- 1- The Civil Service Council furnishes a detailed analytical annual report to the Council of Ministers to ensure its approval on the general policies that govern the civil service and whatever suggestions pertaining to ways of reforming and developing the existing policies.
- 2- As a public agency, the Ministry of Civil Service reports to the Civil Service Council; therefore, the ministry furnishes a report to the Civil Service Council to obtain its approval on issues relevant to HRD such as approving the administrative training plan which is formulated in coordination with the concerned authorities. The Ministry of Civil Service was established in 1988. It is a central planning agency through which issues related to HRD such as preparing the administrative training plan, follow up the implementation of the Omanization plan, recruitment and selection, and performance appraisal for the civil service are attended to in coordination with the various ministries and public authorities (Aledari,1993, Aledari, 1997).

3- The Ministry of Higher Education was established in 1994 based on royal decree No.15/94. For the purpose of this study this agency supervises the process of scholarships and study grants, hence, the implementation of the Law on Grants and Scholarships.

4- The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor, and Vocational Training shoulder the responsibilities of the technical education as well as the Vocational training. In addition to this ministry, The Ministry of Health, The Sultan Qaboos University, and the Central Bank also contribute in this line.

5- The Omanization Follow up Committee was established in 1997 based on royal decree No.95/97. A brief history of the bodies that existed prior to this agency will enhance the comprehension of this committee's vital role. First, an Education and Vocational Training Council was formed in 1977. This council was assigned the following responsibilities:

(a) Set the objectives of the education policy and link it with that of the vocational training and the requirements of the national economy within the parameters of the development plans.

(b) Set the time scale for the implementation of such policies during the duration of each development plan and furnish it to the Development Council.

(c) Coordinate between the purposes and requirements of education and those of the vocational training.

(d) Follow up the implementation of the education and vocational training programs.

This council was reformulated in 1978 and 1980 and eventually was replaced by the Supreme Committee for Vocational Training and Labor in 1991. (Alansi, 1994, Birks and Sinclair, 1987).

The Supreme Committee was assigned the following responsibilities:

(a) Determine the manpower requirements of the national economy and set the guidelines to assist the concerned agencies to link the training and education policies with those requirements.

(b) Set the necessary Omanization policies for both the public and private sectors and resolve the obstacles that might hinder its implementation.

(c) Approve the manpower plans prepared by the respective agencies.

(d) Approve the investment and utilization plans necessary for implementing the Omanization policies in coordination with the concerned agencies.

(e) Set the necessary policies for employing expatriate manpower(Alansi, 1994, Aledari, 1997).

This committee was also dissolved in 1997 and replaced by the Omanization Follow-up Committee but its responsibilities pertaining to vocational training were assigned to the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor, and Vocational Training. This frequent replacement of committees comes in line with a general reorganizational structure within the country. The Omanization Follow-up Committee was assigned the following responsibilities:

(a) Follow up and supervise the implementation of the plans and programs of Omanizing the jobs in both public and private sectors. To adhere to such a framework the committee has the following authorities:

1- Participate in the process of determining the national economy's manpower requirements .

2- Participate in preparing the necessary investment and utilization plans to implement the Omanization policies in coordination with the concerned agencies.

3- Prepare reports that indicate the achieved progress in implementing the Omanization plans and programs in the public and private sectors and furnish proposals to overcome the obstacles that impede the implementation process.

4- Any further authorization with regards to Omanization assigned to it based on royal orders (the Official Gazzette , Dec.16, 1997).

5- Coordination is also made with the various public agencies through the respective departmental organs such as the Personnel Affairs Department in the preparation phase of the training and Omanization plans as well as the implementation phase.

Within the structural dimension of the HRD policy in the Civil Service Sector the following variations were observed:

The authorities, responsibilities and level of communication of the relevant bodies that shoulder the HRD task differ from agency to another. Such structural variations are of three levels: the level of a directorate general, a specific department for training, or a section for training purposes within the parameters of the Department of Personnel Affairs or as it is called in some ministries the Department of Human Resources Development. Regardless of the difference in the titles of these department they are identical in their assigned task.

One ministry has specified a directorate general within its organizational structure to attend to the HRD function. This agency is the Ministry of Health, where the HRD function is assigned to the Directorate General of Education and Training. Along with such a setup this ministry has a special committee to approve the HRD policy under the chairmanship of the Undersecretary of Planning Affairs.

For an agency which employs 15,117 employees as of 1997 and shoulder the task of health care policy and implementation which is a sensitive and technical in nature. Besides the fact that it enjoys a high level of diversity since its manpower structure is composed of nationals as well as expatriates of different nationalities, ethnic backgrounds, genders therefore has a long way to achieve high percentage of Omanization. Also taking in mind its supervisory role of eleven nursing institutes and three more health institutes such as :

- The Institute of Health Sciences.
- The Institute of Public Health.
- The Institute of Assistant Pharmacists.

Such an HRD structural arrangement is justifiable especially due to the continuous nature of HRD and the fact that as the level of Omanization increases HRD intervention will be in great demand to ensure a high level of productivity and prepare and qualify a new breed of highly competent national manpower, keeping in mind that the current expatriate workers already have acceptable levels of education and experience.

The second level of HRD structural arrangement takes the form of specifying a department of training. Many ministries have adopted this model, such as the Ministry of Civil Service, the Ministry of Water Resources, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor, and Vocational Training and the Ministry of Electricity and Water. In addition to the specific department some of these ministries have a ministerial committee under the chairmanship of the under secretary such as in the case of the Ministry of Water Resources, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Such an HR arrangement is reasonable given the size of these agencies, in addition to attempts to privatize some of the assigned tasks that some of these agencies use to shoulder such as the case of the Ministry of Electricity and Water and high level of Omanization such as in the case of Ministry of Foreign Affairs which has only ten expatriate workers compared to 601 Omani employees as of 1997 (Ministry of National Economy, 1998).

In the case of Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries the department that shoulders the HRD function takes the title of the Department of International Relations and Training. Here there is a likelihood that emphasis might be given to one side than the other. For instance emphasis will be given the international relations rather than training or vice versa. Since this ministry is managing the agriculture and fisheries sector which represent one of the means through which Oman aims to diversify its national income, the HRD function must be administered well and training ought to be assigned to specialized cadre. In the case of Ministry of Education, such representation to the HRD function

within the organizational structure of the Ministry ought to be rethought due to the following factors:

- This ministry employs 30,428 employees as of 1997 which makes it the first in term of the number of employees (Ministry of National Economy, 1998).
- This agency along with the Ministry of Health employs 50.6% of the Omani employees, the rest of the government agencies employ the remaining 49.4% .
- Both of these agencies have 79.1% of the expatriate employees, the remaining 20.9% are working in the rest of the government agencies (Alalawi and Shayban, 1999).
- The fact that it has a high level of diversity because its manpower structure is composed of nationals as well as expatriates of different nationalities, ethnic background, and genders.
- The continuous nature of HRD especially that this agency ought to achieve progress in its walk toward Omanization.

Those factors ought to be examined carefully hence, the HRD structural arrangement should be elevated to a level of a directorate general to be well equipped to fulfill the desired results.

The third level of HRD structural arrangement is that various public agency are assigning this function to a training section within the Department of Personnel Affairs or the Department of Human Resources Development which are identically the same in term of their duties and responsibilities. Example of such representation can be seen in the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and the Ministry of Petroleum and Gas.

It can be clearly stated that the HRD structural arrangements within these agencies are not homogeneous and vary in authority, responsibilities, and level of communication. Those agencies that are shouldering the responsibilities of interacting with the events in global economy include :

- Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

- Ministry of Finance.
- Ministry of National Economy.
- Central Bank of Oman.
- Ministry of Petroleum and Gas.
- Ministry of Communication.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The aforementioned agencies ought to be equipped with well structured HRD departments so that their staff, especially the top, and line managerial levels are consistently exposed to the needed HRD support so that their knowledge, skills, and abilities are updated in order to appreciate the accelerated changes taking place in the global arena especially since the Sultanate of Oman has taken massive steps to integrate with new economic world order and soon will be a member of the World Trade Organization.

In her research study about the training needs assessment in the government in the Sultanate of Oman, Shayban (1990) noted the following observation about the HRD structural arrangement :

- Variations in titles and organizational position of the training bodies within the government agencies. Such observation is still the case as it was mentioned above.
- Only 26 government agencies had a specialized training department which constitutes 60.5% of the over all government agencies. In contrast 39.5% remain without specialized training departments, instead such function is assigned to the Department of Personnel Affairs or the Department of Administrative Affairs. Eventhough her research extends to a bigger domain than that of the study in hand, her remark in this regards is still the case.
- Few training departments or sections are linked with the top management. Her finding revealed that in this case it didn't exceed 2.3% which is one government agency only.

- The agencies that assign their HRD function to a directorate general or a department are few. They only represent 20.9%. This study also revealed that only the Ministry of Health is assigning the HRD function to a level of a directorate general. (Shayban, 1990).

Although Shayban's study was conducted in 1990, the researcher didn't come across such a later diagnostic study which shed more light on the development with regard to this issue.

On the other hand, all these respective bodies of government adhere to their assigned roles with regard to the HRD policy within the parameters of the following laws and regulations:

- The Basic Statute of The State
- The Civil Service Law and its executive regulations.
- The Pension and Post Service Law.
- The Law on Grants and Scholarships.

Article 12 of The Basic Statute of The State stresses that "Justice, and equality of opportunities for Omanis are the pillars of the society and are guaranteed by the State." It is further elaborated in the same article that " Public employment is a national service entrusted to those who carry it out. The State employees, while carrying out their work, shall pursue the public interests and service to the society. Citizens are considered equal in taking up public employment according to the provisions of law" (Ministry of Information, 1997).

Article 13 on the other hand highlights that "Education is a cornerstone for the progress of society which the State fosters and endeavours to spread and make it accessible to all. Education aims to raise and develop the general cultural standard, promote scientific thought, kindle the spirit of research, respond to the requirements of economic and social plans, build a generation that is physically and morally strong, that

takes pride in its nation, country and heritage and preserves its achievements” (Ministry of Information, 1997).

To streamline the HRD function the Civil Service Law states the following:

Article 25 of the above mentioned law states that Training is an essential component for each job and all employees must be subjected to it. All executives must take the proper steps to train the Omani employees regardless of their respective levels or grades.

Training should be based on assessed needs, plans, and programs, that are in congruence with the general development plan of the country, and within the parameters of the allocated resources (The Civil Service Law, p. 9).

Also article 45 of the Civil Service Law “ it is permissible to send employees on scholarships and study assistances to pursue further education or training. Also it is allowable to give them study leave with or without pay based on the preset regulations.” (The Civil Service Law, P.12).

The HRD issue is touched further in the Executive Regulations of the Civil Service Law where article 42 states that “Each public agency should establish a provision within its budget to meet the expenditures incurred as a result of the training activities. This provision is financed annually based on the actual training needs in the respective agency. Each head of unit issues the necessary guidelines to streamline the training activities in his respective agency. However, it must adhere to the training plans approved by the Civil Service Council.” (The Executive Regulations of the Civil Service law, P.13).

Furthermore, the law on Grants and Scholarships stipulates the following pertaining to the educational aspects of HRD:

- 1) All the applications for educational opportunities for the respective employees must be sent to the Ministry of Higher Education for approval.
- 2) There is a specific committee to set the general guidelines for such responsibilities chaired by the Undersecretary of Higher Education (The Law on Grants and Scholarships, pp. 9-10).

Also the Executive Regulations for the above mentioned law indicates the scholarship allowances, and other incentives provided for the employees who are sent on a scholarship such as tickets for him, his wife and up to three children in addition to medical insurance for him or her and their accompanying family (The Executive Regulations of The Law on Grants and Scholarships PP.9-10, 22-24).

The following observations can be drawn from the above quoted citations of the respective laws and regulations that govern the HRD:

1) The training activities are limited to the Omani employees which means that the expatriate employees are left untrained. Although one can argue that to contain financial implications Omani employees are given priority, such disparity, however, might broaden the gap between the two elements that constitute the manpower structure in the public sector. Therefore, this will endanger the notion of team work and deprive the organization of the benefits of applying the strength of the available human resources capacity for the betterment of the overall organizational performance. Such a shortcoming ought to be alleviated by the leadership of the various agencies. The expatriate element ought to be included in the internal training activities that take place in these agencies especially those who are occupying vital positions. Also cross-cultural orientation ought to be encouraged so that both elements operate in a healthy environment rather than one full of ethnic sentiments. It is only when such an aspect is included in the organizational culture of these agencies that they will reap the fruits of diversity. "Managing diversity requires more than just compliance with laws. The management of diversity consists of management processes to create a supportive work environment for employees already on board, and to develop and fully include all of them in order to make the organization more productive" (Pynes,1997).

2) The training activities are subject to availability of resources, a matter which calls for efficient and effective utilization of such resources and dictates a sense of team thinking to come up with creative means of training. In addition such limitation calls for

strengthening the level of coordination between the various public agencies in the sphere of training to contain the training cost and utilize their training funds efficiently. The organizational structure of the various public agencies reveals that there are homogeneous organs, for instance, the Directorate General of Administration Affairs and Finance in most ministries. Such bodies can certainly join hands in the training activities and benefit from exchange programs especially in the area of on-the-job training. Such a level of coordination and cooperation may foster a statesman-like spirit rather than the micro mentality of advocating a particular agency. “ Loyalty to a very broad conception of the public interest motivates statesman. Attentiveness to society and the nation as a whole receives philosophical support from everyone. Political rhetoric is filled with exhortations to public administrators to serve the interests of the entire population; administrators in turn vow their loyalty to the citizenry.” (Gortner et al. ,1997).

3) One can also argue that limiting the HRD concept to training and education doesn't provide a comprehensive appreciation to other primary functions of HRD such as organizational development and career development.

III) HRD: The Implementation Dimension

This section will attempt to explore how HRD activities are carried out. Such process fall mainly in the two areas : training and educational opportunities (provided for the civil servants whether within the country or abroad by virtue of scholarships), but before that we need to delve into Omanization, which is a nationwide policy to ensure that HRD efforts contribute in developing highly skilled nationals so the transition from expatriate to Omani national can be executed smoothly. It is also essential to provide some insight on the contribution of relevant personnel functions to HRD efforts in the civil service sector.

A) Omanization: A Nationwide Policy

Ever since the emergence of the modern state in 1970, the leadership in Oman was aware that massive strides had to be taken to develop the country's human capital. In order to implement the development plans geared to transform Oman to a modern society with the essential infrastructure, the policy makers had no choice but to follow the GCC countries' model and open the country's doors to an influx of migrant workers from various countries of the world.

It must be noted that recruiting expatriate workers was a matter of paramount importance to turn the wheel of development along with their national peers. One also can argue that expatriate workers have contributed and are still contributing in the development process of Oman, especially in the specialized fields in which nationals are scarce.

Although such step was inevitable due to the acute shortage of manpower the country faced both in qualitative and quantitative sense, the issue of developing the country's human resources was repeatedly considered one of the core objectives of the five consecutive five-year development plans that were carried out, the last of which is supposed to end in the year 2000.

The development council, in its decision issued in February with regard to the objective and policies of the economic development in the Sultanate of Oman, indicated that "emphasis must be given to developing the local human resources to enable it to play a full role in the national economy. In this context, there must be expansion in the education and training programs, improvement in nutritious and public health. However these programs must be geared toward qualifying nationals to meet the requirements of both public and private sectors." (Development Council, 1976)

These efforts fostered a nationwide policy of Omanization which aims to fill the available jobs within the public and private sectors with qualified nationals, who therefore incrementally replace the expatriate workers without impeding productivity levels. This policy was to be implemented in view of the following:

- 1- It has the full consent of the political leadership. H.M the sultan has repeatedly expressed the philosophy behind Omanization as a strategic goal.
- 2- It ought to be implemented in both the public and private sectors.
- 3- It should adhere to an incremental process in order to avoid impeding the productivity levels.
- 4- The citizens are asked to play a constructive role in this regard. H.M the Sultan reiterated that “each and every one of you is required to work for the national interest and carryout his patriotic duties with wholehearted devotion” (Ministry of Information, 1995).

Among the factors that have led to viewing Omanization as one of the important challenges facing Oman are:

1. The fact that expatriate workers are competing with national workers to win over the available jobs within the labor market.
- 2.The fact that financial implications are escalating in term of huge remittance. It is estimated that foreign workers remit 30% of the country’s oil revenue or 577 million Omani Rial.
3. The fact that there are ranges of other factors such as level of crimes, sense of dependency and undermining manual work as well as security issues (Alalawi and Shyban, 1999).

The country has adopted several incentives to boost the process of Omanization such as:

- 1) Set a maximum level or a ceiling for the number of expatriate workers which will be allowed to work annually for the various sectors which can be Omanized relatively easy. It is possible to set a 45% Omanization target for industrial, mining and tourism sectors and 25% for Omanizing the trade sector.
- 2) Omanize the managerial positions in the personnel department in all the organizations in the private sector.

- 3) Compensate the private sector for its training expenditures incurred as a result of training Omani workers to qualify them for a smooth transition.
- 4) Give priority with regard to government tenders contracts to companies which commit to a time schedule for implementing Omanization.
- 5) Narrowing the gap between the employment systems in both public and private sectors.
- 6) Link priority of giving government loans and subsidies to the private organizations according to Omanization's levels achieved and their commitment to enhance this cause (The Development Council, 1991).
- 7) In 1995 the government specified an employer's contributions of 7.5% of the expatriate worker's salary to fund vocational training projects (Economist Intelligence Unit, 1998).

The government has always set targets to Omanize various sectors. For instance organizations in the transport and storage are called upon to ensure 60% of Omanization. The insurance firms and estate agents are supposed to achieve 45% of Omanization other sectors such as industry, hotel and restaurants and whole traders are supposed to achieve 35%, 30%, and 20% respectively. On the other hand, the Central Bank of Oman sets a target of 95% Omanization of clerical positions and 75% for middle and senior management positions by 2001 (Economist Intelligence Unit, 1998).

A world bank study indicated that in 1992 the workforce in Oman numbered about 699,700, of whom working Omanis accounted for 244,400. The same study also indicated that 52% of employed Omanis, or 127,000, worked in the agriculture sector. More recent figures show that at the end of 1996 there were about 482,000 expatriate working in Oman, compared with about 105,000 Omanis, excluding those in the military and apparently, agriculture. (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1997)

The efforts to achieve responsible Omanization levels necessitate improvements in the education and training policies. Among the policies which the fifth-five year

development aims to achieve as an initial plan for the long term--visions for Oman's Economy in 2020 are:

- 1- Improve the general education standards to reach international standards.
- 2- Expand the technical education and vocational training and divert the general education graduate to this type of education.
- 3- Provide the vocational and professional training for preparatory level graduates and also for dropouts.
- 4- Follow up the specified percentage for Omanization targets in the private sector and frequently review it in view of the outcomes of the education and training systems.
- 5- Adopt flexible and realistic policies in the Omani labor market
- 6- Upgrade the information and statistics on the data base of the labor market. (Ministry of Development, 1996)

According to the fifth development plan, the demand for labor will reach 903,000 employees by the year 2000. This figure consists of 739,000 existing during the fourth development plan and 164,000 which the fifth development plan is supposed to provide. It is worth mentioning that there will be demand for 54,000 expatriate employees during the fifth development plan, therefore the aggregate demand for expatriate workers will be 527,000 by the end of year 2000.

The number of Omanis in the labor market by the end of 1995 was 266,000 employees and expected is to rise to 376,000 employees by the end of year 2000. This will lead to increase in the percentage of Omanization from 36% in 1995 to 42% in the year 2000. The participation of females in the labor market will increase from 3.6% in 1995 to 5% in the year 2000 (Ministry of Development, 1996).

Among the challenge which faces human resource development and advancing the levels of Omanization, Alalawi and Shyban (1999) state the following:

- 1- The structure of the population
- 2- Low participation of women in the workforce

- 3- Low productivity of the Omani workers
- 4- Weakness in the general education
- 5- Increased number of people seeking jobs
- 6- Gap between public and private sector jobs in terms of compensation and benefits

The majority of Omani's workforce is employed by the state. Since this study is confined to the civil sector, the following part of this segment will be specified for exploring the government dimensions of Omanization.

During the past years the government was the main source of employing Omani employees. The table below highlights the development of manpower in the civil service sector.

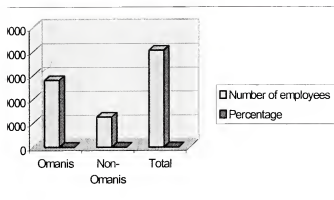
Civil Service Employees from 1970-1998

Year	Number of Omanis	Number of Expatriate	Total	Percentage of Omanization
1970	1630	120	1750	93.10
1975	12900	4665	17565	73.40
1980	21625	13027	34652	62.40
1985	33772	21190	54962	61.40
1990	44024	24096	68120	64.60
1995	59728	26474	86202	69.30
1998	55858	25110	80968	69.00

Source: Alalawi and Shyban, 1999

Distribution of Civil Service Employees Based on Nationalities

Nationalities	Number of employees	Percentage
Omanis	55858	69
Non-Omanis	25110	31
Total	80968	100



Distribution of expatriate workers based on nationalities in the Civil Service

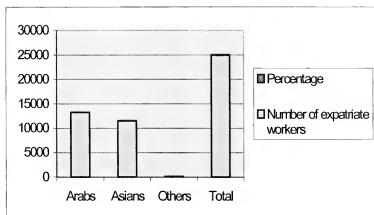
Alalawi and Shyban (1999) stated that 50.6% of the Omanis are employed by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health compared to 49.4% employed by the rest of public agencies. On the other hand, 79.1% of expatriate employees are employed by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health, while 20.9% are employed by the rest of the public agencies. Appendix A provides the distribution of employees in the civil sector on 12/31/1998 and the percentage of Omanization in each agency. Appendix A reflects that The Ministry of Education and The Ministry of Health employees 79% of the aggregate expatriate employees, mostly in the teaching and medical lines. While The Ministry of Regional Municipality and Environment, and also The Office of the Ministry of State and Governor of Dhofar employ 10.9%, mostly in crafts and service assistant jobs. Unlike the expatriates in the private sector, most expatriate in the public sector are highly qualified.

Most expatriates employees within the public sector are working in the following categories:

- Educational services and assistant jobs.
- Medicine, public health and its assistant jobs.
- Advisors and experts.
- Engineering.
- Administrative jobs.
- Statistics, computers, finance and economics.
- Agriculture and fisheries.
- Others.

Distribution of expatriate workers based on nationalities in the Civil Service

Nationalities	Number of expatriate workers	Percentage
Arabs	13270	53.2
Asians	11508	46.1
Others	181	0.7
Total	24959	100



It is evident that the government has invested a huge amount of funds to implement the Omanization policy. Almuhamri (1993) states that “during the Fourth Five-Year Development Plan, for example, it has allocated OR 40 million to implement the Omanization policy. In addition OR 10 million was allocated to the Ministry of Civil

Service in order to implement Omanization programmes in the Civil Service domain. It is, however, recognised by Omani officials that the idea that the Omanization of the workforce could be achieved easily and naturally was unrealistic, particularly with the continuous absence of a clear replacement for the expatriate employees or, in other words, defined manpower planning.”

The responsibility of the Omani employees complements such efforts and plays a vital role in implementing the Omanization policy. Educated Omani employees, especially those who are occupying managerial positions, can contribute to this goal in the following manners:

- Set examples to their subordinates through punctuality and discipline.
- Train their employees and introduce a learning environment in their work place.
- Participate in selecting the right employees based on the authority vested in them.
- Set the right organizational culture and promote harmony between the Omani and expatriate employees so that team spirit prevails and the available resources are utilized efficiently.

B) Personnel Functions of Relevance to HRD

In this area emphasis will be given to what Barton and Chappell (1985) classified as:

1- Recruitment and Selection.

2- In-Service Personnel processes which include activities such as promotion, performance appraisal, and compensation.

Recruitment and Selection

Article 15 of the Civil Service Law executive regulation indicates that job vacancies within the civil service sector ought to be announced through the various means in the media. The announcement in turn gives detailed information about the vacant posts, relevant job descriptions, required qualifications to fill them and places where applicants should submit their applications and appear for the necessary test and

interviews. Priorities are given to national candidates, however, expatriates are sought if Omanis are not available. However, positions which fall within the special groups and grade one of group one are filled through promotion. Article 17 of the Civil Service Law gives heads of the units discretion to exempt some posts from being announced such as those that need special consideration or need to be filled urgently. Heads of the unit are also authorized to use their discretion to determine the jobs for which candidates ought to be subjected for examination and others on which examinations are not needed in order to be filled.

Ahmed (1990) indicates that most of the government institutions use ad hoc committees to attend to interviewing and testing potential candidates in order to select the suitable ones. He further reiterates that the two most used methods are test and interview. The selection system is centralized and attended to by the Ministry of Civil Service but the government agencies are given reasonable autonomy in selecting their staff. Most of the time the Personnel Affairs Committee is assigned the responsibility of selecting the needed manpower.

Once the selection is finalized the person is notified in writing so that he or she can report to the Department of Personnel Affairs within thirty days. Once the employee reports to work a file is opened for him or her. The employee is given a probation period of three months, after which if his or her performance is not satisfactory he can be dismissed based on the head of the unit recommendation. It must be stated that exempting some jobs from examination doesn't ensure merit-based selection, however, within the organizational culture of the public institutions this is acceptable to some extent because it provides flexibility for other considerations within the society. HRD intervention ought to be in the mind of those who are assigned the responsibility for recruiting and selecting but in the absence of well defined job descriptions and job classifications this will not be feasible for the majority of jobs. In addition HRD intervention ought to be in a form of orientation programs geared to provide a sense of awareness for the employee about the

organization he is working for and the expected role he will perform. Taking into consideration the structural arrangement specified for HRD within various organizational structure it is doubtful that some of these agencies can attend to such a role. In his declaration to Majlis Alshura in 1997, the Minister of Civil Service indicated that the employment opportunities in the government sector have been narrowed down to :

- Available vacant grades within the various public agencies' budgets.
- Newly established jobs to meet the demand of new projects.
- Employment due to implementation of an Omanization plan

(Aledari,1997)

Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal is a crucial tool to evaluate the employees' performance in an organization. As a result an agency can retain the best performers and set remedies for those who are inefficient or even dismiss them. Performance appraisal can provide many indicators that assist the decision making process in matters such as training, transferring, promoting and even dismissing after exhausting the available remedies. Only if the employees' performance is appraised properly can a superior come to know the deficiency and strength in his or her staff and therefore can set the needed solutions to improve the deficiency.

In the case of performance appraisal according to the experience of the Civil Service Sector in Oman, this process has undergone continuous improvement in four stages as follows:

- 1) The first method was used from 1976-1984.
- 2) The second method was used from 1984-1988.
- 3) The third method was used from 1988- 1991.
- 4) The fourth method was used from 1992-present (Alouqdah, 1997).

The present performance appraisal method consists of nine distinctive forms, each of which is geared toward appraising a specified group, e.g. managers and supervisors, doctors, positions with the implementation levels, teaching field and so on.

The rating is conducted by the employee's immediate superior and then passed to the superior's superior and finally approved by the Personnel Affairs Committee. These multi-source checks may ensure objectivity in rating. The performance appraisal applies a secrecy method, therefore the employee is not informed about the outcomes of the rating. The proponent of this approach may argue that informing the employee the low rating he is awarded may cause friction between the rater and his subordinates due to the strong bond in the relationship between the people in the Arab society. However, such action deprives the employee a chance of knowing the strong points which can be maintained and the weak point which can be improved. As the level of education rises among Omani employees the issue of friction becomes exaggerated, therefore, it becomes the responsibility of the rater to prove his or her credibility in rating the subordinates and work hand in hand with them to alleviate their deficiencies. Leaving the employee uninformed may create a communication gap and broaden the lack of confidence between the raters and their subordinates and therefore may jeopardize the notion of teamwork in the long run.

Among the findings which Alouqdah (1997) concluded in his study about the performance appraisal in the civil service sector in Oman are:

- 1- Some performance appraisal samples included some elements irrelevant to some employees. If they were left without assigning a grade for it while rating those to whom it is not applicable it will result in lowering the overall grade they will be awarded.
- 2- The applied performance appraisal samples are long, therefore, they are time consuming and may create filing problems over the years.
- 3- The time allocated for preparing these samples is not sufficient especially in large agencies such as the Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Health. This may lead the

raters to rush in the preparation process so that they can finish in the required time. Such a rush may result in neglecting the objectivity in the rating process which in turn will have a negative effect on the credibility of the evaluation.

4) There are several obstacles which face the rater in this regard as a result of :

- A) Difficulty due to absence of performance levels to use as a benchmark while rating.
- B) Difficulties due to variations in the performance level of the employees from time to time.
- C) Difficulty due to lack of clarity in the meaning of some elements in the performance appraisal sample.
- D) Difficulty in rating the annual performance of the employee especially in view of the lack of documenting the observations about the employees performance.
- E) The length of the samples themselves.
- F) The fact that the appraisal records are not taken seriously.

The above mentioned factors may lead the rater to fall into some of the common rating errors such as the halo effect, central tendency, lenient rating, strict rating, latest behavior, initial impression, spill over effect, same as me, and different than me (Pynes, 1997).

As for the contribution of the performance appraisal to HRD activities, one can state that it has a marginal contribution in view of the above mentioned obstacles and the lack of job description and job classification system. Emphasis should be given to enable the raters to maintain objectivity and improve the shortcomings of this process because the outcomes of such process can be helpful in making the right decision about other personnel activities such as promotion, and training. For HRD purposes performance appraisal can produce important indicators which can be used in the process of training needs assessment.

Promotion

For promotion to take place a vacant grade has to be available and certain conditions must be measured in the candidate to be eligible for promotion. The Civil Service Law indicates that promotion should be based on a merit system which takes into account matters such as seniority, academic qualifications, and performance. The Civil Service Law sets a ceiling or a minimum number of years before promoting the employee from one grade to another. These requirements vary depending on the grade group that employee is in prior to promotion. For instance the law requires a minimum of three years for grades three and four of group one, and two years for grades five and six of group one. On the other hand the law sets four years for grades two, and three for group three.

Alouqdah (1997) indicates that only 45% of his respondents stated that their organizations use the outcomes of the performance appraisal as a base for financial promotion, while 18% stated that their organization uses the performance appraisal results for job advancement. In view of the budgetary constraints this function also has a marginal contribution to the overall HRD activities.

Remuneration and Compensation

An employee is based on the relevant qualification and experience as specified in the preset guidelines in terms of the financial grade. The employee is awarded an overtime pay for the time that exceeds the required number of hours. Employees are also eligible to receive an annual increment except those who are awarded an unsatisfactory grade in the performance appraisal report. This increment is considered as a cost of living adjustment added annually to the employees' salary. Employees also receive an electricity and water allowance.

Although article 56 of the executive regulations of the Civil Service Law states that it is possible to reward those with exceptional performance an additional allowance, this provision is subject to availability of funds, therefore, it is seldom the case that it is put in use. Compensation guidelines for public servants are illustrated in section nine of

the executive regulation of the Civil Service Law. The employee's compensation for an injury is usually based on his or her salary when the injury took place. A medical authority, normally Ministry of Health, has to assess the type of injury.

However, in the following circumstances the employee is not eligible for compensation; these are:

- 1) Death or disability as a result of a deliberate act of the employee.
- 2) In case of intoxication.
- 3) Violation of the preset prevention guidelines .

This function can provide some motivation to certain employees but since not all employees are motivated by virtue of financial reward, it will have a minimal impact if it is not used as an integrated package with other means of motivation. Sometimes budget constraints may not make it possible to reward the employees. Due to cultural assumptions financial promotion take place in a form of batches who have been in the same grade for certain number of years. Therefore it is discouraging for those with exceptional performance to see others get promoted in the same manner that they are getting promoted without consideration for the difference in productivity.

C) Training Activities

Training is one of the in-service personnel functions. It includes " Those activities that serve to improve an individual's performance on currently held job or one related to it." (Mondy and Noe, 1990).

Often there is a misconception that training has a magic effect to solve all the problems facing a particular agency. Therefore some agencies embrace such assumption and race to train their employees, but to their dismay the results are not as fruitful as they hoped. For training to be effectively and efficiently carried out, it has to be properly planned, implemented and evaluated. The assessment of the training needs has to be

based on actual needs rather than on some biases drawn by those who are assigned such functions.

In the case of the public sector in Sultanate of Oman the training process can be classified into the following:

- 1) Administrative Training.
- 2) On-the Job-Training.
- 3) Other Training Activities.

1)Administrative Training:

The administrative training is centrally planned by the Ministry of Civil Service in coordination with the respective public agencies. Such a process is attended through the following:

- The Ministry of Civil Service circulates a letter to all the public agencies to prepare their training needs for the following fiscal year. Attached to the letter the ministry sends a specific form in which such needs ought to be listed by the respective agencies. The agency must determine the number of employees that it needs to train, types and level of training. These data should be sent to the Ministry of Civil Service by the end of June.
- The forms are filled by the respective department or section in the respective agency depending on the HRD representation in the organizational structure of agency. Once it is approved by the concerned authority in each agency, it is sent to the Ministry of the Civil Service.
- The Ministry of Civil Service reviews the proposed training needs and puts them before the Civil Service Council for approval. Once the general plan is approved the respective agencies are informed. Therefore, each agency becomes responsible about training its employees based on the proposed needs.

Shyban (1990) indicated that the administrative training aims to achieves the following objectives:

- 1- Contribute toward providing well trained personnel and enhance their performance.
- 2- Train employees on how to apply modern work methods.
- 3- Prepare the number of administrative leaders needed in the public sector.
- 4- Retrain some employees based on the changes in the organizational structure and the agency's policies to adapt to the prevailing environmental forces.
- 5- Assist in the implementation of Omanization policy through preparing suitable alternatives to the expatriate expertise.

The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) participates in setting the administration training plans as well as designing and implementing it. A look at the IPA guide for training programs in 1999 reveals the following observations:

1) IPA is supposed to implement 110 training programs, 49 of which are general training programs tailored to meet the needs of trainees from various agencies within the government sector. While 61 training programs are specified for trainees of a particular agency, e.g. Ministry of Education, Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Environment, The Office of the Minister of State and Governor of Dhofar. Out of the total 110 training programs which IPA is supposed to implement only 95 training programs are geared to train the civil service sector employees. These training programs are categorized subjectwise as shown in the table below.

Training Activities Carried Out in 1999 by IPA

Training Programs	Programs
Public Administration	54
Financial Administration	19
Writing Skills	19
Information Technology	11
English	4
Scientific Research	1
Statistics	1
Library	1
TOTAL	110

2) There are a number of training programs geared toward the behavior of the employees such as :

- A) Stress Management.
- B) Time Management.
- C) Dealing with People

There should certainly be an increase in this area of training in the future because it inculcates good habits that make a difference in the employees' performance and the agency at large. Such training is essential in modern organizations because it helps the employees to take the right attitude toward his or her work environment.

3) The training programs also include training activities in the information technologies such as:

- A) The use of the internet.
- B) Using computer in preparing public budgeting.
- C) Other programs using Microsoft.

This in turn reveals that these agencies are trying to adapt to the environment forces which they operate within, especially the technical environment.

4) There is concern from some agencies to prepare their in-house trainers such as the case of both Ministry of Education and Ministry of Water Resources. This step is one of the means of utilizing the educated employees and directing their strength to the betterment of the organization. This category of employees can be a valuable asset in improving the HRD activities in terms of :

A- Coordinating the training activities.

B- Expanding the base of training to include large number of employees at their agency.

C- Participating in the assessment of the training needs at their agency .

5) The majority of the training programs are specified for the middle management positions. Out of the 95 training programs geared toward the civil service sector employees, there are 62 training programs specifically geared to train middle management positions. About 50% of these training programs are tailored to meet the demand of specific public agencies such as Ministry of Education, Ministry of Regional Municipalities and Environment, The Office of the Minister of State and Governor of Dhofar, Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor and Vocational Training, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and Ministry of Water Resources. The participants in these programs include department directors as well as head of sections. The argument may be that since such programs are specified for the particular agency then they might as well include as many trainees as they can. However, including these different categories in the same programs may result in a lack of congruence among the participants, especially that they differ in terms of educational background, experience, span of control, and the scope of responsibilities, that therefore may impede their interaction with the trainers. If participants are more homogenous, such a training opportunity could enhance the discussion and participants can relate their experience to enhance the contents of the programs. The participants can develop a sense of coordination with each other in the future.

6) There was one program specified for enhancing the supervisory skills of women tailored for the training needs of women. This program is designed for the Ministry of Education.

7) What is striking is that in this annual plan there is no training program tailored to meet the needs of the top managerial positions. This indicates that training activities involve the employees who occupy middle management positions and below. It goes beyond any doubt that organizations are open systems and therefore must adapt to the environment to survive. The uncertainty that agencies operate in necessitates a continuous development of the available human capital. Depriving the upper managerial layer of such training opportunities is likely to create a clash between the top managers and their middle management subordinates because the two segments will not be at the same wavelength. The middle management employees want to put what they learned in the training program to the test of reality and benefit from it in solving their day-to-day problems and therefore will propose certain change to take place in the mechanism of their work. The top managers on the other hand will see no need for such action. Such incongruence will breed dissatisfaction and will abort the effectiveness of the training programs.

Abdelfatah (1994) in his research study on the development of the administrative leadership in the civil service in Oman stressed the need for training the upper managerial incumbents. Among the recommendations he made in this regard are the following:

A) The administrative leadership development should be attended in an integrated and coherent manner. Therefore there should be a comprehensive strategy for human resource development.

B) The administrative leadership development is a continuous process that ought to be supported by the concerned agencies.

C) The scientific and technological advancement necessitates that leaders should update their knowledge and skills.

D) The Omani culture ought to be considered when trying to develop such segment.

E) The contingency approach necessitates that the leaders should be equipped with the needed knowledge and skills to enable them to select the suitable leadership style to attend to the situation in hand.

The IPA used to conduct frequent workshops and meetings devoted to the upper echelon to discuss some issues of concern to the civil service sector. Such an initiative ought to be an annual tradition of the institute because it gives the upper managers a chance to explore some persisting issues and benefit from the diverse viewpoints of the participants. Among the areas of training that ought to be devoted to this category of employees Abdelfatah (1994) recommended the following:

- A) Problem solving skills.
- B) Decision making skills.
- C) Planning skills
- D) Negotiation skills.
- E) Financial and statistical skills.
- F) Human resource development skills.

In this context the researcher reiterates the necessity to expose the upper managerial civil servants to such training to update their knowledge and skills and induce harmony between the different levels in the agency. This, however, supports the researcher's third hypothesis, that the human resource development activities are partially applied, focusing on certain categories of civil servants. Upper managerial employees can't by any means be neglected because it is their leadership and vision that serve to utilize the available resources of the agency to achieve its objectives and set future goals for it.

8) All the training programs are in-service oriented training. However the civil service sector uses the pre-service type of training as an approach for Omanization. This point will be elaborated further in the technical training section.

9) The majority of the training programs are carried out in Muscat, the capital city. Only

nine training programs are carried out in Salalah and are specifically tailored to meet the training needs of the middle management employees at the Office of the Minister of State and Governor of Dhofar. These figures reflect that the regional branches at the various regions in the country have a minimal share in the training programs. Due to the geographical distance between Muscat and the other towns there is a small number of trainees who participate in IPA training activities. The Statement of the Minister of Regional Municipalities and Environment in a recent meeting with his employees seems to support this observation. He indicated that 90% of the training opportunities will be tailored to meet the training needs of the employees at the regional branches of his agency in the year 2000. (Oman Daily Newspaper, July 21, 1999: 4)

Neglecting the regional branches from such training activities is likely to result in an inefficient local government in the long run if such a trend is not reversed.

10) It can also be observed that some of the topics of the training programs are repeated to other agencies as well such as :

A) Developing trainer's skills (one program was designed for Ministry of Water Resources and two for Ministry of Education).

B) Stress management program, for several agencies.

Such repetition is an indication of the lack of coordination between these agencies. Effective coordination between the various agencies will enable them to contain the financial implication of the training activities. The agencies will also tend to nominate homogenous trainees to attend to the training programs rather than end up with heterogeneous groups such as the example of having managers and head of sections attend the same training programs. Proper coordination between the civil service sector agencies will enable them to cooperate in the issue of training for the regional branch employees. They can also activate the internal training through exchanging trainers and trainees.

11) There was a program specifically designed to meet the training needs of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor, and Vocational training on scientific methods on preparing

research. Such training will provide some tangible evidence necessary in the decision making process.

12) There was one training program on managing and marketing the municipality services. Such program reflect the new trend in public administration which calls for embracing some of the techniques used in the private sector.

13) IPA uses a special form to collect the data of the trainees who are nominated to attend a training programs. Such data includes personal information about the employee, about the job, its responsibility, job description, previous training opportunities given to him or her, any other skills that the trainee has if any such as computer skills, and comments of the immediate superior. The IPA also doesn't allow those who miss more than 10% of the duration of the course to appear for the final exam. In this regard IPA also prepares a performance report about the trainees which includes how many hours the trainee was absent among other criteria. At the end of the program the trainee is awarded a certificate which indicates that he or she successfully completed the program. IPA also gathers some feedback from the trainees about the training program that they have attended. Although such measures from the IPA part may introduce discipline in implementing the programs, it remains the responsibility of the various public agencies to assess their actual training needs properly. A look at the available manpower at IPA reveals that there are 25 employees including two who are currently on scholarships. This when compared to what is expected from such a vital organization is clearly insufficient, especially when the institute is involved in training, consultations, publishing, and conferences and workshops arrangements. It is worth mentioning that public agencies also send their employees for training in private training institutes as well.

Shyban (1990) indicated that there are some challenges facing the process of planning the training activities such as:

1) Lack of awareness about training which in turn affect the inputs and outputs of the training.

2) Lack of technical expertise to plan and follow up training in various public agencies.

3) Absence of full cooperation between training planners at the central level and those who plan training at the respective agencies.

4) Lack of cohesiveness in the training plan which are supposed to include training needs assessment, plan implementation, and follow-up and evaluation of the plan. She points out that in practice such components are incomplete and do not complement each other. Therefore training activities end up including some needs only. Not to mention that there is no follow up and evaluation for these plans.

5) Training needs assessment is not attended to carefully due to insufficient planning and absence of essential components such as:

A) Job Classifications.

B) Inability of some directors to assess the precise training needs of their employees.

C) Differences in educational levels and experience between employees in the same group level or even same job level .

Shyban (1990) further points out the following observations about the employees who are involved in the area of training:

1- There are differences in the number, job titles, and scope of work for such category of employees.

2- There is a limited number of employees working in this area. She found that the number ranges from one to five in twenty seven agencies and that only two had five employees working in this area.

Shyban (1994) also made the following observations about the effectiveness of the training activities :

A) Lack of following up the outcomes of training in some government agencies.

B) The agencies don't benefit fully from the outcomes of their training activities.

C) Limited effect of training on the performance of the employees.

D) Limited linkage between training and the other personnel functions.

E) Lack of awareness of some directors and supervisors about the importance of training.

F) Lack of awareness of employees about the importance of training.

Given such observations along with the present HRD representation within the organizational structure of the civil service sector agencies is enough to support the researcher's first hypothesis that despite the increasing importance that the civil service sector is giving to HRD, the outcomes of HRD activities are not evaluated effectively to ensure continuous improvements. The second hypothesis that the process of human resource development is adhered to as an activity rather than a strategic tool is supported as well.

(2) On-The-Job-Training:

This type of training is carried out at each agency and normally attended separately. Due to the lack of published data the researcher was unable to provide an analytical comparative perspective about this type of training activities. However such training is attended to in an organized fashion in large organizations such as Ministry of Health. In various hospitals this type of training is applied in a systematic manner especially for nurses and para-medical staff. Sometimes the job rotation method is used where employees are moved from job to another to broaden their experience. This type of training can be crucial and result-oriented if it is systematically planned and carefully implemented and regularly evaluated. Ali (1990) states that there are two different assumptions for the on-the-job training:

A) It can be designed and implemented in a straight forward manner.

B) It is not doable due to the complexity of the assignment performed by the experts, or the quality of expert or counterpart.

Which ever the case, the on-the-job training can prove to be a practical tool if obstacles facing the success of such attempt are carefully weighted and properly diagnosed. This type of training should not be ignored.

(3) Other Training Activities

IPA conducted numerous pre-service training programs in order to qualify a number of secondary school certificate holders in areas such as Arabic typing, special secretary during the training year 87/88 and training year 89/90. The institute also conducted a pre-service training program in library science for university graduates. Such programs were implemented in nine months and were introduced as a mean to Omanize some jobs previously occupied by expatriates. There were 13 programs tailored for such purposes and attended by 284 employees. IPA also implemented two-year diploma programs to qualify secondary school certificate holders in areas such as accounting and statistics. Such training was geared toward the areas in which Omanis are scarce. During the period from 1990-1996 IPA implemented four programs attended by 85 participants . IPA also intends to organize a diploma program in library science to retrain the graduates of arts (Aledari, 1997).

Almaskary (1992) stated that:

a significant majority of respondents have indicated that they regard working in the area in which they are trained as extremely important. This might be good news, because it might reduce the possibilities of mismatch between education and employment. However, the insistence of working in the area which a graduate is trained for might engender a problem of educated unemployment. The problem of educated unemployment is widespread in developing countries.

Therefore such retraining efforts are geared to avoid such a trap.

The public agencies that have training centers also conduct internal training programs for their employees. In this area the researcher was not able to collect data pertaining to this types of training to give an analytical observation on the Civil Service Sector at large, therefore, we will provide some examples of certain ministries to state that such training is taking place or it is one of the means of training civil service employees.

The training activity report of the Ministry of Electricity and Water for 1998 indicated that 30 employees were provided internal training activities, however, the report did not specify the subject matter of these training activities. Attending conferences and seminars is another type of training within the civil service sector; the Ministry of Electricity and Water training activities report in 1998 reveals that 70 employees were given a chance to attend conferences and seminars within Oman as well as abroad.

The report reveals that among the countries that this ministry's employees were sent in order to attend conferences are Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Japan, United Kingdom, and Switzerland. The conference and seminar method is frequently used by the Ministry of Health, such as the seminar on primary health care which was held on November 5, 1998 (Oman Daily News, Nov.6, 1998: 2).

The civil service sector also provide training to its technically oriented cadres. The Ministry of Water Resources training activity report for the period from 1990-1997 indicates that the ministry provided 1238 training opportunities geared toward technical cadre ; however, the report did not specify the level of such cadre or the area in which they are specialized. On the other hand, the report stated in its introductory comments that such training was directed toward technically oriented jobs.

D) Educational Opportunities

In this context emphasis will be given to the educational opportunities that employers, in our case the public agencies, provide to their employees as a mean of qualifying them. Therefore a description of the education system in Oman is deemed unnecessary. In this regards the agencies coordinate with the Ministry of Higher Education in sending their employees on scholarship abroad and to the respective educational institutes within the Sultanate of Oman. Prior to the opening of the Sultan Qaboos University in 1986 Oman used to send its secondary school graduates to various countries to pursue their university education as well as higher studies. Due to the opening of the Sultan Qaboos University as well as the availability of various colleges

and technical institutes in addition to the opening of several private colleges, the number of those who are sent on scholarships declined. The Ministry of Higher Education coordinates such activities. Employees are sent to pursue their higher education based on their respective agencies' recommendations. In the year 96/97 a Ministry of Higher Education report shows that the number of those who are pursuing their graduate studies was 74, one of whom was sent to finish his chartered of medicine, 58 were sent to pursue master's degrees and 15 were sent to pursue their doctoral degrees. These students are distributed in USA , UK, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, France and Australia. On the other hand in the year 97/98 the report shows that there are 3605 pursuing university degree education.

In addition, some agencies send their employees to the Sultan Qaboos University to pursue their master's degrees. For example the Ministry of Education has sent some of its students to pursue their master's degrees in education administration. The Ministry of Health also coordinates for its employees to sit for their chartered of medicines exams in Oman. Such initiatives reduce the financial implications of such educational opportunities and provide a vast number of employees with such a chance. The opening of the private colleges also provides the public agencies with a chance to educate their secondary school graduate employees with a two- year college education based on their actual needs.

There are also a number of employees who are pursuing a correspondence education. The advancement in the information technology will open a wide chance for educational opportunities and if it is streamlined effectively will also contribute to educating a wide range of employees and provide a chance for the agencies to utilize the allocated funds for such purposes efficiently. An example of the Ministry of Water Resources' efforts in this area will illustrate this. During the period from 1990-1997 this agency had sent 34 of its employees on scholarships to pursue their master's degrees in various fields of relevance to the ministry's specialized functions. The employees were sent to study: hydrology, water resources management, sociology, geographic

information systems, geophysics and other related studies. The ministry also sent 7 of its employees to pursue their undergraduate studies in areas such as: development administration, public administration, finance and technical oriented studies. In addition the ministry qualified 56 employees for post secondary diplomas.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sultanate of Oman has achieved massive strides in its development experience. From a fragmented tribal society before 1970, the country became modern and reknowned worldwide. The government sector has undergone continuous attempts to modernize its institutions so that it can provide its citizens with the services each agency is designed to deliver. To live up to the expectation the civil service agencies have to adapt to their environment consistently. In such a quest these agencies ought to develop their human capital in a continuous manner because it is the qualified and empowered employees who turn the preset plans to tangible results.

While exploring the issue of human resource development and the existing activities and practices in this area within the civil service sector in Oman, this study revealed that the issue of developing the human capital remains one of the challenges facing the civil service sector especially in the technically oriented spheres. Huge investments are devoted to this issue; yet, the outcomes have not met expectations. Although the civil service sector has achieved 69% Omanization, the quality of some of the Omani employees compared to those who have been replaced is questionable. Sometimes point of views about the low productivity levels of Omani employees are aired out. Lower output in the positions which are newly Omanized may be due to many variables such as the development experience in Oman which is itself an infant compared to other countries where modernization efforts have been set in motion for many decades, even centuries. Other possible explanations include the age and educational background of the Omani employees. This issue ought to be researched and suitable remedies should be proposed. It was evident that there is a lack of coordination between the various civil service sector agencies in the area of human resource development. Such a case ought to be avoided and mechanisms for coordination and

cooperation between these agencies should be introduced so that the civil service sector employees can reap the comparative advantage of such cooperation.

Retraining educated employees is going to be an issue of paramount importance, especially in the social science disciplines. This issue should be carefully planned and an awareness program ought to be set in motion to reinforce the importance of such steps. Those who are going to be retrained should be motivated and rewarded properly.

Although Omanization is a natural cry that ought to be sympathized with and understood from the expatriates' point of view, the implementation phase of such policy ought to be done in a delicate way so that it does not jeopardize the quality needed in a particular job being Omanized. Attention ought to be given to qualified expatriates to ensure their satisfaction and maximum performance. Since this segment of employees is qualified, they may feel insecure and alienated. Some of these expatriates have been in Oman for a long time and are well acquainted with the work environment in Oman. They can serve better than any new expatriate that might be employed if high turnover in that segment is the case. The outcomes of this study were supportive to the researcher's hypotheses that:

- Despite the increasing importance that the Civil Service Sector to HRD, the outcomes of HRD activities are not evaluated effectively to ensure continuous improvements.
- The process of human resource development is adhered to as an activity rather than a strategic tool.
- the human resources development activities are partially applied, focusing on certain categories of civil servant.

It was also found that the other personnel functions do not contribute in an integrated sense to the HRD efforts, rather each function is practiced in an independent sense. Also HRD is used as an approach to Omanization of workforce in certain areas, not on an aggregate macro-level scale. However this issue remains to be the responsibility of the

newly established Omanization Follow-Up Committee. In order to alleviate such shortcomings, the civil service sector can benefit from the following recommendations:

1) Develop integrated and comprehensive human resource development plans that take into consideration the various functions of personnel and make them contribute to such a plan. These plans should attend to the macro and micro levels needs of the civil service sector.

2) Increase coordination and cooperation between the various agencies in the area of human resource development.

3) Intensify the activities of the on-job training and incorporate it as a means to create a learning organization so that the employees will undergo continuous renewal in their knowledge and abilities to perform the assigned tasks.

4) Rotate those who are occupying supervisory positions in order to be subjected to different tasks within their organizations. This in turn will enable these supervisors to give importance to train their subordinates.

5) Broaden the base of intergovernmental coordination between the various agencies within the public sector in the sphere of training so that training budgets can be managed efficiently and many employees get trained. This will also help facilitate communication between these agencies.

6) Benefit from the outcomes of the research studies published in specialized journals, such as Aledari, academic dissertations or in-house research performed within the respective public agencies.

7) All the agencies train their employees through local training institutes as well as abroad. These agencies ought to think about qualifying a group of their educated Omani employees to be trainers so that they can conduct some in-house training programs for their agencies. Such a group can also help their agencies in the process of assessing the training needs based on scientific methods. They can also help in the process of evaluating the outcomes of the training programs.

8) Conduct research studies to compare productivity level of both Omani and expatriate employees in order to diagnose the reasons behind the low productivity levels of the Omani employees if that is the case and propose remedies for it. Such studies will enable planners to gear Omanization efforts toward such deficiencies.

9) Make use of the various skilled expatriate employees and utilize their expertise to train the Omani employees provide that:

A) Those expatriate employees are provided some training on the intricacies of being a trainers.

B) Motivate the Omani employees to benefit from such training opportunities.

10) Promote internal training activities toward cross-cultural training especially in big agencies such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, the purpose of which is to:

A) To enhance appreciation of the diversity issue.

B) To discourage the ethnocentric mentality of being Omani versus being expatriate and encourage a sense of teamwork to achieve the goals of their agency.

11) Qualify a group of Omani researchers to shoulder the task of studying the HRD issues in their respective public agencies and heading a quality circle team devoted to find suitable solutions to overcome the obstacles and challenges faced by their agencies.

However, to achieve such purpose those employees ought to be highly educated and exposed to advanced research methodologies. The public organizations can benefit in this regard from IPA and Sultan Qaboos University, especially since SQU became an approved think tank according to a recent royal decree.

12) Public agencies can put HRD as a provision in their tenders which the contractors compete to win over.

13) The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) is a highly specialized government body which play the role of a think tank in the country therefore the following point ought to be considered:

A) The size of the workforce ought to be reconsidered because the present capacity is insufficient compared to the expected task from such organ.

B) The training department at IPA ought to conduct annual training for those who are involved in planning the training activities at the various agencies to enable them to draw on accurate assessment of their employees' training needs . Such a program ought to be delivered in a form of workshop or seminar prior to the date in which these agencies are supposed to embark in assessing their training needs.

C) The quality of employees at IPA ought to be upgraded and the Omanization process ought to take place based on a long term vision. IPA should even consider the option of retaining selected expatriate expertise for a long time, because simply obtaining high accademic degrees does not make one a good trainer or researcher. Since the functions of IPA are knowledge-oriented, the quality of the outcomes is determined by the quality of those who are producing it.

D) The IPA has published several studies concerning HRD, which ought to be updated so that they can help researchers to have the right diagnosis of the present situations.

APPENDICES

Distribution of Employees in the Various Public Organization as of 1997					
Agency	Omani		Expatriate		Total
	Males	Females	Males	Females	
Office of the Personal Rep to HM The Sultan	32	2	9	0	43
Office of Dep. P.M for Council of Ministers	19	0	10	0	29
Office of HMs Personal Advisor	15	0	1	0	16
Office of HMs Personal Advisor for External Liasion	8	1	0	0	9
Office of HMs Personal Advisor for Economic Planning Affairs	10	1	2	0	13
Ministry of Civil Service	177	19	12	0	208
Ministry of Petroleum and Gas	161	20	16	0	197
Ministry of Health	4653	2758	2769	4937	15117
Ministry of Post, Telegraphs and Telephones	737	86	21	1	823
Ministry of Communication	1552	41	357	0	1950
Ministry of Interior	1804	67	77	0	1948
Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor and Vocational Training	1852	326	446	62	2686
Ministry of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs	1187	43	64	0	1294
Ministry of National Heritage and Culture	378	41	14	1	434
Ministry of Education	9355	8802	7024	4647	30428
Ministry of Higher Education	310	96	363	38	807
Ministry of Commerce and Industry	505	77	48	3	582
Ministry of Electricity and Water	1732	50	281	0	2068
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	2266	77	365	1	2343
Ministry of Housing	869	34	116	2	1021
Ministry of Regional Municipality and Environment	5219	90	1429	1	6739
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	584	17	10	0	611
Ministry of Information	940	62	87	2	1091
Ministry of Water Resources	887	135	32	4	1058
Ministry of Finance	327	37	61	0	425
Ministry of National Economy	191	40	8	1	240
Ministry of Legal Affairs	42	5	11	0	58
Office of the Minister of State and Governor of Dhofar	3088	41	1460	2	4571
Civil Service Council	13	0	1	0	14
Tender Board	39	8	4	0	51
General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers	69	0	0	0	69
Institute of Public Administration	35	8	14	0	57
Magistrates Court	179	0	8	0	187
The General Organization of Sports and Cultural Activities	311	16	49	3	379
Office of the Governor of Muscat	207	3	4	0	214
General Secretariat of the Supreme Committee for Conferenes	26	3	0	0	29
Supreme Committee for National Day's Celebrations	13	0	8	0	21
Supreme Committee For Town Planning	13	0	0	0	13
The National Organization for Scouts and Guides	15	2	6	2	25
Commercial Court	86	10	15	1	112
Civil Service Employees Pension Fund	32	6	3	0	41

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