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An analysis of the effectiveness of the human resource arrangements within the Ghanaian decentralized government system: Views of staff of cape coast metropolitan assembly

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Abstract

Adequate human resource (HR) is critical in ensuring goal attainment within the broader framework of local government systems. Like any other institutions, the District Assemblies (DAs) which are central to the success of local government systems in Ghana require adequate and well-qualified personnel in order to be able to perform the responsibilities entrusted to them. However, it is believed that many DAs in Ghana lack the requisite HR for the performance of their mandated functions. This poses a serious danger to the viability of Ghana's decentralized government system. Against this backdrop, this study sought to examine the views of employees of DAs on the HR arrangements within the country's decentralized government system using Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly as a case. The study was descriptive and exploratory, with the Coordinating Director, Deputy Directors, Sectional Heads, and other members of the Central Administration as the population. Purposive and stratified sampling methods were used to select 54 respondents for the study, with interview schedule and interview guide as the research instruments. Frequencies, percentages, Mann Whitney U test and content analyses were employed for the study. The study found that the existing institutional framework contributes to the problems the Assembly faces regarding its HR capacity. Also, the Assembly did not have adequate and well-qualified personnel to carry out its mandate. Again, factors such as low salaries, poor recruitment and selection policy, ineffective staff replacement and transfer policy, low motivation and inadequate training and development hampered the HR capacity at the Assembly. It was found that no differences exist in the opinions of males and females with respect to the factors affecting the Assembly's HR capacity. It is recommended that the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) should re-examine its HR policies in order to grant autonomy to the various Personnel Management Departments in the District Assemblies. This will improve the HR situation at the Assembly since it will reduce excessive delays and travelling costs involved in addressing the HR challenges in the DAs.

Keywords: Local government, district assemblies, human resource, development

Introduction

The human resource (HR) capacity is recognized as the bastion for the development of every nation and organization. Countries and organizations, all over the world, therefore, seek to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes of their people and to utilize them effectively for development (Harbison, 1973). However, in recent times, the HR capacity of nations and organizations has assumed a greater significance in development owing to the increased dimension of globalization of economies and progressive technological advancements (Taher & Arifen, 2000). In his view, Haslinda (2009) posits that human resources are an institution's greatest assets because without them, everyday functions such as managing funds for development, making business transactions, and improving our governance systems may not be achieved.

As a theoretical framework for understanding and appreciating the centrality of HR capacities in nation-building, the human capital theory was developed. Todaro and Smith (2003) give credit to the good works of many economists such as Schultz, Denison, Berker and Myers for using the human capital theory as a basis for situating the relevance of HR towards the attainment of organizational and national goals. The theory credibly proves that an educated population is an asset to a nation or an organization. The direct contribution of

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education is seen in terms of its quantity and quality of occupational skills. Schultz adds that a conscious HR development drive is a major determinant of income levels of workers since the latter is a normal good; hence, the better the quality of HR the greater the level of income.

Powell (2001), Wood (2000) ^[19], and the World Bank (2000) as cited in Analoui (2002), underscore that the success or failure of development in Africa will depend on the skills of the people engaged in this task. Development, in this sense, refers to qualitative and structural changes in an economy for the betterment of the socio economic and political conditions of the people. The strategic importance of the development of HR capacity, for example, was raised at the African Leadership Forum held in Nigeria on 21st June, 1990. At that meeting, Robert McNamara, the former President of the World Bank, stressed the need to build local capacities as the cutting edge of Africa's strategic development agenda. McNamara adds that relevant skills and better-managed public and private institutions for long-term sustainable growth ought to be prioritized in every development activity in Africa (Antwi & Analoui, 2008) ^[3].

The success of Ghana's economy lies in the quality and quantity of her HR (Gyimah-Boadi, 2003; The Government of Ghana, 2010) ^[17]. In his presentation at a workshop organized by the Centre for Democratic Development (CDD) on the theme 'Capacity Building for the Leadership of Parliament' on 21-23 February 2003, Professor E. Gyimah-Boadi, the Executive Director of CDD-Ghana, underscored the indispensability of adequate and relevant HR capacities towards a fully functioning parliament. Professor Gyimah-Boadi observed further that his outfit was delighted to get an opportunity to facilitate a programme to help develop the HR capacity of a key institution of Parliament- the committees.

In recognition of the above, the development of HR capacities of countries, all over the world, has been given particular attention on the development agendas of many organizations of the United Nations that are supporting national poverty eradication efforts. Many of these organizations including the International Labor Organization (ILO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank integrated foci on human capacity development in their programs and activities and seek to improve national capacity to monitor and assess progress in pursuing this objective in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2005).

The human resources are the knowledge, skills and other relevant dispositions of people that can be tapped for the benefit of man while capacity refers to the ability of individuals and organizations or organizational units to perform functions effectively, efficiently and sustainably for the attainment of goals. Thus, HR capacity consists of the knowledge, skills and other dispositions of workers as well as their ability to perform efficiently and sustainably in order to accomplish organizational goals. It relates to the maximum number of people needed or employed by organizations taken into consideration their competency towards the attainment of organizational goals (Gilley, Egglund & Gilley, 2002). In addition, just like physical capital, human capital may depreciate as people forget what they have learned or become obsolete (Schütt, 2003). Training and development (T&D), as Abiodun (1999) asserts, therefore, becomes crucial for both organizational and national success.

In spite of the numerous efforts by various governments, institutions and international organizations, the issue of underdevelopment remains increasingly obvious among African nations for several reasons. Prominent among these factors, is the paucity of trained manpower (Assembly of the African Union, 2002; Jaycox, 1993). The capacity to handle various technical and managerial activities in most sectors of the Ghanaian economy is quite a challenging task. Efforts to address these HR deficiencies, however, have not been successful (World Bank, 1996) ^[20].

It is widely recognized that many of the earlier HR capacity initiatives were ineffective as they tackled only problems of one group or sector in an ever piecemeal approach. Although efforts have been made through a plethora of studies to appreciate the processes and outcomes of past and current HR capacity interventions, the upshots of such studies do not appear to have made any appreciable positive impact on HR capacities (Brady, 1990). Like many other African nations, Ghana has failed to adapt its HR development programs to the exigencies of the ever changing socio-economic and political conditions since attaining her independence.

The relevance of HR capacities in Ghana also finds expression in the decentralized system of government administration (Wood, 2000) ^[19]. Wood adds that the lack of quality HR has led to the centralization of public services in Ghana. But the difficulties associated with centralizing public services pushed the need for bringing governance to the local level as has been the core principle of decentralization. Theoretically, decentralization is rooted within the principle of subsidiarity. Subsidiarity principle enables governments to provide high quality services for their citizens, for increasing managerial autonomy by reducing central administrative controls, and for demanding, measuring and rewarding both organizational and individual performance (Hope, 2001).

The current system of decentralization has come with additional responsibilities and so takes cognizance of various international and national commitments such as support from donor agencies. This includes contributions from the IMF, the World Bank and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) towards the management of development processes (The Government of Ghana, 2010) ^[17]. But the DAs still do not have the requisite HR capacity to manage these resources to ensure optimum benefit to the districts and the country at large. It appears the various modifications in the DAs have been made without much regard to the HR capacities that must accompany it (Odoom, Kyeremeh & Opoku, 2014; Water Aid Ghana, 2009) ^[16, 18]. Besides, studies conducted by the World Bank (1996) ^[20], Ayee (1996) ^[5], Wood (2000) ^[19], and Antwi and Analoui (2008) ^[3] with respect to the HR capacity of the DAs have all shown that the assemblies face numerous problems in that regard. Ever since the above studies were conducted, one would expect that some improvements in terms of the HR capacity of the DAs would have been made. Contrarily, the HR capacities of the DAs are still problematic in most of the DAs (Antwi & Analoui, 2008; Ahwoi, 2010; Odoom *et al.*, 2014) ^[2, 3, 16]. What is more, Water Aid Ghana Report (2009) ^[18] indicates that given the recent near-frequent carving off of certain already established districts to form new districts, the existing supporting personnel occupying some essential positions have been made to move on to fill the newer positions in the newly created districts. Example

in case is the Birim North District, an already resource deprived district, where basic accounting staff have had to be moved to a nearby newly created district. Several views have been shared on the issue of human resource within the DAs in Ghana. For instance, Koranteng (2006)^[11] and Gyaabah (2006)^[9] attribute the problems associated with human resource in the assemblies to poor institutional arrangements. Other scholars also see poor image, poor training and development, and poor social amenities as responsible for the inadequate HR situation at the DAs (Ahwoi, 2010; Hoffman & Metzroth, 2010; Odoom *et al.*, 2014)^[2, 10, 16]. Thus, different viewpoints surround the debates on the HR challenges and constraints at the DAs of Ghana. Indeed, despite the beauty in diverse opinions, the divergence amongst scholars raises questions on what really are the issues in the face of the existing HR needs at the DAs in Ghana.

Ever since the Cape Coast Metropolis assumed the status of a metropolis in 2007, one cannot aptly appreciate the reflection of this progression in terms of the HR capacity needed to ensure effective decentralization (Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly [CCMA], 2009; Odoom, 2013). The situation in the CCMA calls for a serious attention since effective HR capacity is the sinew for smooth decentralization. Although the situation may not be peculiar to the CCMA, this study sought to examine the views employees of the DAs on the human resource situation in the institution using CCMA as a case in order to proffer some measures for improvement.

Research Objectives

1. To ascertain the views of workers of CCMA on the institutional arrangements at the DAs regarding the HR capacity at the Assembly;
2. To ascertain the personnel capacity needs of the Assembly;
3. Examine the factors that influence the HR capacity of CCMA; and
4. To ascertain whether or not differences exist between the opinions of males and females with respect to the factors affecting the HR capacity of the Assembly.

Research Hypotheses

H₀: There is no significant difference between the opinions of males and females with respect to the factors influencing the HR capacity of the Assembly.

H₁: There is significant difference between the opinions of males and females with respect to the factors affecting the HR capacity of the Assembly.

Methodology

The study relied on the descriptive and exploratory design. Population for this study comprised the Metropolitan Coordinating Directors MCD, Deputy Coordinating Directors (DCDs), Sectional heads of and the other staff of the Assembly. The purposive and stratified sampling techniques were employed to select 54 respondents for the study. Both interview schedule and interview guide were used in collecting relevant data for the study. Interview schedule was administered on the DCDs, the Sectional heads, and the other staff of the Assembly while the interview guide was used to collect data from the CD. Descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, percentages

and Mann Whitney U test were used to analyze the quantitative data whilst content analysis was done for the qualitative data.

Results and Discussion

In presenting and discussing the findings, the researcher first looked at the background characteristics of respondents, specifically, the sex, age and academic qualification of respondents at the Assembly. The study observed that 63.0 percent of the respondents were males whilst 37.0 percent were females. This shows that the Assembly has more male respondents than female. The issue of equity in the labor market is very critical as regards the employment situation of women since they must overcome historical disadvantages in an unfavorable economic environment. The present study confirms a United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's Report (2010) that unemployment rates in Ghana are higher among women than among men. The study also looked at the age distribution of respondents as shown in Table 1. From Table 1, it can be seen that 24.0 percent of the respondents fall above 49 years. This means that the majority (76.0%) of the respondents were below 49 years of age. The retiring age in Ghana is 60 years. This means that the Assembly has more of its workers not nearing retiring age. Thus, with the given the requisite resources coupled with positive work attitudes the workers could contribute greatly towards the achievement of stated goals and objectives, and ultimately the development of the Assembly.

Table 1: Age distribution of respondents

Age	Freq.	Percent
20-29	15	27.8
30-39	11	20.4
40-49	15	27.8
50-59	13	24.0
Total	54	100

Source: Field survey, 2012

The final background feature examined in this study is the educational qualification of respondents. The Assembly possessed employees of diverse academic qualifications, ranging from holders of Middle School Leavers Certificate (MSLC) to university degree. Table 1 depicts that 29.6 percent of staff possessed first degree, whilst 61.1 percent had qualifications below first degree. This means that the majority (61.1%) of the respondents had educational qualifications below first degree. In fact, six of the respondents possessed MSLC. Considering the major role bestowed on the DAs in Ghana, the qualifications of some of the Assembly staff seem inadequate in ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in performance. The findings of the present study corroborate that of Ayee (1996)^[5], Ghartey (2003) and Odoom *et al.* (2014)^[16] that many DAs do not have the requisite qualifications and expertise to be able to perform their expected functions. In support, Hoffman and Metzroth (2010)^[10] contend that most DAs in Ghana do not adequate employees with the requisite educational qualifications to actualize the country's dream of having effective decentralized government system. Hoffman and Metzroth (2010)^[10] assert that the situation is even worse in the rural areas of the country.

Table 2: Academic qualification of respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
MSLC	6	11.1
WASSCE/SSSCE	2	3.7
Certificate	14	25.9
Diploma	11	20.4
1 st Degree	16	29.6
2 nd Degree	5	9.3
Total	54	100

Source: Field survey, 2012

The first objective relates to the views of respondents on the institutional arrangements with respect to the HR capacities at the Assembly. Three categories of respondents, namely the Sectional heads, DCDs and CDs were approached to solicit their views on the existing institutional arrangements at the DA with respect to the Assembly's HR capacities. A number of issues were considered. The researcher sought to ascertain whether or not the existing institutional arrangements had any impact of HRM at the Assembly. The results as obtained from the views of Sectional heads and DCDs showed that the institutional arrangements impacted staff motivation (91%), recruitment and selection (89%), staff satisfaction (86%), staff postings and transfer (83%), T&D (80%), staff (80%), retention of staff (76%), and staff attraction (72%) have not been satisfactory. When the researcher contacted the Sectional heads and the DCDs of the Assembly on the overall impact of the institutional arrangements with respect to the HR capacity at the Assembly, it was evident that the majority (92.3%) of them indicated that they were very dissatisfied with the impact of the present institutional arrangements on the overall HR capacity at the Assembly. The implication is that in the views of the respondents the existing arrangement contributes to problematic nature of the Assembly's HR capacity. The reason the respondents assigned was that the Assembly was constrained in tackling its own HR needs because the present arrangements virtually do not give them any autonomy to do so especially when it comes to workers who are paid directly from the central government coffers. Indeed, most of the times instead of actively addressing its own HR capacity issues, the Assembly, like other assemblies in the country, is made to largely depend on the central government in order to deal with its HR needs. The collaboration that should exist between the Assembly and the necessary institutional bodies such as the MLGRD and the AG was found to be very poor. In the words of the CD, In so long as we continue to pay lip service to issues of autonomy at the District Assemblies in Ghana, then it will be very difficult for the assemblies to address their own HR needs. It seems to me that we are not yet ready for decentralization. We desire to have smooth decentralization, yet we do not want to yield power to the local people.

The findings of the study show that there is more to the problem than the views expressed by Ahwoi (2010) ^[2], and Hoffman and Metzroth's (2010) ^[10] that the issue has to do with poor image of the DAs, poor training facilities at the assemblies and poor social amenities. However, the study supports Gyabaah's (2006) ^[9] position that the institutional arrangements pose a major problem to the HR capacity at the DAs. What is more, according to Ayee, as cited in Tettey (2006), the present situation in Ghana makes the DAs

unable to wield authority over their employees or elicit their full loyalty. Again, the study substantiates that of Koranteng (2006) ^[11] and Antwi, Analoui and Cusworth (2007) that there is no functional and professional HR development institutional structure at the DAs to better address the assemblies' HR needs. Indeed, the existing HR arrangements at the DA defeat the very relevance of the principle of subsidiarity. According to the subsidiarity precept, authority, by default, should reside at the lowest possible level of government, and delegated upwards under the rarest and most necessary of circumstances.

The second objective relates to the staff capacity needs at the Assembly. The researcher solicited views in terms of needs assessment, the numerical strength of employees working in the DAs, the number of workers required by the two Assemblies, and the factors that hinder employee performance. The study revealed that the CCMA conducted needs assessment before addressing the staff capacity needs of the Assembly; even though, it was not frequently done. In a study conducted by Odoom *et al.* (2014) ^[16] at the Assin South District Assembly, it was observed that needs assessment was not given any serious attention when addressing the human resource needs of the Assembly.

On the numerical strength of the Assemblies, the majority (72.2%) of respondents stated that the Assembly did not have adequate and well qualified staff required to achieve the desired goals. In support, during the interview, the CD of the Assembly agreed that the existing number of staff under them was not adequate to perform the expected functions. The Officer added that some of the employees do not possess the relevant knowledge and skills to be able to deliver their entrusted functions. This finding confirms the views expressed by Antwi and Analoui (2008) ^[3] and Water Aid Ghana (2009) ^[18] that most staff of the DAs in Ghana do not have the required skills and expertise to perform their entrusted functions, especially in the deprived areas of the country.

Though the Assembly had an organogram of the District Administration, it did not indicate the number of staff needed by each section of the Assembly. The CD as well as the DCDs indicated the number of staff at the post and the required number of staff of each section of the Assemblies. The Assembly did not have the required staff capacity to execute the responsibilities given to them. The sections in the Assembly have varying staff requirements and this is because they have diverse roles and expectations. The required number of staff for the various sections ranges from 5 to 40. Table 3 summarizes the staff strength of the Assembly as indicated by the CD and the DCDs. The DCDs stated that the ICT section which is a new creation did not have the needed staff not to talk of a sectional head.

Table 3: Staff strength at the two Assemblies

Section	No. of employees at post	No. of employees required	Shortfall
Administration	17	23	6
Finance	10	16	6
Environmental Health & Waste management	26	40	14
Planning & Budgeting	3	11	8
Procurement & Internal Audit	3	6	3
Revenue	11	20	9
Security	23	31	8
Works	12	18	6
Total	108	165	60

Source: Field survey, 2012

Particularly, some of the Sections Heads said that the Assembly does not have enough staff for effective and efficient performance. They commented further that the Assembly needed more hands due to the enormity of the work they needed to carry out. The finding of this study corroborates that of Water Aid Ghana (2009) ^[18] which shows that many DAs do not have adequate staff with requisite qualifications. The findings are also consistent with that of Ndegwa and Levy (2003) ^[13] that the DAs have not shown adequate capacity to attract well qualified personnel. In fact, the failure of the Assembly to have adequate and well qualified personnel to handle the various functions entrusted to them is a challenge to the continuing relevance of the human capital theory. This is because adequate HR in any organization or institution is responsible for the growth of the organization or institution (Haslinda, 2009).

On why the Assembly has not taken the initiative to employ workers to fill these vacancies, the study found that they lacked the mandate to do so. It was revealed further that the Assembly, like all other assemblies in Ghana, does not have the mandate to recruit their own employees especially those on the government's payroll. The CD indicated that currently the Assembly only sends in applications for employees depending on the vacancies available. Upon a careful consideration, the OHSC, MLGRD or AG's Department would post personnel to the Assembly. The Assembly could only employ people to replace an employee who had left the institution, either by transfer, retirement or

death upon the approval of OHCS, MLGRD or AG. The prevailing situation at the Assembly substantiates the findings of Odoom *et al.* (2014) ^[16].

Again, the study examined the factors hindering the performance of the respondents as shown in Table 4. From the table, it is vivid that logistics in the form of stationery, vehicles, computers, security gadgets and sanitation equipment were not adequate. It is an undeniable fact that logistics play an important role in the day-to-day administration of the Assembly. Dia, as cited in Odoom *et al.* (2014) ^[16], argues that logistics and equipment play an essential role any effective capacity building efforts. The study also sought to find out workers' views about the management response to the factors that hampered their performance. It was seen that although management had been informed about these factors hindering performance, they had done virtually nothing about them. During the interview, the CD generally agreed that the Assembly did not have the financial capacity to properly address issues that hinder staff performance. Nonetheless, the Officer admitted that it is crucial for the Assembly to improve upon the situation. Odoom *et al.* (2014) ^[16] caution that the existing situation in the DAs may lead to a decline in the morale of staff and low performance. This will eventually derail the attainment of the Assembly's goals. Other factors that hinder employee performance at the Assembly were also determined as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Views of Respondents on the Factors that hinder their performance

Section	Factors
Administration	Inadequate administrative tools (Computer and accessories, stationery), low motivation, inadequate personnel
Audit	Inadequate administrative tools (Computer and accessories, stationery), low salaries, low motivation, inadequate personnel
Environmental health and Waste Management	Inadequate cleaning equipment, inadequate vehicles, low salaries, poor incentives, inadequate qualified personnel
Finance/ Accounts	Inadequate administrative tools (Computer and accessories, stationery), low salaries, low motivation, inadequate qualified personnel
Planning and Budget	Inadequate administrative tools (stationery), low salaries, low motivation, insufficient office space, inadequate qualified personnel
Revenue	Low salaries, low motivation inadequate personnel
Security	Inadequate security gadgets such as torch lights, whistles, locks, low salaries, low motivation, inadequate personnel
Works	Inadequate training programmes and training facilities, low salaries, low motivation, inadequate personnel

Source: Field survey, 2012

It is clear in Table 4 that while some of the factors are common to the various sections, others were peculiar to each section of the Assembly. This means that the personnel capacity needs of the Assembly, on the whole, are not the same for the various sections and will therefore require not

the same approach in addressing them.

The third and final objective deals with the factors that influence HR capacity needs at the Assemblies. All the respondents were approached to collect their views on the factors that influence the HR capacity needs at the

Assemblies. The HR capacities at the DAs are influenced by economic, physical, psychosocial and skill related factors. If these factors are lacking then the HR capacities of the DAs will be affected adversely (World Bank, 2005). The study revealed that recruitment and selection (89.9%) within the Assembly is highly centralized in Accra which hinders the Assembly's HR capacity. In addition, it was found that staff replacement (85.5%) was a huge challenge hindering the HR capacity of the Assembly. The CD commented that staff recruitment and selection was a big challenge at the Assembly. The Officer also supported the fact that staff replacement hampered effective HR capacity of the Assembly. The Officer further attributed the situation to difficult bureaucracies and other factors. The findings support MLGRD (2007) that bureaucracies contribute largely to problematic HR capacities at the Assemblies. The study also sought to find out whether staff members were given orientation and induction upon assumption of duty. Views were solicited from the Sectional heads, DCDs, CDs and other members of the CA. On the part of the Sectional heads and other members of the CA, it was found that the majority (66%) of the respondents had no orientation and induction programme upon assumption of duty as seen in Table 5.

Table 5: Perceptions of Sectional heads, Deputy Directors and other members of the Central Administration on orientation and induction programme given at the Assemblies

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	18	34
No	35	66
Total	53	100

Source: Field survey, 2012

It is clear from the above that the issue of workers not being given orientation and induction is a common problem in all the DAs especially those located in the rural areas. Although the CD indicated that the Assembly occasionally conducts orientation and programme for the newly recruited staff, the Officer admitted that it was not properly done.

The study revealed that motivation is another factor influencing the HR capacity at the Assembly. For instance, the majority (68.9%) of the respondents stated that they were lowly motivated. When further asked what would motivate them, the respondents gave various answers as to ensure their continuous stay on the job. They ranked increased wage or salary as the most important factor (85.8%), followed by fringe benefits (82.&%), opportunity for training and development (79%), participation in decision-making (74.4%), recognition and reward for hardwork (71.2%), better promotion system (68.6%), with the inherent desire to help society as the last (22.7%). These results show that employees are often motivated by economic and non-economic factors that are in place.

Besides, all the motivational factors are critical in ensuring staff retention and satisfaction in the institution. It is of little wonder that the rate of worker retention was found as one factor which influences the HR capacity at the Assembly. The respondents said that in order to for the Assembly to have improved HR, there is the need for Management to ensure employee retention. All the respondents stated that even though attrition rate was not very high in the Assembly, many employees would prefer to leave the Assembly any day if better conditions are offered to them

elsewhere. Indeed, when the researcher sought to find out whether any of the staff of the Assemblies had ever thought of leaving the Assembly for another establishment, it was revealed that 70.8 percent of them would prefer to leave the Assembly. Among the reasons that informed their decision to leave the Assemblies included low salaries; poor remuneration, low satisfaction; limited T&D opportunities and high cost of living in the city. Ahwoi (2010) [2] asserts that limited T&D opportunities and poor training facilities inhibit the DAs' HR capacity. Again, according to Odoom, Opoku and Ayipah (2016) [15], motivation is vital in enhancing employee performance.

The nature of work at the Assembly was also delved into since it can influence the HR capacities. The respondents were asked to indicate their views on the workload at the Assembly as shown in Table 6. It is clear from the table that 75.9 percent of the respondents generally said that there was too much work at the Assembly, while 24.1 percent stated that work at the Assembly was monotonous. The workload and the nature of work can affect job satisfaction, and therefore increase attrition rate at the Assemblies.

Table 6: Views of Respondents on the workload at the Assembly

Workload	Frequency	Percentage
Too much and therefore difficult to manage	20	37.0
A lot of work but able to manage	21	38.9
Work is monotonous	13	24.1
Total	54	100

Source: Field survey, 2012

Relationships and interactions between management and other staff may be one of the factors that would inform one's decision to stay or leave the job. These interactions may be favorable or otherwise. When asked about the relationship that existed between members of staff and management, the respondents indicated that there was a cordial relationship between them and management of the Assemblies. The majority (86.9%) of the respondents of ASDA stated that there was a cordial relationship between staff and management, while only 7.4 percent of the respondents of CCMA indicated that the relationship that existed between staff and management was not cordial as observed in Table 7. What is key is that there is a cordial relationship between most staff and management of the Assemblies which, in the views of Noe *et al*, (1996), ensures organizational effectiveness.

Table 7: The relationship between staff and management of the Assemblies

Type of relationship	Frequency	Percent
Cordial	50	92.6
Not cordial	4	7.4
Total	54	100

Source: Field survey, 2012

The mode of promotion of staff also influenced the Assemblies' HR capacities as presented in Table 8. There were two categories of promotion lines in the Assemblies. These were: the management staff promotion line; and the non-management staff promotion line. The management staff were promoted through interview conducted at three-year intervals. But the other members of staff were promoted through examination conducted by OHCS. Three years after every promotion, one is qualified for promotion

to the next level after the prescribed examination. The management of the Assemblies only recommends staff for promotion. About 53.7 percent of the respondents in found the mode of promotion in the Assembly to be problematic whereas 41 percent of them stated it was well structured. What is critical is that an appreciable number of respondents believed that promotion in the Assembly was problematic.

Table 8: The mode of promotion in the Assembly

Mode	Frequency	Percent
Well structured	22	40.7
Transparent	3	5.5
Not well structured	19	35.2
It delays	10	18.5
Total	54	100

Source: Field survey, 2012

Table 9: A Mann-Whitney U-test analysis of the opinions of males and females on the factors affecting HR capacity at the Assembly

Sex	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)
Males	30	31.72	951.50	233.500	533.500	-2.210	.027
Females	24	22.23	533.50				
Total	54						

(Statistic is significant at 0.05): Z= z value

Source: Field survey, 2012

Conclusions

It is clear from the study that favorable institutional frameworks play a critical role in ensuring effective HR capacity at the decentralized government system. Nonetheless, the study found that the existing institutional framework contributes to the problems the Assembly faces regarding its HR capacity. Again, although adequate staff capacity is crucial for promoting viable decentralized administration, the existing situation at CCMA needs improvement. The Assembly did not have adequate well-qualified personnel to carry out its mandate. The Assembly requires more personnel in almost all the sections in order to position it for goal attainment. Besides, several factors such as low salaries, poor recruitment and selection policy, poor staff replacement and transfer policy, ineffective orientation and induction program, low motivation, inadequate training and development, among others influenced the HR capacity needs at the Assembly. There was no difference in the opinions of males and females with regard to the factors affecting the Assembly’s HR capacity. It is recommended that the MLGRD should re-examine its HR policies in order to grant autonomy to the various Personnel Management Departments in the District Assemblies. This will help improve the HR situation at the Assemblies as it will minimize undue delays and travelling costs involved in addressing the HR challenges in the DAs. It is also recommended that the Management of the Assembly should team up with corporate bodies in the city to come out with measures to increase employee satisfaction for better job performance in line with the goal of effective decentralized government system.

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Hypothesis Testing

H₀: There is no significant difference between the opinions of males and females with respect to the factors influencing the HR capacity of the Assembly.

The study further analyzed whether or not differences existed in the opinions of males and females with regard to the factors affecting the Assembly’s HR capacity at 0.05 significance level. The result is shown in Table 9. From the table, the Z value is -2.210 with a significance level of .027. The p-value of .027 is greater than the alpha value of 0.05 which indicates that there is no difference between sex distribution of respondents and their opinions on the factors affecting the HR capacity of the Assembly. This means that the opinions on the factors affecting the Assembly’s HR capacity are the same regardless of one’s sex.

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