

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**SKILLED LABOUR PLACEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL
EFFICIENCY: A CASE STUDY OF GHANA CUSTOMS AND
PREVENTIVE SERVICE**

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PREVENTIVE SERVICE

BY

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DEVELOPMENT

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DECLARATION

Candidate's declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original work and no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: Charles Kwami Dzakpasu

Supervisor's declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: Drs. N.K.T. Ghartey

ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to investigate skilled labour placement and organizational efficiency in the Customs Excise and Preventive Service of Ghana (CEPS). To achieve this goal, questionnaires specially designed in line with the objectives of the study were administered to 200 officers of CEPS. Their responses were analyzed with the Predictive Analysis Software (PASW) version 17 and presented in the form of simple frequency tables.

The results of the study suggest that CEPS measured the efficiency of its employees by considering how fast they processed client's clearing documents, the extent to which they were able to work with minimal errors and with less supervision, their ability to initiate and maintain friendly customer relationship, their ability to detect revenue fraud and finally by their ability to solve job-related problems as they arise.

The results further suggest that in spite of the challenges faced by CEPS, skilled labour placement played some role in achieving organizational efficiency. An average of 50 percent of transfers and placements in CEPS were based on academic or professional backgrounds. Based on the findings, the study recommended that management should involve in training and capacity building for staff. Secondly, management should be involved in recruitment and placement processes thereby recruits be tested for the skilled they applied for. It is also recommended that CEPS' management should show more commitment to staff transfer and that transfer must primarily be based on proven qualifications, skills and experiences.

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DEDICATION

To my wife Celestine Dakey, who supported me financially and morally.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASYCUDA	-	Automated System of Customs Data
CEPS	-	Customs Excise and Preventive Service
ECOWAS	-	Economic Community of West African States
GCMS	-	Ghana Customs Management System
GCNET	-	Ghana Community Network
PASW	-	Predictive Analysis Software
VAT	-	Value Added Tax
WTO	-	World Trade Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

The Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS) was established in 1839, then known as the Department of Customs. The objectives and functions are to collect and account for all indirect taxes levied on imports and exports (Republic of Ghana, 1993). The CEPS collects about 55 percent of national revenue and the Tema Collection point alone collects about 80 percent of this amount (Anipa, 1997:11-13).

CEPS is the state organisation responsible for the collection of Import Duties, Import VAT, Export Duty, Petroleum Tax and other taxes. It collects about 55 percent of total government revenue which is used to finance the country's recurrent budget and development projects in the health, education, housing and the transport sectors, etc. CEPS also ensures the protection of state revenue by preventing smuggling. In addition to these revenue functions, CEPS performs agency duties on behalf of other government organisations and ministries by seeing to the enforcement of laws on import and export restrictions and prohibitions.

As its contribution towards making Ghana the gateway to West Africa, CEPS began implementing programmes to modernize customs procedures and processes from 1997 so as to facilitate trade and movement of people in and out of the country. Valuation of goods is also now based on World Trading Organisation (WTO) standards, the requirement being that importers present genuine invoices on their transactions. To ensure efficiency and higher productivity, CEPS is currently working to streamline and fully automate customs processes and procedures under the Ghana customs management system (GCMS) and the Ghana Community Network (GCNET) which serves as interface to put all stakeholders on line.

The vision of CEPS is to provide world class customs service. Its mission is to design and implement effective strategies and programmes to collect, account and protect customs, excise and other assigned tax revenues at a minimum cost, while facilitating trade, investments and the movement of people across the borders of Ghana through effective and transparent service delivery. Its operational value is an unwavering resolve to serve the nation by maintaining high standards of professionalism; doing what is required without fear or favour.

The Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS) was established under the provision of PNDC LAW 144, otherwise referred to as the Customs, Excise and Preventive Service Law 1986 as an autonomous public service institution to replace the customs and excise department. The legal mandate under which the CEPS operates currently is the Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (Management) Law 1993, PNDCL 330. In addition, the CEPS applies other laws

and regulations which prescribe the mode of operation and penalties for various infringements.

The history of the Service dates as far back as 1839. It was then known as the Department of Customs headed by a Principal Collector, who by 1850 also acted as the Colonial Treasurer. He was stationed at the Cape Coast Castle, the seat of Government (Customs Guide, 2002). In 1851, a three – member executive council to supervise the colony was created with the Principal Collector as a member. This arrangement was reviewed in 1853 and the colonial Secretary replaced him. In 1885, the Treasury and Customs Ordinance No.4 (1885) abolished the office of collector of Customs and Treasurer. The duties were divided and discharged separately by the Controller of Customs and Treasurer respectively. The Controller of Custom's Office came into force on September 18, 1885 and his duties defined in Gazette notice of October 1885 (Public Relations, 1999).

In 1947, Ordinance No. 40 Section 2 created the name “Customs and Excise Department”. The Department, which had been administered by expatriates, was on July 13, 1961, given the first Ghanaian controller by name Mr. Frank A. Arthur under the post independence Africanization policy of Government. In 1962 responsibility of the Department was, by a presidential decree, transferred from the Ministry of Finance and Trade to the Ministry of Interior. All personnel and their conditions of work were then subjected to the police Disciplinary Code, but the Controller continued to be responsible to the Ministry of Finance and Trade in the assessment and collection of revenue. This

arrangement was reversed in 1966 as part of a general re- organisation of the entire civil service (Public Relations, 1999).

The first group of officers started a training scheme at the Accra Polytechnic in 1965. Under this programme, personnel of the service underwent a course of two years academic and one-year practical work. The objective was to train professional Customs personnel to undertake various functions (Anipa, 1997:11-13).

The role of the Customs, Excise, and Preventive Service as the main government institutional agency responsible for indirect taxation in the country was enhanced with the strengthening of its Customs and Preventive functions to include duties for which the erstwhile Boarder Guards were responsible. New administrative structures were created to reflect a new corporate, paramilitary and quasi – self-accounting status (Republic of Ghana, 1993).

The service performs its preventive functions by physically patrolling Ghana's borders and other strategic points, examination of goods as well as documents relating to the goods entering the country. In this respect, CEPS plays a key role in surmounting external aggression and integrity of the nation, therefore, it is a member of the National Security Council. In addition to these functions, CEPS performs agency duties on behalf of other government organisations and ministries by seeing to the enforcement of laws on imports, exports restrictions and prohibitions. CEPS aims to be a world class provider of custom services. This vision is strengthened by its policy statement to provide

service that is efficient, fair and transparent, and recruit, train and maintain a highly qualified and motivated workforce.

Stemming from the functions and the vision statement, CEPS needs skilled and professional workforce as well as enabling technology to obtain results. The skilled and professional workforce which has direct effect on organisational efficiency and effectiveness can be realised from good management and development of the human resources. According to Wulf and Sokol (2005), a human resource policy needs to be at the centre of customs reforms and human resource management is the linchpin to effective and efficient customs administration.

Human resource management information from CEPS indicates that there is a good staff profile in terms of recruitment processes and the requisite qualification of those selected and placed. For example, basic or non-tertiary certificate holders are recruited and ranked as junior officers while tertiary certificate holders are also ranked as senior officers. Also there is a training programme for recruits and incumbent staff to enable them acquire the necessary skills. With these achievements, the question is to what extent and in what manner does CEPS carry out task analysis in order to distribute or place the staff properly for efficient performance?

Statement of the problem

Apart from traditional roles and agency duties performed by CEPS, it is also faced with emerging challenges such as facilitation of trade, combating of

international terrorism, cross-border crimes and drug trafficking among others. Such activities have grown in complexity and sophistication, and clients of CEPS have become more demanding for quality service. To compound the problem, the state continues to rely more and more on CEPS for increased revenue generation for national development. Year-by-year revenue target for CEPS continue to be increased because CEPS remains the highest revenue collector for the state.

In addition to the above and in the face of customs modernization globally, CEPS has introduced a completely automated electronic interface system of customs operations (i.e. Ghana Community Network / Customs Management System – GCNet/GCMS). This is an improvement upon the semi-automated system called ASYCUDA (Automated System of Customs Data) which falls short of coping with the present challenges. The picture painted above makes it imperative for CEPS to make maximum and effective use of its human resources. One way by which this can be done apart from recruiting the right caliber of officers is the right placement of experts and professionals.

There is evidence that through the transformational stages of CEPS at any given point in time, its personnel are given the necessary skill training to cope with the changes and, where necessary to employ experts. For sometime now, the human resource unit of CEPS has been engaged in the development of the human resource base of the organisation through training courses, refresher courses and seminars. Besides, most incumbent staff members upon realizing the importance of skilled labour placement are now pursuing higher education in order to enhance their professional chances. But the question is whether the service is able to meet

its vision with its present human resource policy which entails placement of any officer in any position to perform any function irrespective of the officer's area of specialization. CEPS is known to restrict the placement of skilled professionals to only a limited number of jobs. These include accounting professionals, chemists and information technology specialists among others. Evidence from informal discussions with some CEPS officers also shows that officers with specialization such as journalism, surveying, statistics, law and artisanship whose recruitment was based on specific description in relation to these skills are now performing general customs duties.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to examine the effect of skilled labour placement on the performance efficiency of CEPS. The assumption is that labour with the requisite qualification, training and experience is likely to perform efficiently if carefully placed.

The specific objectives framed to guide the research were to:

- identify skilled units in CEPS
- determine the efficiency indices in CEPS
- assess skilled labour placement in relation to academic qualification, training, and /or experience
- examine the relationship between skilled labour placement and organisational efficiency

- identify other factors and the extent they influence skilled labour placement
- to make recommendations on how to enhance skilled labour placement in CEPS

Research questions

- What are the skilled labour units in CEPS?
- What are the efficiency indices in CEPS?
- What is the relationship between skilled labour placement and academic qualification, training, and /or experience?
- What is the relationship between skilled labour placement and organisational efficiency?
- What other factors influence skilled labour placement?

Significance of the study

The research is being carried out with the view to identifying whether proper skilled labour placement can affect the efficiency of CEPS and how this can be maximized in the service. The study also seeks to determine the factors that affect skilled labour placement within the Service.

Though the study is mainly on skilled labour placement and efficiency in CEPS, the main focus of the study is directed at the effect of skilled labour placement in terms of academic qualification (in specialized areas), training and experience on individual efficiency. The study is conceived as an exploratory

research that seeks to explore whether there are other factors that influence placement practices in CEPS aside those mentioned above.

The study has the potential of generating significant information about the key skills in CEPS and how these are being used to enhance the efficiency of CEPS. This will be very useful to both management of CEPS and Government in adopting the right human resource policies to effectively manage the range of skills available in CEPS. The academia will equally be privy with the research results and will serve as the basis for further research into the management of skilled labour placement in organisations.

Scope of the study

There are several factors which contribute to organizational efficiency. This study is however limited to skilled labour placement within the human resource management practices of CEPS. This limited scope is however relevant in the context of the current reform and modernization of the service to achieve efficiency.

Limitations of the study

Inadequate funds and the time allowed for the study were the main limitations faced in the conducting of this research. Aside of these, combining this research with work posed a key challenge to the study.

Additionally, the study was limited by cooperation and assistance from the respondents of the Research. This may be attributed to the usual distrust for the

use of the data being collected. However, this limitation was addressed by reassuring respondents that the data collected will be used for only academic purposes and that their responses will be treated anonymously.

The final limitation faced by the study related to the lack of current information on the subject of the study. This limited the quantity and quality of information from secondary sources.

Organisation of the study

This dissertation is made up of five chapters. The first chapter deals with the profile of Ghana Customs Excise and Preventive Service, regarding its structures and procedures and the changes it had undergone since its establishment. The service human resource practices are previewed with regard to current skilled labour placement policies. For this purpose, the research objectives, the corresponding research questions and the scope of the study are presented as well. Chapter two reviews the relevant literature, discusses skilled labour placement procedures and its achievements in other organisations. The third chapter looks at the methodology for the study which describes the design, the population of interest, the sampling procedure, methods of data collection, and data processing and analysis as well as the techniques used. The fourth chapter presents and discusses the findings and finally chapter five summaries the results, draws conclusion there from and advances policy recommendations on which future action may be based.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature on the topic of the study. Emphasis is laid on the key aspects of the study, namely, labour placement and organisational efficiency as individual concepts and in relation to each other. In this view the basic concepts and operational definitions for organisational efficiency and skilled labour placement for the purpose of the study are examined along with relevant information.

Skilled labour placement: an overview

According to Wikipedia (2009), a skill is a proficiency, facility or dexterity that is acquired or developed through training and experience. However, skill placement in this context means officers job specification or description in terms of skill acquired through academic qualification, training and experience. It does not necessarily mean that placing officers on their grades or ranks in respect of their academic qualification on direct entry into the service. For example, a lawyer is assigned with legal related tasks. In this vein, the view is that when officers are placed as such their performance will be efficient. According to the American Heritage Science Dictionary, efficiency is the state or quality of being

efficient; competence in performance: or ability to accomplish a job with a minimum expenditure of time and effort. From this definition, efficiency indicators are about how efficiently resources or inputs are used to produce outputs. In other words these indicators track the cost of obtaining a result or delivery a service and are somehow difficult to quantify and interpret. In this regard efficiency indicators in this context are limited to: time spent in processing customs related documents, ability to work with minimal errors and less supervision, officers' competency to detect revenue fraud, and friendly customers' relation to clients (Coates, 2000).

After recruitment and its successive processes have been carried out, the candidates that have been selected will have to be positioned in their respective areas of competency or the areas for which they applied and underwent successful screening. The process of placing the newly recruited employees in the workstations and environments in which they can efficiently perform towards the achievement of the goals of the organisation is termed placement.

Bramham (1982) underscores the relative importance of placement by the fact that the ability of an employee to perform effectively at a given position or task does not depend individually on the knowledge, skills and abilities he has acquired or on the demands of the position he is fulfilling. Workers producing optimum results therefore are those that have the right knowledge, skills and abilities for the right jobs. Thus, reference is not only made to 'fixing pegs in holes, but rather fixing the right peg in the right hole.' Placement can therefore be loosely said to comprise the assignment of a newly recruited employees to the

positions of competence for which they have been assessed or the reassignment of an already employed worker to a new role which may be below or above his current level in management to perform an extended old task or an entirely new one (Dessler, 2000).

Concept of skilled labour placement

Organisations are what their human resources make them to be (Moorhead and Griffin, 1998). All endeavors aimed at growth and the success of the organisation depends primarily on the abilities, skills, knowledge and efficiency of its human resource. As expressed by Kendrith and Ferris, (1982), this highly elastic resource with unlimited potential, if identified properly and placed on the right job, knows no boundaries to its contribution to the success of the organisation. This fact makes skilled labour placement an appropriate and integral part of the determinants of the success or otherwise of modern organisations. For the benefits to be fully reaped, placement which requires precise selection processes and expert recruiters to match the accomplishments of the candidates to requirements of the job must be adopted. This is known as skilled labour placement (Gregory, 1996).

Skilled labour placement is indeed a time consuming one. In addition, the costs that go with it and the efforts, apart from strategies for successful recruitment and selection, all add up to not only displacing the normal organisational working but also entail maintaining expertise of a very high order for the right placement (Nelson and Campell, 1997). In today's competitive and

dynamic environment, success and growth require all attention of an organisation to be focused on the core activities (Mosley, (1997). Organisations must therefore extend an arm to the practice of skilled labour placement in a bid to meet its specialized human resource needs which will enable them focus on their core activities as well as not carry the burden of unnecessary manpower to perform jobs that can effectively be outsourced to competent partners.

To facilitate the above, organisations must involve experts in their respective fields for consultation to create and finalize the most appropriate profile of personal attributes, competence and skill sets for the available position. Sonnenfeld (2002) thus suggests that in instances where the organisation does not possess the needed expertise to provide advice and / or conduct skilled labour placement, it must consider outsourcing expertise on skilled labour placement.

Rationale for skilled labour placement

Though recruitment, selection and placement of workers form the core of the human resource activities in most businesses, the limelight has in recent times been thrown not on placement but rather on skilled labour placement. Several factors account for the increasing prominence of skilled labour placement in the contemporary business environment.

Cutler (2006), comments that the principal necessitating factor of skilled labour placement is the fact that quality workers are in short supply. He cites as proof of this assertion, the American Welding Society's (an industrial association)

prediction that by 2010 demand for skilled workers in industry may exceed the supply by about 200,000. He also avers that there is an overall shortage of skilled trades' people impacting industries worldwide as production of industrial machinery grows at record levels; securing parts to build industrial goods has become a challenge. In lieu of this therefore, visionary organisations not only place such hard-to-find staff but do so in a manner and place that will enable the organisation to reap optimum benefits from their services. Such organisations therefore place employees not where they can perform but where they can optimally contribute to the organisational growth and development.

There is also the need for skilled labour placement for positions whose functions cannot be replaced or made easier by technology. Since the tasks of such portfolio of workers cannot be easily automated, critical experience and careful judgment is required for placement where robotic solutions are simply not a viable option (Kiggundu, 1989). Mullins (1993) lending credence to this fact states that from small manufacturers to Fortune 100 companies, the effort to recruit and train such critical personnel quickly has become a monumental task. In placing employees at such positions therefore due care and caution must be taken that only personnel who in addition to being qualified for the position possess the greatest competitive advantage over other personnel are considered. As put by Schermerhorn (1989), the existing band of skilled employees must be carefully and artfully placed at positions that require their services most rather than at vacant positions within the organisation.

From another angle, Wendel (1989) explain that the average age of key personnel worldwide continues to ascend past middle fifties. As these experienced workers contemplate retirement, schools and training programmes cannot create replacements fast enough to meet the demand. Additionally, businesses suffer as trained skilled labour workers swap jobs to higher paid ones. He continues that it is in response to this that skilled labour placement activities were developed to offer job-specific training to personnel that enable them to upgrade their skills and qualify for open positions within the organisation. Skilled labour placement strategies are also adopted by organisations that need workers trained in their processes and specific procedures through making specific training programmes available to existing and prospective staff (Cutler, 2006).

Dimensions of skilled labour placement

In addition to the normal placement process carried out after recruitment and selection, Mullins (1993) recommends that organisations go further to carry out the skilled labour placement processes in order to make the most of selected staff. Such skilled labour placement efforts must cater for all management levels and functional specializations, right from the entry level to the top management positions. It must also extend to providing semi-skilled and skilled personnel in case the organisation's needs so require. Keeping the difference in the profiles of the various levels in view, the methods used in skilled labour placement must be different for each level and specialization (Werther and Davis, 1996). The process for all levels must also follow a scientific approach and involves a comprehensive

understanding of the organisation' as well as the candidates' needs. These processes most of which are essential in recruitment and selection, as replicated by Dessler (2000) are outlined below.

An essential prerequisite of all skilled labour placement efforts is a close study of the work process and the job requirement. These are then translated into skill and competence sets and finally into the qualification and experience requirement most appropriate to fulfillment of the job responsibilities and expected targets and results to be achieved. Besides, the organisation's culture, environment as well as the existing compensation packages are taken into account in arriving at the ideal profile required. Having clarity of the attributes required in the incumbent, the organisation must match another very important aspect, that of identifying the individual aspirations and values before placement.

Another important dimension is not only gauging the skill and competence fit but looking at the interpersonal adjustability. This factor is not only important for maintaining the existing equilibrium but also for the induction being long lasting. A frequent exit displaces work and efficiency as well as adds to avoidable costs and expenditure of effort. Each new induction brings with it risks of a host of problems. Apart from acclimatization, managerial and leadership skills do make a difference in building and maintaining a winning team but frequent exits take a toll in disturbing organisational harmony.

Tenopyr (2002) however cautions that notwithstanding these dimensions, organisations must internally develop detailed processes for skilled labour placement of human assets. In developing these internal processes, room must be

made for varied and appropriate modifications linked to the level and specialization. Further, these processes must be suitably modified and adapted to the organisations needs as well as the job slot in question as also the availability of experienced persons of that profile. Organisations must also understand and appreciate that, strategies and methodologies of placement need different handling for senior management, middle and junior management as well as for different industries and locations.

The ultimate goal of all placement activities, whether skilled or non-skilled, must be to achieve success in optimizing satisfaction for both the organisation and the individual and by creating an appreciation of objectives of each in the other so that no discord is allowed to set into the employer – employee relationship (Ferris, Hochwarter, Buckley, Harrel-Cook and Frink, 1999). To individuals, skilled labour placement must chart and facilitate the taking up of a career that has enough in store to meet personal and psychological needs. On the other hand to organisations, skilled labour placement must place human resource in positions that would efficiently contribute to the fulfillment and realization of the goals of the organisation and mesh in well with organisational fabric.

Placement efficiency and effectiveness

Placement must be a core strategic asset if people are contributors to competitive advantage. Most businesses today do not depend heavily on having the right people in the right place at the right time. To this end, Armstrong (2003) draws a line between placement efficiency and placement effectiveness.

Placement effective, done through skilled labour placement is often more important than placement efficiency yet most organisations measure themselves on placement effectiveness. He recounts that whilst placement efficiency refers to filling a maximum number of positions with personnel who fit the qualification bill required of the position by the use of minimum resources and can be achieved through ordinary placement activities, placement effectiveness relates to placing staff in positions where they may achieve maximum personal and organisational results. The latter thus goes beyond the former to ensure that the right position is filled with the right personnel at the right time who will achieve maximum result.

In support of the above, Garman (2005) avers that as every part of every organisation seeks to squeeze the last ounce of productivity out of every last asset, employment departments also feel that they must do their part (obtain maximum returns from minimum inputs) by focusing on placement process efficiency. Unfortunately this focus has a detrimental effect on the departments and the businesses they serve since placement effectiveness and placement efficiency are often mutually exclusive – there are many times when getting the right person later is preferable to getting any person now.

The most significant problem with both the marketing angle of most staffing technology applications and the prognostication of most analysts and consultants is that their efforts focus almost exclusively on efficiency: how to staff more people in less time (Hunter, 2004). The belief is that this will drive down the two most significant measures of recruitment, selection and placement success: time and cost. The first question that must be asked of any placement

therefore is whether it requires a focus on efficiency or effectiveness. In answering, Hunter (2004, p 124) states that these two metrics are often mutually exclusive: You can either get it fast or get it right, but you can rarely get both at the same time. Efficiency is a measure of speed and cost, that is to say "Getting someone in here right away is more important than getting the right person later." Effectiveness is a measure of quality, thus says the opposite: "placing the right person is more important than placing someone right away" (Morse, 1968).

While this is obvious to employers, the distinction makes a big difference to the type of systems and processes established by the organisation. A good rule of thumb is thus established by Murphy and Dzieweczynski, (2005) that employment effectiveness is a human process that may be assisted by technology, whereas employment efficiency is a system process that is enabled by people. The objectives, means and measurements are different.

Deciding between efficiency and effectiveness is often difficult. On its face, it appears that industries that rely on knowledgeable workers or people with distinct skills are industries that benefit from a focus on effectiveness, whereas high-volume staffing operations for positions with a lot of responsibility require a focus on efficiency. But, in fact, the analysis must be on a requisition-by-requisition basis, not on a company or industry basis.

Organisational efficiency

According to Parra-Luna (1993) most of the definitions of organisations in this century derive their roots from Max Weber's definition of organisations in the

sociological sense that is as “a system of human activities continuously aimed at a specific goal”. Thus, for example, Parsons (1959) defines organisations as “social units or human groupings deliberately constructed or reconstructed to achieve specific goals”. From the definitions provided above, it becomes obvious that organisations exist only for the purpose of attaining certain objectives – which can be extremely varied. Thus, Parra-Luna (1997: 47) asserts that enterprises seek a return on capital invested, bureaucracies the functioning of the judicial and political apparatus, schools and universities the dissemination of knowledge, churches the divulging of their beliefs, sports associations the personal and physical improvement of their members and the winning of competitions, hospitals and clinics the curing of their patients, etc. Therefore goals, whether explicit or implicit are the main characteristic of the existence of organisations.

Furthermore, an adequate explanation of the goals is essential not only for understanding what an organisation is, but also for the definition and measurement of the most important concepts in the social sciences, which is performance (Muhlemeyer et al, 1997). We can then say that organisations are justified and warranted only insofar as they ensure an adequate performance, that is, insofar as they fulfill the aims for which they were created. Parra-Luna (1997) uses this to establish a second principle or axiom that the justification for any organisation is directly proportional to its performance. On these grounds, a private firm then is justified if it earns enough money to pay its staff, if it pays for itself and obtains adequate returns on the capital invested, and so is a church

insofar as it increases the number of its followers, a club insofar as it provides a pleasant atmosphere for its members, etc.

It is on the grounds of the second justifying principle for the existence of organisations (organisational performance) that the concept of organisational efficiency takes roots. Organisational efficiency is thus a reflection of the performance of the organisation, that is, how it achieves the goals for which it was set up.

Though Jobber (1998) perceives efficiency as a function of inputs and outputs where a firm producing goods economically is efficient since it does things right, organisational efficiency in this context transcends the input-output ratio. It is the quality or degree to which someone possesses adequate skill or knowledge for the performance of a duty within his/her area of competence in the organisation (Noe et al, 2000). In addition to the input – output ratio Gregory (1996) goes further to establish a relationship between the individual performing the task and the environment in which he performs. An organisation, from this point of view will be efficient in achieving the goals for which it was set up if individual members possess the ability to perform efficiently or effectively in their given positions in the organisation. Therefore, if an employee is placed in an environment within the organisation which does not make it possible for him to effectively apply or enhance his or her interpersonal and intra-personal skills then the efficiency of the organisation is affected because it is not benefiting fully from the potentials of such misplaced skilled workers.

Determining organisational efficiency

Although the concept of “efficiency” is crucial in the perception of organisations, it does not seem possible to define this efficiency, let alone measure it, without resorting to a global or systemic approach (Haynes et al, 1993). Based on this systemic approach, Parra-Luna (1997) determines that an efficient organisation should satisfy the needs of its people; adapt to its environment; reach a balanced degree of internal development for the different values achieved; and perform these requirements with the minimum use of resources.

Organisational efficiency which sets the pace for (organisational health) goal achievement is very central to management (Blunt, 1985). According to Beckhard (1969 p 78) an efficient organisation is one in which;

- The total organisation, the significant sub-parts and individuals, manage their work against goals and plans for achieving these goals.
- The problem, or task, or project determines how the human resources are organized.
- Decisions are made by and near the sources of information regardless of where these sources are located on the organisational chart.
- The reward system is such that managers and supervisors are rewarded (and punished) comparably for: short – term profit or production performance; growth and development of their subordinates; creating a viable working group.

- Communication laterally and vertically is relatively undistorted. People are generally open and confronting. They share all the relevant facts including feelings.
- There is a minimum amount of inappropriate win or lose activities between individuals and groups. Constant efforts exist at all levels to treat conflict, and conflict situations as problems subject to problem solving methods.
- There is high “conflict” (clash of ideas) about tasks and projects and relatively little energy spent in clashing over interpersonal difficulties because they have been generally worked through.
- The organisation and its parts see themselves as interacting with each other and with a larger environment. The organisation is an “open system”.
- There is a shared value and management strategy to support it. Of trying to help each person (or unit) in the organisation to maintain his (or its) integrity and uniqueness in an interdependent environment.
- The organisation and its members operate in an “action research” way. General practice is to build in feedback mechanisms so that individuals and groups can learn from their own experience.

Another determining factor of organisational efficiency is found in John Gardner’s (1965) set of rules for effective and efficient organisations. Aside from describing an efficient organisation as one which is self – renewing, he identifies some rules which may be used as the benchmark in the determination of an

efficient organisation. While the first rule demands that the organisation must have an effective program for the recruitment and development of talent, the second rule calls for the organisation to be capable of continuous renewal and must be a hospitable environment for the individual. The third rule is that the organisation must have inbuilt provisions for self – criticism; and the fourth rule is that there must be fluidity in the internal structure. Finally, the rule requests that the organisation does have some means of combating the process by which clients become prisoners of their procedures.

Schein (1965) from another perspective defines organisational efficiency in relation to what he calls “the adaptive coping cycle” that is, how an organisation can effectively adapt and cope with the changes in its environment. In his words, “it is the sequence of activities or process which begins with some change in the internal or external environment and ends with a more adaptive, dynamic equilibrium for dealing with the change is the organisation’s adaptive coping cycle”. He thus concludes that if the various stages or processes of this cycle are identified, then the points where organisations typically may fail to cope adequately and is thus inefficient may also be identified.

The conditions necessary for organisational efficiency in the scope of the adaptive coping cycle according to Schein include the ability to take in and communicate information reliably and validly; internal flexibility and creativity to make the changes which are demanded by the information obtained (including structural flexibility); integration and commitment to the goals of the organisation from which comes the willingness to change; and internal climate of support and

freedom from threat; since being threatened undermines good communication, reduces flexibility and stimulates self protection rather than concern for the total system.

Skilled labour placement

A fundamental shift is occurring in the world economy: as we move progressively away from a world in which national economies are relatively isolated from one another into an interdependent global economic system. The world economy is also witnessing the rapid appreciation for and development of all aspects associated with and affected by human resource management (Schuler, 2000). While the emerging international economy creates opportunities it also presents challenges and threats with which yesterday's business managers did not have to deal. Managing human resources has become critical to the success of all companies, large and small, regardless of industry (Ulrich, 1997).

The more effectively a firm manages its human resources, the more successful the firm is likely to be. Subsequently, it has become commonplace to say that the management of human resources is and should be a partner in developing and implementing a company's strategy (Armstrong, 2003). Human resource management can help the company reach organisational efficiency and thereby have a determining effect on whether or not the company is good enough, fast enough, and competitive enough not only to survive but also to thrive (Schuler et al, 2000). Today, it would be difficult to imagine any organisation achieving and sustaining efficiency without efficient human resource management

programs and activities (Schuler, 2000). Given the importance of organisational efficiency vis-à-vis the role of Human resources within an international context, it is imperative that attention is not only placed on obtaining the right human resource but also their skilled labour placement if maximum benefits are to be derived from their human resources.

Though challenges exist in the use of skilled labour placement to attain organisational efficiency not only because of globalization, but also due to technology and telecommunication advances, deregulation, diversity and other workforce trends, as well as trends in the nature of work and legal issues (Dessler, 2000). These challenges when resolved will enhance the human resource function in businesses in relation to the organisational effectiveness and efficiency measures of productivity, service quality and profitability (Klehe, 2004).

Contributions of skilled labour placement to organisational efficiency

Skilled labour placement has implications for the growth, survival and profitability of business. Aside ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisations' activities towards achieving its goals, it also allows employees a sense of personal gratification. In addition to these direct benefits, two other implied advantages organisations stand to gain through skilled labour placement are examined below.

Organisational development

From the perspective of Brock (1984), organisational development has gradually evolved into modern management thought and practice to improve organisational performance. In both developed and developing countries, it has been used to boost managerial productivity, motivation, organisational health and renewal. It has also been described by Bradford and Burke (2005) as a strategy to effect planned organisational change and equip organisational participants to cope with a highly dynamic environment. It is worthy to note at this point that improving organisational performance rests with the human resources of the establishment who see to the day-to-day management of the organisation and therefore serve as the fulcrum for overall organisational effectiveness. Organisational development therefore is greatly enhanced when the right positions are filled with the right persons with the right knowledge, skills and abilities at the right time through skilled labour placement.

Change management

The survival and growth of an organisation also depend very much on its ability to adapt to changing circumstances. It must therefore be able to monitor and anticipate change as well as assess its objectives to suit changing conditions. Changing technology, governmental policies, the changing worldwide market, problems of pollution etc., all call for greater sensitivity and adaptability of the organisation to these changes (Woodward, 1965). While changes may impose threats to the very survival of an organisation, they may also, when seen in a positive

light, offer opportunities for growth, expansion and diversification of the organisation to suit the ever-changing trends in the business environment. From another angle Bramham (1982), cautions that while implementing change, organisations must not lose sight of the important role that the human resource will play. This role becomes more important when consideration is given to the fact that the human resource is the only active and well organized resource as against the other organisational resources which are passive. All efforts aimed at ensuring change management may fail if they are not handled by persons of the right calibre and if positions created as a result of organisational change are not filled with suitable persons skilled enough to push for the desired change. Skilled labour placement thus serves as an important aid in the management of change in contemporary organisations.

Conclusion

The use of specific skilled labour placement processes is increasingly expanding to meet the increasing demand for hard-to-find personnel in the service (Harvey and Brown, 1996). Recruiting, selecting and placing tradespersons with appropriate skill sets is therefore critical to cost containment. However many public sector organizations in developing countries are yet to operationalize skilled labour placement as part of their standard Human resource management practice.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology adopted in the conduct of this study. It begins with an outline of the research design, data sources and data collection tools, sampling techniques and size as well as methods for analyzing the data. It also discusses the strategy used for the study.

Research design

The case study design was used in this study. A case study allows the researcher to undertake an in-depth analysis of a problem or subject under study. It allows the researcher to concentrate efforts at the problem and gives total and critical overview of the problem under investigation. Further, the case study design will better aid the in-depth investigation into the relationship between skilled labour placement and organisational efficiency in CEPS and other public services in Ghana.

Population

The Customs, Excise and Preventive Service was the population for the study. The target population also consisted of senior officers from Headquarters, Tema, Kotoka International Airport, Accra and collection points.

Sample and sampling technique

A total of 200 officers from the various departments were randomly selected and questioned. Specifically, 22 respondents were randomly selected from the human resource department. The remaining 178 were sampled from the legal, accounts, operations, investigation/internal affairs, research and monitoring, administration, laboratory and public relations departments of CEPS. The sample size of 200 was employed based on the assumption that since all workers were exposed to the same working environment, all things being equal, the answers provided by any worker at any time was unlikely to vary from that of another.

Support for the use of the probability sampling technique is also drawn from Appiah-Agyekum's (2006) account that if the phenomenon under focus is of public interest or limited to a restricted but expansive group of persons, then any member of the public or that group picked without specific reference to his background is likely to express the same opinion as the others on the subject under research.

Research instrument

Two sets of questionnaires, one for the HR Department and the other for the remaining departments, were designed for the study. In designing the questionnaire, attention was paid to ensuring that the objectives of the research were covered in order to make it effective. The questionnaire was used because it enabled the subjects to respond to questions at their own pace and convenience. Besides, the questionnaire enabled respondents to feel comfortable when answering questions which were personal and which would have been very difficult to obtain during a face to face interview. In addition, because the questionnaire provided a great deal of anonymity to respondents, it may be used to solicit honest and open responses (Mason and Bramble, 1997).

The questionnaires used had 22 items which were developed mainly through a review of relevant documentary materials. Questions asked were mostly close-ended with few open-ended ones. The close-ended questions were used to make it easy and less time consuming for respondents to answer. To remove restrictions and get more in-depth answers, open-ended questions were also used in some instances. This was meant to enable the respondents give elaborate responses and express themselves better.

Validity and reliability of instrument

The research instruments were pre-tested to determine the clarity of the questions. The pre-testing was also aimed at identifying and eliminating problems

of ambiguity in the questions to be asked. The answers and suggestions provided by the pre-testing helped to restructure some of the major questions especially the open ended ones. Additionally, to ensure the validity of the information supplied by respondents, all selected respondents were taken through the questionnaire designed for them.

Administration of research instruments

To ensure the accurate collection of data, the questionnaires were self-administered as against the mail interview method which would have been the easiest method of administration in view of the busy schedule of the respondents.

The data collected for the study was made up of both primary and secondary data. These primary and secondary sources of data were meant to position the research in its proper perspective in terms of concepts and theories.

The types and sources are explained below:

Primary data were collected from the field in the form of raw responses to questionnaires and unstructured interviews. Such data was collected from key officers of the Human Resource Department and other specialized departments of the Service. It examined the placement procedures of CEPS and officers perception of the placement processes. The officers from the HR department of CEPS were interviewed and made to respond to questionnaires on placement issues in CEPS. A series of both open-ended and close-ended questions were designed to elicit responses from the sampled population.

A broad range of secondary data were consulted in the literature review section to identify the theoretical positioning of the topic and to see whether the practice of skilled labour placement and its impact on organisational efficiency. Attempts were made to consult published works and the internet to access data. The secondary data enabled the researcher to conceptually clarify the topic of skilled labour placement.

Data processing and analyses

The data gathered was analysed using the Predictive Analysis Software (PASW) version 17. Tables depicting percentages and frequencies were used as bases of analyses and interpretation. The tables were also used for making inferences and deductions to arrive at meaningful research conclusions. The analyses were therefore both qualitative and quantitative.

The data collected were grouped under the subheadings in which the questionnaires were designed. This is to say that the data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively based on the responses from the sampled population mentioned above, comments and suggestions as well as prevailing viewpoints on the subject matter.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter provides an empirical assessment of skilled labour placement in CEPS. It embodies the analyses, interpretation and presentation of the data gathered as well as the discussions of the analysed data. As such, it is organised under two main sections. While the first section presents the analysed data, the second section provides a discussion of the analysed data.

Background characteristics of respondents

The objective for gathering the background data of respondents was to provide a better appreciation of the respondents' views. This is in line with the fact that choices individuals make are in some way influenced by their level of exposure to the matter in question as well as the generation or age bracket in which they fall (Appiah-Agyekum, 2006). Furthermore, the perception of and opinion on a subject would also largely depend on people's backgrounds and knowledge of the subject matter. Especially in the Ghanaian work environment, some factors that include the age, rank, education and work experience have a major bearing on attitudes.

Table 1: Age of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Under 20	0	0
21 – 40	55	25.8
41 – 60	145	74.2
Above 60	0	0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

The current professional human resource situation in the CEPS as reflected by the response to the questionnaire is that of an aging workforce. This is evidenced by the fact that officers, representing 74.2 percent of the respondents fell between the age brackets of 41 – 60 whilst only 55 respondents (25.8 percent) were within the 21 – 40 age range. There was no worker above 60 years or below 20 years.

Table 2 also shows that 7.3 percent, 16.2 percent, 7.3 percent, 11.7 percent and 57.4 percent of respondents were chief collectors, principal collectors, senior collectors, collectors and assistant collectors respectively. Table 2 shows the ranks of the various respondents questioned in the study. In order to get fair, balanced and representative opinions on the issues under study, respondents were also drawn from all the major departments in CEPS. But owing to different staff strengths, unequal numbers of respondents were selected from each department.

Table 2: Rank of respondents

Rank	Frequency	Percentage
Chief collector	14	7.3
Principal collector	31	16.2
Senior collector	16	7.3
Collector	25	11.7
Assistant collector	114	57.5
Total	200	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

As shown in Table 3, 5.7 percent of the respondents were from the legal department, 8.7 percent were from the accounts department and 36.6 percent were from the operation department. Internal affairs and research, monitoring and information technology department had 8.7 percent each of their representatives as respondents, 6.3 percent were from the administration department. 6.9 percent were also from the laboratory department, 5.7 percent were from the public relations department and 11 percent were from the human resource department.

The operations department, which presented the greatest number of respondents, is indeed an expansive department embodying the valuation, units and other core activities units of CEPS.

Table 3: Departments of respondents

Department	Frequency	Percentage
Legal	12	5.7
Account	19	8.7
Operations	67	36.6
Investigation/Internal Affairs	19	8.7
Research, Monitoring and Information technology	19	8.7
Administration	13	6.3
Laboratory	17	8.6
Public relations	12	5.7
Human resource	22	11
Total	200	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

Of the 200 respondents, 25.1 percent were from the Tema collection point, 46 percent were stationed at the Headquarters, 16.1 percent were stationed at the Kotoka International Airport and the remaining 11.8 percent came from the Accra collection point. This is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Stations of respondents

Station	Frequency	Percentage
Headquarters	88	46
Tema	51	25.1
Kotoka International Airport	34	16.1
Accra	29	11.8
Total	200	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

The respondents had also served with CEPS for varying lengths of time. As shown in Table 5, and in confirmation of the age structure of the respondents, the majority had served in CEPS between 16 and 20 years (37.6 percent). Also, 24.1 percent of respondents had served in CEPS for less than 5 years while 9.1 percent had also served from 6 to 10 years. 7.9 percent of the respondents had served between 11 and 15 years while the remaining 21.3 percent had served for more than 21 years.

Table 5: Number of years in service

Period	Frequency	Percentage
Under 5 years	47	24.1
6 – 10	18	9.1
11 – 15	16	7.9
16 – 20	71	37.6
21 and above	43	21.3
Total	200	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

Respondents had not spent all their years in service at one duty station but had been transferred to different duty stations. As shown in Table 6, 18 percent of the respondents had worked in less than 5 duty stations, 35.4 percent had worked in 6 to 10 stations while 1.1 percent had also worked in 10 or more duty stations. Majority (63.5 percent) of respondents had served in less than 5 different duty stations in the course of their employment in CEPS.

Table 6: Number of duty stations served

Duty Stations	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5	122	63.5
6 to 10	73	35.4
10 or more	5	1.1
Total	200	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

The study also required respondents to indicate in how many different units within CEPS they had worked in the course of their career. It came out that although the frequency of transfers from one duty station to the other was high, the frequency of transfers from one unit to the other in CEPS was lower, with as many as 79.8 percent of respondents indicating that they had been placed in less than 5 different units

Table 7: Number of units served

No. of Units Served	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5	148	79.8
6 to 10	24	10.7
11 to 15	15	5.1
16 or more	13	4.5
Total	200	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

The reason given was that professionals and specialists normally served in the same unit even if they were transferred from one collection point to another. Also the special or technical nature of their functions prevents rampant transfers.

Table 7 also shows that 10.7 percent, 5.1 percent and 4.5 percent of the respondents had served in 6 to 10 units, 11 to 15 units and 16 or more units respectively.

The quality of output of every organisation depends on its human resources. In placement therefore, organisations must not only strive to attract and retain those individuals who possess a reasonable level of education considering the nature of the job at hand, but also consider the area of specialization in placing employees so as to make optimum use of their efforts. Table 8 thus indicates that the employees of CEPS had backgrounds in administration and management (49.7 percent), social sciences (22.2 percent), law (5.9 percent) and general sciences (23.3 percent). There were however more respondents with administration and management backgrounds than the other areas, perhaps due to the manner of activities carried out by CEPS.

Table 8: Respondents' academic background

Academic background	Frequency	Percentage
Administration & Management	98	49.7
Social sciences	43	22.2
Legal and research	14	5.9
General Sciences	45	23.3
Total	200	100.00

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

A conclusion may thus be drawn on the demographic data of respondents that the respondents possess the needed experience and background knowledge necessary to appreciate and thus function in their job roles. Thus it can be inferred that CEPS possesses the active workforce it needs to achieve the objectives for which it was set up.

Skilled labour placement: Perspectives of General CEPS workers

Skilled labour recruitment, selection and placement have in recent times risen to the forefront of management as the most effective means of ensuring that the organisation derives maximum returns from the investment it makes. As expressed by Kendrith et al (1982), the human resource which is a highly elastic resource with unlimited potential, if identified properly and placed on the right job, knows no boundaries to its contribution to organisational success. Skilled labour placement therefore derives its fullest expression when it is done in a manner such that there is a relation of some sort between the area of expertise of the employee and the nature or type of work assigned to him or her. This fact makes skilled labour placement an appropriate and integral part of the determinants of the success or otherwise of modern organisations.

Respondents were therefore asked whether their areas of specialization were related to the kind of work they were doing in CEPS. Their responses presented in Table 9 strongly suggest that indeed their areas of specialization were related to their work schedule, with as much as 81.5 percent of respondents supporting this assertion.

Table 9: Relationship between academic background and work schedule

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	145	81.5
No	33	18.5
Total	178	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

When asked to further indicate which specific aspects of CEPS work activities were related to their areas of specialization, respondents who specialized in administration and management identified recruitment, planning, account reporting and auditing. For those who specialized in the social sciences, they identified customer service, ECOWAS relations and Free zone activities, general operations, classification and valuation. Others with the natural sciences background also identified chemical analyses, food testing and certification, software development and applications as well as mines and energy as their areas of specialization and job orientation.

Nelson and Campbell (1997) aver that for the benefits to be fully reaped, skilled labour placement which requires precise selection processes and expert recruiters to match the accomplishments of the candidates to requirements of the job must be adopted. Deriving from the above therefore, after recruitment and its successive processes have been carried out, the candidates that have been selected will have to be placed in their respective areas of competency or the areas for which they applied and underwent successful screening and/or induction. To

guide the process of transferring existing employees or placing the newly recruited employees in the workstations and environments in which they can efficiently perform towards the achievement of the goals of the organisation, Sonnenfeld (2002) also affirms that skilled labour placement decisions must be based on the academic and professional backgrounds of employees or recruits. But the evidence from the primary data gathered suggests that transfers and placements in CEPS were to some extent is based on academic or professional competence of the staff concerned. An average of about 50 percent of respondents (see Tables 10 and 11) in each instance believed that their academic and professional backgrounds were taken into consideration when placements and transfers were done.

Table 10: Whether placements and transfers were based on academic background

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	87	49.2
No	91	50.8
Total	178	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

Table 11: Whether placements and transfers were based on professional competence

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	90	50.1
No	88	49.9
Total	178	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

The phenomenon in CEPS is what Bramham (1982) cautions about in his assertion that the ability of an employee to perform effectively at a given position or task does depend to a large extent on the knowledge, skills and abilities he has acquired or are demanded by the position he/she occupies. Workers producing optimum results, therefore, are those that have the right knowledge, skills and abilities for those jobs.

An educated and skilled labour force is also considered to be essential to the success and growth of every organisation (Cosh et al., 1998) and also crucial to gaining a competitive advantage in a global economy (Huang, 2001). It has also been recognised for some time that training and development are effective ways to reduce factors that result in organisational failures (Ibrahim and Soufani, 2002; Menzies & Gasse, 1999).

Further, professional upgrading courses and other forms of continuous improvement techniques are valuable tools to enhance the managerial skill set of employees and considered essential for success and growth of service providing organisations (Devins and Gold, 2000). Encouraging the development of the skills

through seminars and professional courses for any workforce has therefore emerged as a major priority for government policy worldwide and labour market interventions have been implemented in response to concerns relating to competitiveness and lifelong learning (Sambrook, 2003).

Against the backdrop of the numerous benefits training and development holds for employees and employers, it is imperative that employees be placed or as Kiggundu (1989) puts it, re-placed after every upgrading of their skills. In doing placements after training and development, cognizance must be taken of the new knowledge, skills and abilities acquired by the employee and how they can be used to the advantage of the organisation.

Table 12: Respondents pursuing professional courses

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	79	44.4
No	99	55.6
Total	178	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

Table 12 above shows the number of respondents interviewed who were pursuing professional courses. In spite of the fact that 55.6 percent of the respondents claimed that they had never undertaken any professional course was worrying considering the relevance of professional specialization to skilled labour placement, it is encouraging that 44.4 percent of respondents had undertaken one form of professional course or the other.

Table 13: Relationship between professional course and CEPS work

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	67	81.7
No	12	18.3
Total	79	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

Table 13 shows the relationship between the professional courses pursued by CEPS officials involved in the study and their official duties. Encouragingly, 81.7 percent of the respondents who had undertaken a professional course agreed that the course they undertook was related to their present job schedule (Table 13). This is also very significant, considering the fact that no organisation stands to gain from education and training undertaken by its staff that have no bearing on its activities.

Professional courses are essential to the service sector and although much of what takes place tends to be job-specific, training is regarded as an important component both for competitive success and business strategy (Bennet and Robson, 2003). Along these lines, Coates (2000) and Sambrook (2003) identify some specific impacts that the academic backgrounds as well as successive upgrades and specialization have on service industry employees. Respondents were therefore tasked with selecting from among options, the major impacts that their academic background and professional upgrading have had on their job. As shown in Table 14, respondents opined that their jobs and professional qualifications impacted on their jobs in all the ways indicated although the major

impact was the faster processing of clients clearing documents. Their responses also underscore the benefits that organisations stand to gain from a properly conducted skilled labour placement activities.

Table 14: Impact of educational and professional background on job

Type of impact	Frequency	Percentage
Faster processing of client's clearing document	75	42.1
Work with minimal errors and less supervision	48	27
Revenues fraud detection	30	16.9
Friendly customers' relation towards client	21	11.8
Other	4	2.2
Total	178	100.0

Source Fieldwork, 2009

The mode of entry into every organisation is a major determinant of the recruitment and selection process and subsequently the placement process. The mode of entry may also be seen as a reflection of the recruitment and selection source preferred by the organisation, whether internal or external, and the nature of the position for which the recruitment is done (Garman, 2005).

As shown in Table 15, 60.1 percent and 34.3 percent of respondents respectively believed that they were recruited by the organisation itself through general recruitment and professional or specialized officer recruitment. Additionally, though Blackman et al (2002) support an increasing rate of recruitment by secondment since it maximises the influence of organisational

actors on the recruitment, selection and placement process and is also an important tool for changing the strategic direction and goal of an organisation, the data provided reflects otherwise with only 5.6 percent of respondents were on secondment.

Table 15: Entry mode into CEPS

Entry mode into CEPS	Frequency	Percentage
General recruitment	107	60.1
Professional or specialized officers recruitment	61	34.3
Secondment	10	5.6
Total	178	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

In addition to the above, another important determinant of skilled labour placement is whether employees were recruited for specified job titles. As provided by Kiggundu (1989), jobs available for the recruitment, selection and placement processes may be categorized into two – routine and non-routine.

In relation to skilled labour placement, it stands to reason that individuals recruited for routine jobs will be generally placed whilst those recruited for specified job titles will be placed according to the areas of specialization. This has however been challenged by Garman (2005) who through arguments centering on the mobility of labour and multi-tasking provide that specialists or professionals need not be recruited for specialist job titles.

With reference to CEPS, though 64 percent of the respondents opined that they were not recruited for specified job titles (Table 16), an overwhelming 94.4 percent of respondents indicated that specialists or professionals should be recruited for specialized job titles (Table 17). Their responses are supportive of Kiggundu's stance but in contrast with Garman's. Providing reasons why they thought specialists or professionals should be recruited for specialized job titles respondents indicated among others that certain aspects of their jobs were such that specialists were needed for their successful operation; that skilled or professional workers required little on the job placement and adjustment time to enhance job delivery.

Table 16: Recruitment for specified job title

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	64	36
No	114	64
Total	178	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

The questionnaire also sought information from respondents on the difficulties faced by professional officers in their jobs. This information is presented in Table 17.

Table 17: Specialist recruitment for specialized job titles

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	168	94.4
No	10	5.6
Total	178	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

In Table 18, the paucity of resources needed for the smooth performance of their duties was mentioned by 47.2 percent of respondents as a main problem faced by professional officers. Also, administrative bottlenecks and the lack of incentives were respectively identified by 32 percent and 15.2 percent of respondents as the challenges they faced.

Table 18: Difficulties faced by professionals

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate resources	84	47.2
No incentives	27	15.2
Administrative bottle-necks	57	32
Others	10	5.6
Total	178	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

According to 5.6 percent of the respondents, other problems faced by professional officers included the inability of skilled personnel to practise their professions because they had to take up duties in other departments due to staff

shortages. And also the inability of the service to supply them with equipment to perform what they had been trained to do.

Respondents were also asked to provide suggestions concerning skilled labour placement for efficiency in CEPS. Some of the key suggestions made centred on the fact that specialists should, as a matter of necessity, be given Customs training to help them direct their expertise correctly to the appropriate quarters in CEPS, the re-initiation of the 'rationalization' policy which was aimed at managing the human resource capacity base of the organisation and that management must consider the background of employees carefully before placement or transfers.

Skilled labour placement: Perspectives from HR department

The objective of administering a separate questionnaire to the HR department was informed by the fact that being the major actors in terms of recruitment, selection and placement issues in CEPS, they were better placed to provide insights into the issues under discussion. Their opinions were sought to confirm or prove otherwise the assertions made by the other officers of CEPS involved in the study and in some cases provide an in-depth assessment of skilled labour placement activities in CEPS.

Table 19 presents a summary of some of the responses (in percentages) provided by the HR department

Table 19: Assessment of recruitment in CEPS

Question	Freq	Agree (percent)	Disagree (percent)	Not applicable	Total (percent)
The commonest mode of entry into CEPS is the general basic recruitment using non tertiary qualifications	22	94.2	0	5.8	100
Another mode of entry into CEPS is professional or Specialized recruitment	22	100	0	0	100
The third mode of recruitment into CEPS secondment	22	3.7	96.3	0	100
CEPS measures efficiency of its employees by the fast processing of clients clearing documents	22	88	17.5	4.5	100
CEPS measures efficiency of its employees by working with minimal error	22	100	0	0	100
CEPS measures efficiency of its employees by working with less supervision	22	81.8	0	18.2	100
CEPS measures efficiency of its employees by friendly customer relationship	22	96.3	0	3.7	100
CEPS measures an employee's ability by revenue fraud detection	22	100	0	0	100
CEPS measures efficiency of its employees by solving job related problems.	22	84.6	0	15.4	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

Though several modes of entry exist for use by private, public and quasi-governmental organisations, evidence provided by the review of documentary

materials from CEPS points to a high use of general basic recruitment through non-tertiary qualifications. Respondents from the HR department were thus asked to authenticate the modes of entry into CEPS and further identify which was the commonest mode used. All respondents from the HR department without reservation confirmed that professional or specialized recruitment was common and secondment mode of entry into CEPS was very rare.

They however, identified the general basic recruitment approach using non-tertiary qualifications as the commonest mode of entry into CEPS. In their justification for this policy, they indicated that majority of the basic entry level duties were routine jobs which required no specialisation and could be easily learned by pre-tertiary qualification holders. There was thus no need to use professional recruitment or go through the secondment process to fill such vacancies.

Additionally, every organisation has the means of assessing the efficiency of its employees. Review of secondary data on the operations of CEPS as well as unstructured personal interviews conducted with key CEPS personnel identified several approaches by which CEPS assessed the efficiency of its employees. Respondents from the HR Department were also tasked with confirming whether those means of assessing efficiency identified were indeed used by CEPS. An average of 91.7 percent of the respondents confirmed that indeed CEPS measured the efficiency of its employees by considering how fast they processed client's clearing documents, the extent to which they were able to work with minimal errors and with less supervision, their ability to initiate and maintain friendly

customer relationships, their ability to detect revenue fraud and finally by their ability to solve job-related problems as they arose. They however stressed that each assessment method was not used in isolation but in unison with the others.

Respondents also confirmed that CEPS employed all manner of skilled personnel ranging from chartered accountants to lawyers. They further indicated that skilled personnel were in most instances placed with reference to their expertise. They cited, for instance, that professional accountants and auditors were placed in their various accounting and auditing departments and on the same rank while lawyers were placed in the legal or investigation departments. There were however some respondents who disagreed that skilled labour placement was always done with reference to the areas of expertise of employees. They cited instances where some personnel whose recruitment was based on a particular expertise were placed in a unit which had little relationship with their area of expertise because

- Government directives at times supersede the organisation placement process.
- In most cases officers who were upgraded into specialized areas did not disclose their areas of expertise to the service and continue to perform other functions of personal interest.

Regardless of where they were placed within the organisation, respondents agreed that professional workers were able to respond to the challenges of their jobs. Because of the difficulty in developing a metric tool or benchmark for measuring and comparing performance of professional staff as against their non-

professional counterparts, respondents found it difficult to clearly assert that skilled personnel performed better than their colleagues in the same department who did not have the same expertise. In this regard, about 50 percent of respondents believed that these professionals performed better than their non-professional counterparts (See Table 20).

Table 20: Assessment of Placement in CEPS

Question	Freq	Yes (percent)	No (percent)	Total (percent)
Are these skilled personnel placed with reference to their expertise?	22	72.8	28.2	100
Are they able to response to the challenges of their jobs?	22	100	0	100
Do they perform better than their colleagues in the same departments who do not have the same expertise?	22	52.7	47.3	100
Does skilled labour placement affect CEPS' efficiency?	22	100	0	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

Table 21: Impact of specialization on job

Impact of specialization on job	Frequency	Percentage
Faster processing clients' clearing documents	5	22.7
Work with minimal error	5	22.7
Revenue fraud detection	3	13.6
Friendly customer relationship	2	9.1
Working with minimal supervision	7	31.8
Total	22	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

The respondents from the HR Department also agreed unanimously that indeed, skilled labour placement had a positive impact on the efficiency of CEPS. They opined that skilled labour placement impacted on CEPS efficiency through faster processing of client documents, enabling skilled workers to work with minimal error, detect revenue fraud and initiate and sustain friendly customer relationship. Working with minimal supervision however appeared to be the most important impact of skilled labour placement on the efficiency of CEPS (Table 21)

Table 22: Challenges to skilled placement

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage
Resistance from employees	11	50
Unwillingness by management	3	13.6
Technical problems	4	18.2
Others	4	18.2
Total	22	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2009

Respondents were finally asked to identify the challenges they faced in implementing skilled labour placement. Though inferences may be made from the responses provided that the unwillingness of management to support skilled labour placement (13.6 percent), technical problems (18.2 percent) as well as other minor challenges (18.2 percent) hindered successful skilled labour placement in CEPS, the most dominant challenge subscribed to by 50 percent of respondents was the resistance from the employees.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The primary goal of this research was to assess the degree of use and effect of skilled labour placement to achieve organisational efficiency in CEPS. To achieve this goal, questionnaires were administered to 200 officers of CEPS from the Tema, Accra, Kotoka International Airport and Headquarters collection points of CEPS.

The questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively and presented in frequency Tables. The responses were also discussed qualitatively. At the end of the analyses, it was found that skilled labour placement lead to organisational efficiency in CEPS.

The following findings were made by the study

- Though professional or specialised officers recruitment and secondment were acceptable modes of entry into CEPS, the most common mode of entry into CEPS was the entry through the general basic recruitment process.
- Transfers and placements in CEPS were to some extent not based on academic or professional backgrounds. Only about half of the respondents

believed that their academic and professional backgrounds were taken into consideration when placement and transfers were done.

- Professional or skilled officers lacked the resources and incentives needed for the smooth performance of their duties. Also, administrative bottlenecks and the inability of skilled personnel to practice their professions because they had to fill in at departments with staff shortages were also problems that they faced. Other challenges they faced include the inability to obtain appropriate technology, instruments and equipment to perform what they had been trained to do.
- CEPS measured the efficiency of its employees by considering how fast they processed client's clearing documents, the extent to which they were able to work with minimal errors and with less supervision, their ability to initiate and maintain friendly customer relationship, their ability to detect revenue fraud and finally by their ability to solve job-related problems as they arise.
- Skilled labour placement impacted on CEPS efficiency through faster processing of client, enabling skilled workers to work with minimal error and minimal supervision, to detect revenue fraud and initiate and sustain friendly customer relationship.

Conclusions

The study has been able to assess the main contributions made by skilled labour placement to organisational efficiency in CEPS. Though some setbacks

were uncovered, the study has also been able to identify some clear benefits to be derived by CEPS from skilled labour placement. The study has also been able to prescribe measures through which the challenges faced by CEPS in ensuring organisational efficiency through skilled labour placement could be remedied.

Despite the limitation that the study was not conducted on a national scale, it has still been able to provide meaningful insight into skilled labour placement issues in CEPS and other Ghanaian public sector organisations.

Recommendations

The study has been able to identify how labour is recruited and placed in CEPS and the contributions it makes to organisational efficiency in CEPS. Based on the findings made by the study, the following recommendations are made.

There should also be training and development as well as capacity building initiatives for management and staff of CEPS to enhance their skills and in effect increase the contributions they make to the achievement of the organisational goals.

It is also recommended that the CEPS management should show more commitment to skilled labour placement and the related activities. Specifically, placement and transfers must primarily be based on the proven qualifications, skills and experiences of workers.

Also the study identified some factors that inhibited skilled labour placement activities in CEPS. These factors included the lack of motivation and incentives for skilled personnel as well as administrative bottlenecks of

requisition of working logistics. It is therefore recommended that the current annual performance rewarding system of CEPS, which characterized by nepotism be replaced by a transparent one. This new rewarding system should have indicators that inspire performance, such as recognition in appreciation of an achievement, schedule “tune up” training sessions, developing career path, good working environment, team spirit etc. It is also recommended that administrative policies, procedures and technology be re-evaluated to ensure cost effectiveness and efficiency.

It is further recommended that CEPS management should take keen interest in upgrading officers in order to be more competent in their specialisation areas so that they can be placed properly for organisation efficiency, rather than such officers perusing their personal interests to the detriment of the organisation. In addition, management should involve in recruiting and placement processes, that is to say transparent recruitment and placement process be instituted so that the recruits be tested for the skilled required.

The study also recommends that the new role of CEPS be redefined and fully resourced. It is worthy to note that CEPS currently operates within a complex environment of intelligence collection, community protection, trade facilitation and revenue collection and for this role the service is tasked to streamline its control and processing functions. Consequently, CEPS must continuously re-aligning its border and ports clearance procedures to conform to investment facilitations strategies purposively to promote economic development and facilitate international business. It is important that these activities are

performed in close cooperation and coordination with other agencies of the governments, the riveted sector and other countries, especially our West African neighbours. This cooperation must be enhanced and given the necessary support and attention.

Finally, it is recommended that more studies be carried out on the subject matter to provide solid grounds for establishing other contributions and constraints to skilled labour placement in CEPS and other services that were not captured by this study. Such studies, apart from addressing the challenge of limited information on the subject under study, will also provide policymakers and other stakeholders of the maritime industry with valuable information for evidence-based practice.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF

**TOPIC: SKILLED PLACEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL
EFFICIENCY A CASE STUDY OF CUSTOMS, EXCISE AND
PREVENTIVE SERVICE (CEPS)**

Instructions: This questionnaire is designed to collect data for the purposes of academic research as part of the requirement for the award of a Master’s Degree in Human Resources Management from the University of Cape Coast. The information provided will be handled with confidentiality and respondents are entreated to answer the questions as candidly as possible. Thank you.

1. Age.....
2. Rank.....
3. Department.....
4. Collection.....
5. Number of years in Service.....
6. Number of duty stationed worked.....
7. Number of units/seat served?
8. What is your area of academic specialisation?.....
9. Is this specialisation related to custom work?

Yes

No

10. If yes, which aspects of custom work does this relate?

.....

11. Is your academic background taken into consideration when placement or transfers are done?

Yes

No

12. Have you ever undertaken any professional course before?

Yes

No

13. If yes, what is the area of your professional specialisation?

.....

14. Is this professional specialisation related to custom work?

Yes

No

15. If yes, what aspects of custom work does this relate?

.....

16. What impact does your academic background have on your job?

faster processing of clients

work with minimal errors and less supervision.

revenue fraud detection

friendly customers relation towards clients

Others (specify).....

17. Is your professional background taken into consideration when placement or transfers are done?

Yes

No

18. What was your mode of entry into CEPS?

general basic recruitment

professional or specialized officers recruitment

secondment

Others (specify).....

19. Were you recruited for a specified job title (eg IT, Chemist etc)

Yes

No

20. Do you think specialist or professionals should be recruited for specialised job titles?

Yes

No

21. If yes, why? And if no, why not?

.....
.....

22. What difficulties do professional officers face in their job?

inadequate resources

no incentives

() administrative bottlenecks

23. What other comments do you want to make concerning skilled placement and the efficiency of CEPS?

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HR DEPARTMENT

TOPIC: SKILLED PLACEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL EFFICIENCY A CASE STUDY OF CUSTOMS, EXCISE AND PREVENTIVE SERVICE (CEPS)

Instructions: This questionnaire is designed to collect data for the purposes of academic research as part of the requirement for the award of a Master’s Degree in Human Resources Development from the University of Cape Coast. respondents are entreated to answer the questions as candidly as possible. Information provided will be handled with confidentiality. Thank you.

1. Age.....

2. Rank.....

3. Department.....

4. Highest qualification.....

5. The commonest mode of entry into CEPS is the general basic recruitment using non-tertiary qualifications.

(a) Agree (b) Disagree (c) Don’t know

6. Another mode of entry into CEPS is professional or specialized recruitment.

(a) Agree (b) Disagree (c) Don't know

7. The third mode of recruitment into CEPS is secondment.

(a) Agree (b) Disagree (c) Don't know

8. CEPS measures efficiency of its employees by the fast processing of clients clearing document.

(a) Agree (b) Disagree (c) Not applicable

9. CEPS measures efficiency of its employees by working with minimal error.

(a) Agree (b) Disagree (c) Not applicable

10. CEPS measures efficiency of its employees by working with less supervision

(a) Agree (b) Disagree (c) Not applicable

11. CEPS measures efficiency of its employees by friendly customer relationship

(a) Agree (b) Disagree (c) Not applicable

12. CEPS measures an employee's ability by revenue fraud detection.

(a) Agree (b) Disagree (c) Not applicable

13. CEPS measures efficiency of its employees by solving job related problem.

(a) Agree (b) Disagree (c) Not applicable

14. What are the types of skilled personnel employed by CEPS?

(a)..... (f).....

(b)..... (g).....

- (c)..... (h).....
- (d)..... (i).....
- (e)..... (j).....

15. Are these skilled personnel placed with reference to their expertise?

- Yes
- No

16. Are they able to respond to the challenges of their jobs?

- Yes
- No

Explain your answer.....
.....

18. Are these professionals also placed in other departments or units without reference to their expertise?

- Yes
- No

Explain your answer.....
.....

19. Does skilled labour placement affect CEPS efficiency?

- Yes
- No

20. What areas of efficiency are normally affected?

Tick where applicable

- faster processing of clients

work with minimal error

revenue fraud detection

friendly customer relation

working with minimal supervision

21. What challenges do you face in implementing skilled placement?

resistance from employees

unwillingness by management

technical problem (eg. Shortage of skilled personnel)

others (specify).....

22. What important comments do you want to make in relation to skilled placement in CEPS.

.....
.....
.....

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