

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE FOUR CAREER PATHS USED  
FOR THE PROMOTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA**

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## ABSTRACT

The institution's management firmly believes that staff members who excel exemplarily in performing their duties should reap the fruits of their hard work. However, that requires motivation of which promotion is one. Currently UNAM has four career paths through which administrative staff members can advance their career at the University, namely: applying for a vacant position at a higher level in another department; being promoted in the current position by way of upgrading the staff members current position; being promoted to a higher position within the department; and Ad Hominum promotions. This study intends to investigate whether the four career paths are applied procedurally.

A combination of methods involving literature survey, questionnaires and interviews was used to collect the data for the study. The study discovered lack of information sharing on the policy as well as misinterpretation of the procedures amongst staff members as major problems. The other is staff member's mistrust of the policy makers. This does not mean that the policy makers are not doing a good job. However, staff needs to be guided as to how they can be promoted in the future. The study is the first of its kind.

Among the findings are that staff members need to be trained on how the policy works, and that annual performance appraisal forms should be completed in order to make it

easy to identify good performers. It is expected that the findings will contribute towards effective dissemination of information on promotion among staff members, and to influence better management of Human Resources issues, in particular implementation of policies on promotion.

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## DECLARATIONS

I, **Ivone Cornelia Tjilale**, declare hereby that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work or part therefore has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher education.

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**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

ERG	Existence Relatedness and Growth
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management
PA	Performance Appraisal
PMS	Performance Management System
SD	Staff Development
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UNAM	University of Namibia

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Institutions of higher learning such as universities and colleges are labour intensive organizations and depend on staff for effective and quality service delivery. Thus, it is in the interest of any such organization to develop its members of staff in order to ensure effectiveness in carrying out their tasks.

The University of Namibia (UNAM) is one such institution. It was established by an Act of Parliament, Act No 18 of 1992, making it the first institution of higher learning in the country (UNAM 2006-2010, 2006). The Act states that UNAM's operational objectives and functions are to:

1. provide higher education and undertake research
2. advance and disseminate knowledge
3. provide extension services
4. encourage the growth and nurturing of cultural expression within the context of Namibian society
5. contribute to the social and economic development of Namibia; and
6. foster relationships with any person or institution, both nationally and internationally.

In order to achieve these objectives, the University needs a staff component that is highly motivated. To that end, the institution's management strongly believes that Administrative staff members who excel exemplarily in performing their duties should

reap the fruits of their hard work (Seibes, 2007, p. 164). Such staff members include those individuals responsible for developing and implementing policy, coordinating resource utilization, supervising administrative units that support academic functions, and/or serve as liaison officers to a variety of constituents such as faculty, students, business and industry, and government (Johnsrud, 1991, p. 119).

### **1.1.1 Orientation of the proposed study**

Human Resources Management is a very critical aspect of any organization. Generally its objectives are to: help the organization reach its goals; employ the skills and abilities of the workforce efficiently; provide the organization with well-trained and well-motivated employees; raise the employee's job satisfaction and self-actualization; communicate HRM policies to all employees and help maintain ethical policies and socially responsible behavior (Ivancevich, 1998, p. 9). The objectives also include promotion of staff through appropriate policies and procedures.

The University of Namibia HRM uses four career paths as instruments to promote staff. The first path entails applying for vacant posts at a higher level within the department under which one works or in another department. The applicant completes a prescribed application form to which she/he should attach comprehensive curriculum vitae for processing by the Human Resources department. Interviews then follow. If successful at interviews, one is then appointed. The candidate's appointment could be supported by



staff performance appraisal and probation reports provided by the supervisor. The appraisal is based on performance management system (Seibes, 1997, p. 165).

The second path is by way of upgrading the staff member's current position. Such promotion is necessitated by resignations, retirements and the institutions continuous growth that may necessitate creation of new posts at different levels (Seibes, 1997, p.166). Creation of such new positions sometimes results from evaluation of some posts upon request by supervisors. Incumbents of positions graded on a higher level may qualify for automatic promotion on condition that: the staff member has been in the position for a period of at least three consecutive years; he/she is directly responsible for the increase in the organizational complexity and responsibilities that the post carries; and that the formal qualification requirements did not change with the evaluation. Such a staff member will be required to serve a one year probation period. It should be noted however, that a staff member occupying a position that is graded at a higher level may be promoted to the higher position on condition that a higher qualification is obtained in spite of the fact that he/she has five years experience which is the minimum, and is responsible for all the responsibilities the position entails. The required qualifications should be identified by the supervisor and confirmed by the job evaluation committee. In cases whereby a position has been graded at a higher level based on increased complexity and responsibility, an incumbent who does not have the minimum five years experience and the required qualifications can be promoted on a one year probation period. However, a condition could be set that he/she should obtain the minimum

qualification, which could be basic or postgraduate certificate within a specified period of time.

Promotion to a higher position within the department constitutes the third path. A staff member may be promoted to the position if he/she has the necessary qualifications. In such a case the Dean/Director/Bursar/Registrar is required to submit a comprehensive motivational or supportive report in accordance with the provisions of Performance Management System for consideration leading to the possible promotion of the candidate. If promoted, the staff member will also serve a one-year probation period.

Ad Hominum promotion system is the fourth path. That follows a staff member's exceptional performance in a particular position observed over long periods, thereby necessitating an evaluation of the staff member's work output. The Dean/Director/Bursar/Registrar's recommendation requesting the Vice-Chancellor to promote the member is necessary for the promotion to be effected. Such promotion is dealt with in terms of the approved policy on remunerations. Should the staff member decide to vacate his/her position, the position will be advertised and filled at the original grade and salary.

#### **1.1.2 General Rules of the University's Promotion Policy:**

A staff member is promoted under any one of the five general rules stated below.

1. One may not be considered for promotion before completion and confirmation of the probation period.
2. A staff member can be appointed to a higher position for which he/she applied through the normal recruitment and selection process, then serves a one-year probation period.
3. A staff member promoted in their current posts and has at least five years continuous service will not serve the one-year probation period.
4. One can be promoted within his/her current post due to a higher-grade level, but a staff members who does not have a minimum of five years continuous service or who does not have the minimum formal qualification for the higher post will serve a one-year probation period.
5. All promotions are to be approved by the staff appointments committee.

Promotion is defined as the act of advancing or elevating a person to a higher rank or position. It occurs when an individual's demonstrated performance, contribution to the organization and competencies are recognized. This is done by assuming the role and the associated responsibilities of a job in a grade higher than the one currently occupied (Promotion: Competitive or Noncompetitive, 2005). Promotion is thus, a primary means for organizations to meet human resources staffing requirements and to identify quality leadership (Johnsrud 1991, p. 120).

The above definitions point to the fact that performance management entails a systematic approach to the management of people, using their performance outputs, goals measurements, feedback and recognition as a means of motivating staff to perform to their maximum potential. To that end, UNAM's philosophy on performance management puts emphasize on positive needs development and self-assessment. It further regards development as a joint responsibility of the staff member and his/her supervisor/manager (Seibes, 2007, p. 165). Hence, performance management could be regarded as a process through which UNAM attempts to change the behavior of its employees, specifically to induce behaviors that will lead to improved performance and/or increased productivity (Seibes, 2007, p. 168). UNAM views these four career paths as necessary for its institutional staff development.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Generally promotion is seen as a way of motivating staff members. However, investigation by trade unions has confirmed that some administrative staff members are often left out when promotions are made without any explanations given in spite of the four career paths designed to advance their careers (S. Angolo, personal communication, October 21, 2008). The problem is: Administrative staff members who believe that they qualify for promotion are not promoted. Yet there are clear institutional procedures which are supposed to be followed. These present a problem because it leads to staff not being motivated enough to perform their duties efficiently.

Another problem could be that staff members are not aware of the four career paths used for promotions at UNAM, particularly after observing their colleagues being given positions that have not been advertised, which is common and legal in most organizations. Therefore, the study intends to investigate whether the four career paths used to promote staff members at UNAM are applied procedurally and equitably.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

Given the above background, the main research question is: **Are the four career paths used to promote administrative staff members applied procedurally?**

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

This study seeks to:

1. find out whether the promotion procedures are in fact being followed.
2. influence revision of policy dealing with promotion of Administrative staff.
3. proffer recommendations for corrective measures.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The study is the first of its kind. It is expected that the findings will contribute towards effective dissemination of information on promotion among staff members, and will

have positive impact on the management of Human Resources issues, in particular implementation of policies on promotion.

### **1.6 Limitation of the study**

The study was restricted to staff members at the main campus. The ones from the northern campus and regional centers were not part of the study due to distance and time constraint. Limited access to some of the confidential documents was the other limitation.

### **1.7 Clarification of terms**

#### **1.7.1 Development**

Development can be thought of as bringing capacities that go beyond those required by the current job description. It represents efforts to improve an employee's ability to handle a variety of assignments. As such, it benefits both the organization's operations and the individual's career (Mathis 1997, p. 314). Therefore, development refers to a process of gradual change which places an employee at his/her optimum potential. The development could bring future benefits.

##### **1.7.1.1 Human Resource Development**

According to Craig (1995, p. 59), Human Resources Development (HRD) is the integrated use of training, development, organizational development and career development to improve individual, group and organizational effectiveness. Thomson

and Mabey (1994, p. 7) adds to that definition by stating that HRD as part of HRM entails regular analyses of job content in relation to organizational objectives and individual skills, a relationship that enables employees to manage their own careers.

### **1.7.2 Human Resources**

Nkoe (2002, p. 46) points out that human resources is vitally important to the organization's success. He further argues that the HRM function must be involved in all aspects of an organization's operation. Furthermore, also states that employees must perform at an optimal level so that overall strategy and goals can be achieved.

### **1.7.3 Human Resources Management**

Several experts on Human Resources define Human Resources Management (HRM) differently. In the view of Armstrong and Baron (2002, P. 3), HRM can be defined as a strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets- the workers who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of its objectives for sustainable competitive advantage. Gerber, Nel and Van Dyk (1995, p.16) describe it as a purposeful action of the human resources department aimed at assisting functional managers to optimally utilize human resources under their control in accordance with the official organizational policy. According to Dessler (1999, p.2), HRM refers to the practices and policies you need in order to carry out the personnel aspects of your management job, specifically acquiring, training, appraising, rewarding, and providing a safe and fair environment for your company's employees.

#### **1.7.4 Human Resources Management Functions**

HRM functions generally refer to a complex network of generic enabling functions, functional activities, analytical methods and auxiliary aids. These functions are in continual interaction for the purpose of recruiting, training, utilizing, remunerating reasonably and fairly, and retaining an effective, motivated and trained personnel corps (Andrews 1988, p. 4).

#### **1.7.5 Policies**

Policies are types of plans that guide managers and supervisors in making decisions appropriate for developmental activities. Policies provide common premises for action. They also provide some assurance that recurring problems and issues will be handled with some measure of consistency throughout the organization (Tracey 2004, p. 523).

#### **1.8 Chapters Outline**

The thesis consists of five chapters:

**Chapter one** is introductory and describes the context of the problem, the problem statement, objectives the researcher hopes to reach, the research question that the researcher hopes to answer, limitations and significance of the study. It also clarifies the key concepts and indicates chapter sequencing.



**Chapter two** provides the theoretical framework. It also summarizes various author's research findings and opinions on the subject. These guided the study.

**Chapter three** is devoted to the research methodology and strategies used in developing the thesis. The chapter pays particular attention to data gathering instruments and data analysis procedures from quantitative and qualitative perspectives.

**Chapter four** presents and analyses the data extracted from the information gathered through questionnaires and interviews, and by other sources used.

**Chapter five** presents conclusions and recommendations based on the findings in chapter four.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to look at the available literature on the subject, identify the dimensions of the promotion concept and explain its importance. The theory guiding the study is also identified.

### **2.2 Promotion as a concept**

Promotion refers to the availability of opportunities for career advancement (George, 2000). Career advancement may not necessarily be associated with or limited to hierarchical progress in the organization. It includes opportunities for lateral movement and growth (Cockburn & Perry, 2004; Robinsons et al, 2003). According to Gunawan and Kleiner (2001, p. 109) promotion is a practice for recognizing and rewarding employees' effort and contribution. It is usually characterized by a change in job and title, and increase in pay. Power and responsibilities are normally attached to it. Johnsons (1992) and Vigoda-Gadot (2003) suggest that in order for promotion to be satisfying, the opportunities it avails to the beneficiary should fulfill the following:

- The position should enhance a need for achievement.
- The employee should feel the sense that he or she is being recognized in the organization.
- He or she should assume more challenging responsibilities.

In principle, ample opportunities for promotion are vital to job satisfaction because promotions contain a number of valued signals about a person's self worth (Toposky, 2000). Such signals may be material, while others are social (recognition in the organization and increased prestige in the community). Weallens (2003) support these views by suggesting that the ready availability of promotions administered according to a fair system contributes to job satisfaction. However, Johns (1992), argues that there is a cultural and individual difference in what is seen to constitute a fair promotion system. Some employees may prefer a strict seniority system, while others may desire a system based strictly upon job performance. At the same time, some people may be more concerned with the opportunity for promotion than others. He also contends that these people feel that fair and ample opportunities will contribute the most to job satisfaction.

Armstrong (1998, p. 25, 171 & 507), whose work deals with every aspect of the personnel management function, discusses promotion as a function in relation to business needs. His book offers clear advice on how companies can maximize the effectiveness of the personnel function, and ensure that it makes a major contribution towards organizational success. Armstrong is also of the opinion that development of staff is concerned with providing learning and development opportunities, making training interventions and planning as well as conducting and evaluating training programmes. Additionally, he states that every organization should have human resource policies because they help to define the way things should be done. He further argues that promotion policy should be clear on internal recruitment. At the same time he recognizes the fact that there will be occasions whereby the organization's present and

future needs can only be met by recruitment from outside. An organization needs infusion of fresh blood from time to time in order to avoid stagnation.

Johnsrud (1991, p. 120) added to the debate by suggesting that promotion within an organization is a primary means for individuals to advance their careers. She is also of the opinion that opportunity for promotion is important for meeting individual aspirations to acquire increased responsibility, status and better salary. She further states that promotion is a primary means for organizations to meet human resource staffing requirements and to identify quality leadership. Focusing on gender, Johnsrud and Hech (1994, p. 23) stated that several studies have produced evidence that women are disadvantaged and men are advantaged in the promotion process. That prompts the question: Is UNAM's affirmative Action Policy implemented accordingly? The answer to this question is important because it broadens the parameters of the investigation.

Other experts, Sherman and Bohlander (1992, p. 148-149), are of the opinion that by filling vacancies from within, an institution can capitalize on the investment made in recruiting, selecting, training and developing its current staff. The experts further argue that promotion gives other employees reason to anticipate that comparable efforts by them will lead to promotion, thus improving morale within the organization. They conclude by arguing that if an organization's promotion policy is to have maximum motivational value, employees should be aware of it.

Other experts on HRM such as Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk and Schenk (2003, p. 409-410) are of the opinion that promotion has and will become an increasingly

contentious issue due to the argument surrounding the definition of employment equity, affirmative action and the concept of merit. Swanepoel et al. (2003), further point out that promotion decisions are traditionally based on aspects such as work performance history and meritorious work related grounds. They also proffer the argument that flattening organizational structures are limiting promotion opportunities thereby causing a lot of debate and even unhappiness among employees. Consequently, they suggest that all employees should be provided with information regarding promotional opportunities and the standards to be applied. The expectation is that promotion decisions are based on competencies, not merely on paper qualifications; and that job specification is reassessed to determine whether the competencies and qualifications are in line with the essential requirements of the position. UNAM could follow the same approach when it comes to sharing information concerning promotional opportunities, especially with regard to Administrative staff members.

However, Pergamiti et al. (1999, p. 581) state that promotion has consequences such as wage returns, earnings structures, training and supervision. Whereas Nel et al. (2004, p. 156) argue that trade unions can actively promote the interests of their members by pressing for seniority as the criterion for promotion, unions could also insist that employees be promoted from within before outsiders are hired, and specific individuals should be promoted subject to the grievance procedure. UNAM could use the same

approach. By using the same approach a lot of unhappiness amongst staff members will be reduced.

### **2.2.1 Problems that could be associated with promotion**

Promotion decisions seek to identify competence needed to execute tasks to the satisfaction of manager's expectations. The difficulty in achieving that objective prompted Guanawan and Kleiner ( 2001, p. 109) to discuss the following problems associated with promotion:

#### **2.2.1.1 Ineffective promotion decisions, which could increase inefficiency within the company**

In the authors' opinion, ineffective promotion decisions, meaning those decisions made without consulting the concerned head of departments or supervisors, can lead to a wrong person being promoted. The result will demand for managers' attention, and that will subtract from their overall managing time. It can dissatisfy managers in terms of their expectations and decrease the company's total production.

#### **2.2.1.2 Unfair promotion decisions could provoke antagonism, suspicion, or fear among employees**

The organization could be characterized by: (i) promotion given to employees who have personal connections with more powerful forces within or outside the organization;

(ii) employees with such connections often threatening their managers that they will take their dissatisfaction to top management; and

(iii) managers, due to the fear that they could lose their jobs, feel compelled to improve those employees' promotion opportunities. Such promotions could also cause a clash among employees and anger among those who do not get promoted. As a result, the company's operations may be undermined and achievement of the goals threatened.

#### **2.2.1.3 Discrimination Allegations**

Gender differences in promotion often occur in large firms and, in most cases, disadvantage women. Managers sometimes do not offer women hierarchically high and better paying jobs given to men with qualifications equal to those that women possess. Other discriminatory acts are based on race, colour, religion, sex, nationality, age, disability, and retaliation.

#### **2.2.2 Promotion Systems**

Gillian (1997, p. 110-111) claims that there are several promotion systems such as job ladder, occupational restructuring and job posting are adopted by many business organizations.

##### **2.2.2.1 Job Ladder**

Job or promotion ladder refers to a listing and patterning of jobs, which indicate possible paths of progression from one to another. Managers use this ladder as a guideline to

promote employees horizontally or vertically. In order to induce people to commit them to career progression, job ladders must be clearly understood by employees and systematically followed by management.

#### **2.2.2.2 Occupational Restructuring**

Occupational restructuring refers to an attempt to eliminate dead-end jobs, which means jobs where there is little or no chance of progressing and succeeding into a higher paid position and to promote minority groups. Managers select candidates from minority group instead of more senior employees. If there is no qualified minority group member, and if the organization unit has not met its affirmative action goal, the company may hire from outside instead of promoting a non-minority employee. However, occupational restructuring may cause widespread repercussions such as litigation for discrimination against those in dead-end jobs (Gillian, 1997, p. 110-111).

#### **2.2.2.3 Job Posting**

Job posting refers to an invitation to current employees to apply for promotional opportunities. The advantages of job posting include increased employee motivation to apply and less favoritism by supervisors. However, it involves more paperwork and longer delays in filling vacancies. That said, managers are required to justify their



decision to reject unsuccessful applications. At UNAM it is done across units or departments.

### **2.3 Concepts and terms related to promotion**

The concepts and terms discussed below are related to promotion. These are job satisfaction, job analysis, job evaluation, performance management system, performance appraisal, staff development, remuneration and organizational commitment.

#### **2.3.1 Job Satisfaction**

There are various definitions of job satisfaction. Most authors define it in terms of feelings, attitudes and beliefs. Robbins et al. (2003) see job satisfaction as a subjective measure of workers attitudes, that is, an individual's general attitude to his/her job. A person with high job satisfaction holds positive attitudes towards the job, and one who is dissatisfied with it has negative attitudes towards it (Robbins et al. 2003).

Job satisfaction is a generalized affective work orientation towards one's present job and employer, and a pleasurable or emotional state could result from the appraisal of one's job or job experience (Martin and Roodt, 2007, p. 23). However, Visser and Coetzee (2005, p. 63) describe it as a complex variable which can also be defined as an attitude. Whereas Townsend et al (2007, p. 28) define it as the degree to which an individual's needs and desires are met and the extent to which it is perceived by other employees, Sempene et al. (2002, p. 23) are of the opinion that job satisfaction as a personal evaluation of conditions present in the job, or outcomes that arise as a result of having a

job. It thus, has to do with an individual's perception and own evaluation of his job. The perception is influenced by the person's unique circumstances like needs, values and expectations.

### **2.3.1.1 Dimensions and sources of Job Satisfaction**

Ivancevich and Matteson (2005) explained that, for researchers to understand job attitudes, they need to understand job dimensions, which are complex and interrelated in nature. They mentioned that the common dimensions of job satisfaction include: work, pay, promotion opportunities, recognition, and benefits, working conditions, supervision, coworkers, company and management. These are anchored in what Jones (2000) called variables used to determine the various sources of job satisfaction, namely:

- 1) Characteristics or nature of the job itself – examples are participation in decision making, and authority to initiate independence actions;
- 2) Characteristics of the organization – examples include salary, benefits, and opportunities for promotion; and
- 3) Values –viewing one's work as an important aspect of one's life that defines the person.

### **2.3.1.2 The importance of job satisfaction for individuals**

It is suggested that positive attitudes towards an individual's job are often associated with positive attitudes towards one's life in general (Ellison, 1997). However, to the

extent that job satisfaction does contribute to mental health and general life satisfaction, this may happen because of the possibility of acquiring self-esteem. In other words, people experience a sense of accomplishment and worth in performing a satisfying job, and this feeling spills over to their off the job life (Warr, 1987).

### **2.3.1.3 The importance of job satisfaction for the organization**

The experience of job satisfaction is not only important for the individual functionary but also for organization with specific reference to performance, absenteeism, staff turnover and organizational citizenship behavior (Armstrong 1993, O'Malley, 2000). In other words, UNAM should ensure that staff members are satisfied because if they are, it ensures the smooth running of different centre/faculties on campus.

### **2.3.2 Job Analysis**

Singh (2008, p. 87) views job analysis as the hub of virtually all human resources management activities necessary for the successful functioning of organizations. Chang and Kleiner (2002, p. 73) see it as a systematic process of obtaining valid job information to aid management in decision-making. Its purpose is to elicit information pertaining to various types of jobs that may be used for a job evaluation assignment.

Chang and Kleiner (2002, p. 74) identify the steps in the process of job analysis as follows:

- Identify and isolate the component tasks in a job because some jobs may consist of a large number of tasks and sub-tasks. Therefore, it will be convenient to group some of these into tasks where there are similarities among them.
- Examine how tasks are performed, for example the skills required; and the order in which they have to be exercised whether tasks are done in isolation or as part of a team effort.
- Identify the main areas of responsibility and duties involved, both regular and occasional. The main duties should be grouped according to their difficulty, frequency and importance to the job as a whole.
- Note the prevailing working conditions in respect of the physical, social and financial aspects of the job. Physical environment involves temperature, noise, dirt, danger and comfort in terms of office facilities. Teams, shifts and isolated work are regarded as social environment. Financial conditions are concerned with the payment system in place, the basic wage rate, current salary, fringe benefits, incentive schemes and any bonus.
- Identify the personal demands, which a job makes on an individual incumbent. There are five types of such demands. First, physical demand such as travel hours to work and appearance; second, intellectual demands, exemplified by verbal or numerical ability; third, any particular psycho-motor, social or diplomatic skills called for; fourth, experience; and lastly, personality factors, for instance, ability to work through other people.

According to Armstrong and Murlis (2005, p. 10), job analysis provides the basis for job description or role definition. Its additional functions include data collection for job evaluation, organizational design or review; improvement of performance management, succession planning, career management, and other human resources management processes.

### **2.3.3 Job Evaluation**

Pritchard and Murlis (1992, p. 16-17) define job evaluation as the process of assessing the relative size or importance of jobs within an organization. They are of the opinion that job evaluation should be used at all times to ensure that employees are promoted into the correct positions. Bussin (2002, p. 5) sees it as a systematic and objective process of comparing one job to another within an organization without looking at individual character, personality or performance. He further states that job evaluation depends on terms such as: job analysis, job description, job grading, job specification and wage and salary structures. UNAM is currently using the Peromnes system to evaluate jobs of administrative staff members. According to Fortunato and Waddell (1981, p. 55), job evaluation has four commonly used methods. These are ranking method; classification method; factor comparison method and point method. All these are different from the Peromnes system that UNAM uses. The system is characterized by six job content factors, namely: problem solving; consequences of judgements; pressure of work; knowledge; job impact and comprehension.

### 2.3.3.1 Benefits of Job Evaluation Systems

Despite the differences in systems, it could be argued that job evaluation systems:

- a) provide a logical, graded hierarchy and pay structure
- b) reduce inequalities
- c) provide a means to regain control over salary and wage administration, and
- d) provide consistent rationale for pay structure.

### 2.3.3.2 Job Evaluation Process

The process consists of two broad stages (Bussin 2002, p.6), each with its own process:

Stage	Description	Outcomes
1	The job not the individual- Job descriptions and job grading	Job or role description and a grade
2	The individual in the job- development of salary structure	A salary structure

**Table 2.1: Job Evaluation Process**

It is important for everyone in the organization to understand that it is the job that is evaluated and not the person on the job. Job Evaluation is thus, an impersonal process in stage 1, and takes no account of the quality, performance or effort that a person brings to the job. It is only in stage 2, where salary and remuneration structures are developed, that the employee's personal qualities and characteristics in terms of his/hers performance are taken into account.

### **2.3.3.3 Why job Evaluation Systems Fail**

Job evaluation systems are not guaranteed to succeed. Bussin (2002, p. 17) observed that in most cases that the system collapses, it is usually due to:

- 1) Weak initial implementation.
- 2) Weak top management.
- 3) Lack of employee participation and support.
- 4) The upgrading of job without a corresponding change in job content.
- 5) Inadequate administrative support.
- 6) Lack of communication.
- 7) Job descriptions not being reviewed and re-graded as the job changes.
- 8) Lack of transparency.

In conclusion, there is no such thing as a good or bad job evaluation system. They all do the same thing-rank job descriptions relative to one another.

#### **2.3.4 Performance Management System**

Performance managements system (PMS) is one of the most important and critical functions of human resources management. It is seen as a way of establishing mechanism for reviewing the performance of staff, and helping them to effectively contribute towards the achievement of organizational objectives (Price 2000, p. 181 & Martineau 2005, p. 7). According to Williams (2002), defining performance management is a difficult task. However, he states that generally there are three main perspectives on the topic, namely:

- performance management is a system devised to manage employees,
- it is a system to manage the organization, and
- it is a system to manage the integration of the above two

His definition emphasizes the fact that PMS is a system that ensures organizational performance through the alignment and integration of all the organizational aspects such as the vision, mission, values and culture of the organization. Whitford and Coetsee (2006, p. 65) add to the debate by defining PMS as a philosophy for managing the behavior of people within the context that facilitates and supports alignment of individual goals with organizational goals in order to achieve organizational and financial performance. By comparison, UNAM's philosophy emphasizes the agreement



of objectives, development needs and self-assessment. It is positive, forward looking and regards development as a joint responsibility of the individual and the supervisor/manager (Seibes, 2007, p. 165).

#### **2.3.4.1 Purpose of Performance management system**

Performance management encompasses all aspects of HRM that are designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of both the individual and the organization. Brown and Armstrong (1999) consider PMS to be anything that an organization does to improve its total performance. They postulate that PMS has three primary purposes. Firstly, it assists organizations in providing a basis for managing both organization and employee expectations; secondly, it aims to provide a framework, which facilitates the integration of corporate and individual objectives, beginning with the communication and integration of the organizations core values; and lastly, it seeks to provide developmental process for the organization by setting guidelines that assist in establishing future needs and outcomes. The main reason for having a performance management system in operation in an organization is that people perform best when they know what is expected of them and have helped in setting the expectations (Price, 2000). Price further states that an effective PMS requires an organization to do three things well, namely to:

- define the characteristics of good-as opposed to average or bad performance.
- remove obstacles so that employees can perform well, and
- encourage performance through reward, praise or promotion.

### 2.3.5 Performance Appraisal

Pattanayak (2002, p. 82) defines Performance Appraisal (PA) as all those procedures that are used to evaluate the personality, performance, and the potential of group members. According to Mathis and Jackson (2000, p. 384), PA is the process of evaluating how well employees perform their jobs as compared to a set of standards, and then communicate that information to those employees. Byars and Rue (200, p. 275) view PA as the degree of accomplishment of the tasks that make up an employee's job. In their opinion, PA reflects how well an employee is fulfilling the requirement of a job. Performance appraisal thus, seeks to measure terms of results. According to the authors employee's performance can be measured in three ways:

- **Trait-based:** information is about personality and creativity, and has little to do with the job
- **Behavior-based:** information focuses on specific behaviors. For example, how does an employee behave towards his/her co-workers and customers?
- **Result-based:** information is measurable and suitable.

#### 2.3.5.1 Why do we need performance appraisal?

Performance appraisal supporters believe that "if employees are to be promoted, developed and transferred, it is important to obtain reliable data to base those decisions upon. Appraisal helps to provide information on actual performance (Kempton, 1995,

p.156). Dessler (1997), thereby help to explain the four types of information that constitute performance appraisal, namely information for:

- decision making about promotion and salary increment;
- the supervisor and the supervised to review the subordinate's work-related behavior;
- correcting any deficiencies;
- reviewing the person's career plan in light of his/her exhibited potential.

However, it should be recognized that not all appraisals are effective not to mentioned beneficial. Kempton (1995, p. 156) suggests three benefits of an effective appraisal:

- organizational: which forms reinforcement of the manager-subordinate relationship;
- managerial: it avails opportunities to discuss work, areas of confusion and counseling; and
- employee related: provides employees opportunities to discuss with their manager their current roles and aspiration for the future.

At UNAM the above is happening in some departments. For instance at the Human Rights and Documentation centre staff members are meeting with the Director every second month to discuss work, areas of confusion and aspirations for the future.

### **2.3.6 Staff Development**

Elton (1987, p.55) defines Staff Development (SD) as a broad concept covering the systematic identification of the present and anticipated needs of an organization and its members. According to Webb (1996, p. 1), SD is expected to reflect institutional policies, programs, and procedures that facilitate and support staff so that they may fully serve their own and their institution's needs. It is essentially a field concerned with releasing the potential of all staff so that they can be effective, successful, creative, and at the same time be bold in taking initiatives in their work to the benefit of their colleagues, their institutions and their own career development (Partington and Stainton 2003, p. 1).

SD (formal and informal) at Higher Educational Institutions (HEI's) which include UNAM, takes place within the context of specific organizational framework because of particular and general challenges that institutions of higher learning face throughout the world. Therefore, it is only logical that all administrative staff members at HEI's constantly update their skills and competence within the context of the challenges faced by the particular institution they find themselves in (Harvey, 2005, p. 18).

Within the higher education context, the organizations' biggest asset is its human resources (UNESCO, 1998). Matheson (1987, p. 159) emphasizes that staff development plays an essential role in ensuring the up-to-datedness and relevance of staff expertise. He identifies three distinct dimensions in terms of staff development. Firstly, the context, which describes the routes along which development, can take place. This

includes career structure, promotion criteria and job specification. Secondly, it should outline the skills required for various jobs related to inter-personal skills, administrative skills, communication skills and intellectual skills. Lastly, it should describe the techniques and a wide range of means that are available to achieve the ends of a particular job.

#### **2.3.6.1 Staff Development Mechanism**

According to Price (2000, p.365), developmental needs can be generated from job analysis and performance assessment. The following mechanisms are usually used:

- Performance appraisal
- Feedback and performance coaching
- Training

These mechanisms are based on the following belief that:

- Human resources are the most important assets in the organization.
- Human resources can be developed to an unlimited extent.
- Employees feel committed to their work and the organization if the organization nurtures the feeling of belonging.

Finally, Staff development has two important goals, namely, development and evaluation. The goals aim to improve the performance of staff in their present positions

and to prepare staff for possible future opportunities (Cummins, 1990). Therefore, staff development provides learning and development based on the strategic approach that is not only concerned with the present but with the future as well.

### **2.3.7 Remuneration**

According to Miller et al. (2002), remuneration is a powerful driver of strategy, especially when the link is obvious. Hence, remuneration policy and strategy should be designed to underpin and drive organizational strategy and performance (Gerhart, 2000).

### **2.3.8 Organizational Commitment**

Organizational commitment is defined as an individual's attitude towards an organization. It combines a) a belief in and acceptance of organizational goals and values; b) willingness to exert considerable effort towards organizational goal accomplishment ; and c) a strong belief to maintain membership in the organization (Yeh, 2007). Kanter (1968, p. 533) views organizational commitment as the willingness of social beings to give energy and loyalty to an organization. Mowday et al. (1979, p.226) and Poter et al. (1974, p. 604) define organizational commitment as the relative strength of an individual's identification with, and involvement in the particular organization. Greenberg and Baron (2003, p. 160) and Silverthorne (2004, p. 594) have similar views with an addition that organizational commitment also entails employees' work attitudes toward the organizations in which they work.

### **2.3.8.1 Factors of organizational commitment**

Different factors shape organizational commitment, namely job-related factors, employment opportunities, and organizational structure.

#### **2.3.8.1.1 Job-related factors**

Organizational commitment is an important job-related outcome at the individual level. It also has its own impact on other job-related outcomes such as turnover, absenteeism, job effort and performance. However, absence of promotional opportunities can enhance or diminish organizational commitment (Randall, 1990).

#### **2.3.8.1.2 Employment opportunities**

Individuals who strongly think that they stand a good chance of finding another job become less committed to the organization while they ponder over such desirable alternatives. Those who do not see employment opportunities elsewhere tend to have a high level of commitment to the organization. (Vadenberghe, 1996).

#### **2.3.8.1.3 Organizational structure**

Additionally, organizational structure plays an important role in organizational commitment. Zeffane (1994, p. 991) indicates that the removal of bureaucratic barriers and the creation of more flexible structure are more likely to contribute to the enhancement of employee commitment both in terms of their loyalty and attachment to the organization.

## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

Since promotion is seen as a way to motivate staff, it is imperative to have a theoretical base that recognizes promotional needs.

### **2.4.1 Theories of motivation**

Gibson et al. (2000, p. 127) say motivation is a concept we use when we describe the forces acting on or within an individual to initiate and direct behavior. At the same time McCaffery (2005, p. 162) states that motivation is about giving people good reason to make them want to do things well in order to excel. In concurrence with the authors above, Bateman and Snell, (1999, p. 440) argue that motivation refers to the forces that energize, direct and sustain a person's efforts.

Theories of motivation fall into two categories: i) Content theories, such as Maslow's need hierarchy; Aderfer's Existence, Relatedness and Growth (ERG) theory; McGregor's theory x and theory y; Ouchi's theory z and Herzberg's two factor theory. They focus on the factors within the individual or person that energize, direct, sustain, and stop particular behavior. They attempt to determine the specific needs that motivate people to act in one way or another. ii) Process theories, which include those that concern Social learning theory, Operant conditioning, Expectancy, Equity, Goal setting and Job design. These describe, analyze energized, direct and sustain behavior. Only those factors that are primarily external to the person can stop them. Both categories have important implications for managers who, by the nature of their jobs, are involved with the motivational process (Gibson et al, 2000, p. 128).



Theoretically this study is anchored in the *Equity theory* and in *Herzberg's two factor theory* because they provide the most elementary and practical guidelines useful for the study.

#### **2.4.1.1 Equity theory**

The essence of equity theory is that employees compare their efforts and rewards with those of others in similar work situations. The theory thus is useful because it focuses on the perceptions people have about how they are treated as compared to others (Armstrong, 2001, p .309). In other words, equity theory involves feelings and perceptions, and it is always a comparative process (Armstrong, 2001, p. 309).

The importance of the theory is that various means could be used to restore equity after equity tension has been experience: 1) the employee will change inputs; 2) the employee will change outputs; 3) the employee will change his or her attitude; 4) and the employee will change the person he or she compares herself with (Cronje et al., 2004, p. 230). The implication here is that staff members will be competent if they are treated equally, which could make them improve their skills and knowledge output. In practical terms, what the theory says is that if employees judge that their inputs in the organization are rewarded fairly and justly in comparison to those of others doing the same job, they will be motivated to work even harder to earn those rewards. However, if they believe that their inputs are not rewarded fairly and justly in comparison to others, they will be less motivated and consequently exert less effort in their jobs.

#### **2.4.1.2 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory**

By contrast, Herzberg's two-model factor theory consisting of Hygiene and Motivators (Swanepoel et al., 2003, p. 328) strives to investigate what people need from their jobs, The motivational factor is seen to be effective in making the individual produce superior performance and effort while the hygiene factor describes the environment and serves primarily to prevent job dissatisfaction (Armstrong, 1998, p. 305).

Cronje et al. (2004, p. 227) proffer the hygiene factors that people consider essential to do any job. Some of the examples are organizational policy and administration, equipment, supervision, interpersonal relationships with colleagues and supervisors, salary, status, working conditions and work security.

The motivation factors focus on the content of the job, and include aspects such as achievement; recognition for what has been achieved; the job itself, progress and growth; responsibility and feedback. Their absence does not prove highly dissatisfying. However, when present, they build strong levels of motivation that results in good performance (Cronje et al., 2004, p. 227). This implies that when motivation factors are present they are likely to encourage employees to achieve higher productivity and in that vein accomplish personal and organizational goals. In Herzberg's views, motivators determine whether a person has low job satisfaction or high job satisfaction. Similarly, hygiene factors determine whether a person has low job satisfaction or high job satisfaction.

Theories of motivation are about giving people what they need in order to excel in their performance. Additionally, McCaffery (2005, p. 163-164) points out that if managers do not want to have any problems they should aim to:

- Nullify or at least minimize the effect of the hygiene factors, especially those aspects of work that give rise to gripes and dissatisfaction: everything from workload differences, bureaucratic systems to car parking facilities. They should get these things right which will result in them avoiding staff demotivation.
- Nurture and accentuate the key factors that create positive motivation within individuals, especially aspects of work that give staff a deep sense of satisfaction: everything from professional development, promotion and responsibility to simply acknowledge a job well done.

Promotion is a movement to a higher position with more responsibilities. Promotion at UNAM is either initiated by the staff member or comes as a result of continuous request from the supervisor to the Human Resource Department. The equity theory emphasizes that members of staff should be treated equally in order to be competent in their daily duties. Herzberg's theory looks at two factor models which primarily deal with aspects of ensuring that staff members are aware of the different human resource policies and that they are satisfied with their job descriptions.

UNAM is currently not having annual performance appraisals for administrative staff members, which could make it easier for supervisors to recommend their subordinates for promotions. The two theories are appropriate for the study because they both emphasize the importance of staff motivation which is a very essential part of promotion. In other words, Equity and Herzberg's theories recognize the importance of career development in an organization.

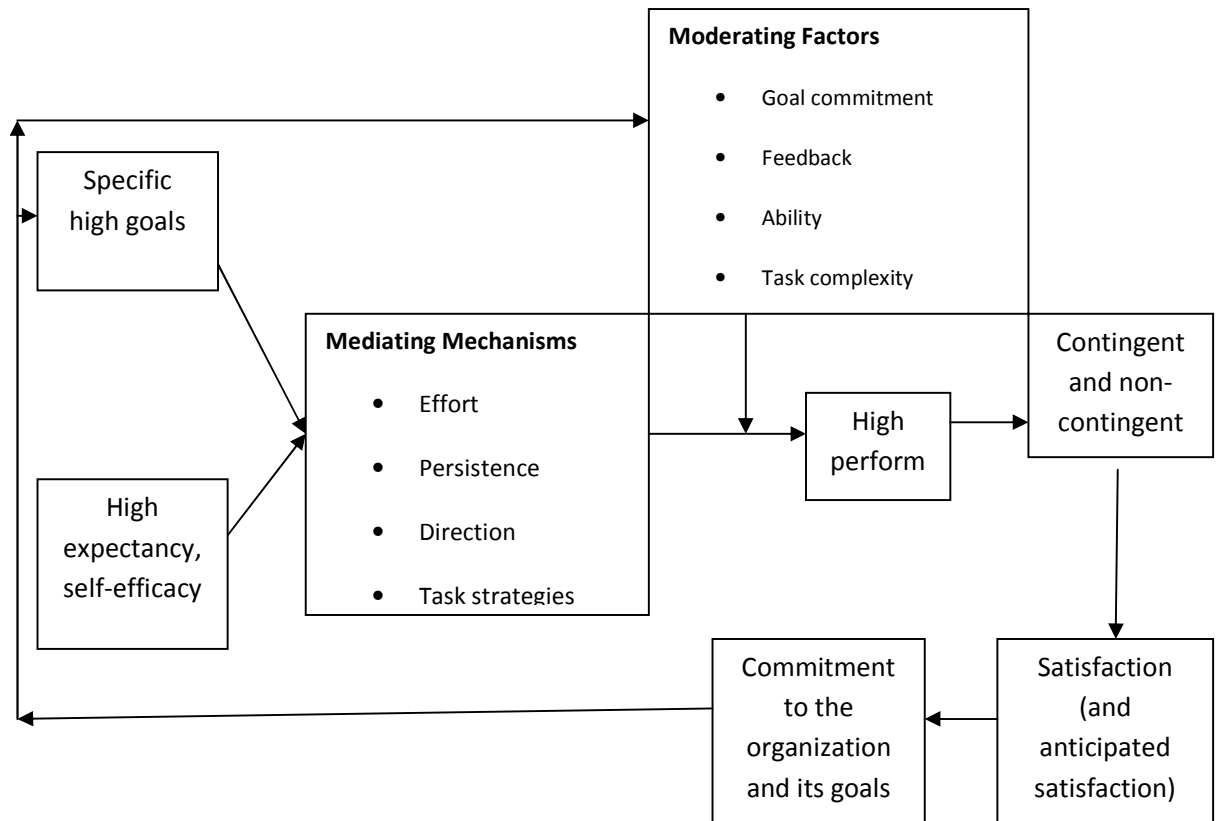
#### **2.4.2 Theories of Job Satisfaction**

According to Spector (1997, p. 2), job satisfaction is simply how people feel about the different aspects of their jobs. The following theories discuss the different aspects of job satisfaction VIE theory, Comparison theory, Opponent process theory and High performance cycle theory.

- *VIE theory*: the theory is derived from the expectancy model of Vroom by Porter and Lawler. The model acknowledges that people work for both extrinsic rewards, such as money and promotions, and intrinsic rewards such as pride in one's work and a sense of accomplishment;
- *Comparison theory*: is an extension of the Porter-Lawler model. The theory draws concepts from the equity theory of motivation by assuming that workers ultimately determine their job satisfaction by comparing their relevant job inputs and outputs to others;

- *Opponent process theory*: the theory presents an intriguing explanation of why job attitudes change over time, and why workers may become bored with jobs they once found satisfying. However, it does not explain why some workers are continually either very satisfied or dissatisfied with their jobs.
- *High performance cycle theory*: is an integration of work motivation and job attitudes theories (Dipboye, Smit and Howell, 2002, p. 116-117, 149-150, 152-153).

For the purpose of this study the *High Performance Cycle Theory* is considered suitable because the model uses the motivational framework and predicts that high goals and high success expectations lead to high performance. In turn, HP also considers the influence of personal and situational factors, such as ability and task complexity and produces rewards, satisfaction, and commitment to future goals as figure 2.1 on the next page indicate.



**Figure 2.1: Locke and Latham's (1990) High Performance Cycle Model**

## 2.5 Comparative Analysis with other Higher Institutions

The University of Houston and UNAM have different rules and regulations for promoting administrative staff. It is the policy of the University of Houston (2006) to promote staff members who have successfully completed 6 months of employment with the University following an evaluation of their performance. By comparison, UNAM probation period is 12 months before one can be considered for promotion. Whereas the University of North Florida (2008) argues that the criteria for promotion should include

meeting the minimum qualifications to be appointed to the rank or position in order to increase knowledge in the field of specialty.

Other views as expressed by University of Memphis (2005) indicate that the quality of any University is maintained primarily through the appraisal, by competent faculty and administrative officers. Therefore, each candidate as a faculty member may apply for promotion whenever she/he meets the established criteria. Whereas the University of Wesleyan (2005) argues that it is important for Administrative staff members to continue improving their existing skills and develop new competencies. The institution further states that expanding the skills of Administrative staff members will benefit both the staff members and the University in several ways.

The Indiana University (2004) adds to the debate by identifying the factors that might qualify a staff member for promotion. The factors include experience, past performance, job-related educational background, ability to perform the work, and attendance record over the last twelve months. However, the University of Stellenbosch (2009) states that the focus area of the institution must be taken into consideration when staff members are appointed or promoted.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

By looking at the above opinions, there are few similarities and differences in terms of how the views and implied practices relate to what UNAM is doing. The similarities are that there is a need to advance staff members for a better place of work in terms of

service delivery, efficiency, effectiveness and acquisition of new skills and knowledge. The difference in opinion is that some authors argue that annual performance appraisals are needed. These constitute the route to determine advancement needs, which is not the case at UNAM. The institution processes annual appraisals for Academic staff members only. In a summary, as the literature reveals, promotion is a complex and dynamic process that involves many factors. Some of the factors are inter and extrapersonal among the employees which influences both direct and indirect control over them.



## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter is devoted to a detailed description of the research design: data collection strategies, validity and reliability of the research, population, sampling size and data analysis methods used.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Research design is a plan or blueprint of how a researcher intends to conduct the planned research (Babbie and Mouton, 2001, p.74). It also guides the researcher in planning and implementing the study in a way that is most likely to achieve the intended goal. This study used a combination of qualitative and quantitative research designs because it investigated the why and how of decision making, not just what, when and where. Quantitative research design was used because the empirical inquiry focuses on individuals. These were the Administrative staff members who had personal opinion on the matter under investigation. A questionnaire was used to gather information.

Qualitative research design was used to get perspectives of the staff members on the matter under investigation. The design was also used by means of an interview to find out whether policies in place are beneficial to the entire administrative staff members. The differences in the characteristics of quantitative versus qualitative research are illustrated in Table 3.1.

<b>Quantitative</b>	<b>Qualitative</b>
Depends on the use of numbers and measurements	Does not depend on the use of numbers or measurements
Focuses on phenomena that can be explained by numbers and statistics	Focuses on phenomena that cannot be explained adequately with statistics
The researcher needs to play a more prominent role in the data gathering process	The researcher is unobtrusive or a participating observer
Has a structured data collection process	The data collection process is semi-structured.
Needs a set plan for the completion of research	Is very flexible and changes as the data and circumstances change
Has a post positivist tradition	Has a phenomenological perspective
Tries to establish casual relationship	Generates hunches

**Table 3.1 Differences between quantitative and qualitative research designs**  
 [Adapted from Babbie and Mouton (2001); and Struwig and Stead (2001).]

### 3.2.1 Primary versus Secondary data

Primary data is gathered from direct observation or data personally collected. Methods of collection are through interviews, personal or telephone calls and questionnaires. Data is normally collected for a specific purpose. The researcher collected data by means of interviews and questionnaires.

Secondary data is any information that already exists. It is information initiated elsewhere and was discovered by others (earlier research findings). Methods of gathering data are by re-analyzing the existing data and are collected to support own work. Journals and library books were used as sources of information.

### 3.3 Population and Sampling

The target population was 90 of the 350 administrative staff members at UNAM's main campus. It consisted of staff at lower level, middle level and management/supervisors. Staff in job grades 14-11 as well as grades 10-6.

<b>Administrative Staff</b>	<b>Job Grades</b>
Management/Supervisory	8-6
Middle Level	11-9

Lower Level	14-12
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### **3.3.1 Sampling Method**

The study used convenience sampling. The sample size has been chosen based on the following criterion: Administrative staff that have been promoted and those that have not been promoted. The sampling comprised members of staff from the Library, Finance department, Office of the Registrar, Vice-Chancellors Office, Center of External Studies, Language Center, HIV/AIDS Unit, and administrative units in the faculties. A key staff member in the Human Resource Directorate was part of the sampling, because the directorate is responsible for the documentation of information dealing with the grading of positions and personnel placement. Since supervisors have the authority to either recommend staff for promotions or not to recommend they were part of the sampling size. Such a wide representation made it possible to draw concrete and viable conclusions. At the same time it facilitated construction of informed recommendations.

## **3.4 Research Instruments**

### **3.4.1 Questionnaires**

In this research, a questionnaire defined by De Vos et al (2000, p. 152) as a number of questions directed to interviewees for response served as one of the research tools to gather information. The researcher made the time to deliver the questionnaires personally. The respondents were given a week to complete the questionnaires, and

thereafter to return each to the researcher either through internal mail or to call the researcher to pick it up.

Closed and open-ended questionnaires were served to the target groups. The questionnaires were distributed to both promoted and non-promoted Administrative staff members in the different departments, or sections/units. Closed questions are easier and quicker for respondents to answer because respondents understand the meaning of the question better. The questions are understood better because they are scaled, and they provide for multi-choice response. By contrast open-ended questions permit creativity, self-expression and richness of detail (Neuman, 2000, p. 261). Therefore, using both open and close-ended questionnaires provides a wide range of response.

### **3.4.2 Interviews**

Interviews are conversations with a purpose (Dexter in Merriam, 1998, p.71). To that end, the interview was conducted using semi-structured interview questions. The interview was conducted at the interviewee's preferred venue in an effort to induce relaxed response thereby and to obtain more authentic information.

The Human Resources director was interviewed on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2009. The interview lasted for 30 minutes. To ensure complete recording of the response, a tape recording device and hand written notes were used.

### **3.4.3 The Internet**

Internet search engines such as Google Scholar, EbscoHost and Sabinet were used to obtain on-line journals about promotion processes in higher institutions and to secure

concepts linked to the process. Concepts, such as occupational restructuring, job ladder, job posting, performance management systems, discrimination allegations and organizational commitment were obtained through the internet.

### **3.5 Validity and Reliability of the research instruments**

#### **3.5.1 Validity**

In line with Sowell (2001, p.5), validity of research refers to the degree to which outcomes are accurate and grounded in data. Such data should be adequate and valid, and so should be the instruments used to collect it. Therefore, in order to check the validity of instruments used, the interview questions were submitted to the division's superiors for corrections. Supervisors are expected to be custodians of the institutions operational inputs which constituted the basis of the questions.

#### **3.5.2 Reliability**

According to Brink (1996, p. 171), reliability refers to the degree to which instruments can be depended upon to yield consistent results if used repeatedly over time on the same person, or if used by two different investigators. The following criteria were incorporated into the questionnaire in an attempt to enhance reliability.

- Questions were formatted as simple as possible to reduce ambiguities.
- Ample time was allocated to complete questionnaire.
- The questionnaires were administered to all respondents in a consistent manner.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. Quantitative data analysis is mainly applied by statistical methods. Hence, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to analyze the data for this exercise. The software was selected because it has more features. Frequency tables were produced for the use when calculating and figures. Calculation of the correlation from SPSS program software was done with the assistance of a statistician. Analysis of data was descriptive in nature and the results were organized and presented in tables and figure forms using the SPSS software. The results were quantified in percentage forms and in proportionate statistics.

### **3.7 Ethical Consideration**

#### **3.7.1 Informed Consent**

The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents in the sense that it was merely for the researchers Masters Degree course requirement. Consent form did highlight that respondents participation would be voluntary, and that no one would be forced to partake should she/he chose not to.

#### **3.7.2 Confidentiality and Privacy**

The researcher drafted an informant consent letter to the respondents in order to ensure their right to anonymity and confidentiality pertaining to information on and about staff

from prospective interviewee. In addition, the researcher ensured that participant's names would not be associated with the findings of the study.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter provided an overview of the research methodology, study population and sampling used in the study. Other issues discussed included instruments used for data collection. Ethical issues that were adhered to by the researcher were also stated.



## **CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Data Analysis is an interpretation of the collected data for the purpose of drawing conclusions reflecting the interests and ideas that prompted the enquiry (Babbie & Mouton 2001, p. 10). Data analysis also refers to any research and it includes interpretation and summarizing of the mass information or data collected. The end result is expected to be recommendations: what to do next give what has been discovered.

This chapter presents the findings from the questionnaires and the interview, and analysis of those findings. The results are presented as follows: Section A: Demographic details; Section B: Training and Development; Section C: Promotion Policy; Section D: Supervisors; and Section E: Interview with Human Resources Director. Finally, responses from the questionnaire are fully displayed as descriptive statistics.

### **4.2 Section A: Demographic Details**

A total of 36 respondents completed their questionnaires.

#### **4.2.1 Faculty/Department/Centre**

**Table 4.1: Faculty/Department/Centre**

	Respondents	Percentage %
Library	8	23.5
Office of the Registrar	5	14.7

C.E.S	3	8.8
Finance/Office of the Bursar	9	26.5
Student Records	1	2.9
Law faculty	1	2.9
Examination	1	2.9
Vice Chancellor's Office	2	5.9
Pro vice Chancellor	1	2.9
HIV/AIDS Unit	1	2.9
Language Centre	2	5.9
Total	34	100.0

The table indicates that the majority of respondents were from the Office of the Bursar: 26.5%, followed by those from the library and the Registrar's Office with 23.5% and 14.7% respectively. The Law Faculty: 2.9%, Examination: 2.9%, Student Records: 2.9%, Vice-Chancellor: 5.9% and PVC's office: 2.9%, HIV/AIDS Unit: 2.9%, Language Centre: 5.9% and the Centre for External Studies: 8.8%. The low representation could be attributed to the fact that most of those targeted were too busy to complete the questionnaire.

#### 4.2.2 Highest Qualification

**Table 4.2: Highest qualification**

	Respondents	Percentage
		%
Less than Grade 12	1	2.9
Grade 12/ Matric	5	14.3
Post-school certificate or diploma	10	28.6
Bachelors degree	13	37.1
Honors degree	4	11.4
Masters degree	2	5.7
Total	35	100.0

From the above information it is evident that the majority (37.1%) of administrative staff members have Bachelor's degrees, followed by 28.6% having post-school certificates and diplomas. Those with Masters Degrees: 5.7%, honors degrees: 11.4%, grade 12: 14.3%, and less than grade 12: 2.9% are in the minority. It is clear that the majority of staff do have good tertiary qualifications that need equitable recognition by UNAM. That means they compare themselves to those having the same qualifications and have been promoted.

### 4.2.3 Current Job Title

**Table 4.3: Current job title**

	Respondents	Percentage %
Library Assistant	6	16.7
Administration Officer	5	13.9
Secretary	4	11.1
Bursar	1	2.8
Distance Education Officer	2	5.6
Accountant(Creditors)	2	5.6
Creditors Clerk	1	2.8
Student Records Officer	3	8.3
Bursary Officer	1	2.8
Record Officer	1	2.8
Assistant Bursar	2	5.6
Payroll Officer	1	2.8
Senior Library Assistant	3	8.3
Exams Information Officer	1	2.8
Personal Assistant to the VC	1	2.8
Debtors Assistant	1	2.8
Executive Secretary	1	2.8
Total	36	100.0

Table 4.3, indicates that 16.7% of the respondents are library assistants, followed by administrative officers, secretaries and student record officers with 13.9%, 11.1% and 8.3% respectively. Statistically, 9 of the respondents were from the office of the bursar, 2 from the Centre of External Studies, 1 from the examination department and 2 from the office of the Vice Chancellor.

#### 4.2.4 How did you get the job?

**Table 4.4: How did you get your job**

	Respondents	Percentage %
Promotion	5	14.7
Went through the normal selection process.	27	79.4
Internal transfer	2	5.9
Total	34	100.0

As indicated under table 4.4, 79.4% of staff got their jobs through the normal selection process which entails applying for vacant positions, 14.7% were promoted and 5.9% were internally transferred after applying for the vacant positions. This data indicates that the majority of staff had to apply for position in order to acquire promotional position.

#### 4.2.5 How long have you served in this position?

**Table 4.5: How long have you served in this position?**

	Respondents	Percentage %
0-5 years	22	62.9
5-10 years	7	20.0
11-15 years	4	11.4
16-20 years	2	5.7
Total	35	100.0

The table indicates that the majority at 62.9% of staff who completed the questionnaire had been with the University for 5 years. Those who have served the institution for between 11 and 15 years constitute 11.4%; and 5.7% and 20% are made up of those who have been UNAM employees for between 5 and 10 years, and between 16 and 20 years respectively. This indicates that the staff is committed to the University. It also confirms that the respondents were relatively mature in terms of experience.

#### 4.2.6 What do you find rewarding about your job?

Most of the respondents indicated learning new things everyday; meeting new people on a daily basis, and salary benefits as the most rewarding about their jobs. These entail

exposure to knowledge, management and leadership challenges, working conditions, and serving and helping needy students to advance to higher levels of education.

The response also indicated the following as other rewards:

- “Having minutes approved without any corrections”.
- “Management challenges”.
- “Multi tasking makes the job stimulating”.
- “The acknowledgment of a job well done”.
- “Consistency and Accountability”.
- “Satisfying customers’ needs”.
- “Travelling and International exposure”.
- “Meeting deadlines”.
- “Staff Development”.
- “Promotion”.

From the above it is clear that staff members are enjoying their work despite the lack of promotion opportunities.

### 4.3 Section B: Training and Development

#### 4.3.1 Do you think Human Resources department knows your training needs?

**Table 4.6: Do you think Human Resources department knows your training needs**

	Respondents	Percentage %
Yes	11	30.6
No	25	69.4
Total	36	100.0

In response to the question, the majority (69.4%) indicated that Human Resources department is not aware of their training needs, while 30.6% indicated that Human Resources department is aware. The response could indicate that staff members are waiting for the Human Resources department to ask them about their training needs in order to upgrade their skills and knowledge.

#### 4.3.2 If yes, how was it communicated to Human Resources?

**Table 4.7: How was it communicated to the Human Resources Office**

	Respondents	Percentage %



Through discussion by appointment	1	8.3
Through staff review and development meeting	5	41.7
Through other channels	6	50.0
Total	12	100.0

The respondents who said yes to the previous question, 41.7% indicated that their training needs were communicated through staff review and development meetings. The others, 33.3% benefited from different channels of information. This may be an indication that various departments are putting in an effort to second their staff for training.

#### **4.3.3 Opinion on the ongoing training and development.**

**Table4.8: Opinion on the ongoing training and development of UNAM staff**

	Percentage	
	Respondents	%
Very important	32	88.9
Important	2	5.6
Somewhat important	2	5.6
Total	36	100.0

Table 4.8 clearly indicates that 88.9% of respondents see training and development as very important, while the 11.1% doesn't seem to value the importance of training

#### 4.3.4 Respondents' views: An analysis.

Most (46.9%) respondents view training as means of upgrading their skills in order to become more competent; 21.9% sees ongoing training as important because of the exposure to the ever changing technology; 18.8% sees UNAM as an institution of higher learning therefore there it needs qualified staff in order to keep up with technological globalization; and 6.2% feels that training makes one stand a good chance to be promoted. This indicates the eagerness of staff members to upgrade themselves in order to make the University the best institution and in the process benefit personally.

#### 4.3.5 Training received since joining UNAM.

**Table 4.9: Have you received any training since you joined UNAM?**

	Respondents	Percentage %
Yes	26	72.2
No	10	27.8
Total	36	100.0

Table 4.9 indicates that 72.2% received training from the University, while 27.8% of the respondents had not received any training. This indicates that the University is trying very hard to ensure that staff should upgrade their skills either through formal or informal training. It could also be an indication that those who have not received training are either on probation or had training before joining the University.

#### 4.4 Section C: Promotion Policy

##### 4.4.1 The four career paths.

**Table 4.10: Are you aware of the four career paths used for admin staff at UNAM?**

	Respondents	Percentage %
Yes	5	13.9
No	31	86.1
Total	36	100.0

The majority, 86.1% of the respondents indicated that they are not aware of the four career paths. Only 13.9% know about it. One could argue that the staff feels left out by not being officially informed about the policy. However, the ignorance about the policy could be a result of not being proactive on the part of the staff. One needs to actively enquire about the policy issues upon joining an institution such as UNAM.

#### **4.4.2 Sources of information on promotion policy.**

Only five respondents completed this question. Of these 60.0% mentioned that they got the information from the Human Resources Department, and 40.0% said they got it from the staff policies and regulations booklet. The response poses two possible reasons for the situations. Firstly, that staff members are not very keen to know and to understand the policy under which they work. Secondly, they may be very happy about the situation.

#### **4.4.3 Views on the four career paths**

The four career paths were listed before the question. The analysis indicates that 22.6% of staff feels that being promoted in the current position is seldom even after upgrading your qualifications. However, 3.2% feels that it is great to be promoted in the current position because you have been the incumbent for several years and know the work well. At the same time 16.1% of the staff members do not know what ad hominum promotions are. It was a clear indication that some of the staff members heard for the first time through this study about the procedures for the first path, which entails applying for a vacant position. Hence, they need clarity on the other three career paths even though they do not happen often. The data also indicates that 9.7% of the respondents feel that promotion through applying for a vacant position is quite fair because everyone who applies gets the opportunity to be interviewed. Some disturbing views include those expressed by 13.0% of the respondents that there are no clear guidelines on the application of the policy. The other is that 6.5% are convinced that

promotion is based on favoritism, colour and ethnic group. The group 6.5% urged that promotion should be linked to performance.

#### **4.4.4 Satisfied with implementation of the policy.**

There seems to be a lot of different views with regard to the promotion policy. 34.8% of the staff members indicated that in order to be promoted you need to be linked or associated with certain people; 20.7% indicated satisfaction with the way the policy is being implemented; 13.8% expressed ignorance about the content of the policy and therefore could not comment on the implementation process; 6.9% did indicate that low staff turnover is challenging productive staff to make career advances. The 3.4% gave the following for not being satisfied with the implementation stage.

- Absence of Performance Management System hampers promotion of high flyers.
- Interview panel only based their recommendations on oral communication and not on the qualifications, skills and knowledge of the candidate.
- Recommendations come from people outside the department.
- Policy implementers are being inconsistent which results in frustrated staff.

In spite of there being dissatisfaction among some of the staff, at least there are those who feel that the human resources department is doing a good job.

#### 4.4.5 Aspects of policy needing improvement.

The majority (65.2%) respondents did indicate that Performance Appraisals as well as Performance Management Systems should be done regularly in order to identify the competency of staff members. However, the minority (34.6%) did indicate that job evaluation should be done in order to identify the staff that is over worked. This indicates a need for the PMS system to be put in place in order to identify the staff that needs to be promoted.

#### 4.4.6 Communication and Information flow regarding policy.

**Table 4.11: What's your view on the communication and information flow?**

	Respondents	Percentage %
The communication channels is non -existing	8	30.8
Communication flow is very poor/not a effective	14	53.8
It's good	4	15.4
Total	26	100.0

Table 4.11 indicates that 53.8% of the staff members feel that the communication and information flow regarding the policy is very poor; 30.8% are of the opinion that the communication and information flow is non-existent; and 15.4% feels that it is good.

What could be concluded from the response is that information sharing on the particular policy is very poor, but not at UNAM as an institution.

#### 4.5 Section D: Supervisors Only

##### 4.5.1 Involvement in the development of staff.

**Table 4.12: As a supervisor do you think you should be involved in the development of your staff?**

	Respondents	Percentage %
Yes , because the performance of staff will be negatively affected if a member stays in one position for years without being motivated to develop him/herself	3	33.3
Yes, because we work closely with the staff and know better what they need in terms of training	5	55.6
They are already involved	1	11.1
Total	9	100.0

The response indicates that supervisors should be involved in the development of their staff. As a result 55.6% indicated that they work closely with their subordinates and they are in a better position to identify their training needs. Of these, 33.3% also agreed that they should be involved because they would know subordinate's capabilities. In all, 11.1% expressed that they are involved with the development of their subordinates. This is an indication that supervisors want their staff members to progress personally and professionally.

#### **4.5.2 When last was performance of staff evaluated?**

The analysis indicates that 77.8% of supervisors did not know the last time when it was done; 11.1% said it was two years ago; and another 11.1% said it was last year, but only for one staff member. This indicates the need for the PMS to ensure administrative staff performances are appraised on an annual basis.

#### **4.5.3 Recommendation for promotion.**

The analysis indicates that 33.3% of supervisors rarely recommend their staff for promotion; 16.7% indicated that they only recommends when a position becomes vacant; 16.7% only recommend one staff member; and lastly 16.7% were new in the supervisory position and have not yet had an opportunity to do so.

#### **4.6 Summary of findings for questionnaire**

- The majority of respondents got their positions through the normal procedure of applying for a vacant position. At least there are some of the respondents who were promoted into their current positions.
- The majority of respondents are in agreement that ongoing training and development of staff is very important. The reason could be that most of them received training from UNAM.



- Some of the respondents seem not to have an idea about the existence of the policy. The ones who are aware only know about the first path, which is applying for a vacant position.
- Some of the respondents agree that the policy is not applied procedurally. The reason could be lack of knowledge regarding the procedures to be promoted.
- The majority of respondents indicated that the PMS system needs to be implemented, and that staff development needs to integrate the four paths.
- The majority of the respondents indicated that there is no communication or information flow about the policy. This could be the reason why there are so many different views or emotions about the policy.
- Some supervisors indicated that they rarely evaluate the performance of their staff and recommend them for promotions.

#### **4.7 Section E: Interview with Human Resources Director**

##### **4.7.1 Question 1: What employment factors (conditions) determine UNAM's promotion policy?**

The Director mentioned the four routes as the factors on which the promotion policy is based, namely vacant post at a higher level; promoted in the current position; promoted to a higher position within the department; and Ad Hominum promotions.

**4.7.2 Question 2: Would you say the employment conditions and managerial principles underpinning the staff promotion policy are collaboratively achieving the policy's objective?**

In the opinion of the Director, the conditions and principles are achieving the policy's objective. However, the norm is to firstly advertise positions internally, especially the ones from grade 9 to downwards. The reason is to allow junior staff to be upgraded.

Those from grade 8 upwards are advertised both internally and externally. The reason is because they are managerial or supervisory positions. That said, preference is given to internal staff. An advert is only placed once the supervisor has done an assessment of the position and found no qualified person in the department. The promotion in a current position is done normally when a position has changed in complexity and responsibilities. It can also be done in case of a person obtaining a formal qualification.

In such a case the supervisor might require the position to be evaluated. Ad Hominum is only done in exceptional cases. It is seen as way of retaining good skills at the University and is also personal to the incumbent because when he/she leaves the position the new incumbent will be appointed on the old job grade. The Director has confirmed that since his appointment no Ad Hominum promotion has been done. Promotion is based on PMS. The University has not implemented the system yet because of its subjective nature and the fact that it measures both poor and good performance.

Currently the University is looking into acquiring software to simplify staff performance activities, which will then make it easier for supervisors and staff to keep track of their work output.

**4.7.3 Question 3: What would be your comments on the use of the procedures, and would you say they are followed?**

The Director emphasized that the procedures are being followed. Vacancies are being advertised internally before advertising them outside. Promotion to higher positions within departments does happen. For example there were few promotions in the following departments: estates services, bursar office, and dean of students, library and human resources. In these cases supervisors provided full motivations to have the positions filled. The first two paths namely: applying for a vacant position in the same department and promoting staff member in the current position are easy because they allow for a vacancy. The last two namely: promotion to a higher position within the same department and Ad Hominum could be easier if PMS can take place.

**4.7.4 Question 4: How would you compare the four career paths for admin staff to those of the academic staff?**

The Director indicated that promotion of academic staff is easier compare to administrative staff. There is a clear indication for academic promotion, which is based on the research, they have done, publication and teaching assessment by students as well as general work, which the person does within the department. There is monetary award for academic promotion meaning there is no need for a vacancy. Academic staff can be promoted even if a specific position is not on the establishment of UNAM, for example:

lecturer can be promoted to senior lecturer. In the case of administrative staff you always need a vacancy.

**4.7.5 Question 5: What are the reasons for not having annual performance appraisals for admin staff?**

The Director indicated that currently the appraisals are a paper-based system, meaning there is a lot of paper work that needs to be done because of its subjective nature. Staff associates PMS with financial reward, which does not happen in some cases. Staff fear to be unfairly judged which could be a reason for not having appraisals on an annual basis. With paper work, people don't stick to deadlines. In future if the University introduces the software mentioned earlier maybe appraisals could be done on an annual basis.

**4.7.6 Question 6: Would you say there is room to improve the promotion policy, and if so, what specific aspect should be revisited?**

In his opinion, there is room to improve the policy. He stressed that promotion needs to be linked to appraisal and PMS. Policy needs to overcome the red tape. To have PMS as a guide to provide a staff member with an extra salary notch because currently the University is having automatic notch for the entire staff whether they perform well or poorly. Once PMS is in place it can assist the University in rewarding outstanding performance. That can only happen in consultation with the unions since they are in full agreement of the automatic notch.

#### **4.8 Summary of Findings for interview**

- The explanation given by the Director shows that the procedures are being followed.
- He also indicated that preference is always given to internal staff members as far as filling vacancies is concerned.
- He further indicated that the academic promotions are much easier to do as compare to the administrative ones. This is the reason why they (academics) are appraised annually
- Furthermore, it is indicated that not having PMS is the reason admin staff is not having appraisals on an annual basis.

#### **4.9 Conclusion**

The findings indicate that the majority of respondents are not aware of the four career paths. However, ignorance and lack of motivation could be the reason for staff members not to be aware of the paths. Supervisors could also be blamed for not sharing information concerning promotional opportunities with their subordinates.

Staff members who are upgrading their skills, either through formal or informal qualification at times do not feel motivated enough to finish their education. The reason is because they know that after completion, there is no guarantee of promotion or an extra salary notch. UNAM as an institution of higher learning should start considering

rewarding staff members for obtaining additional qualifications, or they will end up losing skilled manpower.

The implementation of the PMS is highly recommended in order to reduce unhappiness among staff members. Some feel that only staff from certain groups is benefitting from promotional opportunities. With the introduction of the PMS, promotion will be based on performance output.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings and conclusions, and makes recommendations.

### **5.2 Conclusions**

#### **5.2.1 On the procedures for promotion.**

The evidence gathered from the interview indicates that the procedures are being followed. The interviewee, Mr Izaks explained what each path has a clear procedures. These are used in promoting staff members in different departments at UNAM. He further stated that the first two paths are the ones mostly used because they require vacancies to open up, which happens often at the institution. It makes it easier because the supervisor can identify a person that he/she feels qualifies for the vacant position and writes a recommendation to the Human Resource Department for that specific person to be promoted.

#### **5.2.2 On the appropriateness of the policy on promotion.**

The evidence gathered from questionnaires and interviews indicate that the policy needs to be revisited. One of the paths indicates that promotion can only be possible through performance appraisal, which is not practical because the PMS is not in place.

The evidence gathered also indicates that there is a need for training regarding the policy because the policy is not explaining the procedures in detail. It simply mentions what is

supposed to be done, and not how it can be done. There is also an indication that the policy only applies to some departments within the University especially when it comes to being promoted within the same job. Most respondents blamed the non-procedural process by the policy implementers who are not sharing the information with regard to the policy. All respondents identified lack of effective communication and information sharing as a major reason as to why the policy is not being implemented effectively.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

While appreciating the efforts made by the Human Resources Department and the University Management for the staff members, the following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study.

- Promotion should be done within the framework of a broader set of institutional policies such as staff recruitment, staff tenure, appraisals and incentives for better service delivery.
- Staff development office should organize training for departments to explain the four career paths and what the procedures for each path are. Staff should always be reminded that promotion is a cost for the University and taking into account that the University is not a moneymaking institution.
- The PMS system should be implemented in order to identify the good performers who might stand a chance to be promoted.



- Employees want to feel informed and knowledgeable about their organizations. Therefore, the Human Resources Department should ensure that each and every administrative staff member has a copy of the policy. By doing these it will ensure that the good and positive image of the University is kept outside.
- The policy implementers should consider rewarding staff members who are obtaining qualifications. It could be by means of awarding a salary notch or promotion. It should be kept in mind that UNAM is an institution of higher learning whereby staff will continue upgrading their qualifications.

These initiatives have the potential to improve UNAM's image and attractiveness, particularly when it comes to recruiting qualified and experienced staff.

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**ANNEXURE 1: QUESTIONNAIRE**

Master of Public Administration  
of the  
University of Namibia

My name is Ivone Tjilale, as part of the requirements for a Master's Degree in Public Administration, I am conducting a study on "*An investigation into the four career paths used for the promotion of administrative staff at the University of Namibia.*"

Thus, you are kindly requested to spare some of your precious time to answer, as carefully and fully as possible, all the questions in this survey. Please rest assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of your completed questionnaire.

Thank you for your time and input

**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS**

1. Faculty/Department/Centre

.....

2. What is your highest qualification

Less than Grade 12	1
Grade 12/Matric	3.
Post-school certificate or diploma	4.
Bachelors degree	5.
Honors' degree	6.
Masters degree	7.
Doctorate	8.

3. Your current job title?

.....

4. How did you get your job?

.....

5. How long have you served in this position?

1. 0-5 years
2. 5-10 years
3. 11-15 years
4. 16-20 years
5. more than 20 years

6. What do you find rewarding about your job?

.....

**SECTION B: TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

7. Do you think Human Resources know your training needs?

Yes

No

If yes, how was it communicated to the Human Resources Office?

Through discussion by appointment	
Through performance appraisal exercise	
Through staff review and development meeting	
Through other channels	

8. What is your opinion on the ongoing training and development of staff at UNAM?

Very important	
Important	
Somewhat important	
Not important	

Explain:

.....

.....

.....

9. Have you received any training since you joined UNAM?

Yes

No

**SECTION C: PROMOTION POLICY**

10. Are you aware of the four career paths used for promoting admin staff at UNAM?

Yes

No

11. If yes, how did you get the information?

.....

12. The paths are: applying for a vacant position; being promoted in current position; promoted to a higher position within the department; and ad hominum promotions.

a) What is your view on the use of each one of them? Kindly explain your answer.

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

b) Are you satisfied with the way the policy is being implemented? Kindly explain your answer.

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

c) What aspects, if any, of the policy do you think need improvement and why?

.....  
.....

.....

d) What is your view on the communication and information flow with regard to promotion opportunities at the university?

.....

.....

.....

**SECTION D: SUPERVISORS ONLY**

13. As a supervisor do you think you should be involved in the development of your staff so that they can perform better? Kindly explain your answer.

.....

.....

.....

14. When was the performance of your staff members last evaluated?

.....

.....

15. How often do you recommend your staff for promotion?

.....

.....

**ANNEXURE 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR HUMAN RESOURCES  
DIRECTOR**

1. On what employment factors (conditions) is UNAM's promotion policy based?
2. Would you say the employment conditions and managerial principles underpinning the staff promotion policy are collaboratively achieving the policy's objective?
3. What would be your comments on the use of the procedures, and would you say they are followed?
4. How would you compare the four career paths for admin staff to those of the academic staff?
5. What are the reasons for not having annual performance appraisals for admin staff?
6. Would you say there is room to improve the promotion policy, and if so, what specific aspect should be revisited?





