Reorganization as a Civil Service Reform in the Philippines: Some Insights and Lessons

Perla E. Legaspi

Introduction

The governance paradigm has stressed the need for higher productivity and efficiency of public organizations. This has led to the call for introducing changes and reforms in the civil service. Such changes and reforms also call for the need to attune human resource development to the needs of the times. In response to this call, a number of civil service reforms and changes have been initiated by the central government. These have focused on reorganization or restructuring efforts to make the public organizations more efficient in their operations; on reengineering to make the systems and processes more flexible and customer-friendly; and on HRD strategies to enable the government employees to be attuned to the introduced changes and thus, become more productive and efficient civil servants.

The implementation of civil service reforms and changes is replete with problems and issues most especially in regard to the changes in the quantity and quality of human resources, staffing patterns, and impact on the growth and development of the employees. The area on human resources therefore raises serious questions regarding the effects and impact of reorganization as a civil service reform on the management and development of human resources in the public sector. To what extent have the changes and reforms affected the work environment? How do the changes and reforms influence and affect the motivation and performance of the employees? To what extent have the reorganized public agencies provided for the growth and development of the employees?

This paper attempts to address the above questions. It showcases the National Statistics Office, a public agency in the Philippines that is providing frontline services and has undergone restructuring or reorganization reforms. The discussion of the agency’s experience focuses on the effects or impact of the changes and reforms on the employees’ work performance, morale and motivation, and growth and development. The problems and constraints affecting the performance of the employees in relation to the introduced reforms and changes are also discussed. The last section of the paper presents some lessons drawn from the implementation of the reorganization as a civil service reform.

Conceptual Framework

The paradigm shift from the traditional model of public administration to new public management model has brought into sharp focus a critique of the bureaucracy. The “old” model of bureaucracy emphasizes a “rule-bound” culture (Brown, 2004); hierarchical and centralized structure; inflexible and unresponsive structures to the

---

1 Professor, National College of Public Administration and Governance, University of the Philippines
interests and concerns of the citizens; and characterized by a process of “top down” implementation which often results in inappropriate policies (Minogue, 2001). These characteristics point out the inefficiency, ineffectiveness and unresponsiveness of the bureaucratic model, which necessitate a strong call for reforms in the public sector.

The emergence of the new public management model appears to respond to such call. The new model has the following characteristics that would seem to transform the government structure to a more responsive and efficient tool for service delivery and decision making processes (Minogue, 2001: 21):

- A separation of strategic policy from operational policy
- A concern with results rather than process and procedure
- An orientation to the needs of citizens rather than the interests of the organization or bureaucrats
- A withdrawal from direct service provision in favor of a steering or enabling role
- A changed, entrepreneurial management culture

The above characteristics stress the entrepreneurial type of government as espoused by Osborne and Gaebler (1992). The model focuses more on results than the process or procedure; on the steering or enabling role of the government; and on the reorientation of the bureaucracy to the needs and concerns of the clients or customers. Apparently, with the criticisms of the bureaucracy and its flawed system, the government would have to undergo a process of transformation whereby it would be able to adopt the entrepreneurial model of public management. To undergo such process, there are certain conditionalities that have to be met. These partake of the following: 1) reorganize the civil services to reduce the size of the bureaucracy; 2) restructure and reduce the public sector through privatization; 3) introduce competition into the residual public services through contracting out of public services to the private sector; and 4) enhance efficiency and obtain “value for money” via performance management and auditing (Minogue, 2001). These conditionalities constitute the reforms needed in the public sector as emphasized in the new model of public management.

HRM in the Public Sector

Evolving from the model of traditional personnel administration which is primarily concerned with the internal processes such as recruitment, discipline, compensation, and the application of the rules and regulations of the civil service system, the new human resource management in the public sector takes a broader and more people-focused definition of managing human resources in the organization. While it covers the domains of acquisition, selection, motivation and rewards, maintenance and development, public human resource management goes beyond all these, taking cognizance of the ever changing and dynamic external environment. Thus, it aims at marshalling the capabilities and potentials of the personnel in developing the capacity of the organization to adapt to the demands of the changing environment.
Following the principles of the new public management model, the public sector HRM has attempted to create more flexible structures and processes; restructure highly centralized public agencies via flatter management structures; grant more responsibilities and accountabilities to line managers and supervisors in the management of personnel; and implement programs of decentralization and devolution. At the job level, the new system has introduced broader and multi-skilled jobs and has stressed performance and output measures (Brown, 2004).

In terms of the management of employees, the new HRM model has highlighted the capacity of the human resources in attaining performance outcomes of the public agency in accordance with the strategic direction of the organization. In other words, the new system has put emphasis on the acquisition and retaining of employees who can achieve the desired outputs and outcomes. It has relied on performance management for “workforce flexibility and productivity” (Brown, ibid, p.307).

However, there are criticisms against the new system. It has been said that opportunities for career development have been lessened with the adoption of the principle of performance management for the flexibility of the employees in the work arena and productivity. The major changes in the structures of the public organizations have considerably reduced the number of staff. The restructuring has also resulted in lesser benefits and wages. The contracting out of public services to the private sector has arguably led to poorer quality of services and has undermined the role of the public servants.

Apparently, the above criticisms have led to further enquiries regarding the implications for and/ or effects of the new model on the development of human resources in the public sector. The following section will try to delve deeper on the public sector or civil service reforms and their implications for human resources development.

**HRD and Civil Service Reforms**

For the purpose of this paper, public sector reform is equated with civil service reform. Public sector reform can be defined as “deliberate changes to the structure and processes of public sector organizations with the objective of getting them run better” (Pollitt and Bouckaert in HRM in the Public Sector, 2002). There are certain organizational improvement strategies that have been used over the years to introduce changes in the structure and processes. They are considered to be civil service reforms because they affect the operations and performance of the bureaucracy as a whole. Some of these take the form of reengineering, information technology, reorganization, empowerment, and performance measurement. Assessments made on the application of these strategies have highlighted the implications for the development of human resources in the public agency.

The concept of HRD goes beyond education and training. It implies the development of capabilities for work of all employees to enable them to become more efficient and productive members of the organization. With this definition, the various
public sector or civil service reform strategies would have effects on the development of each individual member of the organization. For instance, the downsizing process would reduce the number of the personnel and would create tensions between social expectations and job security, the provision of “safety nets” for the outplaced employees, and budgetary restrictions that may limit the range of services or the size of “safety nets” that the government may decide to offer to the displaced employees (ILO, Geneva, 1998). Outsourcing could also have negative effects on managing knowledge and life-long learning. Knowledge is said to be in the heads of people and so, if employees are pushed out, then there would be knowledge problems in the organization. Information technology would not solve the problem, as employees would still need knowledge to handle it. Further, any reform that may be introduced would have implications on behavioral change. This kind of change would take some time to effect some positive or negative changes in the performance of employees.

Reorganization as a Civil Service Reform

One of the civil service reform strategies that has been adopted and applied by the Philippine government is reorganization. The assumption is that government or the bureaucracy has become very inefficient and ineffective because of its size. Others would contend that it has become bloated with so many personnel who cost much and did little. This has led to the effort of reducing the size of the bureaucracy by abolishing structures or units that are seen to be non-functional in terms of the vision and mission of the organization; by merging offices or units to avoid duplication of functions and thus reduce cost; or by creating units or offices that would cater particularly to specific concerns and needs of the clients.

Restructuring the bureaucracy could also involve decentralizing certain functions to the regional or field level to increase responsibility, accountability and responsiveness to the local clients or community.

In view of the reorganization efforts, public agencies necessarily would have to reduce the number of staff especially those who occupy positions that are declared to be redundant or non-functional in line with the redefined vision and mission of the organization. This emphasizes the need for a forecast of strategic objectives that would prescribe targets for the numbers and kinds of personnel required to perform the new and old functions of the agency. Unfortunately, experience would show that not many public agencies have made use of the strategic exercise.

The reorganization efforts could also result in the transfer or redeployment of personnel that could lead to the lowering of morale and motivation levels of the employees. Moreover, without proper preparation of the personnel to assume new positions or jobs in terms of acquisition of the necessary skills and knowledge, they could possibly end up as “square pegs in a round hole”. This could give rise to discontent and dissatisfaction, which oftentimes could result in non-performance or poor performance of functions and responsibilities among the staff.
Restructuring could be seen as a costly exercise because the government should be ready with the provision of “safety nets” to the employees who would be displaced by the reorganization. These “safety nets” necessarily entail costs. For instance, the government could offer attractive early retirement schemes; financial incentives to leave the public sector jobs; or it could offer reemployment to the public sector in case there is a need for their services after the restructuring process.

Reorganization as an improvement strategy strongly conveys the fact that the employees or the human resources of the public agency take center stage in the civil service reforms. The introduction of this reform strategy has various implications for HRD that have to be addressed to be successful in the efforts toward improving quality and productivity in the public service.

The Case of the National Statistics Office

The National Statistics Office (NSO) has undergone reorganization that took effect in 2000. To obtain insights on the effects of the restructuring, personal interviews were conducted with 12 division chiefs and 27 personnel (out of 30) who were identified to be affected by the restructuring: those who were retained in their “old” positions or jobs; those who were transferred or redeployed; and those who were promoted and whose positions were upgraded. About 20 clients or customers were also randomly interviewed in one of the biggest transaction centers of the NSO (Serbilis Center, East Avenue, Quezon City) to get their perceptions about the quality of services being provided by the said agency.

Reports and documents relevant to the reforms were looked into including the issuance of administrative and executive orders and accomplishment reports of the agency.

The NSO is the major statistical agency of the central government. Placed under the administrative supervision of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) by virtue of Executive Order No. 149 dated December 28, 1993, it is responsible for collecting, compiling, producing, publishing, and disseminating general-purpose statistics. It is also mandated to carry out and administer the Civil Registry Law as provided for in Act No. 3753 dated February 1931.

Based on its legal mandate, the NSO is tasked specifically to:

- Undertake all censuses on population, agriculture, commerce, and industry;
- Conduct statistical surveys by enumeration, sampling, and other methods;
- Compile and classify other statistical data and information;
- Conduct social and economic studies and make projections of population, agricultural production, income, and the number of livestock;
- Publish and disseminate all information related to the above functions;
- Assist the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) in the formulation of a continuing comprehensive statistical program for the government;
- Provide technical assistance and support to projects of other statistical agencies and institutions; and
- Carry out and administer the provisions of the Civil Registry Law and issue authorization to solemnizing officers in accordance with the provisions of Article 7 of the Family Code of the Philippines.

The Restructuring of the NSO

Recognizing the critical role of the NSO in the provision of quality statistical products and services for planning, policy formulation and decision making, the Office of the President had issued Executive Order (EO) No. 5 dated July 29, 1998, to strengthen the organizational set-up of the agency with the end view of making the organization more efficient and effective in delivering its mandated functions. Based on the Executive Order, the reorganization of the agency focused on the following:

- Delegation of more substantive and administrative functions to the field offices to transform them from mere data collection arms to statistics-producing and civil registration units;
- Refocusing the functions of the central office units towards developmental planning, design and analysis of designated statistical activities, and other surveys and statistical studies requested by government agencies and international organizations; and
- Greater use of information technology to facilitate data processing and analysis and promote easy access to statistical information by interested government, private and international organizations, and the general public.

The Organizational Structure before the implementation of EO # 5

To have a better perspective of the shifts in organization and operations of the NSO, the organizational structure before the implementation of the EO #5 is presented below.
As reflected from the chart, an Administrator who is concurrently the Civil Registrar General heads the NSO. A Deputy Administrator with a management planning and coordination staff assists the Administrator. There are two line departments, which are responsible for the implementation of the yearly plans and programs of the agency: the Industry and Trade Statistics Department (ITSD) and the Household Statistics Department (HSD). Under the ISTD are four (4) divisions: Economic Analysis, Industry Statistics, Business and Services Statistics, and Trade Statistics Division. On the other hand, the HSD supervises three (3) divisions, namely, Design and Operations, Income and Employment Statistics, and Social and Demographic Statistics Division.

There are also five (5) divisions that provide staff support to the whole organization, namely, Administrative Services, Financial Services, Human Resource Information Resources Division, and Civil Registry Division.
The agency has field units that are considered to be the data collection arms of the agency. They also assist in the implementation of the Civil Registry Law. Before the reorganization of the NSO, there were 15 regional statistics offices, 78 provincial statistics offices, and 214 district statistics offices. A Regional Administrator headed the regional office and a Provincial Statistics Officer managed the operations of the provincial office.

The NSO Structure after the implementation of EO # 5

With the implementation of the reorganization plan of the agency, the structure saw an increase in the number of line departments and divisions under each department. Below is the chart of the reorganized structure of the NSO.

It can be seen from the chart that in addition to the Industry and Trade Statistics (ITSD) and Household Statistics Departments (HSD), three (3) more line departments were established namely, the Information Resources Department (IRD) the Civil Registration Department (CRD) and the General Administration Department (GAD). Under the IRD are the divisions on Databank and Information Services, Information
Technology Operations, and Information Technology Systems and Research. The CRD has two divisions to supervise: the Civil Registry Operations and Health and Vital Statistics Division. The establishment of the IRD has emphasized the crucial role of data banking services and the use of information technology in the operations of the NSO. As mentioned earlier, one of the areas focused on by the EO #5 is the greater use of information technology in the operations of the agency.

Also, the elevation of the Civil Registry Division to a department stresses the big and important role of the agency in the administration and carrying out of the Civil Registry Law, which is part of its mandated functions.

Meanwhile, all the divisions providing administrative support to the whole organization are grouped together under one department, the GAD. However, it must be noted that the management planning and coordination staff who were reporting directly to the Administrator were placed under one division, the Planning, Management and Coordination Division. The same case holds true with the Legal Services Section, which was formerly part of the Administrative Services Division. It is now a separate division. The former Financial Services Division was split into two: the Accounting Division and the Budget Division.

The ITSD is responsible for the conceptualization and development of statistical instruments and systems for the generation and dissemination of designated statistics from establishment and enterprise-based surveys and economic censuses covering all economic sectors. With this function, it is understandable that the names of its two divisions have been changed to emphasize its functions. Thus, the former name of the division on Economic Analysis has been changed to Economic Indices and Indicators Division; and the Trade Statistics Division to Statistical Sampling and Operations Division. The changed names highlight the main functions of the said divisions, which may not have been emphasized before the reorganization.

Tasked with collaborating with international agencies and other government agencies regarding the conduct of household-based surveys and censuses, the HSD has changed the name of one of its divisions to Census Planning and Operations Division from Design and Operations Division. Apparently, the changed name would capture the primary function of conducting and planning surveys and censuses.

At the field level, some functions have been decentralized such as the conduct of surveys in the local areas; the processing of the data; and the dissemination of results through press releases and publications. The decentralized functions would enable the field units to perform more substantive role in producing statistical data and in acting as civil registration servicing units. To date, there are 16 regional offices, 79 provincial offices, and 254 district offices. Part of the decentralization efforts of the NSO is the reorganization of the National Capital Regional Office into two divisions: the Statistical Operations Division and the Civil Registry and Information Management Division. The
region is also divided into six (6) district offices. Apparently, the reorganization would enable the NCR to assume full responsibility for generating some data, which used to be produced by the central office. These include import and export statistics, and consumer price index and domestic trade statistics for Metro Manila.

The Changes in the Personnel Complement

At present, the NSO has a total personnel complement of 2,755. Out of this number, there are 957 employees in the central office or about 34.74% and 1,798 in the field offices or 65.26%. In addition to the regular employees, there are 386 casual employees, 186 of whom are in the central office and 200 in the field offices. The NSO also hires contractual personnel whenever there are special projects to be undertaken. To date, there are 530 contractual employees, 401 of whom are in the central office and 129 in the field offices. It appears from the figures that the central office has more special projects to implement than the field offices. It can be seen also from the figures that the field offices have more employees than the central office. This can be attributed to the fact that there are 15 regional offices, 79 provincial offices, and 254 district offices.

As a result of the implementation of the EO # 5, there have been personnel movements in terms of transfer or redeployment to other offices as well as changes in the plantilla positions. Thirty five employees (34 in the central office and 1 in the regional office) have been transferred and 1,027 have been redeployed (666 in the central office and 361 in the field offices). About 205 plantilla positions have been upgraded and 132 have been reclassified. Out of the unfilled positions, the agency created 14 new positions. The figures indicate that there is no decrease in the total number of personnel.

To have a better perspective of the personnel complement of the agency before and after the implementation of the EO # 5, the table below shows the number of employees by type from CY 1998 – 2000.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central Office</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REGULAR</td>
<td>976</td>
<td>995</td>
<td>965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30.88</td>
<td>30.99</td>
<td>30.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASUAL</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.61</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>6.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTRACTUAL</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>3.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>subtotal</strong></td>
<td>1277</td>
<td>1336</td>
<td>1281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40.40</td>
<td>41.61</td>
<td>40.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Field Offices</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REGULAR</td>
<td>1697</td>
<td>1687</td>
<td>1712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>53.69</td>
<td>52.54</td>
<td>53.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASUAL</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>5.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTRACTUAL</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>subtotal</strong></td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>1896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>59.60</td>
<td>58.39</td>
<td>59.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUM TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>3161</td>
<td>3211</td>
<td>3177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen from the above table that between CY 1998 and CY 1999, there is a slight increase in the number of regular employees in the central office. This indicates that during the implementation of the reorganization plan, the central office had added 19 personnel. But after reorganization, in CY 2000, the number decreased a little, from 995 to 965 or a difference of 30 personnel. Still, this is higher than the number before restructuring. In the field offices, the number increased by 25 personnel. This may be due to the deployment of some employees from the central office to the field offices following the thrust on decentralization of some functions. Nonetheless, in regard to the number of casual and contractual employees, the central office has still the bigger number. This may be related to the undertaking of special projects at the central level, which are relatively more than those in the field offices as mentioned earlier.

**The Changes in the Systems and Procedures**

The primary change that took place in the agency is the introduction of information technology into the work area. Basically, computer software programs were developed to facilitate the processing of papers and transactions particularly in the Civil Registration Department. For instance, the so-called DVSS 2000, a software program was introduced in line with the implementation of the EO # 5. This intended to improve the decentralized processing of civil registry documents and generate important vital statistics particularly at the provincial offices.

Accompanying the above is the change in the system of data encoding. Some personnel used to record data manually. Now, data encoding is done through the computers. This is also the case for survey processing. It used to be done manually but
with the use of computers, processing of data became a lot easier most especially in the field offices.

The measurement of work accomplishment has been noted to be altered particularly in the BSSD. Before the reorganization, work accomplishment was measured in terms of the number of documents done. Now, accomplishment is gauged through the value of data, the time of transfer of the data, and whether the maximum number of released data is met. A comparative table is prepared to show the work accomplishments of all the regions. This seems to make the employees more conscious of the quality and quantity of work done.

In terms of the flow of communication and reporting, additional layers have been added to the flow, which often times delays decision-making processes. Unlike before when there were just two line departments, the heads of the five (5) divisions under the Office of the Administrator, reported directly to the Administrator. With reorganization, these divisions were placed under new departments. This means that the division heads would have to report directly to the department heads rather than report directly to the Administrator. In a way, there seems to be some kind of established protocol in communicating and reporting formally. Apparently, the protocol is such that the employees have to follow the lines of authority in the office. To some employees, this additional layer in the flow of communication and reporting delays decision-making processes. Still, to some personnel, this process often times closes the lines of communication between the Administrator and the rank and file. It does not encourage them to communicate “freely” with the higher-ups in the organization.

The Changes/Reforms in the HRM Structure and Systems

The HRM Division plays a critical role in the restructuring of the organization. It is expected to lay the groundwork for the changes to take place most especially in terms of the effects or impact on the employees. Thus, it is expected to upgrade and develop the capabilities of the work force not only for the work changes but also for the sustainability of the changes to further strengthen the effectiveness of organizational operations.

The Changes in the Organizational Structure of the HRMD

Before the implementation of the EO #5, the HRM Division had two (2) sections namely, Personnel Management Section and Personnel Development Section. The former took charge of all the management of personnel processes such as the recruitment and selection of employees, performance evaluation, and personnel records keeping. The staff also served as Secretariat to the Personnel Selection Board. The latter section was responsible for the implementation of development activities for all employees. It was in-charge of the planning and implementation of all training programs and seminars designed to upgrade the skills of the personnel.
The Division was headed by a Human Resource Management Officer V and assisted by a Human Resource Management Officer IV. The Division had a total of 32 employees including the two HRM Officers.

After the implementation of the EO #5, the number of sections has increased in the Division from 2 to 4. The additional 2 sections are: the Human Resource Management Information System Section (HRMIS) and the Health Services Section (HSS). In recognition of the big role of management information system in decision-making processes in the area of human resource management, the said section has been established. The latter section is not a new section having been a part of the Administrative Services Division before the implementation of the reorganization of the agency. Perhaps, its transfer could be due to the fact that the provision of health services to the employees is considered to be part of the benefits and privileges given to the employees, a function of which is a major responsibility of the Division.

The major responsibility of the HRMIS is the computerization of personnel data. The computerization system includes four modules: the personnel information, plantilla, attendance, and archiving and scanning images of inactive files. To date, the computerization of personnel data and records is still an on-going activity, including archiving and scanning of inactive files.

With additional sections, the total number of personnel in the Division has increased from 32 to 43 including two casual employees in the HRMIS.

As claimed by the Division Chief, the important change that has taken place in the Division is not so much in the expansion of the units but more in the importance given to the human resource management functions. The said functions have been strengthened by the computerization of personnel data and by the top management support given to the training and development of personnel.

The Changes in the HRM Systems/Procedures

It has been noted that with restructuring, the NSO has slightly raised the qualification standards for the position of Statistician. Based on the Civil Service Commission (CSC) standards, the person who occupies the position of Statistician 1 should at least be a college graduate. The NSO has raised this requirement by preferring graduates of BS Math or Statistics or someone who has completed 18 units of Math, Economics, or Statistics.

Meanwhile, the mechanism for the recruitment and selection of personnel has not been changed. It is still the Personnel Selection Board that deliberates on matters relative to the recruitment and selection of personnel. However, its membership has undergone some changes. Before the restructuring, the Board was chaired by the Deputy Administrator and co-chaired by the HRM Division Chief. The members included the two department heads, all division chiefs, and two representatives from the rank and file who were selected by management. In line with the implementation of the EO # 5, the
Director of the General Administration Department became the Co-Chair of the Board and the members include all the directors of the departments, the HRM Chief, and two representatives from the employees union. This serves to assure that the voice of the employees association would be heard in the Board through their own chosen representatives.

In regard to the recruitment and selection process, one major change is the entrance examination given to applicants. Before reorganization, applicants were not subjected to an entrance examination. The examination includes the application of psychological or personality tests to the applicants. This procedure ensures the entrance to the service of technically and psychologically prepared applicants.

Before reorganization, the recruitment and selection process was centralized. The regional and field offices were not responsible for the said process. With restructuring, the field offices are now given the responsibility to recruit personnel and to select service contractors needed for their projects. Because the process has been decentralized, the said process has been shortened. According to the HRM Division Chief, it used to take about 5 months to recruit and select personnel. With the changes in place, the process now takes only 7 days.

The promotion system has also been noted to have a basic change in the announcement of vacant positions for promotion purposes. The process of announcing vacant positions was limited before restructuring such that employees were not properly informed of existing vacancies. With restructuring, interviewed employees reveal that the system has improved. Vacancies are now properly announced through various mechanisms such as memos and bulletin boards within the NSO. Most employees get to know of the vacant positions.

Many of the employees claim that before reorganization, they did not have to apply to fill up a certain position for the purpose of promotion. This practice has been changed. One has to apply if one desires to be promoted. Before the reorganization, it was a policy to put insiders in vacant positions before outsiders could be considered. This policy has been changed. Employees from NSO have to apply and have to compete with those coming from other agencies or private organizations. Seniority is no longer considered as a major factor in determining who should be promoted. In other words, promotion has become competitive. Insiders are given preference if they are equally qualified as the outsiders.

The above policy has elicited mixed reactions from the employees. To some, this is good for the organization because the employment of personnel from the outside would infuse new ideas and perspective to the agency. However, to a number of personnel, this does not provide opportunities for employees to move up the hierarchy considering that promotion opportunities in the government sector are very limited.

As regards performance evaluation, the NSO makes use of the CSC model. The criteria have not changed. Based on interviews, some employees are agreed that the
performance rating is influenced by the personal relationship between the supervisor and the employee. Thus, the rating that one gets would depend on how close he/she is to the supervisor. This has served as a demotivating factor to them.

Other employees opine that many employees have tried to improve their performance rating due to the incentives that they get from management. The period during the implementation of the EO # 5 saw the installation of the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence or PRAISE (based on CSC policy). This program gives financial rewards or plaques of recognition to employees who excel in their performance at the central and field offices. For instance, they give awards to the “Best Improved Performance”, “Best in Attendance”and “Best Office in terms of Productivity”, at the end of the year. But then the sustainability of the program has been affected by the availability of funds. If the NSO does not have funds for the said purpose, then no financial awards would be given. Somehow, this has affected the motivation of employees to work harder for such awards.

**Training and Development Activities**

The NSO has the Personnel Development Committee that deliberates on matters relative to training and development. Although the HRM Division prepares the training designs and conducts training needs analysis to determine the kind of training to be undertaken, the Committee reviews the list of training courses and programs to be undertaken and the list of participants in the said programs or courses.

The membership of the Committee has expanded after the reorganization of the agency. Still chaired and co-chaired by the Deputy Administrator and the HRM Division Chief respectively, the Committee now includes all the department directors and two representatives of the employees union. Again, instead of representatives from the rank and file who are selected by management, the employees association is given the opportunity to select from its members who would sit in the Committee to represent their own interests.

When asked about the changes in the developmental activities that have been introduced after the reorganization, most of the division chiefs agreed that there are more opportunities for training and scholarships for the personnel most especially those involved in statistics and information technology. Nevertheless, every employee is given an equal opportunity to apply for scholarship or study grants. There are more personnel now who can go on study leave to pursue further studies. All the department and division heads can nominate their staff to attend the scheduled training activities.

Moreover, one big change that has been introduced is the provision of more opportunities for the employees in the regional and field offices to attend training courses or seminars. According to the HRM Division Chief, before reorganization, seldom can an employee from the regional and field offices attend training courses and seminars. They could not compete with the employees from the central office when it comes to availment of study grants or scholarships. As a result of the reorganization, participants in training
programs are distributed from the entire field and regional offices. The field employees also have the chance to apply for scholarships and study grants.

The above perceptions are validated by the list of training programs or courses undertaken from CY 1997 – 2002. The list shows that there are 388 training activities conducted by the NSO and other training providers. As seen from document, the technical staff of the NSO conducted most of the training activities. Comparatively, there were more training activities undertaken after reorganization took place and necessarily more participants. The figure below shows the comparative data from CY 1997 – 2002.

**Comparative Data on Conducted Training from CY 1997 - 2002**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Training Activities</th>
<th>No. of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997 – 1998</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>1,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999 – 2000</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>3,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 – 2002</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>4,007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown from the above data, there were 85 training courses and seminars conducted and 1,922 trainees in CY 1997 – 1998, the period before reorganization took place. After the restructuring, more training activities were conducted with 146 training courses or seminars in which 3,406 staff attended in CY 1999 – 2000. Again, the figures increased the following year, CY 2001 – 2002, with 157 seminars and training courses and 4,007 participants. The increasing trend seems to suggest that the management has put emphasis on the activities designed to upgrade the skills and enhance the knowledge of the personnel during and after the reorganization of the NSO.

A perusal of the list of training courses and seminars likewise reveals that there are more technical courses and seminars on statistics, censuses, and surveys after the restructuring than before the agency was reorganized. One seminar that was particularly conducted after the restructuring of the agency was the Basic Customer Service Skills Training. Perhaps, this could be due to the establishment of “Serbilis Centers” where the personnel encounter more interactions with the general public. Obviously, the agency would like to enhance the skills of the employees in providing better services to the clientele. Further, it appears from the list of training activities that there are seminars/workshops on planning, gender awareness, property accountability, team building, supervisory development, 5 S for good housekeeping, management audit, and HRMD planning. This suggests that the management has become more aware of the need to upgrade the management and planning skills of the employees for more efficiency and productivity of the organization.
Effects or Impact of the Restructuring /Changes on the Employees

The changes in the organizational structure and the systems and procedures in the NSO have produced both positive and negative effects on the work performance of the employees; on their work accomplishments; on their work morale; and on their level of job satisfaction.

On Work Performance

From the perspective of some division chiefs, the upgrading of their units to a division level does not change the units’ functions. The employees still have the same set of responsibilities. Although there are additional workloads, the nature of their job remains the same. Thus, their level of work performance remains the same.

Nonetheless, some employees view the additional workload negatively. In the case of IT personnel for instance, the increased volume of work has not resulted in the increase of salary. In other words, they view their salary to be not commensurate with the work that they are doing.

On the positive side, certain division chiefs see the restructuring as a factor in developing the expertise of employees. For instance, in the Census Planning and Operations Division, the employees get more focused on the planning and operations, functions of which used to be separated. As they get more focused on their job, they tend to develop their expertise. In turn, this improves their job performance.

The additional layer in the flow of communication and reporting in the organization appears to be not welcomed by many employees including the heads of divisions. Whereas before they could go directly to the Administrator in case of a work problem, the present communication or reporting flow dictates that the division head has to report first to the department chief before the communication reaches the desk of the Administrator. To many of the employees, this flow tends to centralize information and decision-making processes. It slows down the flow of work because the division head has to consult first the director before making any decision. Apparently, some division chiefs, especially whose units were placed under a department, felt that their functions in making certain decisions have considerably been reduced.

Some heads of divisions also see the restructuring as a positive variable in deepening the commitment of employees. To them, this is a result of the functions becoming more defined and with more direction. In the case of the HRM Division for instance, the functions of the employees have become more defined in terms of personnel management and development. According to the division chief, with more defined functions and direction, the employees tend to know more about their jobs and in the process, become more committed to their work.

To many of the employees, the computerization of the systems and procedures has reduced and lightened their workload. Although the workload of some employees has
been increased, their work has become much easier and faster with the use of computer programs. In the case of the Civil Registry and Information Management Division in the National Capital Region (Metro Manila), the employees felt that their research work has become faster most especially with an e-library in place. This means that there is an improved system of researching data and documents making the search faster and convenient as well. This results in the improvement of work.

In the case of employees who have been reassigned or redeployed to other divisions or departments, some of them claim that they had difficulty in adjusting to their “new” work environment. Initially, they were not given enough work so that their work performance suffered. Others state that they were given new and added responsibilities and they also had a hard time coping with the new job. In effect, this affected their work performance because they could hardly finish their work on time. But as they become acquainted with their jobs, they learn new skills and knowledge, which to them, is a positive effect after all. Moreover, some opine that their transfer to a new job has given them the opportunity to perform better because of the new responsibilities given them.

However, to certain employees whose position titles were changed and positions upgraded, the new and additional duties and responsibilities (such as the position title of clerk which was changed to inspector) of the “new” job did not sit well with them. For one, their training background did not match the requirements of the “new” job. They felt that they were not ready for the “new” job because of their feeling of inadequacy due to their different training and educational background.

**On Work Accomplishments**

In terms of office work productivity, most of the division chiefs are agreed that the computerization of the systems and procedures has resulted in higher work productivity of the divisions. Although there has been more workload, work completion has been made faster and more efficient, resulting in more accomplishments.

The establishment of additional departments also means more work and thus, more accomplishments. For instance, the Information Resources Department is tasked to establish a local area network in the NSO, in addition to functions related to encoding, scanning/imaging, and dissemination of data. Aside from the technical work that the personnel have to perform, they are also engaged in the conduct of IT training and programming. The agency does not outsource this service.

Due to the establishment of the Human Resource Management Information Unit in the HRM Division, records keeping have become more efficient. This could also be attributed to the computerization of personnel records and documents, which has made the work of the employees more efficient and faster. In turn, this has contributed to more work accomplishments in the office.
While decentralization of certain functions to the field offices would mean less workload on the part of certain departments in the central office, the experience of the concerned offices, particularly the Statistical Sampling and Operations Division, would show otherwise. It has been noted that the personnel in this division have to redo the work outputs of the field offices because the field personnel seem to lack the needed technical skills to perform the assigned tasks. This suggests the lack of technical training of field personnel. On the part of the central office employees, this is an additional work but necessarily an additional work output for the office.

Majority of the interviewed employees claim that they have accomplished more work after the reorganization and the computerization of the systems and procedures. Because their position titles have been changed and their positions upgraded, they have been given more tasks and responsibilities to perform. This means that they have more work to do. In effect, this has brought their work productivity to a higher level than before the changes. Those who were transferred to other divisions also state they have more workload. This has resulted in increased productivity. Only about two of the interviewed employees who were transferred to other divisions thought that their work output has not changed at all.

On Work Motivation

To some division chiefs, the upgrading of their sections to a division level has not affected at all the motivation of the employees in the workplace. This is due to the fact that the functions of said sections have not basically changed after becoming a division during the reorganization. To them, their sections were already functioning as a division before the restructuring. Apparently, the structural change has not raised the level of motivation among the employees.

However, some division chiefs believe that motivation is a function of increased responsibilities. They noticed among their employees that the increased responsibilities given them have increased their self-confidence in performing their assigned tasks. To the employees, the increased responsibilities also mean opportunity to give inputs and suggestions to improve work performance. In turn, this has increased the level of their motivation.

In addition to the increased responsibilities as a motivating variable, the assignment of new jobs to employees has motivated them to work harder and produce more. This is explained by the fact the employees are able to build up their expertise as they perform a new set of duties and responsibilities attached to the job.

The kind of perks and benefits that an employee gets from the organization also serve as a motivating factor based on the interviews. According to some division chiefs, their employees are not motivated to perform well because their salaries have not been increased and there are no added benefits given them.
A few of the division chiefs argue that the changes in the structure and in the systems and procedures have not changed the motivation levels of the employees. According to them, the motivation of the employees would depend on the kind of leadership there is in the NSO. Apparently, some employees view the leadership to be not consultative and participatory in approach. They are hesitant to react negatively to certain policies and procedures for fear of reprisals. To the division chiefs, there are no open lines of communication between the rank and file and the top management. To a large extent, this has affected the work motivation of the employees.

On Work Morale

The interviewed employees have mixed reactions about the effects of the structural and systems changes on their work morale. Out of 27 interviewed employees, 14 or 51.85% stated that their work morale has been affected by the changes while a slightly smaller number (13 or 48.15%) said otherwise. To those employees whose positions have been upgraded and their salary levels have been increased, their work morale has improved. In effect, they consider this as a promotion (66.67% of the 24 responses). However, those who were not given a promotion and were transferred to other sections or divisions were demoralized (25%). And those who have not been affected by the changes have the same level of work morale in the office (8.33%).

The level of work morale among the employees is also seen to be a function of the importance of the unit or division in achieving the objectives of the agency. According to a number of personnel especially those assigned in the mapping section, their unit is low in priority in terms of the training opportunities given them. For instance, the statisticians are given more training opportunities abroad than the cartographers. Thus, they felt neglected and this has given rise to discontent among them; hence, demoralization has set in.

A few of the interviewed employees state that their transfer to a new position did not motivate them to perform better primarily because they felt that they are not qualified to perform the duties and responsibilities attached to the position. They seem not to cope with the expected level of performance because of the difficulty of the job. In effect, this has considerably lowered the level of their work morale.

There are also employees who like very much their being transferred to a new or another position. Because their qualifications and background fit the requirements of the new job, they have not experienced any difficulty in coping with the demands of the new job. This has contributed to raising their level of morale in the work area.
On Job Satisfaction

It appears from the responses of the interviewed division chiefs that job satisfaction is a function of the responsibilities and challenges that the job offers to the employee. According to them, the upgrading of certain sections to a division level spells out more responsibilities for them to handle. Their employees are challenged to perform better because they get satisfaction from their jobs with the new set of responsibilities, which to them, is recognition of the importance of their role in the division.

Some employees however, have been affected by their being transferred to other sections or divisions. They claim that their level of job satisfaction has been decreased because of the nature of the job assigned to them. Because they do not possess the required training and experience, they could not cope with the demands of the new job.

There is also the perception among the division chiefs that the transfer or redeployment of employees depended on their closeness to the power holders in the agency. This holds true in the case of personnel whose salaries were upgraded. Seemingly, they perceive such changes to be based on personalities and informal dealings with the top management and not on formal criteria. This perception has decreased the level of satisfaction among the affected personnel.

Nonetheless, the upgrading of certain divisions to a department status has provided more opportunities for development of certain employees, which to a large extent, has considerably increased their level of job satisfaction. For instance, the group of IT personnel has been given more scholarships and training abroad. Likewise, due to their developed expertise in the office, they get consultancy jobs that are allowed by the NSO. They can do their consultancy work and at the same time perform their assigned tasks in the office. This adopted policy of the office has contributed to increasing the level of job satisfaction among the IT personnel.

In the newly created divisions such as the Statistical Sampling and Operations Division, many of the employees think that they do not have specific functions to perform and specific activities to undertake. Thus, they feel that there is no specific subject matter to focus on. They seem to be lost on what is their role in the attainment of the overall goal of the agency. This has lessened their enthusiasm to perform better and thus, has decreased their level of satisfaction.

The above sentiment is shared by a number of the employees in the Planning, Management and Coordination Division (PMCD). They opine that they are not clear about the role and place of the Division in the General Administration Department (GAD). If it is tasked to conduct management audit, then it should not be under the GAD but should be placed directly under the Office of the Administrator. It is this unclear statement of the proper role and place of the Division in the organization that has brought dissatisfaction to the employees. In addition, the employees perceive the Division to be a place for the “unwanted” personnel from other divisions. They think that all those personnel who cannot be reassigned in other divisions go directly to the PMCD.
The equitable distribution of workload among the employees is also a factor that has affected job satisfaction. Based on interviews, most of the employees do not mind the increased workload but they do mind a lot the inequitable distribution of workload. They feel satisfied with their work if employees holding similar positions are given the same workload as they have.

The job satisfaction of employees can also be traced to the faster and improved quality of services. Some employees contend that they are satisfied with their job because the waiting time of the clients has been cut short and that their queries have been answered promptly. Moreover, they are satisfied because their division does not have work backlogs. Still, they get satisfied with their new or increased set of responsibilities because of the challenges they face in the performance of their jobs.

However, certain employees state that they are not satisfied with their jobs because their salaries are not commensurate to the duties and responsibilities that they perform. At times, they get overloaded but they do not get compensated for the extra work that they do.

Job satisfaction also appears to be affected by the kind of relationships that the employees have in the office. The interviews reveal that a number of the employees are satisfied with their jobs despite difficulties because of the camaraderie that they share with their co-employees. They enjoy teamwork with their co-workers and therefore find their work to be satisfying.

In sum, majority of the interviewed division chiefs (10 out of 12 or 83.33 %) and a large number of the employees (24 out of 27 or 88.89 %) believe that the introduced changes in the work environment have positively affected their level of job satisfaction.

**Problems and Constraints in the Implementation of the Restructuring Plan**

The implementation of the restructuring plan has brought about certain changes in the organizational structure, functions and systems and procedures. To the division chiefs, these changes have affected the employees the most. Although consultations were held among the employees to discuss the plan and meetings and workshops were conducted to explain the changes particularly in regard to the new functions of the units or divisions, still, the employees were seen to be resistant to the changes. The fear of the innovations or changes introduced to the work design, work environment and work relationships have caused strong resistance. To the employees who have been with NSO for quite sometime, the mere transfer of office location is stressful. There is even more stress on their part if they are given new assignments and functions.

Apparently, the dialogues and meetings conducted did not clearly discuss the criteria for the selection of employees who would be transferred or redeployed. Based on interviews, the employees were not properly informed about the criteria for selecting
employees to be transferred or redeployed. This added more to the negative reaction of the employees to the reorganization of the agency.

The resistance is also strong in terms of the exposure of the employees to new technology. The more “senior” staff members in the office are averse to using the new technology of computers because they have been used to do their work manually. This poses a problem in preparing them for the new functions they have to perform.

In addition to the resistance to the application of new technology in the work setting, the employees stated that the management did not provide more computers to the staff, which is a big constraining variable in preparing them for the application of the new technology.

Another major concern raised by the staff in the reorganization process is the preparation of the staff to hold new functions and responsibilities. Apparently, the management did not equip the staff with the needed skills to enable them to perform their new jobs better. In other words, no training was conducted on their new functions and responsibilities. This is especially true in regard to the decentralized functions to the field offices. While the decentralization of some functions, e.g., conduct of surveys in the local areas, processing and analysis of data, and dissemination of results, is a good move towards strengthening the field offices, most of the field staff are not quite prepared for the performance of such functions. Based on the contention of the interviewed employees in the central office, they experience work overloads because they still have to review the completed tasks of the field staff. This implies that the field staff members are not well-prepared for the assumption of new and additional functions.

To some personnel however, the reorganization has brought forth positive changes. For one, a number of plantilla positions were upgraded and position titles changed. There was no layoff of personnel. Some were transferred to other units where their knowledge and skills were deemed to be more needed. But then, some employees complained that these changes, most especially those pertaining to the upgrading of positions, benefited the division chiefs and the regional statistical officers more than the ordinary employees. The position titles of some division heads and regional statistical officers were changed to department directors and regional directors, respectively. Thus, the salary grade levels were increased; from SG 24 to 27 (division chief to department director) and from SG 24 to SG 26 (regional statistical officer to regional director). The upgrading of positions did not apply to their assistants and the rank and file did not have salary increases. This was seen to be a constraining variable in the introduction of changes and reforms in the organization.

Perhaps, the biggest constraint in the reorganization process is the political will in pushing through with the changes and reforms. Seemingly, there was lack of political will in the sense that some personnel who were supposed to be transferred to or redeployed to other units or divisions stayed in their old units. Based on interviews, some employees made some “arrangements” with the management such that they remained in their “old”
positions. To many of the employees, this ran counter to the overall goals and objectives of the reorganization of the agency.

Clients’ Perceptions on Service Delivery

Most responses of the clients show that they avail themselves of services from the NSO on securing copy of birth certificate (about 33% of the responses); copy or validation of marriage certificate (24%); and the rest are on validation or authentication of birth certificate (15%), copy of death certificate (13%), legal services (9%), and publications and statistical data (4%). Half of the respondents state that they transact business with the agency once a year and the others, twice or more than twice a year.

Majority of the clients (17 out of 20) state that the NSO services have improved since the agency has undergone reorganization and its systems and procedures have been computerized. Transactions have become faster and much easier most especially in the “serbilis centers”. For instance, the processing of the application for a copy of birth certificate used to take 3 days. Now, the copy could be secured in less than 2 hours. This also goes true to the other certificates such as the marriage certificate. They can be secured on the day of application.

The clients also observe that the employees render service even during lunch time. They appreciate the fact that the employees work during lunch break, which is not the usual case in other frontline offices. They notice the absence of “fixers” in the centers. This could be due to the fact that the number of steps involved in the processing of papers has been reduced for the convenience of the clients. The procedures have become more systematic and these are strictly followed.

The clients are happy to note that the employees have become more customer-friendly. They, including the security guards, are more cordial and considerate now. They used to be unfriendly and did not want to entertain questions nor complaints. There is a big change in employees’ attitude.

However, a few of the clients have encountered some negative experience with the employees especially in regard to the library services of the agency. The clients think that the employees are not knowledgeable about the NSO’s publications. Despite the fact that the documents or information appear in the catalogue, the employees concerned could not find the materials being requested by the clients. This could mean that they are lazy to search for the needed documents or, they do not know where to look. To the clients, the employees providing library services need further training.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The structural changes in the NSO have elevated a number of units to the division level and in the process, have introduced changes in the position titles and upgrading of certain positions in the office. Definitely, these changes have increased the work morale and motivation levels of the employees. Nonetheless, a few resented the process because they perceived the process to be iniquitous. They claimed that only the division chiefs and regional statistical officers benefited from it. This has given rise to dissatisfaction among them.

The structural changes have also brought about some changes in the functions and responsibilities attached to certain jobs. Such changes have served as challenges to the employees in improving further their work performance and outputs. On the other hand, certain employees have viewed their jobs as a demotivating factor because they are not technically prepared to assume their “new” jobs. The technical requirements of the “new” jobs do not match their educational background and training; hence, they could not perform better and accomplish more.

Moreover, the changes have likewise increased the workload of some employees due to the new or added functions to the existing functions of their divisions or departments. As expected, the affected employees clamored for a corresponding increase in their salary levels, commensurate to their expanded functions and responsibilities. Unfortunately, the reorganization agenda did not include this. Although the agency has considered the granting of financial work incentives, and has started giving incentives to good performers, these are not given regularly. This has served instead as a dissatisfying factor.

What is worth noting in the reorganization of the agency is the emphasis given to the HRM functions particularly on the training and development of the employees. Certain changes in the HRM systems and procedures have taken place such as the giving of entrance examination to applicants; the proper announcement of vacant positions in the office; and the need to apply and compete with outsiders in the filling up of vacant positions for promotion purposes. These emphasize the fact that the agency has put credence to competition, professionalism and competence in the work arena as a result of reorganization.

Further, the agency has established the Personnel Development Committee, which reviews the list of training and development activities to be undertaken by the agency. The membership of the committee has been expanded to include the representatives of the employees union who are selected by the union members. In a way, this empowers the employees through their participation in the deliberations of the committee.

A recognized good effect of the reorganization is the increased opportunities for training and scholarships for the personnel most especially those involved in statistical
operations and information technology. Every employee is given an equal chance to apply for scholarship or study grants, which was not the case before reorganization. This is especially true in the case of the employees from the regional offices. It used to be that the regional employees could not compete with the central office employees in availing of study grants or scholarships. They seldom attended training courses and seminars. With the reorganization, regional employees have been given equal opportunities for attendance in training activities.

The Implementation Problems

The NSO experience shows that the implementation of reforms and changes in the work environment encounters a number of problems. One of the major problems is the strong resistance to change by the employees particularly by those who have been with the organization for quite some time. The reorganization and the application of new technology are threatening because they may lose their job if they get reorganized out or they may not be able to perform well because they lack the necessary skills.

As shown by the NSO reorganization, a number of employees have been transferred or redeployed. This situation has become problematic because the employees were not clear about the criteria for the transfer. They perceived that the transfer was based more on personal relationships with the top management than on objective criteria. This has led to discontent and the lowering of the level of morale among the employees. Likewise, the lack of training conducted for the transferred employees has contributed to the lowering of their morale and job satisfaction levels.

The lack of equipment and facilities has affected much the implementation of the changes in the agency. Apparently, not all of the employees have been given new computers.

“Political will” as a factor has been cited as an implementation problem. It appears that management has not pushed through all the changes contained in the reorganization plan. Many of the employees have viewed this lack of “political will” negatively.

The case study has shown that civil service reforms such as reorganization and the application of information technology have considerably affected the management and development of human resources. In line with the new public management model, the purported aim of the reforms is to increase the efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of the public agency. The organization’s performance is much influenced by the employees’ performance. In this case, the capacity of the human resources to achieve performance outcomes is essential as emphasized by the new HRM model.

As indicated by the case, the employees’ work performance and outputs, as well as their motivation, morale and job satisfaction have been affected, positively and negatively, by the introduced reforms. As such, the efficiency of the organization could be gauged through the work efficiency of the employees. This has been validated by the
assessment made by the clients on the quality of services delivered. In other words, the changes in the work environment can be a function of the work performance, morale, motivation and job satisfaction of the employees.

With this interactive relationship between the organization and the employees, focus is made on the development of the capacity of the human resources in the attainment of performance outcomes of the public agency. Apparently, the reforms introduced in the NSO have not centered much on developing the capabilities for work of all the employees. The training and development activities came in as secondary to the efforts of reorganization as an improvement strategy. For instance, the transferred or redeployed employees were not given appropriate training to prepare them for their “new” jobs. Also, those who were given new functions and responsibilities did not have the opportunity to be trained. Definitely, this has affected their work performance and efficiency.

Closely related to the concern on developing the capabilities for work of the employees would be the human resource management functions of the organization such as the acquisition, selection, motivation and rewards, and promotion of personnel. The introduction of public sector or civil service reforms would have to consider introducing changes in the HRM functions for a more effective implementation of reforms. This is in line with the new HRM model, which puts premium on performance management for workforce productivity. Changes in the systems and procedures in the acquisition and selection of personnel based on merit and competence would definitely be seen as a step towards the achievement of desired outputs and outcomes by the organization. Changes in the management functions pertaining to the promotion and motivation of personnel would also be of value to the organization in terms of making broad strides towards effective performance management. Performance criteria can set the direction for greater organizational output and efficiency.

As seen from the case study, the agency has attempted to make some changes in the HRM systems and procedures. For instance, in the recruitment and selection process, a major change that has been instituted is the giving of entrance examination to applicants, which includes the psychological or personality tests. This ensures the acquisition of technically and psychologically prepared personnel for the attainment of desired outcomes and outputs of the organization. Likewise, in the promotion of personnel, the agency has attempted to make promotion very competitive where both insiders and outsiders are given equal chance to be employed and promoted in the agency if they meet the job requirements. Again, this ensures professional competition in the acquisition and promotion of personnel. This is good for the organization’s performance management and output. Such changes have been received positively by many of the employees, although a number of them still found such changes to be wanting. To a certain degree, these have affected their productivity and their motivation to work harder and to perform well.

To a certain extent, the introduced improvement strategies have some empowering effects on some employees. To them, the changes in their functions and
responsibilities have provided them with the opportunity to learn new skills and knowledge. This has increased their productivity and self-confidence. Nonetheless, this kind of an opportunity has been limited as shown in the case study.

It is worth noting though that the agency has mechanisms for the participation of the rank and file employees in the decision-making processes particularly in decisions pertaining to the recruitment, selection and promotion of personnel. Representatives of the employees union sit in the personnel committee of the agency. Such kind of participation has some empowering effects on the employees through their unions. Membership in the personnel committee has afforded them with the chance to discuss with management their concerns and issues affecting employees.

The case study strongly suggests that there is a need for an enabling work environment where efforts towards developing the capabilities of the employees for work would be sustained and maintained. As seen from the case, the agency has not done much to create such kind of an environment. For instance, the giving of rewards and incentives for good performance is seen to be a tool for enhancing capabilities of employees for work. But then, the agency, due to financial constraints, has not been able to sustain this effort.

An important aspect of an enabling work environment is the provision of logistical support for more efficient performance. The study has indicated the negative effects on the performance of the employees without sufficient and good equipment and facilities.

As seen from the case study, the introduction of the civil service reforms has attempted to broaden the concept of HRM under the principles of new public management model. As noted from the case, there is still the need to focus on the internal processes of managing the personnel such as recruitment, selection, promotion and the application of civil service rules and regulations to ensure efficiency and productivity among the workforce. However, the case has also depicted the fact that aside from improving the systems of managing the employees, there is the greater need of mobilizing and developing the capabilities of the workforce for more productivity and efficiency of the organization in response to the demands of the clients for more effective and efficient delivery of frontline services. Further, the case study has shown that the new public sector HRM has attempted to create more flexible structures and processes and has tried to decentralize authority to the sub-national level for faster decision-making processes and transactions. And at the job level, the new HRM system has emphasized performance and output measures. Indeed, the concept of HRM has taken a broader perspective under the principles of new public management.
Lessons Learned

As depicted from the case study, there are certain lessons that can be drawn from the implementation of public sector or civil service reforms, among which are the following:

1. **The need to include in the civil service or public sector reform agenda the changes to be made in the HRM and HRD functions and activities.** As seen from the case study, the performance, motivation, morale and job satisfaction of the employees are closely related to the changes in the management of human resource functions as well as to the development of the capabilities of the employees for work. In this regard, the implementation of the improvement strategies should be accompanied by the changes in the HRM and HRD functions and systems to effectively carry out the objectives of the reforms and ultimately improve the organization’s performance. For instance, changes in the system and procedures in the acquisition of personnel should be instituted where only the technically and psychologically prepared applicants are employed. The same case goes true to the promotion of personnel where promotion criteria are applied to all employees and that the promotion process would enhance professional competition between insiders and outsiders for the attainment of desired outputs and outcomes.

   At the job level, it is important for the employees to know their job responsibilities and accountabilities to be able to perform well their tasks. In this regard, management should prepare their personnel for the effective performance of their jobs by developing and enhancing their knowledge and skills to meet the requirements of their jobs. Management should also come up with performance measurements as standards for assessing good job performance.

2. **The need to technically prepare the employees for the new jobs or functions and responsibilities assigned to them.** The preparation would entail a clear understanding of their functions in relation to the overall goals and objectives of the office. This would likewise include training on their part to enable them to acquire the needed skills and knowledge before they assume their new jobs or functions.

3. **The need to orient and involve the employees in the processes contained in the reform agenda.** As found in the case study, the conduct of dialogues and meetings with the employees to explain the overall goals and objectives of the reforms is wanting. Thus, their lack of understanding of the principles and criteria involved in the changes has given rise to certain fears and anxieties about the changes in their work environment. These have contributed to the strong resistance of the employees to the implementation of the improvement strategies.
4. **The need to create an enabling work environment for the implementation of the reforms.** A work environment where the introduced changes and reforms are sustained and maintained by management could be seen as an enabling or facilitative kind of environment. One way of maintaining and sustaining the momentum for the implementation of the changes and reforms is the provision of good equipment and facilities to aid the employees in their work. As indicated in the case study, the lack of and poor quality of equipment and facilities have largely contributed to the job dissatisfaction of many employees. Even a comfortable working place where the employees could work conveniently for greater productivity appears to be a must.

   Another way by which the work environment can enable the employees to be more productive and efficient is to maintain and sustain an incentives award system. As seen in the case study, the giving of awards or incentives to good performers has set the work standards in the office to be emulated by all employees. The awards or incentives have also motivated the employees to work harder and perform their best in achieving the set performance targets. Unfortunately, as experienced by the sample agency, the employees got discouraged and were demotivated when the incentives stopped coming due to financial constraints.

5. **The need for a strong “political will” to implement the reform agenda.** One of the cited constraints in the implementation of the improvement strategies is the lack of “political will” on the part of the management to push through all the changes and reforms contained in the agenda. This gives the wrong message to the employees that the management is not “sincere” in instituting reforms in the organization. Thus, this contributes strongly to the disenchantment of the employees on the whole process of innovation and reforms.
References

Books


Papers


Steijn, Bram. “Human Resource a Neglected Subject”, Rotterdam: Erasmus University 2002

**Journal Articles**


**NSO Materials/Documents**

National Statistics Office Primer


Executive Order No. 5- Strengthening of the National Statistics Office

NSO Staffing Pattern Per Executive Order No. 5

NSO Plantilla of Personnel, CY 1993 and CY 2004

Personnel Complement Reports, CY 1999-2000 and CY 2004

List of Training Activities from 1997-2002

Primer of NSO Civil Registry System Project

Memorandum Circular 01-04: Guidelines In The Implementation of New Functions of the Field Office, March 8, 2001

NSO Office Circular No. 1: Merit Promotion Plan, July 1, 1990

NSO Merit Selection Plan (Revised, September 2002)

NEDA-NSO Government Manpower Information System: Tally of Positions by Organizational Unit, July 05, 2004