

**STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES
ADOPTED BY WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS WITHIN ATHI
WATER SERVICES BOARD**

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DECLARATION

This research proposal is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

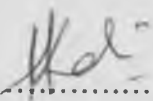
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DEDICATION

To my family who believed in me and urged me on even when the going got very tough. My loving husband, Ben Mkalama and my dotting children Lynda Mwisiwa, Kate Nabwire, and Jayden Ososo.

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ABSTRACT

Strategic human resource development is concerned with the continuous building of productive capacities within organization to enable them remain competitive in the market place. It focuses on planned human resource deployments and plans that are centred directly at the organization's employees. Strategic human resource development practices are employee developmental activities which an organization deliberately undertakes to ensure that the employees within the organization have the right skills, knowledge and attitudes to drive the organizational strategy. The water sector, which is one of the pillars of vision 2030, must have the right people to drive the objectives of the water sector reforms and to achieve the vision.

Water Service Providers (WSPs) are organizations appointed by Water Service Boards under the Water Act 2002 to provide water services within specified service areas. The study focused on WSPs operating within the Athi Water Service Board. The objective of the study was to establish the strategic human resource development practices adopted by Water Service Providers both at the macro and micro levels.

This was a descriptive census design and hence all the eleven registered, licensed and operating Water Service Providers within the Athi Water service board were taken for the study. Both primary and secondary data were used and data was analysed using descriptive statistics.

The study established that amongst the micro strategic human resource development practices, on the job training, job rotation and information technology are practiced at higher frequencies than job design, job enlargement, career development, job enrichment, multitasking and 360 degree feedback practices. On the other hand, amongst the macro practices peer consultation and delegation are highly practiced whereas empowerment and coaching are not common while succession planning is not practiced at all. Mentoring is practiced but at a moderate level.

The study concluded that there were no sufficient strategic human resource development practices adopted by the Water Service Providers. This was considered not sustainable for the sector as the employees do not have the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable the sector achieve its main objective of providing affordable and efficient water services.

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ACRONYMS

AWSB	Athi Water Services Board
IT	Information Technology
MOWI	Ministry of water and irrigation
SHRD	Strategic Human Resource Development
SHRDP	Strategic Human Resource Development Practices
WSPs	Water Service Providers
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
ODA	Overseas Development Authority
SIDA	Swedish International Development Authority
AFD	French Development Agency (AFD)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

According to Buzell and Gale (1987), the Challenges facing organizations today are as result of a number of issues namely globalization, liberalization of economies, technological changes and a more informed consumer who dictates what he/ she wants. According to Blaxill and Ralph (2009), the critical issue for organizations is for them to survive by countering the stiff competition in the market. They further argue that the ability of an organization to perform will not only depend on the strategies employed but also on the resources owned and developed by the organization. These resources will eventually define the organization's capability to maintain the onslaught of other competitors. This capability therefore, must be developed using both internal and external resources.

1.1.1 Concept of Strategy

Slack and Lewis (2002) argue that in today's highly competitive, internet-based, and global marketplace, it is important for companies to have a clear plan for achieving their goals. According to Porter (1985), in order to maintain a competitive position in the market place, a company must have a plan which must include the company's goals in the short term, medium term and also long term. He further observes that as the company puts these plans in place, they should have a clear understanding of the market- place, and how they will be able to differentiate themselves from their competitors. In effect, all other decisions made by the company must support this long-range plan.

Strategy has been defined by different authors from different perspectives. Porter (1995) defined strategy in terms of its function to the environment as the match between an organization's resources and skills and the environmental opportunities and risks it faces. Drucker (1974) defined strategy in relation to market and product choices, as the common thread among an organization's activities and the market. On the other hand Schelling (1980) defined strategy as the direction and scope of an organization that ideally matches the results of its changing environment and in particular its markets and customers so as to meet stakeholder expectation. The argument from these three definitions is that for the organization to be able to do business in its environment, it must have internal resources including human resources with the right skills that will enable it to properly deal with the challenges that it may face in the course of doing business.

Lamb, Robert and Boyden (1984) have taken the view that for any organization to be able to remain relevant to the customers, it must always endeavour to ensure that its plans both in the long term and in the short term are able to define the position of the organization in the market place. The plans normally involve, among other issues, plans around customers, products, market share, profitability and competitive edge. In order for these plans to be successful, organizations must check whether the people who will drive them have what it takes to ensure that they are achieved as envisaged (Kesler, 2000). This means that one of the most critical plans for organizations in both the short and long term is a plan for the development of the human resource to always be sure that they have the right staff in the right place doing the right thing in order to

be able to withstand the competition around them and therefore achieve the bigger strategic goals of the organization.

1.1.2 Strategic Human Resource Development

According to Lisk (1996), strategic human resource development refers to continuous development of the manpower to constantly achieve the set Vision and Mission of any organization and encompasses training and development and the use of other human resource development initiatives aimed at improving the performance of individuals. It involves planned approach to learning aimed at changes in knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudes and values and in the behaviour of a learner or group of learners. From the foregoing therefore, human resource development focuses on a series of actions directed at helping participants in the development process to increase their knowledge, skills and understanding and to develop the attitudes needed to bring about the designed developmental change.

Strategic human resource development refers to the ability of an organization to function as a resilient, strategic and autonomous entity through the development and acquisition of relevant manpower capabilities Zimmerman and Tregoe (1980). According to Glueck (1980) , the concept of human resource development refers to the building of sorts of productive capacities and investments in human resources, the aim of which is to enhance productive capacities in specific fields or improve organizational capacity in the organizations that are chosen as agents of development. This way, organizations become strategically placed to achieve their goals and objectives.

Ndege (2006) on the other hand views human resource human resource development as those activities which relate to developing of staff in all aspects of work to ensure that they have the ability to drive the organization's vision .It relates to leadership development, advocacy skills, training/speaking abilities, technical skills, organization skills and other areas of personal and professional development. When properly planned and applied, it may lead to improved governance, leadership, mission and strategy administration, programme development and implementation, increased income generation, partnerships and collaboration.

Conventional wisdom suggests that investments in human resource development are associated with a range of individual and organizational benefits. The Human Resource literature posits human resource development as the vital component in organizational processes of cultural change and an important behavioural device in terms of securing workforce commitment and in realizing the latent potential of employees (Keep, 1989). Similarly, economic studies identify training and development investments as key determinants of organizational performance and economic growth Rumelt (1980).

Zimmerman and Tregoe (1980) argue that strategic human resource development is critical in the improvement of organizational performance. He further argues that the impact of training is linked by a cause-and- effect chain, whereby “training leads to reactions, which leads to learning, which leads to changes in job behaviour, which leads to changes to organization, which leads to changes in the achievement of ultimate goals”

From the foregoing, strategic human resource development (SHRD) therefore encompasses human resource development as an essential part of development of the human resource of an organization in order to have staff with the right knowledge to help them focus and position the organization in its right place in the market.

1.1.3 Strategic Human Resource development Practices

Slack and Lewis (2002) argue that strategic human resource development practices can be defined as employee developmental activities which an organization deliberately undertake from time to time to ensure that the employees have what it takes in terms of skills, knowledge and attitude in order to drive the organizational strategy. These activities are undertaken in a planned manner depending on the short, medium and long term strategies of the organization. According to Buzell and Gale (1987) a good business strategy and one which is likely to succeed, is informed by people factors. Knowledge, skills and abilities have to be developed and used to the maximum if the organization is to create value. They further observe that the intangible value of an organization which lies on the people it employs and continuously develops is gaining recognition and it is generally now accepted that this has implications for long term sustained performance.

According to Lisk (1996), Strategic human resource practices can be viewed from two perspectives. These are macro and micro human resource development practices. Macro human resource development practices are designed for senior executives who include Chief Executive Officers, senior and middle level managers. These practices include Mentoring, coaching, peer consultations, empowerment, delegation and succession planning. Micro human resource development practices operate at both the

operational and senior executive levels. They include; career development, information technology, job rotation, job design, job enrichment, job enlargement, 360 degrees feedback, multitasking and on the job training.

1.1.4 Athi Water Services Board (AWSB)

Prior to the year 2002, the provision of water services was guided by the Water Act CAP 372 Laws of Kenya. Under this framework, the provision of water services was done by Local Authorities. There was a lot of inefficiency in the provision of the services and there were a lot of problems that were experienced (Ministry of Water and Irrigation, 2000). In order to tackle these challenges, the Government of Kenya embarked on deep rooted institutional reforms in the water sector within the new legal framework provided by the Water Act 2002. Eight Water Services boards were created to be in charge of defined areas of operations.

Athi Water Services Board is one of the eight Water Service boards and its area of Jurisdiction is provided for under Gazette notice number. 4913 of 13th June 2008 which include; Nairobi, Thika and Kiambu districts. Section 51 of the Water Act 2002 defines the responsibilities of all Water Service Boards to include; holding or leasing and developing water assets, contracting Water Service Providers (WSPs) commonly known as Water Companies who are their main agents in provision of water services, monitoring the Water Service Providers, developing human resource development programmes for the Water Service providers and preparing plans for improvement of services including expanding service coverage and reviewing tariffs

1.1.5 Water Service Providers (WSPs)

Water Services Providers (WSPs) are the entities through which Water Service Boards (WSB) provide water and sewerage services. The WSPs provide water services under appropriate agreements entered into between them and the Water Service Boards with the approval of the Water Services Regulatory Board, the regulator of the water sector. The plan of transfer of water services, Rules 2005 provide that WSPs may be community groups, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), private companies including those set up by local authorities for the specific purpose of operating water services. Section 57 of the Water Act 2002 describe their responsibilities to include maintaining and operating the infrastructure that is leased to them by the Water Service Boards, preparing business plans acceptable to the Water Service Boards which must indicate the plans for the WSP to develop its human capital and submitting reports to the WSBs for purposes of monitoring .There are eleven WSPs within the AWSB's area of jurisdiction (**refer to Appendix I**). Therefore, these eleven WSPs, as the entities through which AWSB provide water and sewerage services, are critical partners to the success of the AWSB.

Ghebrechristo (1983) carried out a study on manpower planning for the city commission and found out that there lacked properly coordinated human resource development practices both at the macro and micro level. According to Ghebrechristo (1983) this led to a myriad of problems including; high operation costs due to lack of prudent financial management, high water costs due lack of proper monitoring and lack of performance orientation. Ghebrechristo (1983) further found out that an

appropriate mechanism for reporting, monitoring and evaluating performance of personnel was missing and that there was lack of incentives and planning. He concluded that without the parallel upgrading of relevant human resource capacities to deal with the many identified challenges facing both the water and sewerage services in the country, the performance of the water sector as a whole and especially the success rate of specific water development projects may remain below expectation.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The need for human resource development has been highlighted by researchers who argue that it is important for organizations to build their human resource capacity in order to sustain competition. According to Drucker (1974), the aim of strategic human resource development is to enhance productive capacities in specific fields or increase organizational capacity in those organizations chosen as agents of development. Gluek (1980) is of the view that the purpose and nature of strategic human resource development is to provide the individuals with the intellectual skills on the one hand and to provide the organizations to utilize employee skills to meet their goals.

Before the water sector reforms, the provision of water services was faced by a lot of challenges revolving around planning, customer care, operations and maintenance which were partly precipitated by the fact that the employees of the local authorities (who by then provided water services) did not have sufficient skills and even those who did have the required skills were not adequately and continuously developed professionally to enable them face the ever evolving challenges in their work places. The Water Act was brought in to address this by making it a mandatory condition that

for anyone to be appointed as a Water Service Provider, they had to prove technical capacity to operate as a WSP. This means that they must have staff with the right skills. As part of the requirements of the Water, Act, WSPs must develop business plans acceptable to the Water Service Boards which must include strategies on how the WSPs intend to develop the human resource in order to deliver efficient water services. From the foregoing, the responsibilities bestowed upon WSPs by the law are heavy and therefore there is greater need to have a caliber of staff who can establish effective systems which meet legislative requirements and which ensures accountability to stakeholders.

In terms of notable studies carried out, Ndege (2006) carried out a survey on human resource development strategies in the state corporations in Kenya. Ndege found out that State corporations appreciated the fact that for any organization to remain competitive and in order for it to achieve its strategic plan, the development of the human resource must be continuously planned for and properly monitored. . Ndungu (2000) carried out a study on the relationship between human resource systems, business strategy implementation and performance which focused only on the relationships between the three variables. According to Ndungu (2000) organizations that plan for the development of their human resource were more likely to meet their strategic goals. Ghebrecristo (1983) focused on training methods and techniques in an organization with a focus on manpower planning in the Nairobi City Commission. He found out that for the Nairobi City Commission to improve the provision of water services there was an urgent need to develop a clear human resource development plan.

It can be observed from the foregoing that the need for a well developed human resource is important for the achievement of organizational goals. The water sector is no exception and the Water Act has put in place the responsibilities of the Water Service Providers towards this end. It is therefore of an academic interest to establish to what extent the Water Service Providers have complied to the provision of the Water Act to develop their human resource.

The above studies closely relate to strategic human resource development practices but do not deal specifically with strategic human resource development practices within the water service Providers within the Athi Water Service Board. In essence there is no study that has been undertaken to establish the strategic human resource practices adopted by WSPs within the AWSB. This study is therefore an attempt to bridge this gap.

1.3 Objective of the study

To establish the strategic human resource development practices adopted by Water Service Providers (WSPs) within the Athi Water Service Board (AWSB).

1.4 Importance of the study

The outcome of the study may form a basis for further research and add to studies already carried out in human resource development .The recommendations of the study will help motivate researchers to pursue further research in this area.

Athi Water services Board (AWSB) may find this study useful because it will show what strategies the WSPs within its area are using in developing their human resource.

This way, the AWSB will be in a position to improve on its strategies in monitoring human resource development programmes in the water companies and even propose new strategies to the WSPs in staff development programmes. Other Water Service Boards will also benefit in the same manner.

This study will also be useful to all the Water Service Providers in the country in that they will be able to understand what strategies the WSPs within AWSB have put in place to ensure that they have human resources that can grapple with the many challenges facing the water sector especially now that the WSPs are still settling down and putting in the structures that are required in order to be able to provide efficient water services.

The Government and its related agencies and development partners may find the study important in that they will understand the different strategic human development practises that may be applied by different organizations in the different sectors of the economy to continuously develop their human resource.

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation in particular may use this report to audit the human resource development programmes in all the WSPs in the country and therefore determine whether the WSPs are in compliant with the law. The Ministry will also be able to understand the human resource development needs and therefore compel the Water Service Boards in the country to develop appropriate programmes for the WSPs.

The Water Services Regulatory Board (WASREB) may use this study to understand how well the WSPs and Water Service Boards (WSBs) are complying with the law in

so far as human resource development is concerned and therefore propose regulations and new laws that will assist in monitoring total compliance by both the WSBs and the WSPs.

Stakeholders in the Water Sector may use the outcome of this study to help develop their human resource which is important for the attainment of the Vision 2030 in so far as the provision of water and sewerage services is concerned.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Strategic Human Resource Development

Strategic human resource development has been defined based on different perspectives. Kotler and Armstrong (1994) define Strategic human resource development as the development activities undertaken by organizations in their long term ability to achieve their missions effectively and efficiently through management, governance and persistent re-dedication to achieve results. Banfield et al (1999) also define strategic human resource development as employee development activities that improve an organization's ability to achieve its mission or a person's ability to define and realize his/her goals or to do his/her job more effectively. This view of Banfield et al (1999) is supported by Harrison (1997) who defines strategic human resource development as the development of employees to enable them do what they already know in a better way in order to achieve organizational long and short term goals.

According to Pearson Et al (1992), strategic human resource development focuses specifically on the pattern of planned human resource deployments and activities intended to enable the organization to achieve its goals. Such activities are workforce centered directed mainly at the organization's employees, finding and training them, working modalities of payment, explaining management expectations, justifying management's action, satisfying employees' work related needs, dealing with their problems and seeking to modify management action that could produce unwelcome employee response..

Harrison (1997) argues that strategic human resource development therefore involves a planned approach to learning aimed at changes in knowledge, skills, understandings, attitudes and values and in the behaviour of a learner or group of learners. The author further observes that it focuses on a series of actions directed at helping participants in the development process to increase their knowledge, skills and understandings and to develop the attitudes needed to bring about the designed developmental change. From the foregoing, strategic human resource development is therefore associated with the technical goal of providing a trained work force, promoting the knowledge and skills required by organizations to acquire greater prosperity and achieve its goals both in the long term and in the short term.

According to Cohen (1993), strategic human resource development is intended to provide or build productive capabilities and encompasses aspects of awareness in raising education and training attitude change, confidence building, participation in decision making and action. The critical goal being the maximization of people's potential to contribute to development by participating fully in all activities. It develops the effectiveness of the human resource which is critical for the provision of the key to competitive differentiation between firms.

Meritz (1997) on the other hand argues that strategic human resource development involves the organizational mechanisms used to support the training and development of individuals, the critical goal being the maximization of people's potential to contribute to the development and achievement of organizational goals both in the short term and also in the long run by actively participating fully in all activities

geared towards organizational success. In order for an organization to remain relevant, these activities must be monitored and reviewed from time to time.

As an organization that engages in strategic human resource development, it is expected that four training outcomes would eventually be achieved. These are; trainees' reaction to the programme content and training process, knowledge and skill acquisition at the end of the programme(learning) , behaviour change in the job (behaviour) and improvements in tangible individual or organizational outcomes such as turnover, accidents or productivity (result).

Strategic human resource development process should be seen as a continuous exercise in structured autonomous and social learning of individuals and organizations in order to adapt abilities to the continuously emanating opportunities, challenges and constraints in the market place. This exercise assists in the diagnosis of organizational performance and institutional strengths and weaknesses; it articulates and prioritizes the required capacities that need to be imparted to the individuals and institutions and it implements the support by using a variety of tools and instruments (Tregaskis et al, 2001).

Strategic human resource development has gained prominence in the recent past; with many international organizations taking centre stage in expounding its importance in the contribution towards economic growth [United Nation Development Program (UNDP), 1992, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), World Bank]. In Africa, the setting up of the African Institute for Capacity Building headquartered at the Jomo Kenyatta University for Advanced Technology [JKUAT] Nairobi, Kenya, was a milestone in itself because it then sets the pace for economic growth.

Strategic human resource development is viewed as a critical tool for development. United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] regards it as the process by which individuals, groups, organizations and societies increase their abilities to perform functions, solve problems and achieve objectives, to understand and deal with their development needs in a broader context and in a sustainable manner [UNDP, 1992]. This in essence indicates that capacity is critical in achieving the global objective of poverty reduction particularly within the developing world and in the Organizational sense, it is critical in achieving the broader strategic organizational goals and objectives.

The World Bank on the other hand, initiated moves that focused on strategic human resource development with other bilateral agencies including the [United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Overseas Development Authority, Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA), the French Development Agency (AFD) They have focused on funding related efforts throughout Africa for many years [Africa Capacity Building Initiatives, 1990]. This underscores the importance of human resource development in helping sustain aid Initiatives. 1993].

2.2 Theories of Human Resource Development

According to Learner (1986) Studies have been conducted on better understanding of Strategic human resource development. The studies conducted included the review of theories underpinning strategic human resource development and arguments that have been advanced in literature. These studies are aimed at ensuring that there was a better understanding of the multidimensional facets of change and human resource

development. Millesen & Bies (2005) carried out a study to investigate the degree to which four mainstream organizational theories are useful in understanding, explaining and predicting why No-Profit organizations might engage in Strategic human resource development. Accordingly, each theory paints an incomplete picture of a highly complex phenomenon because although each theory takes into account the critical relationship between organizations and its environment, each focuses on a different set of antecedent conditions to the actual human resource development relationship (Millesen and Bies 2005). The theories analyzed were the strategic management theory, the resource dependence theory, the agency theory and the Institutional theory.

2.2.1 Strategic Management Theory

According to Millesen and Bies (2005), Strategic Management Theory advocates the making of deliberate choices by organizations in order to better themselves vis-à-vis the environment. From this end, strategic management perspective emphasizes the importance of engaging in Strategic human resource development to respond to environmental contingencies such as identification of training needs or technical assistance, the incorporation of feedback to guide implementation and improving individual and organizational learning

Slack and Lewis (2002) support this position and argue that managers in this case deliberately and willingly take human resource development activities so that they can improve decision making and make practical changes which are responsive to constituent expectations and make most of environmental opportunities in order to attain and sustain competitive advantage. Some of these include peer consultations,

coaching, mentoring, networking and career development programmes. This theory therefore presumes that once an organization engages in strategic human resource development activities, it is better placed to compete in the market place.

2.2.2 Resource Dependence Theory

The resource dependent theory holds that the ability to acquire and maintain resources is essential to organizational survival. This observation has also been shared by Armstrong and Baron (1998) who have argued that the acquisition and retention of employees is critical to organizational success. According to Millesein and Bles (2005), this theory is based on three assumptions which emphasise on the need to engage in human resource development activities. The first assumption is that no organization controls all of the resources it needs to survive and this must interact with the environment. Organizations must therefore develop capacity to be able to resist being controlled and constrained by other organizations, to mitigate dependence relationships and to reduce environmental uncertainty. The second assumption is that organizations are actually embedded in their environment. That is, organization's actions are not simply a function of internal structures, decisions, processes or goals; rather they are a function of and depend upon the external environment as well This argument has been supported by Arango Et al (1999).The authors observed that organizations undertake human resource development in order to improve programs (Increase self sufficiency) and to provide sufficient infrastructure which may not exist. Such infrastructure may be in the form of capital, time and manpower.

The third assumption is that organizations have the potential of shaping the environment. Human resource development would therefore be necessary in order to advertise and promote organizations in a way that demonstrate development and growth. In essence, managers would engage themselves in human resource development activities in order to secure the resources required for survival. Pearson Et al (1992) reinforced this position and argued that for an organization to properly position itself, it must engage in some specific human resource development programmes otherwise it will not have face in the market place.

2.2.3 The Agency Theory

Millesen and Bies (2005) argues that the agency theory predicts that agents are likely to behave opportunistically, misrepresent their abilities to the principal in order to obtain the contract (adverse selection) and “shirk” not put forth the agreed upon level of effort (moral hazard). Organizations, particularly managers, engage in human resource development in order to send a powerful message to those who are looking to reduce agency costs. Organizations therefore participate in trainings obtaining essential organizational and professional credentials, certifying relevant staff and promoting continuing education. It further predicts that managers engage in human resource development because they are contractually obligated to do so. In other words, principals require agents to conduct human resource development to minimize the risk of making an adverse selection or embarking upon moral hazard. As a result, managers are coerced into engaging in activities that demonstrate their ability, worthiness and success

2.2.4 Institutional Theory

The Institutional Theory focuses on the ways in which organizational structure and processes reflect institutional pressures, rules, norms and sanctions. Institutionalization occurs when organizations enact similar behaviors. Therefore, organizations became isomorphic. And isomorphism occurs through coercive mimetic or normative processes. Organizations may therefore undertake human resource development activities because it may be a requirement for licensing (legal and political pressure) or pressure to professionalize. This is through specialized training, education and credentialing. In their study, Dunphy and Slace (1990) observed that the employer-employee relationship is contractual and therefore all that arise out of it happen because it is required to be undertaken by the contract. Failure to undertake these requirements, then would amount to a breach of contract.

2.3 Strategic Human Resource Development Practices

According to Lisk (1996), Strategic human resource practices can be viewed from two perspectives. These are the macro and micro human resource development practices.

2.3.1 Macro human resource development practices

According to Learner (1996), the macro perspective addresses the methods used at the strategic level to identify Human resource development needs for the organization that will ensure that the organization stays focused in the achievement of its strategic goals in the long term. Mallak and Kurstedt (1996) also noted that macro human resource development practices are designed for senior executives of organizations

who are expected to provide leadership in the implementation of the organizational strategic plan. These practices include Mentoring, coaching, peer consultations, delegation, succession planning and empowerment.

Mentoring is one of approaches used by organizations to develop employees. According to Parsloe, of The Oxford School of Coaching & Mentoring; Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximize their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the people they want to be. Buell (2004) further observes that unlike other techniques, mentoring introduces an independent and objective source of help from outside that is independent of the line Manager. In this case, someone else other than the line Manager is therefore used to help another to achieve something. Bozeman & Feeney (2007) affirms the importance of mentoring in organizations and says in his study that mentoring is about giving help and support in a non-threatening way, in a manner that the recipient will appreciate. The authors further observe that this creates value and empowers employees to move forward with confidence towards what they want to achieve.

According to Aryee, Wyatt and Stone (1996) Mentoring is also concerned with creating an informal environment in which one person can feel encouraged to discuss their needs and circumstances openly and in confidence with another person who is in a position to be of positive help to them. Bullis and Bach (1989) observe that organizations have today even gone further and are sourcing mentors from outside the organization. According to the two authors above, these mentors from outside the organization are able at the end of the day to freely discuss with the employees and

advise them on areas that employees need to be developed in order to keep pace with the demands of their jobs. From the foregoing it is clear that mentoring brings about career development and confidence among employees and its effects are evident in the long run rather than short term and assists organization in developing employee development programmes.

Coaching of employees in another macro human resource development practice used by organizations to develop their employees. Parsloe (1999) has defined Coaching as a management style which requires managers to help other people unlock their potential and enhance their own performance. It is about supporting people to learn instead of telling them what the answers are. Clutterbuck & Megginson, (1999) observed that the mindset of the manager-coach is to create an environment that fosters learning, independent thinking and opportunities to contribute. On the other hand, Armstrong, M. and Baron, A. (1998) argues that in coaching, the manager-coach doesn't want to be seen as a solution provider. Rather, they want to be seen as a facilitator, paving the way for team members to achieve their career objectives. Arango et al, (1996) also argue that coaching removes barriers and boundaries and emphasizes individual and team achievement of a common organizational goal. The coaching leadership style builds personal and team morale and fosters a partnership where employees feel like they are contributing to the success of the organization. The authors conclude that by the end of the coaching process, the employee is better refined and can be able to perform his or her duties better and on the part of the organization, it understands employee development needs more clearly.

Peer consultation is another strategy used in strategic human resource development. Benschoff (1993) defines peer consultation as an arrangement in which peers work together for mutual benefit. Each of them therefore uses his or her skills to help the other function more effectively in their professional roles. Wagner & Smith (1979) observe that peer consultation involves participants of similar levels of experience within the business and preferably in different areas. In this case, there is no mentor but each of the peers guides the other. Armstrong & Baron argue that that peer consultation resulted in greater self confidence, increased self drive and therefore improved organizational performance. In his study, Benschoff,(1993) came to the conclusion that through peer network, employees are able to develop in their careers through sharing experiences and knowledge ,challenging each other's assumptions and expanding each other's networks.

Seligman, (1978) also supports the importance of peer consultation in organizations and confirmed during his study that during the consultations, the peers are able to identify areas that need more capacity building and therefore design development programmes to address the areas identified. Seligman (1978) also found out that peer consultations helped increase counselor trainees level of empathy, respect, genuiness and concreteness. Organizations on the other hand have been able to strategically develop their employees and position them properly in order to be able to take up their responsibility more effectively.

Another macro human resource development practice is delegation. Jenks & Kelly (1986) define delegation (or deputation) as the assignment of authority and responsibility to another person (normally from a manager to a subordinate) to carry

out specific activities. However the person who delegated the work remains accountable for the outcome of the delegated work. This practice is supported by Gilardi (1998) on the ground that it empowers a subordinate to make decisions and it is therefore a shift of decision-making authority from one organizational level to a lower one. When delegation is done properly it does not amount to abdication (Culp & Smith (1997).

The opposite of effective delegation is micromanagement, where a manager provides too much input, direction, and review of delegated work. In their study, Jenks & Kelly (1986) found out that in general, delegation is good and can save money and time, help in building skills, and motivate people; and that poor delegation, on the other hand, might cause frustration and confusion to all the involved parties.

According to Slack and Lewis, (2002), delegation aids in succession planning in that employees are exposed to more challenging assignments hence making them continually able to meet the ever increasing challenges in the market place. Organizations have been able to reap high performance, increased motivation, and skills development where proper delegation has been utilized. Also, when employees are exposed to higher responsibilities, organizations are able to develop proper human resource programmes that will be used by the organization in the future. It is a way of developing employees within the work place and thus enhances change over during the absence of managers.

Succession planning is another strategy used in developing human resources at the macro level. According to Clutterbuck & Megginson (1999), succession planning as a

strategic human resource development tool is not simply about identifying people for the top leadership positions but it is a Strategic Management process used for identifying and developing internal people with the potential to fill key leadership positions in the company. Management in this case identifies individuals who have the potential to take up more challenging jobs and come up with training and skills enhancement programmes that would prepare them to assume higher responsibilities. Kessler (2000) also argues that succession planning increases the availability of experienced and capable employees that are prepared to assume these roles as they become available and concludes that succession planning also builds a pipeline of employees ready to step into various key job roles throughout an organization

Empowerment of employees is also used as a strategy for developing employees at the macro level. Yasar, Jarra & Zairi (2002) define empowerment as the process of enabling or authorizing an individual to think, behave, take action, and control work and decision making in autonomous ways. It is the state of feeling self-empowered to take control of one's own destiny. Employees are given lee way to participate in the decision making process. Bowen & Lawler E (1995) are of the view that employee empowerment is a strategy and philosophy that enables employees to make decisions about their jobs and considers it mandatory for any organization that want to remain relevant.

According to Mallak & Kurstedt (1996), empowerment helps employees own their work and take responsibility for their results and also helps employees serve customers at the level of the organization where the customer interfaces with the

employee. They further see it as the state of feeling self-empowered to take control of one's own destiny and see it as a way of encouraging employees to come up with their own ideas out of which the organization can understand the developmental needs and therefore come up with ways of developing the employees further to enable them perform their duties optimally. From the foregoing therefore, employee empowerment is a tool that when used properly is capable of developing internal human capacity that may transform an organization.

Derick (1985) proposes that employee empowerment should be based on four levers. These are clear vision and challenge, openness and team work, discipline and control, support and a sense of security. These levers explain both the mechanistic and organic perspectives on empowerment, which must be integrated in order to achieve a sustained level of employee empowerment (Quinn and Sprietzer, 1999).

2.3.2 Micro human resource development practices

The micro perspective identifies the degree to which internal career development systems facilitate organizational progression and personal development. It also addresses the extent to which organizations perceive need for skill enhancement to equip the employees with relevant skills for future work demand. It addresses the issues of mechanisms to manage employees' careers and skill areas. These practices are the ones used by Management as part of their daily employee programmes that are expected to improve employee performance at the work place and hence achieve organizational goals. They are designed both for the senior executives and the lower cadre of staff. These practices include; career development, information technology,

job rotation, job enrichment, job enlargement, on the job training, 360 degrees feedback, multitasking and job design.

Rhebergen & Wognum (2002) have described career development as a process that organizations deliberately undertake in order to develop its employees to meet future challenges. It is a process that involves the developing and planning the career paths of employees. They further observed that as career paths are charted, Management also use this process to develop proper human resource development programmes that would ensure that employees are trained and skills upgraded as they climb the organizational ladder to occupy positions of higher responsibilities. Many researchers have observed that career development programmes that are properly thought through can increase productivity. Kaissler (2000) has argued that career development facilitates the organization's objective of showing a well articulated, growth oriented yet flexible career paths to its employees. Properly planned career paths have enabled organizations to record increased staff motivation, increased staff retention and as a result, increased organizational performance.

Information technology (IT) is another micro human resource development practice that has been hailed as a catalyst of human resource development. The role of technology in the development and sustainability of human resources has attracted a number of studies with various outcomes. Powell and Micalet (1997) investigated linkages between information technology (IT) and firm performance and observed that there was little solid empirical work or synthesis of findings in the area of IT and performance. The findings showed that information technology alone has not produced sustainable performance advantages in the organization but that some firms

have gained advantages by using it to leverage intangible, complementary human and business resources such as flexible culture, strategic planning–information technology integration, and supplier relationships. According to Powell and Micalet (1997) the results support the resource-based approach, and help to explain why some firms outperform others using the same information technology and why successful information technology users often fail to sustain IT-based competitive advantages.

Another aspect of micro Human Resource Development practices is job rotation. According to Day (2000), job rotation is defined as an approach where an individual is moved through a schedule of assignments designed to give an employee a breadth of exposure to the entire operation. It is practiced to allow qualified employees to gain more insights into the processes of a company, and to reduce boredom and increase job satisfaction through job variation. North (1992) also argues that the objective, of job rotation is to expose the employees to different experiences and wider variety of skills to enhance job satisfaction and to cross-train them.

Ortega (2001) observes that many firms use job rotation and it has proved to be a better learning and motivation force for the employees. He has given two explanations for this. The first reason being that it fosters employee learning and increases human capital accumulation (a key component of human resource capacity development).It therefore exposes employees to a variety of experiences and may in this way contribute to their professional development. The second reason is that job rotation increases motivation and is viewed as a mechanism to reduce boredom and keep the employees interested in their work. Meyer (1994) examined the relationship between job rotation and development of the human resource and observed that when

employees rotate, a firm receives information about how well the different employees match the different jobs as well as the profitability of each job. This is important for the development of the required workforce

In his study, Brikenhorff, (2006) was of the view that job rotation need to be employed with other human capacity development programs. While the managerial skills associated with more conventional projects are useful to social development managers, he argues that social development management places greater emphasis on entrepreneurial behaviour and attention to both analysing and influencing the environment external to the organization. Aebi (1972) in his study on the effect of job rotation as a human resource development tool says that facilitating the creation of local-level capacity and developing the human resource, also requires strong interpersonal skills. In his argument therefore, he suggests a combination of skills training and job rotation as the best approach to preparing social development managers.

Another micro human resource development practice is job enrichment. It is an idea that was developed by the American psychologist Frederick Herzberg in 1950. Herzberg (1996) defines it as the process by which employees are given an opportunity to use the range of their abilities. Miskel (1982) has also defined job enrichment as a type of job redesign intended to reverse the effects of tasks that are repetitive requiring little autonomy. Some of these effects are boredom, lack of flexibility, and employee dissatisfaction. From these definitions therefore, the underlying principle is to expand the scope of the job with a greater variety of tasks, vertical in nature, that require self-sufficiency. Aebi (1972) argues that since the goal

is to give the individual exposure to tasks normally reserved for differently focused or higher positions, merely adding more of the same responsibilities related to an employee's current position is not considered job enrichment.

According to Herzberg (1996) many organizations use job enrichment where employees are allowed to show case their strengths. He further observes that the advantage of this management process is that the organization is able to tap on the best ideas from the employees and is able then to come up with human resource development programmes that will develop the employee and also ensure that the organization has a work force that is able to work in a competitive environment.

Job enlargement is also another micro human resource development practice used. It is a Management technique used to increase the number of tasks that an employee should perform without changing the challenge. According to Brinkerhoff (2006), it involves addition of tasks at the same level of skill and responsibility. He observes that increasing of tasks that an employee can do could mean that an employee is required to perform tasks that are not even within their divisions. For example, an accountant may also be required to undertake human resource duties. This has been found to be very useful by employees because it has been possible for staff to step in when some of their colleagues are indisposed. The technique ensures that one can perform various jobs cutting across departments. Ortega (2001) argues that when employees are used this way, the organization is able to pick the strong attributes of staff and reinforce them and also they are able to identify areas that may need

enhancement. This way Human resource development programmes are developed in order to address the weak areas identified.

- ✓ On the job training is another macro human development practice. Jacob et al (1985) argue that on-the-job training focuses on the acquisition of skills within the work environment generally under normal working conditions. Through on-the-job training, workers acquire both general skills that they can transfer from one job to another and specific skills that are unique to a particular job. Rothwell et al (1994) affirm this position and further observes that on-the-job training has been used to develop employees and typically includes verbal and written instruction, demonstration and observation, and hands-on practice and imitation. In addition, the on-the-job training process involves one employee, usually a supervisor or an experienced employee, passing knowledge and skills on to a novice employee. The supervisor is normally at hand to ensure that the trainee has mastered the techniques that he or she is being trained in. Management is able to determine areas that employees are weak in and therefore come up with appropriate human resource development programmes that would continuously improve the technical capacities of employees. Armstrong and Baron (1998) has referred to this practice as “sitting by Joe”

The 360 degrees feedback is another macro human resource development practice. Handy (1996) has described the 360 degree feedback as a process whereby an individual (the recipient) is rated on his or her performance by people who know something about his or her work (the raters). This can include direct reports, peers and managers and in some cases customers or clients, in fact anybody who is credible to the individual and is familiar with their work can be included in the feedback process.

This is usually in addition to completing a self-assessment on performance. The data gathered is then compiled into a report showing the employee's strengths and development needs according to the people he/she works closest with.

Graeme (1998) argues that the resulting information from the feedback is presented to the individual with the aim of helping them to gain a better understanding of their skills and development areas. Each source can provide a different perspective on the individual's skills, attributes and other job relevant characteristics and thus help to build up a richer, more complete and accurate picture than could be obtained from any one source. He further argues that from the results, organizations can develop meaningful human resource development programmes.

Fletcher et al (1998) are of the view that the 360 degree feedback, also known as multi-level, multi-source feedback, is a very powerful and sensitive process. It can increase the individual's awareness of how their performance is viewed by their colleagues and indeed how it compares with their own view of their performance. They also observed that 360 degrees feedback can serve as a strong spur for development and behaviour change. It's very power means that it needs to be managed professionally. The authors above argue that there can be costs, both for the individual and the organisation in getting it wrong. They further argue that this system can be successfully used as a stand-alone employee intervention or as an integral part of another human resource system such as performance management.

✓ Learner (1986) defines multitasking as the ability of an employee to perform different tasks across different job descriptions. The author observes that employees are able to derive satisfaction from their work since each feels a sense of belonging and acceptance. The author further notes that multitasking results to better utilization of the human resource and reduction of costs especially in the sales and benefits budget because one individual is able to perform several tasks instead of having to recruit several people to perform the different tasks . According to Leonard (1984), multitasking has now become an important component of job performance for a growing number of professions including- air traffic controllers, taxi drivers, receptionists, engineers and many others. Their study found that individuals who prefer working on multiple tasks simultaneously enjoy the experience of multitasking more and are able to derive satisfaction from their jobs. They further found out that by multitasking, an employee is able to reduce the repetitiveness of a job and reduce boredom. They concluded that multitasking should be used in organizations because it develops staff and also enables organization to be able to utilize their employees' abilities to the benefit of the organization.

✓ According to Clare et al (2005) job design is a work arrangement (or rearrangement) aimed at reducing or overcoming job dissatisfaction and employee alienation arising from repetitive and mechanistic tasks. The authors described job design as the process of deciding on the contents of a job in terms of its duties and responsibilities, on the methods to be used in carrying out the job, in terms of techniques, systems and procedures and on the relationships that should exist between the job holder and his supervisor, subordinates and colleagues.

Vemic (2007) argues that through job design, organizations try to raise productivity levels by offering non-monetary rewards such as greater satisfaction from a sense of personal achievement in meeting the increased challenge and responsibility of one's work.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

This was a descriptive census design. The adoption of this design is justified on the ground of its exhaustiveness and personal touch with the respondents and also by the fact that the population under study is small. This methodology has been adopted by the following studies; Muyoyo (2004) using Companies quoted at the NSE; Kiyeng' (2003) Korir (2005) using tour operators listed by Kenya Association of Tour Operators; and Ndege 2006 on state corporations in Kenya.

3.2 The Population

The Athi Water Service Board (AWSB) which is one of the Water Service Boards created by the new water act 2002 is mandated to appoint all Water Service Providers within its area of jurisdiction which covers Nairobi, Thika and Kiambu. Currently, AWSB has appointed eleven (11) WSPs within its area (appendix I). The population of the study was all the Water Service Providers appointed by the AWSB. This was therefore a census study as all the Water Service Providers within AWSB were used.

3.3 Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data was collected using a self administered semi structured questionnaire. Closed ended questions were used to guide the interviewee. Closed ended questions were structured and therefore facilitated analysis. Open ended questions were also used in the data collection. They

assisted in getting information from the respondents that could not be elicited from the closed ended questions. The questionnaire was divided in two parts. Part A was used to capture the demographics of the Water Service Providers while Part B was used to collect data on the strategic human development practices adopted by the Water Service Providers. A drop and pick method was used. The questionnaires were filled by Managing directors in some cases and in others by the heads of the human resource function.

Secondary data was collected using the already existing company documents like the Strategic plan, the budget and the Performance contracts signed between the Athi Water Service Board and the Water Service Providers.

3.4 Data Analysis

The raw data collected through the Questionnaires was edited for accuracy, uniformity, consistency and completeness before analysis. The edited data was analysed using descriptive statistics. Specifically the researcher used averages, modes, and means to analyse the data. Tables were used to present the results. These provided a pictorial view of the outcomes.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers data analysis and interpretation. It is divided into three main parts. The first part discusses the key demographics upon which the key research questions are based. These include the firms' year of registration and licensing, number of employees, and number of departments. The second part discusses a review of the strategic plan in so far as the planning for human resource development activities are concerned and also a review of budget allocation to human resource development activities. The third part discusses the actual analysis of the research findings. It addresses the degree to which each water service provider (WSP) studied has adopted strategic human resource development activities. This section has two subsections that discuss the SHRD practices adopted by the WSPs both at the macro and micro level.

The research findings are presented using tables. The population of the study consisted of all the eleven Water Service Providers (WSPs) licensed and operating under Athi Water Service Board. Ten WSPs responded to the survey by the close of the study. This represented a response rate of 91% that can be used to reliably make valid conclusions on what strategic human resource development practices that these Water Service Providers have put in place both at the macro and the micro levels. The respondents were Chief Executives Officers and heads of human resource departments of the WSPs.

4.2 Demographics characteristics of the respondents

There were a total of eleven WSPs within AWSB at the time that this study was undertaken. These WSPs provide water services within Nairobi, Kiambu and Thika. They were appointed to operate after 2002 when the Water Act 2002 became operational and therefore all the ten WSPs have been in operations for less than ten years. The initial staff were seconded from water departments within local authorities and the NWCPD operating in those areas. Due to the similar nature of their functions, all the WSPs within AWSB operate using four main departments

4.2.1 Firms registration and Licensing

Before the enactment of the Water Act 2002, water services across the country were previously being provided by Local authorities and the Ministry of Water and Irrigation through the National Water and Conservation Pipeline Corporation (NWCPD). The Water Act 2002 became operational in the year 2002 and with it came the conditions of licensing Water service Providers (WSPs). All the WSPs within Athi Water Services Board that were considered in the study were appointed and licensed to operate after the operationalization of the Water Act in the year 2002. Consequent to the operationalization of the Act, water departments in local authorities in the country and in the NWCPD were transformed into water companies and were registered afresh as per the requirements of the law. The distribution of the WSPs based on their registration is as per Table 4.01 below. The firms were found to be of different ages

Table 4:01 Year of Registration

Year of Registration	Frequency	Percent
2002-2004	1	10%
2004- 2007	7	70%
2007- 2010	2	20%

(Source: Researcher)

From Table 4.01 it can be observed that all the WSPs have been in existence for less than ten years.

The licensing process followed the registration of the WSPs as independent companies under the Companies Act chapter 486 laws of Kenya. This process took less than five months. The WSPs were given operating licenses as per the dates indicated in table 4.02 below.

Table 4.02 Year of Licensing

Year of Licensing	Frequency	Percent
2002-2004	1	10%
2004- 2007	7	70%
2007- 2008	2	20%

(source: Researcher)

4.2.3 Number of Employees

Water Service Providers (WSPs) operate under very strict guidelines issued by the Water Services Regulatory Board (WASREB), the regulator for the water sector, through the Water Service Boards (WSBs) who monitor the operations of the WSPs. These guidelines cover governance and institutional issues like organizational structures. For purposes of ensuring that there is efficiency in the provision of water

services, the AWSB, using the guidelines from the WASREB, limit the number of employees to be employed within the WSPs in order to help the WSPs maintain a lean staff.

From the study, it was observed that the number of employees within all the ten WSPs is relatively low save for one firm which has over two thousand employees The reason being that the city council of Nairobi from which the company was formed was one of the oldest and biggest local authorities in the country and was serving a population of over four million. It also had the biggest infrastructure in the country. Due to the high number of consumers and the size of its infrastructure, the council had to recruit many employees who were absorbed by the new Company. The distribution of the firms in terms of the number of employees is given in Table 4.03 below.

Table 4.03 Number of Employees

WSPs	Number of Employees
1	43
2	166
3	21
4	36
5	30
6	43
7	2500
8	15
9	35
10	10
Total	2899

(source: Researcher)

4.2.4 Number of Departments

Using the guidelines issued by the Water Services Regulatory Board (WASREB) the Athi Water Services Board (AWSB) has provided WSPs within its area with a general framework of management in terms of the kind of organizational establishment that the WSPs should maintain together with organization structures to be put in place to ensure that there is proper optimization of the human resources within each water Service Provider. All the ten WSPs studied operate with four main departments which are designed based on the main functions of the WSP. The Departments are similar in all the WSPs. The departments and their main functions are as discussed below;

The Finance and Administration department is key to all the WSPs. Its main functions include financial planning and control; debt collection, production of accounting and financial reports; monitoring of financial performance and developing and implementing Board resolutions on financial management, cash management and credit control. The Human Resource Department is concerned with the recruitment of staff, employee remuneration, administrative duties, developing human resource policies, employee pension, discipline and implementing Boards resolutions on human resource matters. The commercial/ marketing department is concerned with billing and collection, disconnections and reconnections, marketing the WSP, and responding to customer queries. The department also acts as the interface between WSP and the public. The technical department mainly deals with the operations and maintenance of the water and sewerage infrastructure, putting up of new infrastructure, and developing and implementing plans for future infrastructure

development and improvement. All the functions of the four departments are intended to ensure that there is efficient provision of water services.

4.3 Human resource development strategy

Human resource development strategy refers to the building of productive capacities and investment in human resources, the aim of which is to enhance skills in specific fields or improve organizational capacity in the organizations that are chosen as agents of development. It ensures that employees have the right knowledge, skills and attitude to help them focus and position the organization in its right place in the market.

4.3.1 Human resource development strategy and strategic plans

Organizational strategies are developed in the strategic plans. As organizations plan how to achieve the plans, they must also worry about the people who will drive those plans. Human resource development strategy therefore revolve around putting in place developmental plans for the human resource within the organization in order to ensure that the employees have the right skills, knowledge and attitude to be able to achieve the plans.

The analysis and review of both the strategic and business plans of all the ten WSPs showed that there were no plans at all for the development of the human resource. Clearly the WSPs did not see the connection between human resource development and organizational performance and therefore the need to develop strategic human resource development plans for the employees.

4.3.2 Human resource development and budget allocations

In order to have sustainable HRD programmes, organizations must take a deliberate move and ensure that the programmes are funded just like any other programme undertaken in the organization, for instance infrastructure development. This is because the human resource is the single most important resource that an organization must nurture at all times because it is the people who drive the strategy. HRD is therefore as important as any other undertaking in the organization and needs to be budgeted for.

The analysis of the financial statements of the WSPs show no tangible allocations for human resource development programmes save for the usual annual increments. The budget allocation towards human resource development programmes, in relation to the total organizational budget, ranges from as little as 0% to 12%. It was established that among the WSPs studied, two (20%) had a budget of between 0% to 5%; seven (70%) had a budget of between 5% to 10% and only one (10%) had a budget of 12% allocated to HRD programmes. These levels of budget allocation for HRD activities cannot be sufficient to carry out reasonable developmental programmes to enhance employee skills. The WSPs are likely to face sustainability challenges if they don't continuously develop their employees. The distribution is different amongst all the WSPs as summarized in the table 4.04 below.

Table 4.04 percentage of budget

Percentage of budget allocation	Frequency	percentage
0-5	2	20
5-10	7	70
10-15	1	10
TOTAL	10	100

(Source: Researcher)

4.4 Micro human resource development practices

The micro perspective identifies the degree to which internal career development systems facilitate organizational progression and personal development. It also addresses the extent to which organizations perceive the need for skill enhancement to equip the employees with relevant skills for future work demand. It addresses the issues of mechanisms to manage employees' careers and skill areas. These practices are the ones used by Management as part of their daily employee programmes that are expected to improve employee performance at the work place and hence achieve organizational goals. This section seeks to analyze the level at which the WSPs within the AWSB have adopted the micro human resource practices as part of their human resource development strategy in order to drive organizational goals and objectives and in order to ensure that the employees have the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes considered critical in performing their day to day jobs and also skills that would enable them face every day challenges in the work place..

In order to analyze the micro human resource development practices, the 5 Liker scale was used by the respondents in relation to the frequency upon which these practices

are employed by the WSPs. In order to get the frequency, the ranking was categorized into five. These are; no extent which was the lowest ranking with a score of one and this showed that the practice was not being practiced at all ; a score of less extent which had a score of two which was an indication that the practice was being practiced but at a very insignificant level; a score of moderate extent which had a score of three, meaning that the practice was averagely being practiced but still not taken very seriously by the WSP; a score of large extent which had a score of four and the highest was a score of very large extent which had a score of five. These two scores of large extent and very large extent signified that the practice was being used by the WSP and was considered important for developing employees in order to undertake their daily operations. The analysis undertaken for the various strategic human resource development practices at the micro level was as follows;

Table 4:05 Micro HRD Practices

Description of Activity	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
On job Training					10	5
Job Rotation				9	1	4.1
IT			1	5	4	4.3
Multitasking			10			3
360 Degrees Feedback		10				2
Job Enlargement	4	5	1			1.7
Career development	5	5				1.5
Job Enrichment	7	2	1			1.4
Job Design		10				2

(Source: Researcher)

On the job training was ranked as the most frequent practice within the WSPs. All the respondents (100%) confirmed their use to a very large extent. This was attributed to the fact that most of the firms are young and the pressure to deliver services when at the same time the number of employees is controlled by the WASB calls for

immediate placement of personnel who learn their skill as they do the job. Further, it was considered less expensive and could deliver immediate results. It was also observed that some of the old employees were transferred either from the Ministry of water and irrigation, the National Water and Conservation Pipeline Corporation (NWCP) or from the City Council of Nairobi and had a lot of experience. The WSPs used this long experience to train other staff on the job because knowledge transfer was almost immediate. The response as per table 4.05 gives a mean score of 5 which is the maximum.

The second common practice amongst the WSPs is job rotation. This is where employees are moved from one department to the other over a period of time. This practice is common amongst the lower cadre of employees and is used to fortify internal controls within the vulnerable operational areas. Since the WSPs are still very young and don't have a lot of employees, they use job rotation also to ensure that staff understand the operations for the WSP in all the departments. This has assisted a lot in that one employee can step in where another employee is indisposed for one reason or the other. It was also observed that job rotation was not an expensive practice among the WSPs. This practice is common with 90% of the respondents confirming their use to a large extent and 10% to a very large extent. The summarized response is given in Table 4.05. The response as per table 4.05 gives a mean score of 4.1, which is very high.

The third common practice among the WSPs is Information Technology. This tool is very critical in the water sector as it not only helps in billing but also in several other

areas including; identification of defaulters and therefore putting strategies on how best to collect what is due to them since this can seriously affect their bottom line; preparation of their financial statements and hence being able to ascertain their financial position which would then assist them in properly projecting their financial outlay; the GPIS system would enable them to identify their infrastructure and also be able to fix problems immediately, meaning that there would be fewer technical problems to the system. This would result to having their infrastructure operating at its optimum and therefore increasing their revenue. WSPs can use IT to have competitive advantage over their competitors. The adoption of IT and its importance is clear to the WSPs and is reflected in the score given in Table 4.05. The response to the use of IT as a strategic human resource practice indicates that 10% WSPs practice it moderately, 50% to a large extent and 40% to a very large extent. The response as per table 4.05 gives a mean of 4.3 which is very high.

Multitasking is one of the practices that is moderately used. Multitasking is a strategy where one employee is assigned several other duties in addition to what he/she does on a day to day basis. It was observed that for example a driver could be used as a messenger, a meter reader and also for data entry. The ability to multitask may be used to enhance performance especially at the lower levels of operations which are prone to absenteeism and high turnover to ensure uninterrupted work flow. The responses show that multitasking is a moderately employed practice within all the WSPs as reflected in the response in Table 4.05 where all the respondents (100%) gave a moderate score of three. This is attributed to the fact that the WSPs have very few staff and they are still settling down and they therefore try to make use of the staff

that they have to meet customer demands. The response as per table 4.05 gives a mean of 3 which is moderate.

Among the practices that have been adopted at very low levels is 360 degree feedback. The ability for employees to get feedback on their performance enables organizations to use their employee productively. Employees are able to identify their strong and weak points and therefore come up with strategies on how to develop them. The feedback programs come in various forms including 360 degree feedback. This is where everyone is evaluated by everyone else both horizontally and vertically. The response indicates that this practice is not common among all the ten WSPs with 100% of the respondents citing a less extent application of the practice. Most felt that this system is a fault finding strategy that can be abused to punish poor performing employees to the detriment of employees. The response as per table 4.05 gives a mean score of 2.

The second practice that is at low level is job enlargement. Job enlargement involves increasing the number of tasks that an employee should perform in addition to his/her normal duties. It was established that this practice is rarely used may be due to fact that these firms are young and the employees are very few due to the restrictions placed by the regulatory board. It may also be speculated that these WSPs are on their early stage of business and just settling down. These factors make them to be concerned with the development of the infrastructure because customers expect immediate service. According to the respondents, employees were only assigned the jobs that they know. The response is lowly ranked with 40% not practicing it at all,

50% practicing it to a less extent and only 10% practice it moderately. The response as per table 4.05 gives a mean score of 1.7, which is very low.

The third practice which has been adopted at very low level is job enrichment. Job enrichment is about increasing employee tasks vertically to basically remove repetitiveness in a job and to prepare them for greater responsibilities. The response to job enrichment programs also reflects a practice that is not being used by the WSPs and even where it is practiced, it is done at a low frequency. The response shows that 70% of the respondents do not practice enrichment programs at all, 20% practice it to a less extent and 10% to a moderate extent. This may be attributed to similar circumstances and conditions given for job enlargement. The response as per table 4.05 gives a very low mean score of 1.4.

Career development is the fourth practice that is at a very low level. Career development, as a process that charts the career path of employees, requires concerted effort from both the organizations and the individual employees. It empowers and enhances employee performance which the organization may capitalize and use as a strategic tool. The responses show that 50% of the respondents do not practice career development at all, while 50% practice it to a less extent. The reason for none practice of career development is attributable to the fact that the WSPs are new establishments which are still in the process of recruiting and filling the established positions and they are yet to start charting employee career paths. The response as per table 4.05 gives a mean score of 1.5 which is considered low.

The fifth practice that has been adopted at a low rate is job design. Job design is practiced to a very low extent by all the WSPs studied. All respondents (100%) indicated that it is practiced at a less extent as per Table 4.08. Whereas this ought to be human resource development practice that should form part of the operating strategy, the WSP felt that this method is not critical to their operations and is actually nearly forgotten. All the WSPs did not think that this was an important human resource strategy that can be used to enhance and sustain the skill level standards within the WSPs. The response corroborates the responses received on account of job enrichment and enlargement which are part of job design. The response as per table 4.05 gives an average score of 2.

Arising from the analysis, it is clear that out of the nine micro human resource development (HRD) practices studied, job enlargement, job enrichment, career development, 360 degree feedback and job design have been adopted at a very low extent, with an average mean of about 1.72 which is very low; Multitasking has been moderately adopted by all the WSPs while job rotation, on job training and information technology have been adopted at a very large extent with an average mean of 4.47 which is very high. This is an indication that really, there are no micro HRD practices adopted by the WSPs. The non development of the human resource means that the employees may not have adequate skills, knowledge and attitudes to perform their day to day tasks within the WSPs. This will result to the WSPs not operating as commercial organizations as envisaged under section 47 of the Water Act 2002. Hence, the objectives of the WSPs, AWSB and the MOI will not be achieved. This in essence would mean that the objectives of the sector of providing efficient and affordable water services may not be realized.

4.5 Macro human resource development practices

The Macro perspective addresses the methods used at the strategic level to identify human resource development needs for organizations that will ensure that they stay focused in the achievement of their strategic goals in the long term. The main objective of the macro human resource development practices is to ensure that organizations have individuals who can drive organizational strategies that will achieve organizational goals. The categories of employees at this level are mostly highly skilled professionals. This section therefore analyzes the degree to which the WSPs employ macro human resource development practices which are very critical to senior executives of the organization who are the ones responsible for providing leadership in the development and implementation of strategy. It investigates whether the WSPs have programmes that would ensure competitiveness and sustainability of organization within the market in terms of service delivery and increased bottom line.

In order to analyze the macro human resource development practices, the 5 Liker scale was used, by the respondents in relation to the frequency upon which these practices are employed by the WSPs. In order to get the frequency, the ranking was categorized into five. These are; no extent which was the lowest ranking with a score of one and this showed that the practice was not being practiced at all , less extent which had a score of two which was an indication that the practice was being practiced but at a very insignificant level; a score of, moderate extent which had a score of three meaning that the practice was averagely being practiced but still not taken very seriously by the WSP a score of, large extent which had a score of four and very large extent which had a score of five. These two scores of large extent and very

large extent signified that the practice was being used by the WSP and was considered important for developing employees in order to for the organization to achieve its long term plans and to strategically remain competitive in the market place. The analysis undertaken for the various strategic human resource development practices at the macro level was as follows;

Table 4:06 Macro SHRD Practices

Description of Activity	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Peer Consultation					10	5
Delegation					10	5
Mentoring			10			3
Coaching		10				2
Empowerment	7	2	1			1.4
Succession plans	10					1

(Source: Researcher)

Peer consultation is one of the practices that has been adopted by all WSPs. Peer consultation is where individuals at the same level either from within the organization or between individuals of the same level from different organization share experiences and therefore learn from such experiences. The response showed a 100% practice of peer consultations to a very large extent across all the respondents. It was established that all the ten WSPs are members of the Water Service providers association whose members are the Chief Executive Officers of all the WSPs. They have found this useful because the less experienced WSPs have been able to share their experiences and learn from the more experienced WSPs from all over the country. They all indicated that this has come in handy especially in dealing with teething problems because they are able to consult and find solutions to their common

challenges. The response as per table 4.06 above gives a mean score of 5 which is the maximum.

Another practice that is common among the WSPs is delegation. Delegation is about senior executives allowing other employees below them to perform tasks for the senior positions. It allows for succession planning because it makes employees at lower levels understand the tasks for senior positions hence making it easy to take over in the future. It is about creating future executives. This is one of the most commonly used practices and the response confirms this as all the respondents (100%) confirm that all WSPs practice it at a very large extent as reflected in Table 4.06. All the studied WSPs are aware that this practice is very key to the sustainability of their organizations. The response as per table 4.06 gives a mean score of 5 which is the maximum.

Mentoring allow Managers to have someone outside the organization help them grow in their career and unlock their potential. It was observed mentoring is undertaken at moderate level although it is not directly undertaken by the WSPs. It was established from the responses that 100% of the respondents practiced it moderately. The explanation given is that Managers at the AWSB have been assigned one WSPs to mentor and ensure that the structures within the WSP were in place and operating well. These Managers therefore interact with the WSPs and help them in settling down and in resolving operational issues that may come up from time to time. The response as per table 4.06 gives an average score of 3.

One of the practices that is not common among the WSPs is coaching. Coaching is the use of more experienced Managers in the organizations to help other employees of less experience to unlock their potential. The response on the employment of coaching is that 100% of the respondents practice it to a less extent (refer to Table 4.06). This may be attributed to the fact that the WSPs have only four departments with very few employees and coaching requires a large number of employees with a hierarchy that might result in climbing the organizational ladder. It also requires a great deal of time and patience before the Manager can determine whether there is any technology transfer. The WSPs were mostly concerned with providing services to customers and improving their revenue collection and therefore did not see this as a priority yet. The response as per table 4.06 above gives a mean score of 2 which is very low.

The second practice that is not common is empowerment. Empowerment is about giving employees the space to dream and come up with new ideas on how to better perform their duties to achieve the organizational objectives. From the outcome of the study, clearly this practice is not used to a large extent since the score was distributed within the lower range of one to three. The highest percent of 70% was from the respondents who do not practice it at all, followed by 20% who practice it to a less extent and 10% who practice it moderately. Empowerment requires financial investments since employees are allowed to come up with new ideas on how to operate and these ideas need to be actualized. Nine out of the ten WSPs studied were not very strong financially, making it difficult to invest in empowerment practices. They all seemed to be more focused on the establishment of the structures and

infrastructure and on delivering services to customers. The response as per table 4.06 above gives a mean score of 1.4 which is very low.

Succession planning has not been adopted at all by any WSP. Succession planning as a strategy is the identification of future leaders and making a deliberate decision to develop them for future higher responsibilities as they rise in the organizational ladder. Succession planning is critical for organizational sustainability. The response indicates otherwise with all the respondents (100%) returning a not at all score as reflected in Table 4.06. This may be attributed to the fact that appointments to head these WSPs is determined by the Athi Water Service Board and it therefore becomes difficult for the WSPs to groom their own to take over in future. The response as per table 4.06 gives a mean score of 1 which is very low.

Arising from the analysis, it is clear that out of the six macro human resource development (HRD) practices studied, peer consultation and delegation have been adopted at a very large extent by all WSPs (100%) with an average mean score of 5 which is very high; mentoring has been adopted at a moderate level by all the WSPs (100%) with a mean of 3 and empowerment and coaching have been adopted to a less extent with an average mean score of 1.3 which is very low; and succession planning has not been adopted at all by all the WSPs studied. This is an indication that just like the case for micro human resource development practices, there are no serious macro HRD practices adopted by the WSPs. The non development of the human resource at the macro level means that the senior executives within the WSPs are not properly developed to provide leadership. The WSPs may, as a result of this, not have

employees who can steer the organization towards achieving its objectives and those of the sector. Further, it may mean that the WSPs will not have future leaders to steer them to the next level by developing the appropriate plans. This may eventually lead to non sustainability of the WSPs; and therefore if something is not done to turn around this situation, the dream of ensuring efficient and affordable water for the citizens of Kenya may remain a dream that will be difficult to achieve.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5:1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study. It has divided the recommendations into two namely recommendations for policy and practice and recommendations for further research.

5.2 Summary

The ten WSPs studied were established as a result of the Water Act 2002 and therefore came into operations after the operationalization of the Act. Overall, all the WSPs are less than ten years in operations .The number of employees to be recruited by the WSPs is guided by the AWSB using the guidelines issued by the WASREB from time to time. All the WSPs studied were similar in nature and therefore perform basically similar functions. These Departments are the Finance, Commercial/Marketing, Technical and Human Resource Department.

From the study, it was established that among the nine micro human resource development practices picked for the study, the most commonly practiced ones among all the WSPs studied are only three, namely job rotation, information technology and on the job training with an average mean score of 4.47 which is considered very high. Job design, job enrichment, job enlargement and 360 degrees feedback were either not used at all, or were used at a very insignificant level. They had an average mean score

of 1.72 which is considered very low. Multitasking on the other hand, was moderately used among all the WSPs with a mean score of 3.

Among the six macro human resource practices studied, only two were widely practiced among all the WSPs. These are peer consultations and delegation with a mean score of 5 which is the maximum. Succession planning is not practiced at all among all the ten WSPs while coaching and empowerment were used at a very low level with a mean score of 1.3. Mentoring was practiced at a moderate level by all the WSPs and was carried out by the AWSB. It had a mean score of 3.

It was further observed that the strategic plans of the WSPs lacked human resource development policies. This means that the WSPs did not have any link between strategy and human resource development. They did not seem to think that having a strong human resource would drive the organization into achieving its objectives and strategic goals. Their concentration was on making sure that the infrastructure was in place to bring in the bottom line, but forgot that this infrastructure is operated by human beings and for the bottom line to be achieved, the human resource needed to be up to the task and be able to deliver efficient services to customers and ensure that they maintain a competitive advantage.

It was also observed that there was very little budget set aside for human resource development and training programmes. From the findings, the budget set aside ranges from 0% to 12% from the total organizational budgets. From the ten WSPs that were

studied, only one had a budget of 12%. The rest had an average budget of between 0 and 9% set aside in the budget for human resource development activities.

From the analysis of the findings, there is almost no feedback mechanism for the employees. It is therefore very difficult for employees to know their strengths and weaknesses and therefore it may not be possible for employees to improve. Employees are more satisfied when they can measure their performance and usually when employees realize that they have contributed to the good performance of the organization, it increases motivation. The increase in motivation has a multiplying effect in that it improves performance which in turn improves the bottom line for the organization.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concludes that there no sufficient strategic human resource development practices adopted by the WSPs both at the macro and micro level. It has been observed from the study that of the nine micro SHRD practices studied, only three were common and the other were either practiced at low extent not practiced at all. Out of the six macro strategic human resource development practices studied only two were common while the other four were either at very low extent or not practiced at all. This is very low and undesirable. The non development of the human resource at the micro level means that the employees may not have adequate skills, knowledge and attitudes to perform their day to day tasks within the WSPs. This would result to the WSPs not operating as commercial organizations as envisaged under section 47 of

the Water Act 2002. Hence, the objectives of the WSPs, AWSB and the MOWI would not be achieved. This in essence would mean that the objectives of the sector of providing efficient and affordable water services would not be realized.

On the other hand, lack of macro HRD practices at the senior executive level means that senior executives within the WSPs are not properly developed to provide leadership. The WSPs may, as a result of this, not have employees who can steer the organization towards achieving its objectives and those of the sector. This may eventually lead to unsustainable WSPs which may lead to the collapse of the water sector reforms. If something is not done by the Ministry of water and irrigation which is the policy maker of the sector to turn around this situation, the dream of ensuring efficient and affordable water for the citizens may remain a dream that will be difficult to achieve.

The study makes a further conclusion that there is no link between strategy and the people who drive it. The strategic plans for the WSPs studied had no strategies on human resource development activities and the budgets had very little allocation to HRD activities ranging between 0% to 12 % of the total organizational budgets.

5.4 Recommendations

This study makes two recommendations, one for policy and practice and another for future research.

5.4.1 Recommendation for Policy and practice

The study recommends that since the WSPs are still very young and may not have sufficient funds to allocate to HRD activities, the Ministry of water and Irrigation, as the ministry in charge of the water sector should always ensure that part of the budget that is allocated to Athi Water Service Board has an amount specifically allocated for human resource development activities within the WSPs in its area. Further, in order to ensure that AWSB applies such allocations for HRD programmes within the WSPs, the Ministry of water and irrigation should ensure that the development, implementation and monitoring of strategies for human resource development activities in the WSPs is one of the targets signed between the Ministry of Water and irrigation and the Athi Water Services Board.

The other recommendation is that since the AWSB appoints WSPs as their agents in the provision of water services they should ensure that the WSPs have employees with the right skills, knowledge and attitude by ensuring that they (AWSB) budget for human resource development programmes for the WSPs. Good performance by the WSPs would also mean that the revenue for the AWSB goes up since the WSPs pay a percentage of the revenue collected to AWSB. AWSB therefore has a legal and moral obligation to ensure that the employees for the WSPs are well versed with their roles.

Another recommendation is that WSPs need to revise their strategic plans to ensure that they have programmes for the development of their human resource. Even if they develop the best infrastructure, and do not have the best people to run it, it will still be

very difficult to achieve their objectives. They should develop human resource development practices which are compatible with the industry in addition to elaborate human resource policies that would enable them achieve, amongst other objectives, the millennium goals and the Kenya 2030 vision.

The study further recommends that the WSPs must also understand that they have the real responsibility of improving service delivery. They should therefore, even as they get assistance from the ministry of water and irrigation and the Athi Water Services Board, put an amount in their budgets for human resource development programmes. To ensure that this is done and implemented, the development and implementation of SHRD policies must be signed as performance targets between the AWSB and the WSPs.

The WSPs also need to develop an objective feedback system that will inform management on the strength and weaknesses and therefore develop appropriate HRD programs that will enable the organization grow and compete in the market place.

Since capacity building of WSPs is a legal requirement under the water Act 2002, the study recommends that the ministry of water and irrigation and the Water Services Regulatory Board should develop and gazette regulations under the Act to provide for penalties against both Water service Boards and WSPs who do not develop and implement HRD practices.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Further Research

This study focused on establishing the strategic human development practices adopted by WSPs within Athi Water Services Board both at the macro and micro level. It is proposed that further research could be carried out to establish whether there are any differences in terms of strategic human resource development practices amongst the other WSPs within the other seven Water Service Boards across the country. The other possible research area could be to identify the factors that affect the adoption of the strategic human development practices amongst the WSPs. Lastly a study may be carried out to establish the effect of strategic human development practices adopted by WSPs on performance, efficiency and service delivery.

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APPENDIX I: LIST OF WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS

- (i) Nairobi Water and Sewerage Company Limited
- (ii) Kiambu Water and Sewerage Company Limited
- (iii) Limuru Water and Sewerage Company Limited
- (iv) Thika Water and Sewerage Company Limited
- (v) Gatundu South Water and Sewerage Company Limited
- (vi) Kikuyu Water and Sewerage company Limited
- (vii) Githunguri Water and Sewerage company Limited
- (viii) Karimenu Water and sewerage Company Limited
- (ix) Ruiru Water and Sewerage Company Limited
- (x) Gatanga Water Trust

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

PART A

- (i) Name of the organization (optional).....
- (ii) When the organization was registered.....
- (iii) When was the organization licensed by AWSB.....
- (iv) Number of employees within the organization
- (v) Name of Department.....
- (vi) Main functions of the department.....
- (vii) Number of staff.....
- (viii) Nature of duties and responsibilities of each staff.....
- (ix) What employee skills do you consider a prerequisite in your department?
.....

1 How is the organization of the Departments dictated by strategy (tick where appropriate)

Department by function	
Department by customer	
Department by product	
Matrix relationship department	
Department by geographical/territory	
Project department	
Department by combination approach	
Others (Name).....	

2 Identify the frequency by which the organization applies the following to its employees (1=No extent; 2=Less extent; 3=Moderate extent; 4=Large extent; 5=Very large extent

Activity	1	2	3	4	5
On job training					
Job rotation					
Job enlargement					
Enrichment programs					
Job design					
Empowerment					
Information technology					
360 degrees feed back					
Staff multitasking					
Others.....					

Where the response to the above is “To No extent “or “less extent” please explain briefly and give reasons

- (i) Why is this the case.....
- (ii) What would you recommend

3. Identify the frequency by which the organization applies the following to its employees (1=No extent; 2=Less extent; 3=Moderate extent; 4=Large extent; 5=Very large extent

Activity	1	2	3	4	5
Mentoring					
Coaching					
Peer consultations					
delegation					
Employee empowerment					
Succession Plans					

Where the response to the above is “To No extent “or “less extent” please explain briefly and give reasons for each of your answers.

- (i) Why is this the case.....
- (ii) What would you recommend

5 Which of the following do the organization consider as the need for human resource development (Rank them with 1 being least factor to 5 being the highest)

Basis of engaging in Human Resource Development	1	2	3	4	5
To improve on decision making					
To make practical changes					
To attain and sustain competitive advantage					
To resist being controlled by other organizations					
To mitigate dependence relationship					
To reduce environmental uncertainty					
To improve on programs undertaken					
To provide sufficient infrastructure					
To comply with contractual obligations					
To comply with the legal obligations and requirements of the water sector					

Give a brief explanation for each of your answers:

-
- (i) Why is this the case.....
- (ii) What would you recommend

6. Does the Strategic Plan have a strategy for the development of staff in the organization? Please tick as appropriate.

Yes

No

7. On average, what percentage of the company budget is allocated to staff development activities?

THANK YOU.



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DATE... 2ND OCTOBER 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter ... ROSE NDANU MKALAMA

Registration No. ... D/P161/9115/01

is a Master of Business Administration (MBA) student of the University of Nairobi.

He/she is required to submit as part of his/her coursework assessment a research project report on a management problem. We would like the students to do their projects on real problems affecting firms in Kenya. We would, therefore, appreciate if you assist him/her by allowing him/her to collect data in your organization for the research.

The results of the report will be used solely for academic purposes and a copy of the same will be availed to the interviewed organizations on request.

Thank you.

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
MBA OFFICE

DR. W.N. IRAKI P. O. Box 30197
CO-ORDINATOR, MBA PROGRAM



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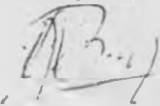
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