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MPA THESIS

ON

A CRITICAL STUDY OF PUBLIC PERSONNEL  
ADMINISTRATION IN ETHIOPIA WITH A FOCUS  
ON OROMIA STATE GOVERNMENT

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**A CRITICAL STUDY OF PUBLIC PERSONNEL  
ADMINISTRTION IN ETHIOPIA WITH A FOCUS ON  
OROMIA STATE GOVERNEMNT**

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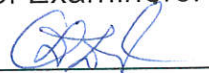
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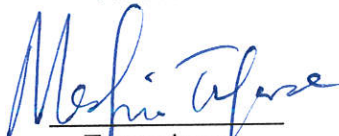
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### **Acronyms**

AAPAM	Association of African Public Administration and Management
AAU	Addis Ababa University
BPR	Business Process Reengineering
CPA	Central Personnel Agency
EC	Ethiopian Calendar
FCSC	Federal Civil service Commission
HR	Human Resources
HRA	Human Resources Administration
HRM	Human Resources Management
MPA	Masters of Public Administration
OCSC	Oromia Civil Service Commission
OEB	Oromia Education Bureau
OHDPO	Oromia Housing Development Project Office
OLF	Oromo People Liberation front
ORRA	Oromia Rural Roads Development Authority
OUPI	Oromia Urban Planning Institute
OWUDB	Oromia Works and Urban Development Bureau
PM	Personnel Management
SHRM	Strategic Human resources Management
SNNP	Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples
TPLF	Tigrean People Liberation Front
TVT	Technical and Vocational Training
UN	United Nations

## ABSTRACT

In Ethiopia, a country of diversified people with their own distinct cultures, administrative systems, religious and political ideologies which had fallen under the administration of aristocracy, no attempts were made to develop, nurture and adopt an indigenous national ideology and system of administration. Abuses of authority, inefficiency, corruption and irresponsiveness were the main vices which still prevail in the political and administrative structure at all levels of governments in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's civil service system, therefore, is in urgent need of in-depth analysis of problems in specific contexts rather than prescribing western models as panacea for all evils in the civil service. In this thesis, efforts have been made to critically examine the public personnel administration system in federal Ethiopia with a focus on Oromia state government.

The scope of the research was limited to the assessment of the civil service administration which is under the direct regulation of the Federal and Oromia Civil Service Commissions. The Federal and the Oromia Civil Service Commissions were, therefore, the prime sources of information on the overall national and regional public service systems.

The term public personnel is often used interchangeably with such terminologies as the civil service, civil servants, government employees, public sector employees and the like. Nowadays the idiom 'human resources administration' (HRA) is becoming popular instead of personnel administration, personnel management or manpower administration. Whichever idiom preferred, in its modern sense public personnel administration refers to the administration or management of the human resources through systematic, pragmatic and flexible approach towards the planning, attracting, developing, maintaining, coordinating, motivating them in such a way that enhances employees' quality of life and

creates sustainable commitment to serve the public and promote social, economic and political development.

The current federal public personnel administration in Ethiopia is the gradual transformation of the traditional, centralized public administration which has been in place for more than half a century. Upon the introduction of the federal system in Ethiopia in 1991, the federated units have established their own Civil Service Commissions to regulate the public service administration in their respective government. Some of the staffs of the former centralized civil service were transferred to the newly established regional states.

At present, personnel administration activities which were previously undertaken by the Federal Civil Service Commission have been decentralized. It seems that the federal civil service system is gradually reforming itself after decades of traditional, self-serving system of administration. The Commission has decided to concentrate on regulatory aspect of personnel administration by decentralizing personnel activities (recruitment, selection, promotion, training, etc) to the concerned civil service agencies.

Besides some improvements, the federal civil service still suffers from the age old traditional attitudes and methods of the Ethiopian civil service. Though professionalized human resources administration and merit system are formally emphasized, political patronage and conventional method of public administration still dominate the civil service sector. Moreover, the pay level of the civil service sector is very low compared to the private and NGO sectors. As a result the civil service is losing its educated and experienced workforce.

After the establishment of federal administration regional states have formed their own civil service systems and civil service commissions to regulate and administer the regional civil service. Similarly in Oromia State Government, a number of public sector agencies have been established to undertake socio-cultural, economic and political affairs of the region. The State Government has also established the Oromia Civil Service Bureau in 1993 to

regulate the regional civil service. At present it operates in the name of Oromia Civil Service Commission with a responsibility of regulating about 34 regional civil service organizations. There are also autonomous public enterprises that are not directly regulated by the regional civil service but obtain technical supports in the areas of personnel management and organization.

The size of the Oromia civil service is the highest among all the regions in Ethiopia. According to the Federal Civil Service annual personnel statistics the civil service of Oromia comprises of 31% of the total civil service at national level. The other peculiar characteristic of the Oromia civil service is its ethnic composition. Benishangul-Gumuz is the second best in non-native incorporation in regional civil service.

Politics and public administration is mixed up to a large extent in Oromia. Though the regional government, formally (through its incapable civil service commission and civil service laws) is claiming that it is following the merit principle of public personnel administration, the reality on the ground shows that the spoils system of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century American public administration is very much in practice in Oromia.

In general Oromia state civil service inherited from the former centralized public administration of Ethiopia all the awful practices: contempt of the public, inefficiency, loyalty to bosses, service-seeking and corrupt behavior. As a result, team spirit is very low in Oromia State civil service.

Political immaturity and intolerance, administrative misbehavior, political patronage, unfair representation of the different ethnic and social groups in the public service, corruption and inefficiency, still prevail both at regional and national levels. Some recommendations are here by made to improve the public personnel administration system in Ethiopia in general and Oromia in particular. These recommendations are:

- 1) Strong commitment for national consensus and regional autonomy
- 2) Avoid the rampant political patronage and adopt Merit system

- 3) Transform the traditional approach to personnel administration
- 4) Search for a strong and committed leadership
- 5) Need for a strong Civil Service Commission
- 6) Improving the civil service compensation systems
- 7) Need for a strong and independent civic society and organized civil service
- 8) Radical transformation of governance and the civil service administration in Oromia

## CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

### **1.1 Background**

Public administration is in practice since time immemorial, in one form or another. Human beings have been practicing various forms of administration since the early times; the time when people began to live in community. "Ever since man emerged from the most primitive form of association he has had to devise administrative systems, even in society's displaying few of the attributes of the modern state" (UN hand book of public administration: 1961, p.4)

After the formation of modern states, public demands on national governments have been increased more and more and hence the role of public administration. The roles, however, remained traditional and limited to maintenance of law and order and preserving the status quo, leaving the role of social and economic developments to the invisible hand. This was the overall trend in the world political ideology until the rise of Marxism, the extreme outlook about the role of state and the society. "It was the experiences of the interwar depression and the Second World War which eclipsed the economic orthodoxy of laissez-faire (Horton and Farnham eds. 1999, p. 6)."

The post World War II crises posed an extreme challenge to this traditional role of public administration. A paradigm shift in the thinking of the role of public administration, however, only emerged after the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After the decolonization of African states during the 1960s, the role of public administration was completely reoriented from its traditional role of keeping law and order and maintaining the status quo to being the accelerator of social and economic change and a prime mover and stimulator of national development. Thus the public sectors have become larger and larger in size, variety and complexity.

These enormous and diverse roles of government is planned and exercised to a large extent by the public employees, the civil service. As the role and activities of modern government are very large and complex in nature, so are the size and nature of the civil service. As Rosenbloom (1986:4) states, public administrative jobs range from the exploration of outer space to sweeping of the streets; some have a nationwide impact; others have virtually no responsibility for policy making and simply carry out the mundane governmental tasks... Public administrators are doctors, lawyers, scientists, engineers, accountants, budgeters, personnel officers, managers, clerks, typists, manual laborers and individuals engaged in a host of other occupations and functions. Furthermore these diversified groups of people come from different cultural, geographic and ethnic background.

The administration of these diversified civil services which are crucial in the national development is one of the major components of public administration. This part of public administration which deals with the management of civil servants at work places, i.e., public personnel administration has, therefore, attracted the attention of many scholars and of public administrators.

To a very large extent, the nation's ability to achieve its goals through public administration depends upon the performance, honesty and motivation of public employees. Although we think in terms of institutions and principles, in the final analysis organizations and governments are not charts and words on pieces of paper; they are made up of people and it is necessary to some how organize the conditions of their employment (Ibid, p.4).

Issues which are the theme of public personnel administration include organizational arrangements, recruitment, job assignment, training and development, promotion, employees' compensation, reward, fringe benefits and exit procedures. In this research paper efforts are made to assess the paths through which the public personnel administration has passed in Ethiopia since the formation of what some historians called "modern Ethiopia." Critical studies on the present public personnel administration policies (implicit and explicit), practices and maladies particularly are made with a focus on the Oromia State Government.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

It is now more than a century since centralized state administration, based at the capital Addis Ababa, has began. From this time until the fall of Emperor Haile Selasse by the military Junta in 1974, Ethiopia has undergone a feudal system of administration and divine rule ideology, based on the myth of Solomonic dynasty. For Ethiopia, a country of diversified indigenous people with their own distinct culture, administrative system, religious and political ideology which had fallen under the administration of aristocracy, no attempts were made to develop, nurture and adopt an indigenous national ideology and system of administration. The opportunity for considering the role that can be played by the peoples of Ethiopia by adopting their indigenous politico-cultural and administrative systems was non-existent owing to the myths of divine kingship and the biased attitude of the ruling class towards the ruled.

It is very recently that the country has entered into a promising path of political and social development, particularly with the devolution of powers to regional self governments under the current administration. However, things did not go according to expectations. The age-old political and administrative culture of the nobility characterized by dominance, prejudice, intolerance, contempt, distrust,

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disingenuous, naughtiness, still prevails in one way or another. Abuses of authority, inefficiency, corruption, irresponsiveness still prevail rampantly in the political and administrative structure of all levels of governments in Ethiopia.

On the other hand, very little effort, if at all there is, has been made to advance the public personnel administration, through systematic and pragmatic studies. Ethiopia's civil service system, therefore, is in urgent need of in-depth analysis that gears towards defining existing problems in specific contexts rather than prescribing western models as panacea for all evils in the civil service. The idea behind the present research is to initiate such studies in the public personnel administration of Ethiopia in general and Oromia in particular to seek solutions to the malpractices and archaic system that prevailed over the decades.

### **1.3 Objective and Significance of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 Objective of the Study**

The main objective of the research is to describe the past and present trends in the public personnel administration of Ethiopia, identify its major deficiencies to be used as a lesson in the future. The research will also critically examine current policies, procedures and practices of public personnel administration at federal level in general and in Oromia State Government in particular, assess its strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations. In general the research has the following major objectives.

- (I) To study and describe past and present public personnel administration in Ethiopia in general and Oromia region in particular, examine the adequacies, relevance, and timeliness of such practices and recommend objective solutions for the problems to bring about improvements in the overall personnel administration in the public sector of the country.

- (II) To forward recommendations for policy makers and practitioners in the area of public personnel administration
- (III) To initiate ideas for further research in the public personnel administration of Ethiopia and Oromia

### **1.3.2 Significance of the Study**

An efficient and responsive civil service is a deriving force of social and economic development. The opposite is true when the civil service becomes irresponsible, partisan, inefficient and self-serving. In the context of American public personnel administration, G. Negro and A. Negro (1994:3) described the importance of public personnel administration as follows:

...the quality of American's life depends on the performance of those who work for government – the quality of the public service. An Internal Revenue Service unable to recruit and retain competent accountants is unlikely to make sure that everybody pays a 'fair share. A bodily trained police officer is a threat to the public safety, and overworked air traffic controllers may make disastrous mistakes. Incompetent or self-serving procurement and contract administration practices may waste huge sums and threaten the publics' health, safety and welfare. Partisan and discriminatory personnel practices fuel social conflict and limit the capacities of public agencies to be responsive to the legitimate interests of many groups in society (p. 3).

Systematic studies and researches in public personnel administration enable politicians and public officials see past and present strength and weaknesses, learn from their mistakes and capitalize on their strengths. Findings of researches and studies are means to device flexible, up-to-date and demand driven civil service and to foresee future requirement.

### **1.4 Hypothesis**

The output of this research is directed at attesting or disproving the following working hypothesis related to the public personnel administration of Ethiopia throughout its long history up to the present. This hypothesis is the following:

*The Ethiopian public personnel administration and its derivative in the Oromia State Government are unable to move forward to bring a meaningful improvement in the overall development of the country in general and Oromia in particular by transforming itself from a traditional patronage and self serving administration into a merit based and neutral, flexible, responsive, development and people oriented civil service system. The system became an impediment not only to the social, political and cultural and economic development of the county but also resulted in the decline in the morale, work life and public confidence of the civil service itself.*

The objective of the research, however, is beyond approving or disproving the working hypothesis. Based on the findings, the root causes of the problem will be examined and solutions recommended.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The scope of a public service varies from country to country. Therefore, a contextual working definition is adopted to clearly demarcate the scope of the civil service covered by this study. The study covers civil service which is under the direct regulation of the Federal and Oromia Civil Service Commissions. Also included are semi-autonomous regulatory and implementing agencies at federal and regional levels, customarily known as authorities, like road authorities, transport authorities, civil aviation authorities, Inland Revenue Authority, Customs Authority. Public undertakings which are commercial in nature and administered by labor law were excluded from the coverage of this study. The focus was on critically examining the recent trends and practices in the Oromia state government, identifying major problems in current policies, procedures and practices and forwarding feasible and workable recommendations at regional as well as national level.

## **1.6 Limitations of the Study**

The major limitation in this study is time. For the study is wider in scope, owing to the very nature of the subject unless it is required that only a small section of it should be addressed, the available time was inadequate to conduct adequate surveys and analysis. However, the researcher is convinced that it is better to handle a meaningful subject area than dividing it into a small part that might not give a clear picture of the intended subject.

The other major limitation was the fear of the civil servants to provide information on the subject. This was particularly a serious problem in Oromia civil service. People are very much suspicious of any sort of questions related to their working environment. This shows the past and present political and administrative atmosphere and the lack of a tradition of free expression of ideas in the country. This was a major hindrance in conducting this thesis.

## **1.7 Research Design**

In this study a wide range of data collection techniques were employed to obtain data and information from both primary and secondary sources. Among the secondary sources are previous studies, the public sector organizational profiles, statistical data from the Central Statistics Agency and the Annual Statistical bulletin of the Federal Civil Service Commission are some. Critical examination of previous literature is the major method used for describing the evolution of public personnel administration in Ethiopia, the problems and improvements in the past.

Administration of questionnaires, non participatory and participatory observations, informal grouped discussions, structured and unstructured interviews are among the data collection techniques employed for primary data collection. Past and

present experiences and observations of the individual researcher as a member of the Federal and Oromia Civil Service are also reflected in this study. As civil service is close to everybody's everyday life incidents and observations are very common especially for those who are interested in the study of the subject and, therefore, the researcher has used every available opportunity through out the study period.

### **1.8 Sampling Design**

Purposive and random sampling methods were the techniques used in this study. The Federal and the Oromia Civil Service commissions were the primary source of information on the overall national and regional public service systems. Questionnaires were distributed to employees of randomly selected organizations and employees in Oromia State Government's civil service. Among the organizations surveyed are Education Bureau, Works and Urban Development Bureau, Rural Roads Authority, Housing Development Project Office, and Urban Planning Institutes were among the public organizations surveyed.

### **1.9 Data Gathering Tools** ✓

As stated earlier, the major data gathering tools were examination of previous studies, interviews, questionnaires, participatory as well as non participatory observations. Questionnaires were especially designed in two languages (English and Oromo). The English version was used to provide options for non Oromo members. [Afaan] Oromo is the official working language of the Oromia State Government.

### **1.10 Methods of Analysis** ✓

Simple analytical tools and comparisons of absolute as well as percentage figures were used in the analysis of this study. Descriptive and judgmental methods are largely employed as the subject itself relies more on qualitative analysis. Bar

graphs, pie and area trends were utilized to interpret statistical figures. Descriptive analysis supported by tabulations of absolute figures and ratios are widely utilized in the analysis.

### **1.11 Organization of the report**

This research paper is organized in five chapters. Chapter one deals with the introductory part: objective and research methodology. Chapter two is devoted to conceptual frameworks and literature review.

Analysis of data and interpretations of results are dealt with in chapter three and four. Chapter three entirely deals with the public personnel administration at national level and the feral government. Chapter four, on the other hand, is devoted to the critical analysis of public personnel administration in Oromia state Government.

The last chapter is conclusion and recommendation. The findings and policy recommendations concerning public personnel administration at federal and state levels are presented in this final chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO – CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 *The Concept and Genesis of Public Personnel Administration*

#### 2.1.1 Genesis

Personnel administration as a concept and practice came out of the personnel management which was first introduced in the private sector of developed economies, particularly in USA and Britain. Its genesis is closely associated with the evolution of management theories and practices which are developed in the context of the private sector.

In early times when private organizations were small in size and the numbers of workers employed were very few, the owner himself carried out everything. There was no division of labor and systematic organization of works. With the increase in the size and complexity of organizations, it was found necessary to separate the management of such organizations from the owner and to organize jobs into meaningful and manageable functional units. This led to division of labor and the introduction of functional divisions like personnel, finance, marketing, production, etc.

At these early stages the management of workers was based on the “carrot and stick approach”. According to Bratton and Gold (1999: pp 4-7) in early stages of industrial revolution in Britain, there were codes of discipline and fines that enforce coercion, sanction or monetary rewards. “In 1840s common humanity and political pressure began to combine with enlightened self-interest among a few of larger employers to make them aware of alternative ways of managing their workforce other than coercion, sanctions, or monetary rewards. Increasing numbers of

employers were accepting responsibility for the general welfare of their workers in the 1890s. In Britain a number of philanthropic employers began to develop paternalistic care and concern for their employees.”

World War I (1914-18) gave an added impetus to industrial welfare activities to deal with the hemorrhage of skilled labor; many women were induced into industry for the first time. This necessitated greater concern for workers welfare in industrial work (Ibid p.7)

The other three important developments in the evolution of personnel management in the 1920s and 30s, according to Bratton and Gold (1999) are the development of administrative theories, particularly Weber's ideal bureaucracy, Taylor's scientific management and the human relations movement. These influenced the internal practice of organizations and the way employers viewed their human resources. Thus, a shift towards corporate capitalism provided a rationale for a separate and specialist personnel department to take responsibility for effective management of people.

World War II (1939-45), like World War I, immediately precipitated an increased demand for material and labor. The war fostered an increased demand for human resources specialists as the human relations approach was embraced by many organizations anxious to maximize labor productivity and foster industrial peace.

### ***2.1.2 Public Personnel Administration and Personnel Management***

Public personnel administration as part of the broader field of public administration evolved through the adaptation of the principles and practices of personnel management of the private sector. Its evolution is closely associated with the growth of the public sector and the increasing size and number of the civil service

with the government intentions to regulate and promote social and economic progress, ensure equitable distribution and efficient allocation of resources and ascertain sustainable development.

Public personnel administration, however, is different from private sector personnel management in its nature and scope. As Cox et al (1994, p. 52) states the nature of public administration, with its special set of expectations and rewards accruing to public employees, does contribute to making public personnel practice fundamentally different from private sector personnel management. Horton and Farnham identified the following points for contrasting managing in the public sector with the market driven nature of management in the private business. Summary of the contrasts is given in Table 2.1.

- 1) Organizational goal are set by politicians
- 2) The criteria of success are relative to those goals and cannot be reduced to a “bottom line” of profit or loss. Public organizations cannot be bankrupt because they do not rely on the market for their revenue.
- 3) Public organizations are given goals which reflect the purposes for which they exist, but in contrast to those of private bodies, they tend to be complex, vaguely defined and often conflicting. The goals of public organizations are some times unattainable
- 4) Public organizations are ultimately accountable to the public they serve. The public are specially interested in what public organizations do and how they do it because:
  - a) Public bodies are often monopoly providers, leaving the public no choice but to take what they supply
  - b) Public bodies can exercise power to ensure compliance with public laws by fining people or even depriving them of their liberty

- c) They provide public and merit goods which directly affect the quality of people's lives.
- d) They levy compulsory taxation to fund governmental activities.
- e) They regulate many areas of social life such as licensing, drinking, driving and entertainment or controlling building designs and land use.

Therefore, the public is highly interested in the use of public power, the values reflected in the decision made, the efficiency with which public money is used and the quality of the service provided. In practice four types of public sector accountability exist, according to Horton and Farnham (1999, pp 35-36): legal, political, consumer and professional.

#### **Legal**

All legal bodies operate within a strict legal frame work, unlike private organizations which can do any thing which the law does not specifically forbid. Public bodies can only do what the law permits and prescribes for them. This legal rule of ultra vires means that public officials must be able to point to legal authority for their actions. Failure to exercise their legal responsibilities, or actions which are in excess of their legal authority, can be mandated or restrained by the courts.

#### **Political**

All public officials are directly or indirectly accountable to a political person or body. Civil servants are accountable to ministers, local government officers, to elected councilors and non departmental agencies to appropriate ministers.

#### **Accountability to Consumers**

Accountability to consumers and client of public organization is through institutions established for dealing with complaints and grievances and, more recently, for consulting consumers. Various tribunals deal with appeals against administrative decisions but complaints of maladministration are dealt with by the parliamentary

or Health Services or local commissioners. In Ethiopia, the office of the Ombudsman is established to hear complaints with regard to maladministration in public organizations.

### Professional Accountability

This is particularly pertinent to the public sector, since many public organizations are staffed by professional workers such as doctors, nurses, and teachers. Professionals seek not only to control entry to their occupations but also determine their own methods of work and police their members.

Table 2.1 – Comparison of Public and private Organizations

S. N	Point of contrast	Public Organizations	Private business organizations
1	Organizational goals	Set by politicians Vaguely defined and often conflicting	Set by owner (s), Precise; profit
2	Primary objective and “bottom line” for existence	Rely on government budget; profit making is not their primary objectives Goals may be changed through political pressures	Profit is a “Bottom line” for existence, as they rely on market for their finance
3	Functions and structures	Multi-functional and complex structure	Relatively limited functions and less complex structure
4	Accountability	Accountable to the public they serve	Accountable to the owner/s

### **2.1.3 Are Public Organizations Administered or Managed?**

The term personnel administration is mostly used with reference to the public sector while personnel management is increasingly used in connection to the private sector. "A dominant perception is that public organizations are administered, whilst private organizations are managed...Administration in both types of organizations involves establishing procedures which are designed to link policy with practice, to ensure consistency and facilitate control. In public organizations, it is these administrative processes that have tended to dominate. This gives public organizations their distinctive nature although this varies from organization to organization." Horton and Farnham, 1999, p 37.

"How public organizations are managed is affected by those fundamental facts of political life. Traditionally, their management systems have emerged out of their administrative systems not vice versa. In the private sector, the management function precedes the administrative one. In public organizations, because of their primary political goals and accountabilities, and the priority given to procedures, it is the administrative function which is prior to the management one." Ibid, p. 39  
Horton and Farnham (1999, p 38) enlist five key contrasts between administrative and management systems. These are presented in Table 2.2

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Table 2.2 - The key contrasts between administrative and management systems

<b>Points of contrasts</b>	<b>Administrative systems</b>	<b>Management systems</b>
Objectives	Objectives tend to be expressed in very general terms and are rarely reviewed or changed	Have more clearly identified goals and objectives, with specific time scales and targets
Criteria for success	Avoiding mistakes and getting things right	Targets are expressed quantitatively
Efficiency and economy	Is secondary in administrative systems	Have primary importance
Role cultures	Responsibilities are precisely defined and there is limited delegation; long hierarchies in structures and tendency to caution and refer problems upward dominate	Shorter hierarchies , more delegation and a willingness to take decisions
Roles to be played.	One of arbitration and rule interpretation	The manager is a protagonist, looking for opportunities, fighting for resources and taking initiatives.

The administrative system in public organizations is notably known for its lengthy procedures, impersonality, rigidity and inflexibility. This brought excessive assault and a host of academic debates on the concept of Bureaucracy. Scholars such as Robert Merton argued that there are at least four principal traits of bureaucratic personalities (Goodsell, 1985. p 88). These are over-specialization, over-emphasizing rules and regulations, complacency (red-tape and nepotism), and impersonality. According to Horton and Farnham the managerial functions in most public organizations has tended to be 'bureaucratic', 'incrementalist' and 'particularistic'. Bureaucratic management leads to narrow span of control and decisions are taken at higher level in the organization leading to centralization. Extreme narrowness of the scope of work does not allow the functionary to be capable of adapting to ever-changing conditions.

Overemphasizing the importance of rules occurs when an employee forgets the initial reasons for the rules, and enforcement of the rules surpasses in importance in the bureaucrat's mind what the organization is trying ultimately to achieve. An extreme product of this process of displacement of goals, according to Merton, is the bureaucratic virtuoso, who never forgets a single rule behind his action and hence is unable to assist many of his clients.

In response to the inefficiencies and irresponsiveness associated with the traditional administrative systems, a new approach to the public sector management has got a widespread acceptance in recent years. This new approach which extends the private sector management principles to the public sector is called the new public management or managerialism. According to Pollitt (cited in Horton and Farnham, 1999:p. 41) managerialism has five axioms. These are:

- a) Social progress requires continuing increases in economic productivity
- b) Productivity increases come from applying sophisticated technologies
- c) The application of these technologies can only be achieved through a disciplined workforce
- d) Business success depends on the professionalism of skilled managers; and
- e) To perform their role, managers must have the right to manage

#### ***2.1.4 Personnel Administration/Management and Human Resources Management***

Nowadays the idiom 'human resources management' (HRM) is becoming popular instead of personnel administration, personnel management or manpower administration. As Bratton and Gold (1999:7) stated, personnel management takes place within a context of change. Its evolution has been significantly influenced by the dual pressure of public policy and the rise of workplace trade unionism and collective bargaining.

The shift from the old orthodoxy of personnel management, which views personnel processes as very mechanistic operations as Cox et al (1994, p 52) states, is also necessitated by concerns about global competition, internationalization of technology and workers productivity (Bratton and Gold: 1999.p 4). The mechanistic view of personnel administration is properly explained in Cox et al (1994, p 52).

Employees are recruited from a pool of applicants meeting pre-established guidelines. The hiring process is circumscribed by restrictions on information; employment applications as well as interview questions are carefully screened to avoid illegal questioning but to be certain that any bona fide occupational qualification questions are included. The fundamental tenants of personnel practice from this perspective are simplistic. Absenteeism should be reduced; employee turn-over is deplored. Hiring is to occur based summarily upon the applicant's "fit" with the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) and defined in the position classification guidelines. Promotion is to be based on merit. While in most cases, a personnel manager could organize his or her office using this "by-the-book" and somewhat robotic approach, the manager learns

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nothing of why the employees behave as they do. This approach to personnel management ignores the context in which people work – a critical element to any understanding of public sector personnel practice.

Thus, the shift from the term personnel management/administration to human resources management is not simply the matter of choice in the use of semantics; it involves a paradigm shift in the way of looking at personnel administration processes and the dynamism involved. As Cox et al (1994, p 52) state, an alternative view begins its examination of personnel practices from the perspective of how to utilize the contributions of government personnel to achieve the objectives of governance. This more dynamic view of personnel practice places personnel management at the very center of governmental activity.

To enlist worker's full potential and to produce behavior and attitudes considered necessary for competitive advantage requires three aspects of managerial control: organizational and job design, organizational culture, and personnel policies and techniques. Thus the developing managerial orthodoxy now posts the need for reengineering of organizations towards 'flat' hierarchical structures, an enlargement of job tasks and job autonomy, ideally centered around work teams.

Furthermore, it is suggested that senior management can direct and inspire workers through the management of the more intangible aspect of the workplace, such as beliefs, norms of behavior and values (corporate culture). In addition the new orthodoxy asserts the need to recruit, develop and reward workers in ways which create a sustainable commitment to organizations goals and to ensure a "high performance" organization (Bratton and Gold: 1999.p 4).

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According to Torrington et al. (2002), there are divergent opinions among scholars with regard to the degree of differences between HRM and PM. For some, particularly for those whose focus of interest is on the management of collective relationships at work, the rise of HRM in the last twentieth century represent something new and very different from the dominant approach in earlier years. A particular approach in their work is the contention that personnel management is essentially workforce centered, while HRM is resource centered. Personnel specialists direct their efforts mainly at the organization's employees; finding and training them, arranging for them to be paid, explaining management's expectations, justifying management actions, satisfying employees' work related needs, dealing with their problems and seeking to modify management action that could produce an unwelcome employee response. The people who work in the organization are the starting point, and they are a resource that is relatively inflexible in comparison with other resources, like cash and materials.

HRM, by contrast is directed mainly at management needs for human resources. Demand rather than supply is the focus of the activity. There is greater emphasis on planning, monitoring and control, rather than mediation. Problem solving is undertaken with other members of management on human resources issues rather than directly with employees or with their representatives. It is totally identified with management interests, being a general management activity, and is relatively distant from the workforce as the whole. David Guest, 1987, cited in Torrington et al. (2002), enumerates the following differences between PM and HRM.

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Table 2.3 - Personnel versus HRM

Point of deference		Personnel Management	HR Management
1	Time and planning perspective	Short term, reactive, ad hoc, marginal	Long term, proactive, strategic, integrated
2	Psychological contract	compliance	Commitment
3	Control system	External controls	Self-control
4	Employee relations perspective	Pluralistic, collective, low trust	Unitary, individual, high trust
5	Preferred structures/systems	Bureaucratic/mechanistic, centralized, formal defined roles	Organic, devolved, flexible roles
6	Roles	Specialist/professional	Largely integrated into line management
7	Evaluation criteria	Cost minimization	Maximum utilization (human asset accounting)

An alternative point of view, while recognizing the differences, downplays the significance of a break between personnel and HRM. Such a conclusion is readily reached when the focus of analysis is on what HR/personnel managers actually do rather than on the more profound development in the specific field of collective employee relations and personnel management. The rise of HRM in the last two decades of the twentieth century represents something new and very different from the dominant approach in earlier years.

## ***2.2 Public Personnel or the Civil Service Defined***

The term public personnel is often used interchangeably with such terminologies as the civil service, civil servants, government employees, public sector employees and the like. It is, therefore, very useful to define what a career civil service is to understand public personnel administration. A Hand Book of Public Administration, UN (1961) defines a career civil service as follows:

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Career civil services are corps of public officials and employees with tenure of office longer than that of the ministers and who are not charged with ultimate political responsibility. It is also known as the 'civil service' or the 'public service' or 'classified service' and sometimes the 'public administration' ... In modern systems of public administration, the members of the career service are appointed and promoted on the basis of objective tests of competence and are assured of protection against arbitrary dismissal (p.18)

A career service (referred to variously as a civil or public service) is the non-political, permanent corps of officials which forms the backbone of a national administration. To be competent and effective such a service should offer the prospect of a dignified and respected career on a full-time, life-time basis, which will attract and retain persons of superior capacities in the service of their country (p. 35)

Civil servants work for the 'civil' as opposed to the military, ministerial or judicial arms of the state. Members of the armed forces, governmental ministers and judges are not civil servants (Pyper: 1995, p.1)

The civil service or public personnel are also some times interchangeably used with the term bureaucracy, although different meanings are attached to it depending on the context in which it is used. In its generic sense, a bureaucracy is 'government by un-elected, career officials'. The term was popularized by Weber, who associated it with the exercise of 'legal-rational' – as different from 'traditional' or 'charismatic' authority (Balogun and Mutahaba, p. 192).

According to Cox et al (1994, p 53) public personnel is more than a series of steps or organizational constructs. It is more than recruitment, hiring, retention, job analysis, evaluation and promotion. It is a cluster of activities that are changing and evolving, with some activities changing more rapidly than others.

Thus, our definition of the public personnel administration follows. public personnel administration refers to the administration or management of the human resources

engaged in the civil service through systematic, pragmatic and flexible approach towards the planning, attracting, developing, maintaining, coordinating, motivating them in such a way that enhances employees quality of life and creates sustainable commitment to serve the public and promote social, economic and social development.

### ***2.3 The Public Sector and the Civil Service***

The public sector is a broad concept that includes all sectors of the government as opposed to the private sector. It embraces three main categories, viz., the government with all its subsidiaries (government departments/ministries, commissions, agencies, authorities), the public enterprises and the social security. The public sector also includes the judiciary, the security and the national defense. In general, it refers to the three branches of government, viz., the legislative, executive and the judiciary. In other words, it embraces the wide range of activities where government directly operates by employing people of different capacity at different levels including policy making, regulatory bodies, policy implementation, maintenance of law and order and the provision of public goods and sometimes private goods (as in the case of developing countries).

The size of the public sector in a given economy depends upon many factors including the political ideology, level of economic development, and the global environment. The definition of the public service, therefore, could be different from country to country depending upon the specific condition of each country. As stated in Tiziano Treu (1967:4), the concept of public service varies in different countries in terms of the employing authorities and the services covered on the one hand, and the personnel covered on the other. In fact, the concept and the scope are determined by the overall constitutional, political and social system on which the organization of each state is based.

## CHAPTER THREE - THE HISTORY OF PUBLIC PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION IN ETHIOPIA

### *3.1 Background*

The people of Africa, as peoples in every part of the world, have had an indigenous traditional administrative systems since time immemorial. The peoples of the continent had been practicing their traditional self-rule through their indigenous administrative systems emerged as people began to live in community and evolved through times until the 'colonial scramble for Africa' in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to AAPAM (1984, p.3), the colonial scramble of Africa arbitrarily and indiscriminately cut across all systems of African native administration and proceeded to rule and administer Africa in ways not only different from the varying native African systems but also differing in accordance to whether the colonizer power was French, British, German or Italian.

The peoples of the today's Ethiopia too had been practicing their own native administration until the powerful annexation by the Abyssinian Emperor Minilik II during the same period of European scramble for Africa. The Oromo Gada system, a highly developed and democratic administration at that time, was one of the native African administrative systems, which has been forcefully and systematically abolished after the annexation. As Fukui and Markakis, eds. (1994) states, after centuries of self-sufficient independence, the Oromo peoples were conquered by Shoa during the last two decades of the last (19<sup>th</sup>) century. The kingdom of Shoa, in effect, became the Ethiopian Empire.

Public administration in its modern sense and its component public personnel administration, however, presupposes the establishment of an administrative state. The discussion of public personnel administration, therefore, begins from the point in history when the formation of an administrative state had begun in Ethiopia. This in turn requires us to have proper understanding of the genesis and evolution of the current Ethiopian public personnel administration. Before looking into the evolution of administrative state in Ethiopia, however, we need to know what the term itself conveys.

According to Rosenbloom (1986), the growth of civil service employees and the development of large administrative components in governments at all levels are generally referred to as 'the rise of administrative state'. "The term administrative state is intended to convey several realities of contemporary government: that a great deal of the societies resources are spent on salaries and functions of public administrators; that public administrators are crucial to the operation of contemporary government; that, as a whole, they are politically powerful and that the nation has decided upon the course of attempting to solve its problems and achieve its aims through the use of administrative action." Ibid, p.36.

In view of the above definition of administrative state, we can boldly point out three major criteria that qualify the formation of an administrative state in any country that affects the performance of the civil service in any country. These are:

- 1) The size of the public service
- 2) The role that the public service plays in the contemporary government
- 3) National political and socio-economic goals so that the public service can be molded accordingly

The degree to which the above three points are given prominence depends upon the specific political realities in a given nation. The size of the public service and the role it plays in government are directly related to policy decisions to provide welfare services to the public such as housing, health, education, etc. According to Rosenbloom (1986), the need for large scale public administration lies in the governments' policy choice to undertake organizational actions themselves to achieve their ultimate political goals. Besides the traditional roles of public administration, i.e., maintenance of law and order, the desire to promote economic development and social well-being through governmental action is also relies upon the political will and decision.

The decision to pursue common national political and socio-economic goals comes out of national consensus, which is most of the time expressed in constitutions. Without having an all inclusive national political goals, it is difficult to build an effective public administration. This is what is lacking in most African countries, for which Ethiopia is not an exception. According to AAPAM (1984, p.4), at independence, African states inherited the following legacies:

- 1) Independent constitutions that tried to accommodate ethno-cultural development, linguistic, religious, and political differences, but at the same time were meant to facilitate the building of a nation state out of a conglomerate of peoples arbitrarily and involuntarily brought together
- 2) Public services with structures, processes and procedures, condition of service, tradition and attitudes that were not primarily designed to serve the aspirations and goals of the newly independent states.
- 3) Staggering socio-economic underdevelopment and extremely weak indigenous private sectors in their economies.

These legacies have had direct and severe effects on the public services in independent Africa. In search of suitable constitutions, conflicts arose and resulted in civil war in many countries. In others it has continued to cause serious strains and stresses, which together with other factors have resulted in coups and counter coups, suspension of constitutions and strong communal antipathies. The consequent upheavals and instability have resulted in an absence of definite political and socio-economic goals and stable styles of government towards the achievement of which, suitable public service can be built (Ibid, pp 4-5).

Some people, few misinformed or misunderstood and others intentionally (for political purpose), claim that Ethiopia is a non-colonized African country except for the five year periods of the Italian invasion and, therefore, undermine the problem of a common national political and socio-economic goals. Such mistakes arise when colonization is seen from a narrow perspective, i.e., from perceiving only the West (the whites) as colonizers and Africans as colonized. In the next few pages, we will try to look into the historical formation of Ethiopia from various perspectives including the myths and the biases that have dominated the national literature and education system.

### **3.1 The Beginning of the Current Public Administration**

The present Ethiopian public personnel administration had its roots in the rudimentary administrative form of the northern nobility. It was first instituted by Emperor Minilik II at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century after he established its permanent capital, Addis Ababa, in 1886 through his forceful annexation of the central, south, south west and eastern part of the today's Ethiopia (hereinafter referred to as 'the south'). Following the move, said to be initiated by Empress Taitu, Minilik's Wife,

from Entoto to Finfinnee (Filwuha in Amharic) to establish their permanent seat, a group of people who were serving in the houses of the royal families began to establish new settlements. This constitutes the embryonic stage of the Feudal administrative system of Ethiopia. Bahiru Zewde (2002) states the emerging feudal administrative system of Emperor Minilik as follows: The settlements of the palace servants, generally located on the slopes, gave rise to such occupational areas as *saratanya sefar* (the workers quarter), *zebenya sefar* (the guards quarter), the quarters of the un-provisioned, an imperial army unit said to be supplied only with water (Bahiru Zewde: 2002, pp. 70 -71).

On the other hand, Emperor Minilik's army who occupied the south had to establish an administrative system to control the new areas and to enforce their legitimacy on the conquered by basing themselves in the garrison towns established by the army. Thus the centralized feudal system gradually extended to the newly incorporated areas. As Pausewang (1990:43) states, centralization of the empire led both the old-gult lords in the north and the new ones in the south to move into towns as civil servants, taking with them their privileges and the resources they collected in the villages. Bonnie and Jason (1985) give a clear image of the start of Minilik's administrative system.

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The atrocities of the conquest, though not forgotten, were quickly overshadowed by the large scale land grab that immediately followed by the colonization of many areas by Amhara settlers and by the establishment of military and administrative posts throughout the region. These posts eventually evolved into armed garrisons, then urban centers... Soldiers from Abyssinia who helped win the military campaign ...were rewarded for their role in state building with grants of lands in the conquered regions as well as the right to use subjugated indigenous peoples as slaves...Local elites from the conquered population who collaborated with the conquering power during the formation of the new political system were also given land use right in return for their service to the Abyssinian, now Ethiopian, emperor. They could not, however, pass these rights on to their children. (Hereditary land use rights are reserved only to the Abyssinians). (Sentence in the bracket is ours).

After bringing almost all the areas of the present day Ethiopia under his control, Emperor Minilik had succeeded in consolidating his power by reducing the status of the other Abyssinian nobilities, which his Abyssinian forerunners such as Tewodors and Yohannis failed to do, through different means. His ambitions to bring modernity by introducing an administrative system that served his interest, however, remained far from being realized. This fact was clearly stated by Levine, sited in Paul and Clapham, 1967 (volume I: p 317-18).

Minilik revived Tewodros policy of creating a band of generals loyal only to himself...The power of the feudal chieftains he manipulated by traditional techniques, sending them to posts far removed from their home bases , and arranging political marriages. But Minilik did not decisively undercut the authority of the great provincial lords, and at his death the old political structure was still more or less intact... It is they (the nobility) who issued the day-to-day commands to the people, and they alone for whom the peasantry has unflinching respect. Short of a brutally totalitarian program that is willing to ignore the sentiment of the mass of tradition directed peasantry, and suffer the consequences, no dynamic program of agricultural and cultural and social development can take place in Abyssinian areas that does not enlist the active cooperation of the local balabbat (chief) and shum (appointee). Words in the parentheses are ours.

Nevertheless, beginning from the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was relative decline in the power of the clergy and the nobility with very slow and limited move towards establishing modern administrative system: teachers had

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been recruited to teach in the few government schools as opposed to traditional religious subjects given by illiterate clergies. In 1884, a French company began the construction of a railway to link Djibouti to Addis Ababa. Successively other networks of roads spread from Addis Ababa to other centers. From 1889 telephone and telegraphic service was introduced. In 1908 Emperor Minilik established the following 9 ministerial frameworks in the history of the Empire (Aba Paulos Tzadua, sited in Paul and Clapham, 1967, volume I: p 319-21).

- 1) Ministry of Justice
- 2) Ministry of Interior
- 3) Ministry of Commerce and Foreign Affairs
- 4) Ministry of Finance
- 5) Ministry of Agriculture and Industry
- 6) Ministry of Public Works
- 7) Ministry of War
- 8) Ministry of Pen
- 9) Ministry of Palace

The first attempt to establish such offices came in 1908, when the declining Minilik set up a system of ministers; nine ministers were appointed, later to be increased to eleven, and provided with lists of the functions which their ministers should carry out. To some extent, this was simply the giving of new titles to old officials; the Afa Negus became Minister of Justice, the Bejeirond Minister of Finance, and the Tsahafe T'ezaz Minister of Pen. Other portfolios, such as foreign affairs and Posts and Telegraphs, reflects increased contacts with the outside world, but these too carried out their functions as personal servants of the crown, and Mahatama-selasie present the Minister of Posts and telegraphs as the official who would deliver telegrams to the Emperor. In this way the modern institutions of the central government have evolved directly from the personal entourage of the Emperor, a process which was continued during the reign of Zewditu and the early reign of Haile-Selasie."Clapham, sited in Paul and Clapham (1967, pp. 322-23).

This marked the introduction of the feudal system that lasted up to the fall of Emperor Haile-selasie by the military junta in 1974. Nevertheless, the feudal administrative system, which had emerged through the annexation of the south by

Emperor Minilik, by any standard, can not be taken as public administration in its proper sense. Nor one can argue that there was personnel administration in the feudal system of Ethiopia. Rather, it was a traditional patronage that symbolized the relationship between slave owner and slaves. Slavery and slave trade had been endemic in Ethiopian history since early times (Ibid, p 93). The Oromo were colonized: many where sold into slavery, others were reduced to near serfdom, and much of their land was expropriated (Holcombe & Sissai Ibsa, sited in Fukui and Markakis, eds. 1994, p. 169).The subjugation of the people of the south has ended up in massive enslavement and commoditization of humans in Ethiopia until the end of the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The society was divided into different classes based on political and economic status, means of earning livings, ethnic background, etc. Appointments of the bureaucracy was on the basis of loyalty to the system and on proper understanding of the ruling class culture, acceptance of orthodox religion, which has been state religion for over several decades, and minimum level of speaking Amharic. Access to education had remained the sole right of the privileged ruling class family.

This Ethiopian civil service, which is considered to have long history and elder in Africa, did not mature into developed administrative system overtime. The particular socio-political condition under which a particular bureaucracy, in this context the civil service system, is created and the objective which it set fourth to achieve determines the direction and the speed at which it evolves. This fact was described, in the context of African civil service system, by Asmaron (sited in Balgun and Mutahaba: 1999, pp. 198-199).

Chronological age appears to be irrelevant to the evolution of public bureaucracies in Africa. In fact if we go by their 'dates of birth', only two bureaucracies will qualify as 'elders' (Ethiopia and Liberia), and the toddler's will include Botswana, Namibia and South Africa. However, in terms of structural complexity and the goal-attainment capacity of institutions, the 'elder bureaucracies' of Ethiopia and Liberia are at the primeval stage, and are way behind the newly emerging bureaucracies of Botswana, South Africa and Namibia.

The origin of a bureaucracy and the purpose it was required to serve at the time of birth are crucial in determining the evolution of bureaucracy over a period; the Ethiopian public service began as an extension of the Imperial household, and it soon developed into a patrimonial system. Emperor Minilik – a modernist by Imperial standards laid the foundation of the centralized and patrimonial bureaucracy. He appointed his relatives, trusted courtiers and powerful generals to key offices. Complete loyalty to the Emperor was a major condition for survival in the imperial court and for progress within the bureaucracy.

### **3.2 Public Personnel Administration under Emperor Haileselassie**

Though appointing ministers based on the European system of administration had been introduced by Emperor Minilik in 1908, there were no systematic and formal administrative system at the time. It was during Emperor Haileselassie that formal/institutionalized appointments, establishment of governmental departments, commissions and other agencies through proclamations and the publications of appointments of ministers and other high-rank officials through public notices on the Negarit Gazette were introduced.

The other important development during this period was the constitution of the 1931. This constitution almost throughout its chapters emphasizes the Emperor's absolute power, his sacredness, his being elect of God by virtue of his blood as he is from the line of Solomonic dynasty. Chapter 5 of this constitution has, however, relevance to the subject of public administration; it divides the country into 14 principal administrative provinces; the provinces are divided into awurajas (counties) and the counties into waradas (districts). Chapter 10 of this constitution

provides for the government revenue and expenditure and sets the scene for modern public financing.

The other major step in the public service system of Ethiopia was the establishment of the Central Personnel Agency (CPA) by the central public personnel agency and public service order No. 23 of 1961. The regulation issued through legal Notice No. 269 of 1962 pursuant to the establishment of CPA, provides a detailed guidelines on almost every aspect of public personnel administration. This includes staffing, recruitment, selection and appointment, transfer, promotion, training, conditions of service, duties and rights of public servants, personnel records, discipline and others.

Amendment No. 2 of the order No. 46/1966 on the other hand provides for the establishment of government ministries and defines their powers. These ministries are the following:

- 1) The Ministry of National Community Development and Social Affairs
- 2) The Ministry of Public Health
- 3) The Ministry of Land Reform and Administration
- 4) The Ministry of Communications
- 5) The Ministry of Information and Tourism
- 6) The Ministry of Mines
- 7) The Ministry of Public Works
- 8) The Ministry of Education and Fine Arts
- 9) The Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- 10) The Ministry of National Defense
- 11) The Ministry of Interior
- 12) The Ministry of Agriculture

- 13)The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- 14)The Ministry of Finance
- 15)The Ministry of Imperial Court
- 16)The Ministry of Pen
- 17)The Ministry of Justice
- 18)The Ministry of Planning and Development
- 19)The Ministry of Post, Telegraphs and Telephones

Except the very slow increases in the size and variety of public agencies and the formalization of appointments and the establishments of such government agencies, one can hardly mention improvements in the public personnel administration of Ethiopia during HaileSELLASIE's regime. Neither the establishment of the Central Public Agency (CPA) nor the development of public service law had brought about the required improvements in the civil service administration of Ethiopia. The civil service was staffed with uneducated, inefficient and irresponsible civil servant. Corruption was rampant and almost considered ethical and legal in the feudal system of Ethiopia. Recruitment, promotion transfer and trainings were based on blood ties, buying-off, and other corrupt practices rather than on skills, abilities and merits or the requirement of the positions. Ethnic background, social class and speaking Amharic language were considered the main factors for recruitment, even at lower grade, and for advancement rather than the requisite qualifications. The Central Personnel Agency and the development of the civil service law served very little purpose. As explained in the Federal Civil Service Commission Five Years Draft Strategic Plan (2005), Amharic Version, the Ethiopian civil service remained handicapped in its ways of organization, systems and personnel administration. The Central Personnel Agency had done little but remained a neutral observer of the civil service over its 42 years of life (p. 38).

### 3.3 Public Personnel administration in the Socialist Regime

After the fall of the feudal system, Ethiopia has embarked on a completely new political ideology under the military leadership. The century old traditional civil service, however, continued without any basic change. As an administrative system cannot be seen in isolation from the political ideology and system of governance a country is following, the Ethiopian public administration has also undergone a very unfortunate and sluggish trend, which the political structure through out the century demanded. As Asmaron stated, the succeeding socialist regime inherited and probably reinforced the patrimonial bureaucratic system. Deference to Authority, hierarchy and inflexible application of bureaucratic rules conspired against innovative impulses in the bureaucracy, and dampened the tall industrialization ambitions of the then revolutionary government. Routine administrative decisions continued to be based on the personalities rather than on precedence or systematic guidelines. Buccaneering and corrupt activities appeared to be alien to the bureaucracy, but so was entrepreneurial behavior. Caution, meticulous observance of rules and preoccupation with survival were among the recipes of success mastered by the average civil servant in Mengistu's Ethiopia (Ibid. 199)

With the overthrow of the feudal system in 1974, and the onset of the socialist ideology, many had hoped the change would bring an improvement in the political and administrative system of the nation. The *Dergue* regime, however, was unable to bring the expected improvements in the life of the Ethiopian people; it remained only a shift of system from glorifying the king to glorifying socialist ideology and the dictator, Mangistu Halile-mariam.

### **3.5 Public Personnel Administration Since 1991**

With the overthrow of the military rule by the Tigrean People's Liberation Front (TPLF) led armed forces in 1991, Ethiopia has entered a new chapter. The country for the first time seemed to have adopted a pluralistic political and administrative system. A constitution that acknowledged decentralized system of governance and the rights of self-determination of nations, nationalities and peoples has been promulgated and adopted in 1994.

According to the constitution all powers not specifically given to the federal government shall be the power of the regional state governments. The federal government has the powers and functions enumerated under article 51 (1-14) of the constitution.

The transitional charter of 1991 which paved the way for the 1994 constitution provides for the establishment of regional self-government with ultimate power to design policies and implement the same with regard to their internal affairs. At the beginning the constitution established 14 national self governments as enacted by the Peace and Democracy Conference held from July 1-5, 1991 in Addis Ababa. Later on, following the 2<sup>nd</sup> national election the number of the national state governments reduced to nine through the union of the southern nations to form one national self government, the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP). Thus, the SNNP has formed federations of federation with its major constituents, namely Guraghe, Hadiya and kambata; Walita; Keffa; Omo and Sidama.

### **3.5.1 The Federal Public Personnel Administration**

The Ethiopian civil service system has been among one of the highly centralized system in Africa for several years. Top down approach was the dominant political and administrative system since the creation of the unitary state. The peripheries were either completely neglected or highly controlled from the center. The reason for such over centralization of political as well as administrative system in Africa is explained in the AAPAM, 1984. "...the efforts to build nations out of diverse and often disunited communities have in many cases resulted into either over centralization of political power, grater administrative control and expertise at the center to the detriment of the periphery institutions; or in weak ineffective central government services with numerous duplications at the state or regional government levels" p. 5.

Following the overthrow of the Degrue and the establishment of the transitional government in 1991, the dominant political groups have shown a strong commitment towards decentralization. Thus after many false starts, the century old centralized administration and political, economic and cultural dominance by the privileged class over the mass of the south has come to an end.

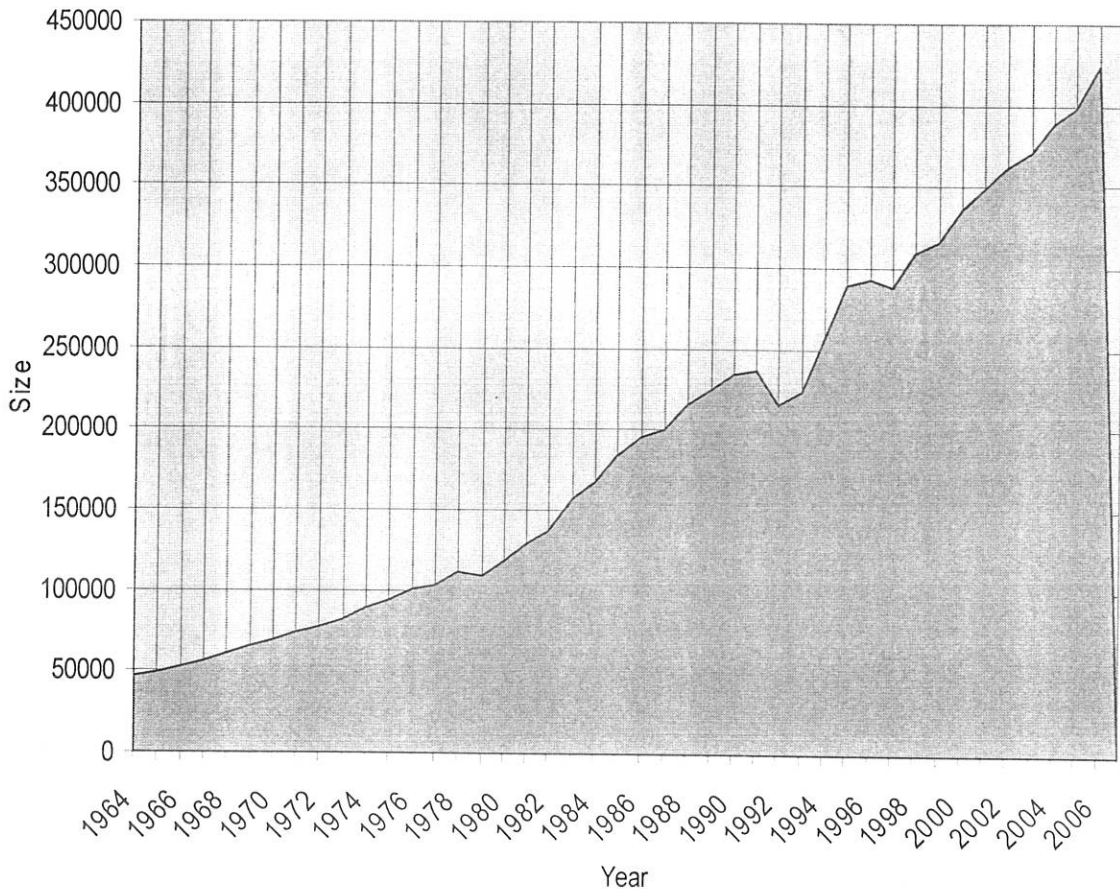
The 1994 constitution provides for the establishment of a strong federal government with its 9 constituent national state governments. According to the constitution, the federal government is responsible for issues like external relations, national defense, economic and financial liberalization, and economic as well as social responsibilities that affect the whole nation. In order to carryout these national responsibilities the federal government established a number of public organizations having regulatory, service rendering, and development responsibilities.

### **3.5.2 The size of the Ethiopian Civil Service**

According to the data from the Federal Civil Service Commission, the Size of the public service has been increasing slowly in Ethiopia for the last 44 years i.e., since 1964 except the decline that has been observed in the years 1992/93 following the overthrow of the communist regime. At present (2006), the size of the civil service at national level is 424,067. Out of these, 46, 238 are working at Federal level while the remaining 375,829 (about 67%) are working at regional level, as shown in the Table 3.1. Oromia and Amhara regional states employ more than 50% of the civil servants in the country, 31% and 22 % respectively. The Federal Government, Tigray and Addis Ababa account for 24.4 % of the total. The remaining emerging regions Benishangul-Gumuz, Afar, Gambella and Harari including the Dire dawa Administration accounts for 7.5%.

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Fig 3.1 - The Size of the Ethiopian Civil service: 1964-2006



Source: Extracted from the FCSC Annual Personnel Statistics Bulletin

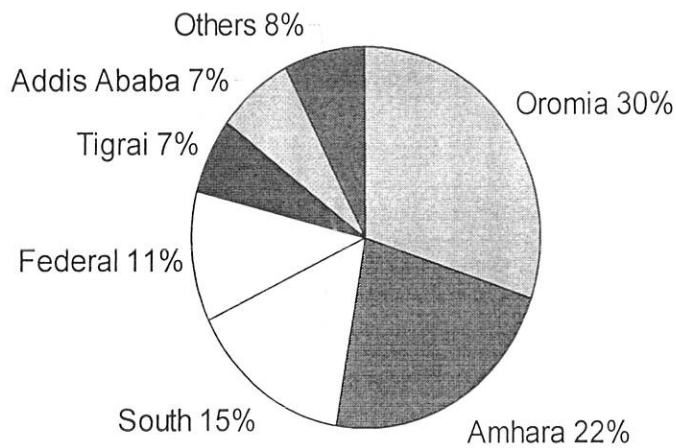
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Table 3.1 – The Size and Distribution of Civil Service at Federal and Regional Level for the last Three Years

<b>Governments</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>%ge</b>
Oromia	131913	116254	113714	31.1
Amhara	93093	83519	81458	22.0
South	63454	63454	63454	15.0
Federal	46238	46184	45514	10.9
Addis Ababa	29456	28944	28770	6.9
Tigray	27983	27983	25764	6.6
Benish-Gumuz	10014	10014	9063	2.4
Afar	5106	5106	5106	1.2
Gambela	5052	5052	5029	1.2
Somali	4377	4377	4377	1.0
Harari	3972	3852	3931	0.9
Diredawa	3409	3409	3383	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>424067</b>	<b>398148</b>	<b>389563</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Federal Civil Service Commission Annual Personnel Statistics, 2006

Fig.3.2 - Distribution of the Ethiopian Civil Service



The proportion of the national civil service to the national population is lower in Ethiopia compared to some African countries the Federal Civil Service Commission Five Years Strategic Plan (1998-2002 EC) indicates the following reality.:

		<u>Per 1000 population</u>
Ethiopia	1:200	5
Kenya	1:119	8
Mauritius	1:22	50
Egypt	1:12	93

The proportion of public employees in Mauritius and Egypt is comparable with that of developed countries. Ethiopia and Kenya, however, is by far behind. This shows the low level of public service in Ethiopia and other least developed countries. According to Goodsell, 1985, p111, the number of public employees per 1000 population has risen from 58 in 1950 to 63 in 1960 to 78 in 1970 in USA. In 1981 it reached 82. This compared to 109 in Britain, 83 in France, 76 in West Germany German Democratic Republic after the fall of the German Wall] and 45 in Japan

According to the Federal Civil Service Commission Annual Personnel Statistics, the size of the civil service in the federal government for the year 2006 is 46, 238. This accounts for about 11% of the total civil service in the country (424,067) for the year. Male employees constitute 28,259 (67%) while females are 18,079 (33%). Most of the female are represented in the lowest rank. This low level of women's representation is the reflection of gender inequality resulting into marginalization of women in the educational system as shown in the following table. Women's participation decreases as one goes up the hierarchy in the civil service as shown the Table 3.2.

The scarcity of educated manpower is one of the major problems in national development efforts in Ethiopia as is the case in many underdeveloped countries. Lack of education reinforces gender inequality and gender inequality augments backwardness; thus forming underdevelopment vicious circle. As shown in the Table 3.3, there is an acute shortage of manpower in the federal civil service as one goes up the ladder.

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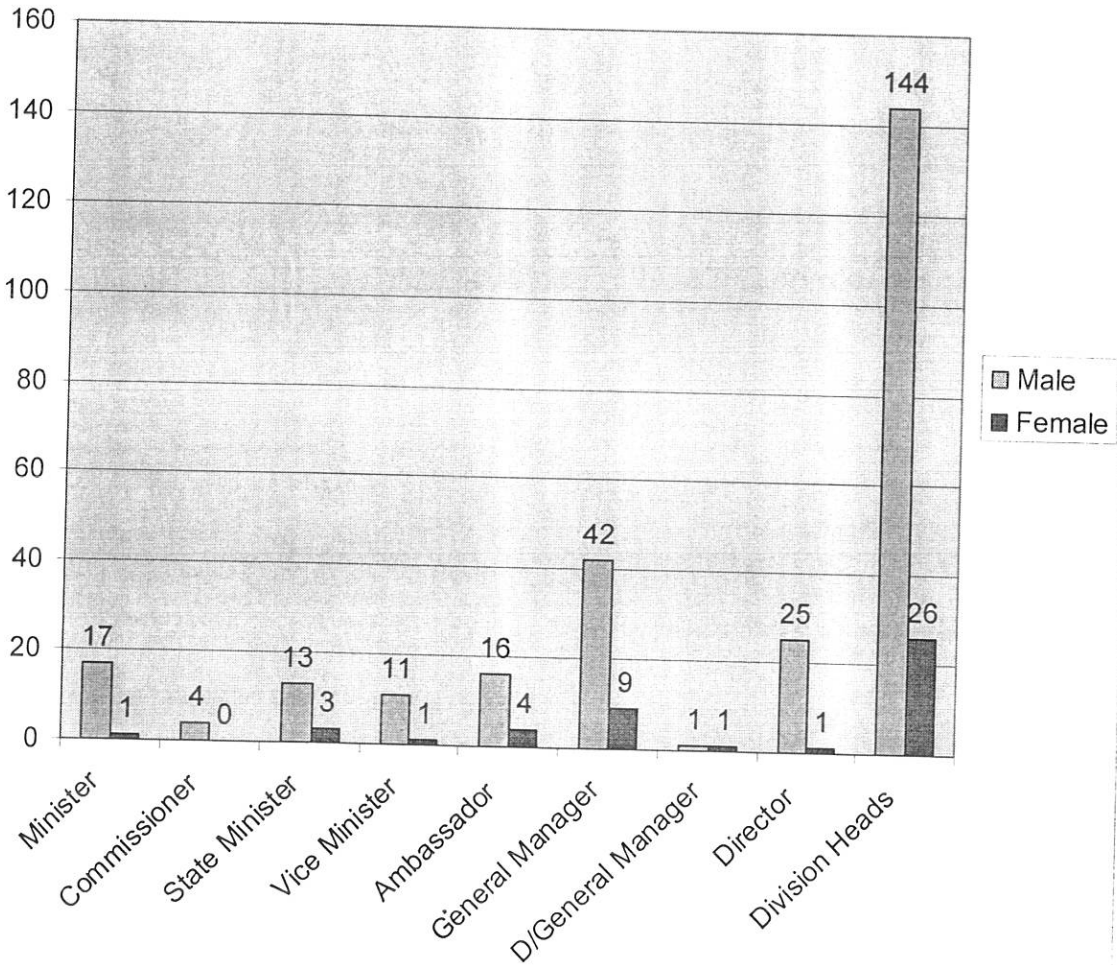
Table 3.2- Composition of Male/Female employees in High level posts at federal Govt.

S.N	Position	Male	Female	Total
1	Minister	17	1	18
2	Commissioner	4	-	3
3	State Minister	13	3	16
4	Vice Minister	11	1	12
5	Ambassador	16	4	20
6	General Manager	42	9	51
7	D/General Manager	1	1	2
8	Director	25	1	26
9	Division Heads	144	26	170

Source: Extracted from the Federal Civil Service Annual Statistics bulletin for the, 2006

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Fig. 3.3 - Male/Female Composition at Managerial Positions of the Federal Civil service



Source: Extracted from the Federal Civil Service Annual Statistics bulletin for the, 2006

**Table 3.3 - Level of Education of Federal Civil Servants**

Level of Education	Below Grade 8		Grade 9-certif		TVT - Diploma		BSc/LLB		MD/DMB		MSc/LLM		PHD		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Illiterate	305	204														
Read & write	3335	2079														509
Grade 1-4	3050	2225														5414
Grade 5-8	20606	10089														5275
Grade 9-12			43474	34045												30695
Certificate					6261	6022										77519
TVT					4217	1515										12283
Univ. 1 <sup>st</sup> - 4 <sup>th</sup>					52718	14769										5732
Diploma					711	670										67487
BSc									13735	1680						1381
LLB									449	68						15415
MD																517
DMB										820	123					943
MA/MSc										204	25					229
LLM												56	4			60
PhD												2914	29			2943
<b>Total</b>	<b>27296</b>	<b>14597</b>	<b>43474</b>	<b>34045</b>	<b>63907</b>	<b>22976</b>	<b>14184</b>	<b>1748</b>	<b>1024</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>2970</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>2</b>		292
Percentage	12.04	6.44	19.18	15.02	28.19	10.14	6.26	0.77	0.45	0.07	1.31	0.01	0.13	0.0		226694
																100

Source: Federal Civil Service Commission, Draft Five years strategic Plan, 2006.

Kumera Baissa, AAU, Faculty of Business and Economics, Department of Public Administration & Development Management (2007)

### **3.5.3 Ethnic Groups Representation in the Federal Civil Service**

Ethnic representation in the federal civil service is highly unfair in the federal civil service. Amhara, which is the second largest ethnic group next to the Oromo, is the dominant ethnic group in the federal civil service, about 53%. Oromo, which represents more than 35 % of the nation's population, constitutes only about 18%. Tigray which constitutes about 6% of the national population accounts for 7% of the federal civil service; Gurage represents 5%. The rest more than 25 minority ethnic groups have insignificant representation and altogether constitute 17 % of the total.

Representative bureaucracy is one of the prerequisites for democratic governance. Bureaucrats are representative of the public at large in terms of education, social status, religion, income and party affiliation. In countries of diverse ethnic groups like Ethiopia, fair representation in the federal public administration is very important to maintain unity in diversity.

The concept of fair representation of ethnic groups in the federal public service requires representation in proportion to the size of the ethnic groups in the total national population. To ensure such proportional representation, affirmative actions to correct the past discriminations are needed. The current condition in Ethiopia, however, seems to strengthen the past trend in some cases (for example representation of the Oromo and the various ethnic population of the south).

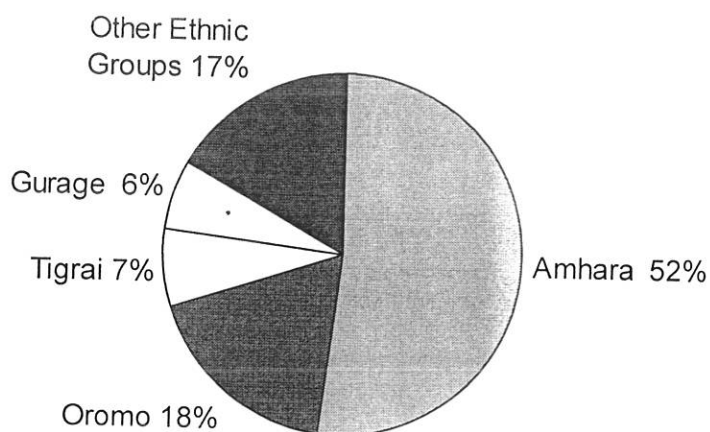
In terms of salary, the largest portion of the federal civil service employees (44%) gets below 500 ET Birr per month. Three fourth of the employees are those who are paid under 1000. Less than 5% are paid 2000 and above.

Table 3.4 - Federal Civil Service by Salary Range

Salary Range	No. of Employees	Percentage
200-499	19959	44.04
500-999	14441	31.87
1000-1499	5708	12.60
1500-1999	3122	6.89
2000-2999	1965	4.34
3000-3499	106	0.23
3500 and above	15	0.03
Total	<b>45316</b>	44.04

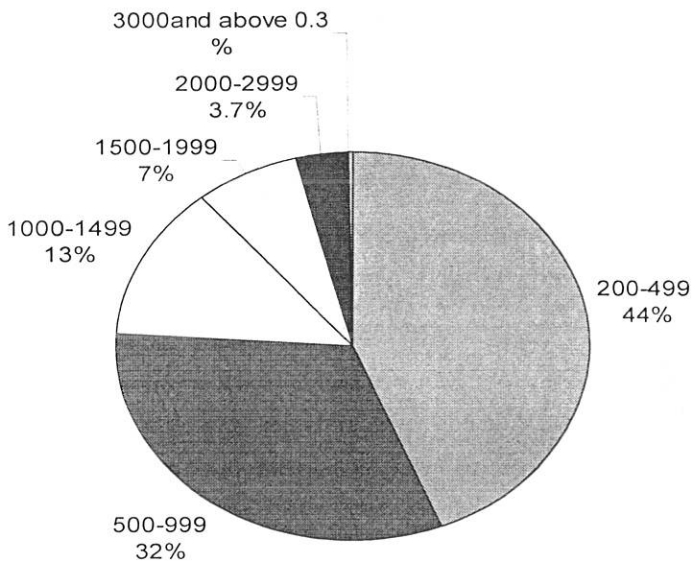
Source: Extracted from Federal Civil Service Personnel Statistics, 2006

Fig 3.4 - Ethnic Groups Representation in the Federal Civil Service



Source: Extracted from the Federal Civil Service Annual Statistics bulletin for the, 2006

Fig 3.5 - Federal Civil service Level of Pay



Source: Extracted from the Federal Civil Service Annual Statistics bulletin for the, 2006

### 3.5.4 Recent Progresses in the Federal Civil Service

The first public service law was promulgated in 1961, by Emperor Haileselassie, following the establishment of the Central Public Agency by the public Service Order, No. 23 of 1961. The proclamation consists of provisions for various personnel matters such as position classification, recruitment and selection, training, promotion, leaves, salaries and allowances among others. These civil service laws were enacted for no avail as neither the Public Personnel Agency nor the concerned public organs have shown interest to enforce and implement the laws. Employee and public welfare has been unknown to the public administration system of Ethiopia as keeping of law and order and suppressing

regional and ethnic revolts against the alien feudal operation were the main focus of the feudal system.

In Ethiopia, a number of rules, regulations and laws had been borrowed from the west and promulgated without giving attention to the local condition. The rules, regulations and the laws, however, remain on paper. Formalism has remained the major characteristics of the Ethiopian government throughout the past and still dominates the administrative system.

In recent years the federal government has made revisions in the civil service law in line with the current federal structure. The two points indicated in the preamble of the Proclamation No. 262/2002, which may justify the revisions are the following.

Whereas it has become necessary to promulgate a law on the administration of civil servants compatible with the progress of the country and federal structure of government;

Whereas it is appropriate to undertake human resources management reform to make the federal civil service efficient, neutral, effective, sustainable, transparent, and development oriented

In the proclamation, civil servant is defined as follows:

Civil servant means a person employed permanently or temporarily by a government office, provided however, that it shall not include the following:

- a) Government officials with a rank of deputy commissioner and with other equivalent ranks or above.
- b) Members of the Houses of Peoples' Representatives and the House of Federations
- c) Federal judges and prosecutors
- d) Members of the Armed Forces and the Federal Police
- e) Employees excluded from the coverage by other appropriate laws

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The proclamation provides, in detail, for a number of personnel issues like classification of positions, powers and duties of the Federal Civil Service Commission and Government Offices, salary scales, recruitment and selection, promotion, transfer, performance evaluation and others. The proclamation also provides for some ethical conduct of the civil servants which includes secrecy, political neutrality, and informing issues which entail conflict of interest.

The proclamation, in many aspects, shows only incremental changes over the past in that it doesn't provide any paradigm shift from the past trend. The social and political dimensions of the civil service like the necessity of affirmative actions to ensure a fair representation of the marginalized ethnic groups, the disabled, and the aged in the federal civil service are overlooked even in the recent civil service law.

The more recent civil service proclamation is proclamation No. 515/2007. In this proclamation, there are two major developments in the history of civil service proclamation in Ethiopia. These are the inclusion of human resources planning (article 12) and actions to promote the employment of persons with disabilities. Other new developments are the addition of clauses for non discrimination of HIV/AIDS patients, performance evaluation as a base for salary increment and improvements in medical benefits to cover spouse and minor children.

The issue of ethnic representation is exceptional in Ethiopia and in some African countries in that even in the era of progress in minority rights and representation, some majorities remain by far underrepresented and neglected in Ethiopia while some ruling minorities possess the lion's share of the political and administrative powers at national level. That is why the Oromo and the south which altogether

constitute more than 60% of the national population have very low participation in the federal civil service.

There are also proclamations and regulations with detailed provisions on important public personnel issues. These are Proclamation No. 345/2003, Public Servant's Pension Proclamation and Council of Ministers regulation No. 77/2002 and Federal Civil servants Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure. The public servants pension proclamation not only covers the public servants proper but also includes those which are outside of the realm of civil service - the military and the police forces. The vivid revision made in the previous pension proclamation is the raising of the retirement age limit from 55 to 60.

The other major parts of the public service employees are those which are engaged in the government owned commercial undertakings. According to the data from Central Statistics Agency, the size of public employees in this sector amounts to 59,516, 59,446 and 54, 622 for the years 2003, 2004, and 2005 respectively. These are governed by labor proclamations. Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is the public body responsible for providing policy advices and for ensuring the proper implementation of the labor law proclamation.

### **3.5.5 Public Personnel Activities in the Federal Government**

The current federal public personnel administration is the gradual transformation of the traditional, centralized public administration which has been in place for more than half a century. Upon the introduction of the federal system in Ethiopia in 1991, the federated units have established their own civil service commissions to regulate the public service administration in their respective government. Some of the staffs of the former centralized civil service were transferred to the

newly established regional states. With its remaining human resources and roles limited to the administration of the federal civil service, the federal civil service continued its traditional and conservative view and system of administration, while the regional civil service like Oromia, with its staff and system of civil service transferred/copied from the center, replicated the system.

The changes in the federal civil service remained only structural until recently. According to Ato Getachew Moges, Head, Office of Civil Service Reform at the Federal Civil Service Commission, the highly centralized and traditional civil service administration, which was latter transformed (structural transformation) into the Federal Civil Service Commission remained mechanistic, inefficient, overloaded by routine personnel activities and had been emphasizing control (reactive). Key and professional positions were held by uneducated and inefficient personnel.

The Federal civil service commission has shown few changes after the civil service reform program. A civil service reform program has five sub programs. These sub programs are:

- 1) Top management system
- 2) Service Delivery reform
- 3) Public Service Ethics
- 4) Human Resources Management Which includes performance management, strategic planning and Business Process Re-engineering (BPR)
- 5) Expenditure Management

Some elements of the service delivery system and civil service ethics are already completed and implementation has just begun. Top management system is

relatively a new program. The human resources system is undergoing but the performance management system has failed and started anew.

The most fashionable program of the civil service reform both at federal and regional level is business process re-engineering (BPR). The program is being applied uniformly almost in all public organizations (the civil service and the public enterprises).

Business process reengineering (BPR) is a relatively new terminology for organizational and job design. It refers to the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical, contemporary measures of performance such as cost, quality, and service and speed (Hammer and Champy, 1999: p. 55).

BPR presupposes the requirement for radical transformation in structures, systems and procedures. Its success depends upon leadership strength, employees' commitment and proper use of computerized technology. The current understanding in the Ethiopian civil service concerning BPR, however, is different - a drug prescribed for all public organizations, without examination to their specific nature, their particular problems, and its effectiveness.

Personnel administration activities which were previously undertaken by the Federal Civil Service Commission, except the delegation of some lower level positions, have been decentralized recently. Though the reform is slow and is not progressing according to expectations, there are some encouraging changes in the federal civil service administration. It seems that the federal civil service system is gradually reforming itself after decades of traditional, self-serving

system of administration. The Commission has decided to concentrate on regulatory aspect of personnel administration by decentralizing personnel activities (recruitment, selection, promotion, training, etc) to the concerned civil service agencies.

Besides some improvements, the federal civil service still suffers from the age old traditional attitudes and methods of the Ethiopian civil service. Though professionalized human resources administration and merit system are formally emphasized, political patronage and conventional method of public administration still dominate the civil service sector. Moreover, the pay level of the civil service sector is very low compared to the private and NGO sectors. As a result the civil service is loosing its educated and experienced workforce. According to the information from Ato Moges, 10 persons who have attended their postgraduate studies have left the Federal Civil Service in the recent two years, and about 97 persons whose educational level is first degree and above have left the federal civil service in the year 2005 only.

## CHAPTER FOUR - PUBLIC PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION IN OROMIA STATE GOVERNMENT

### 4.1 *Background*

Oromia is the largest region of Ethiopia both in area and population. The region constitutes the central part of the country covering an area of about 360,000 km<sup>2</sup>, nearly 32% of the total area. According to the population estimate by the Central Statistics Agency for the year 2006, Oromia accounts for 26,553,000 people followed by Amhara, 19,120,000 and the South 14,902,000, i.e., about 35%,25% and 20% respectively.

Oromia is the homeland of the peoples of Cushitic family, the Oromo. The Oromo are among one of the African people known for their highly democratic traditional administrative system known as Sirna Gadaa, the Gada system.

“The Gada system is a system of Gada classes (luba) that succeeds each other every eight years in assuming political, military, judicial, legislative and ritual responsibilities. Each Gada class is a segment of a generation. Each one of the active luba – beyond the first three grades – has its own internal leaders (hayyu adula) and its own assembly (ya’a). the leaders of the luba become the leaders of the nation as the whole when they come to power as a group in the middle of the life course - a stage of life called “gada” among the southern Oromo and “Luba” in other parts of the Oromo country. The class in power (qomicha) is headed by an officer known as Abba Gada or Abba Bokku in different parts of the Oromo nation, terms that mean “head of the institution” or bearer of the symbol of authority respectively (Asmaron Legese, 2000: p. 31).

According to Goollo Huqaa Liban (sited in the Council of Oromia Regional State Office Complex, Design Report 2002, and P.4) the Gada system is the traditional, legislative, economic and socio-political organ of the Oromo people. Asmarom Legese is one the best known scholars who devoted his whole life to the study of the Oromo Gada system. In his recent work (2000) he described the

development and the misfortunes that happened to this indigenous African administrative system as follows:

...the Oromo, and more particularly the Borana, were not stateless or 'acephalos societies'. They have produced one of the most amazing polycephalos political system, complex legislative and judiciary system and, by African standard, an elaborate military organization They had all that starting in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and continuing until they fell under the control of the Ethiopian and British Empires in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century,, and in case of Borana until the time of our field work, Baxter's in 1950s and mine in the 1960s (p. 42)

Mohammed Hassen (1994) on his part describes the unexpected downturn of Gada system as in the following.

The independent existence of the Oromo was brought to an end abruptly and rudely by the creation of the modern Ethiopian empire during and after the 1880s. The conquest and annexation of their territory not only deprived the Oromo of their history because the creation for the Empire consolidated myths and untruths long held and circulated in the Christian (Abyssinian) kingdom about the Oromo, who were generally portrayed as people without history (p. 1)

After their annexation to the today's Ethiopia, the Oromos have been denied their rights to self rule; their democratic administrative system was abolished except in Borana and Guji where the system survived, their language and culture neglected. The current federal system of administration is meant to solve this and similar problems in Ethiopia. The name "Oromia" itself has come to be recognized only after the formation of transitional government in Ethiopia in 1991.

Since the establishment of the Regional State Government, a number of public sector agencies have been established to undertake socio-cultural, economic and political affairs of the region. The regional official language is [Afaan] Oromo through the use of Latin alphabet for its writing. The state government uses a three-lingual (Oromo, Amharic and English) Gazette called 'Megeleta Oromia' as its official gazette for the publication of proclamations and regulations.

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The political and administrative structure in Oromia is highly volatile in relation to the other region and difficult to tell with certainty the conditions within a reasonable time limit or to predict. The organization of sector bureaus and administrative units and their numbers change very frequently.

The State Government has established the Oromia Civil Service Bureau in 1993 to regulate the regional civil service. At present it operates in the name of Oromia Civil Service Commission with a responsibility of regulating about 34 regional civil service organizations. There are also autonomous public enterprises that are not directly regulated by the regional civil service but obtain technical supports in the areas of personnel management and organization.

The Oromia Civil Service proclamation No. 61/2002, provides for a civil service regulation that incorporates almost all areas of the public personnel administration including position classification and grading structure. Among the major personnel issues incorporated in the provisions are powers and duties of the Commission and government offices; position classification, salary scale and allowances; staffing and performance evaluation; promotion, transfer and others.

Proclamation No. 87/2004, on the other hand, provides for the reorganization and redefinition of the powers and duties of the executive organs of the Regional State. According to the proclamation, Chaffee (Oromo terminology for parliament, rooted in the traditional administrative system of the Oromo, the Gada System), was defined as a legislative organ established pursuant to article 46 (1) of the revised constitution of Oromia Regional state. The Regional Administrative Council, according to the proclamation, is the supreme executive organ of the Regional State Government, responsible for the execution of the state policies,

strategies and laws, and to perform administrative duties. These executive organs are the following:

- 1) The President office;
- 2) The administrative council of the region
- 3) Bureaus and other government offices
- 4) Zonal administrative council
- 5) Urban administrative council
- 6) District administrative council
- 7) Kebele administrative council

The president, according to the proclamation, is the chief executive and has the powers and duties specified under article 57 of the regional constitution. The Bureaus and other offices which are established as an executive organ of the state, by the proclamation are the following:

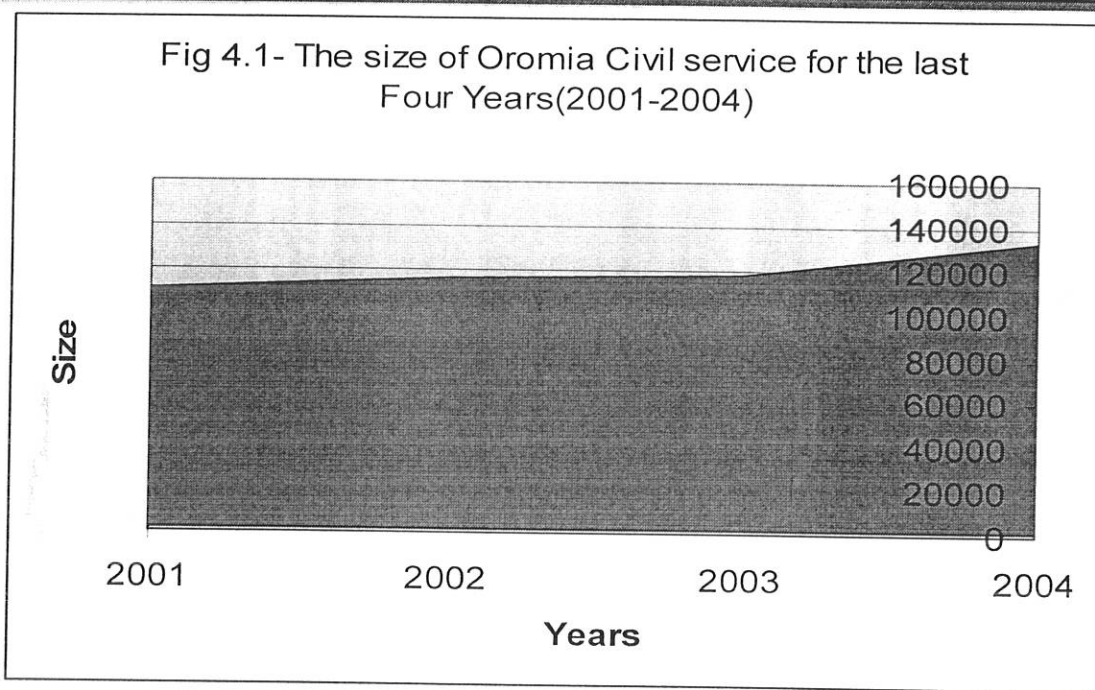
- 1) The President Office
- 2) Justice and Security Bureau
- 3) Education and Capacity Building Bureau
- 4) Agriculture and Rural Development Bureau
- 5) Trade, Industry and Urban development Bureau
- 6) Peoples Organization, Culture, sport and Social Affairs Bureau
- 7) Finance and Economic Development Bureau
- 8) Information and Public Relations Bureau
- 9) Health Bureau
- 10) Water Resources Development Bureau
- 11) Women's Affairs Bureau; and
- 12) Rural Roads Authority
- 13) Design and Construction Authority

- 14) Civil Service Commission
- 15) Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Food Security Commission
- 16) Police Commission
- 17) Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission
- 18) Prison Administration Commission
- 19) The Cooperatives Society Promotion Commission
- 20) Pastorals Development Commission
- 21) Investment Commission
- 22) Environmental Protection Office
- 23) The HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office
- 24) Mines and Resource Development Agency
- 25) Agricultural Research Institute

The proclamation further provides for the powers and duties of the executive organs at different levels: Regional, Zonal, Worada and Kebele levels.

#### **4.2 *Size of the Oromia Civil Service***

The size of the Oromia civil service is the highest of all the regions in Ethiopia. According to the Federal Civil Service annual personnel statistics the civil service of Oromia comprises of 31% of the total civil service at national level. The size of the civil service in Oromia is also steadily increasing for the last five years as indicated in Fig 4.1. The male/female composition for the year 2005 shows 82,709: 33,545 that is a male/female ratio of 71 to 29.



The other peculiar characteristic of the Oromia civil service is its ethnic composition. While some regions like the Amhara and Tigray staff almost all of their public services by native people of their region, Oromia exceptionally employs a sizable number of peoples from various ethnic groups whose origin are out of Oromia. Benishangul-Gumuz is the second best in non-native incorporation in regional civil service.

Amhara comprises the largest group next to the native population in every region of Ethiopia. Tigray, Gurage and Oromo are the other ethnic groups employed in the civil service of all regions in Ethiopia as indicated in Table 3.5.

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Table 4.1 - Composition of Regional States Civil Service in Ethiopia

Region	Total Civil S		Non Indigenous Ethnic groups Employed in the Regional Civil Service							
			Amhara		Oromo		Tigrawai		Gurage	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Tigrai	17213	10770	48	50	50	17	17096	10700	8	1
Amhara*	56115	27404	49689	24491	1657	642	49689	24491	1657	642
Oromia	82709	33545	13149	7697	66429	24355	13149	7697	941	489
Benishangul-Gumuz	6916	3098	2608	1365	2029	833	105	48	96	46
Gambela	3621	1431	676	318	796	449	89	29	64	36
Harari**	2173	1679	841	930	614	330	52	33	52	24
Addis Ababa**	14029	14915	1704	1686	506	424	203	210	111	64
Dire-Dawa Admn council	2227	1182	1332	729	686	362	56	34	59	35
Total	185003	94024	70047	37266	72767	27412	63391	32592	3030	1353
			25.1	13.4	26.1	9.8	22.7	11.7	1.1	0.5

Source: Extracted from the FCSC Annual Statistics bulletin for the, 2006

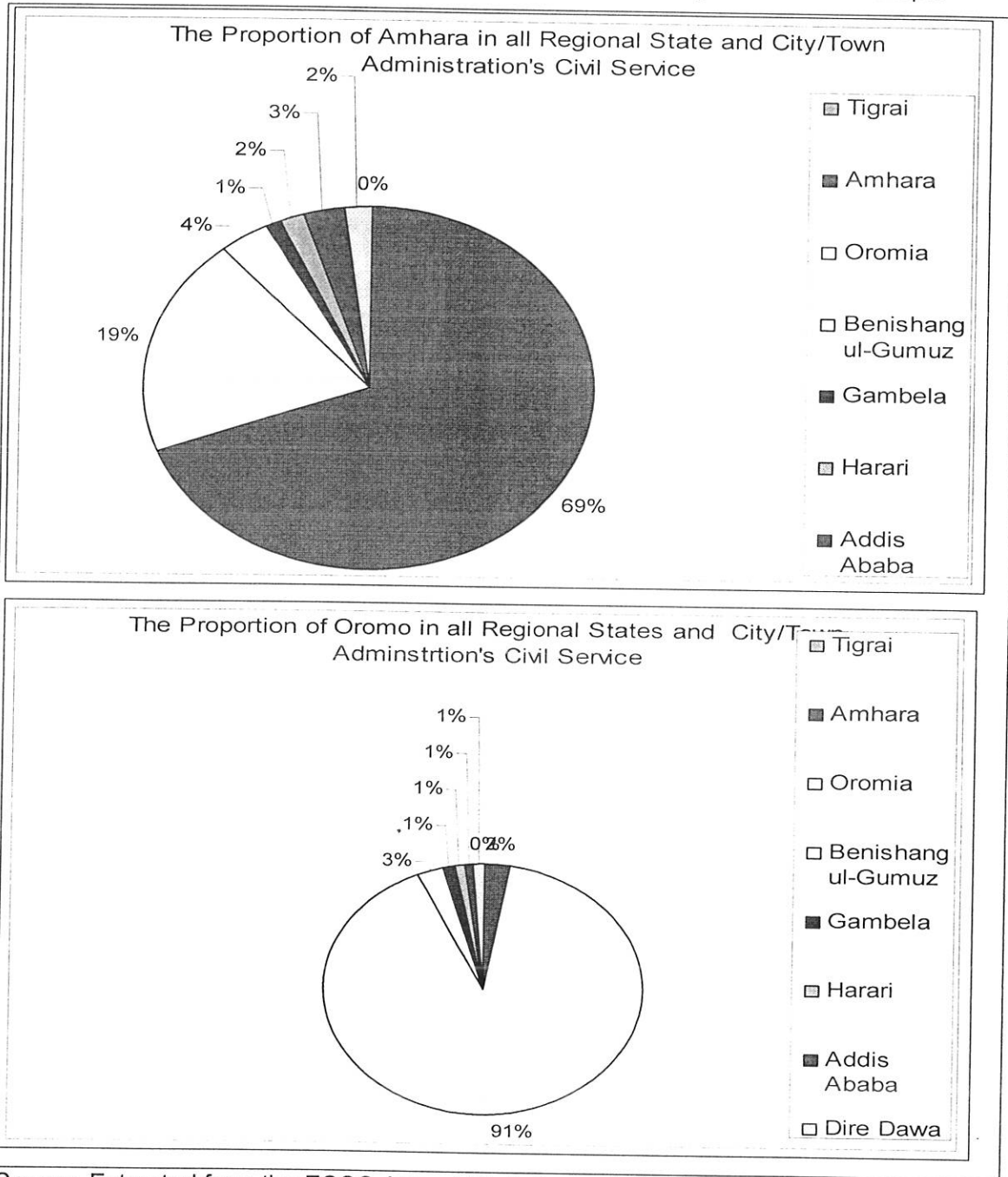
\* Highlights show Oromo civil servants in Oromia zone of Amhara region

\*\* Highlights show comparison of Oromo Amhara and Tigrawai in administrative units where Oromo claims special interest and joint administration

The above data shows that even in Addis Ababa city administration where Oromo is said to have special interest and Harari region where political administration is said to be under the joint administration of the Oromo and the Harari, neither the Oromo nor the Harari have adequate representation in the region's civil service. These reveals, as in the federal civil service, that the regional states are playing passive roles in correcting past mistakes and for improving indigenous people's representation in the administration of their own affairs. In fact, many regions are duplicating past experiences in the administration of their civil services except the adoption of their own language for official use.

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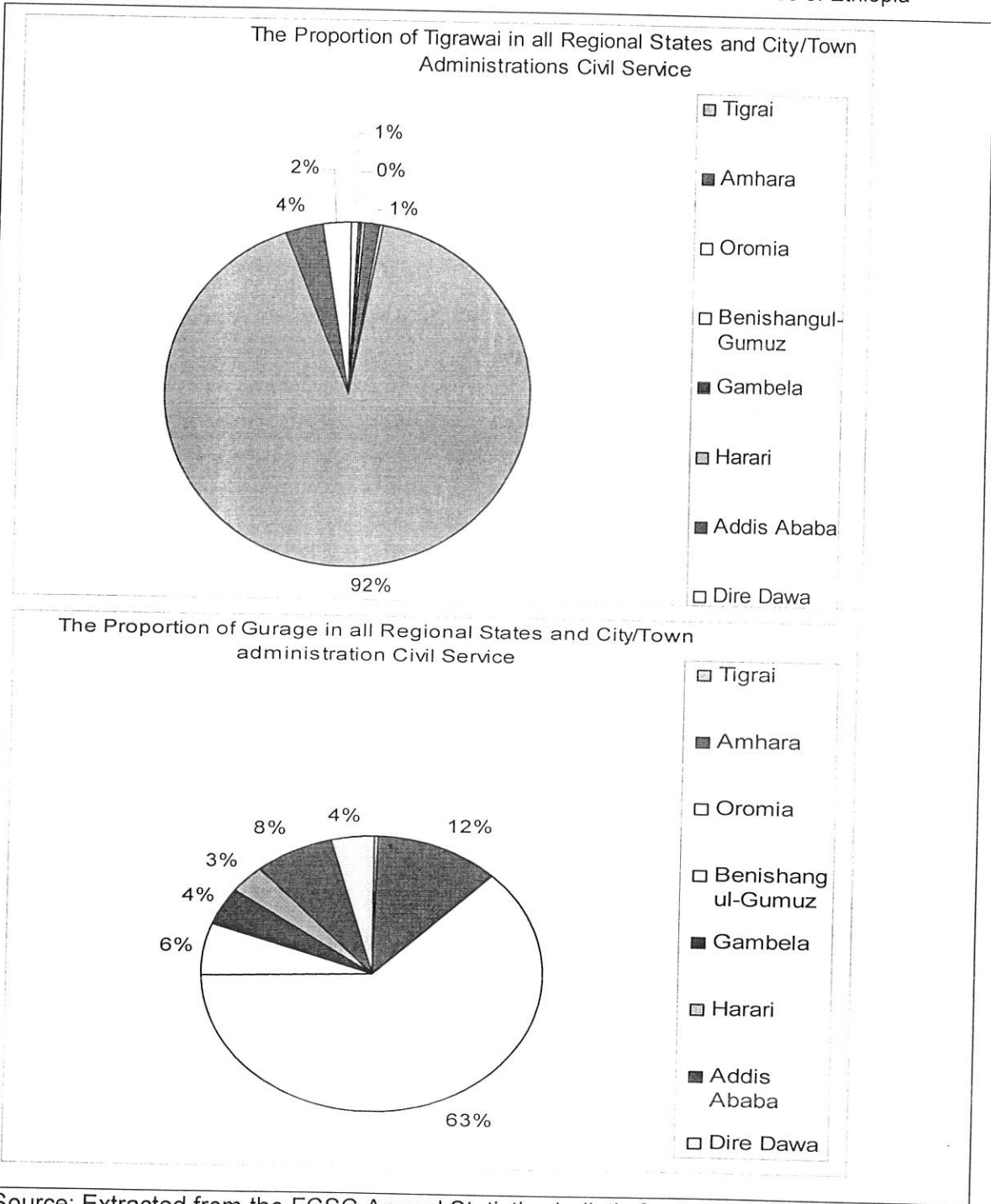
Fig. 4.2 - Amhara and Oromo Nationality in the Civil Service of Regional States in Ethiopia



Source: Extracted from the FCSC Annual Statistics bulletin for the, 2006

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Fig. 4.3 - Tigrawai and Gurage Nationality in the Regional States Civil Service of Ethiopia



Source: Extracted from the FCSC Annual Statistics bulletin for the, 2006

#### ***4.2 Analysis of the Public Personnel Administration Practices in Oromia***

The Analysis of the public personnel administration practices in Oromia State Government is based on primary sources of data obtained through questionnaire, observation and interviews. A series of interviews have been made with the officials of the Oromia Civil Service Commission, particularly Ato Girma Negasa, the Head, Organization and Position Classification Department and Ato Zegaye Yemane-Birhan, the Head of Administrative Court of the Commission. Participatory and non participatory observations, case and personal experiences of the researcher have been also utilized.

Questionnaires have been distributed to 200 randomly selected civil servants from selected public services. Responses have been obtained from 150 employees. The selection of the organizations was based on purposive sampling method. The profiles of the respondents are indicated in Table 4.1. The organizations surveyed are:

- 1) Oromia Works and Urban Development Bureau (OWUDB)
- 2) Oromia Education Bureau (OEB)
- 3) Oromia Rural Roads Development Authority (ORRA)
- 4) Oromia Urban Planning Institute (OUPI)
- 5) Oromia Civil Service Commission (OCSC)
- 6) Oromia Housing Development Project Office (OHDPO)

Table 4.2 – Respondent's Profile

Organizations Surveyed		Sex		Level of Education					Years of Experience				Total	
		M	F	<10	10-12	Cert	Dip	BA	BSc and above	<5	5-10	10-15		>15
1	OWUDB	21	9	-	10	6	11	2	1	6	15	6	3	30
2	OEB	17	11	2	1	8	11	4	2	8	9	10	1	28
3	ORRA	19	7	1	3	5	12	5	-	4	12	8	2	26
4	OUPI	14	6	-	4	3	8	3	2	5	9	4	2	20
5	OCSC	14	10	4	9	2	6	3	-	6	13	2	2	24
6	OHDPO	16	6	1	1	5	5	7	3	3	10	6	3	22
<b>Total</b>		<b>101</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>150</b>

As it can be observed from the above table, female respondents are 33%. Male respondents constitute 67% of the total.

The age of the respondents range from 25 – 52. The majority of the respondents (68%) are between 31 and 40 years of age. About 32% are between 41 and 50 while those whose ages are between 25 and 30 are 16 % of the total. Less than 2% of the respondents are above 50 years of age.

Analysis is based on simple statistical techniques such as ratio and percentage. These were summarized in tabular form as indicate in Table 4.2. Detailed analysis and conclusions derived are described in the subsequent pages.

#### **4.2.1 Politics and Public Administration in Oromia State Government**

Politics and public administration is mixed up to a large extent in Oromia. Though the government, formally (through its incapable civil service commission and civil service laws) is claiming that it is following the merit principle of public personnel administration, the reality on the ground shows the spoil system of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century American public administration. Employments, assignments and promotions are based on political and personal loyalties. Almost all civil servants are required to speak the 'language' of the ruling party and to sympathize. In some sectors like the education sector, the requirement of being a party member is the only way to appointment and advancement.

Table 4.3 – Summary of major responses by the respondents

S.N	Subject of Inquiry	Responses		
1	Responsibility of personnel functions	Management (BA) [5%] Management (Dipl.) [25%]	Sociology [13%] Accounting [12%]	Non social Science [45%]
2	Employees evaluation for promotion conducted by	Committee [95%]	Administration /personnel [5%]	-
3	Trust in personnel decisions	Yes [20%]	No [80%]	-
4	Assignment of bosses on the basis of	Political considerations [100%]	Merit [-]	-
5	Frequency in the changes of bosses	Frequent [80%]	Moderate [20%]	Infrequent/no change [-]
6	Training is recommended by	Predetermined/planned [-]	Political/personal relationship [36%]	Bosses/supervisors [64%]
7	Fairness of personnel decision	Fair [45%]	Unfair [50%]	Serious problem[5%]
8	Employees' rights observed?	Yes [14%]	No [86%]	-

Table 4.3 – Summary of major responses by the respondents (continued from the previous page)

9	Job satisfaction	Satisfied [32%]	Not satisfied [68%]	-
10	Grievance handling procedures/methods	Exist/effective [5%]	Ineffective[95%]	-
11	Political interference	High [100]	Low [-]	Doesn't exist [-]
12	Discriminations /unfairly treated	Yes [34%]	No [45%]	No answer [21%]
13	Motivation in the civil service job	Motivated [-]	Not motivation [100%]	-
14	Preference to work for	Federal Civil service [2%]	Oromia civil service [29%]	NGO/Self [69%]
<b>Response about the Oromia Civil Service Commission</b>				
15	Autonomy/non interference of politics	High political interference[78%]	Moderate political interference [22]	Low political interference [-]
16	Capacity	Intermediate [48%]	Low [30%]	Extremely low [22%]
17	Abuse of power/ corruption	Exists [30%]	Doesn't exist [-]	Unwilling to answer [70%]

In an answer to the questionnaire “how bosses are assigned?” and “how frequent bosses are changed?” 100% of the respondents answered that they are assigned on the basis of their political affiliation and personal loyalties and are changed frequently with changes of bosses in the hierarchy, political appointees themselves. All the respondents recommended the need for bringing an end to the rampant political patronage and the adoption of the merit system for ensuring stable, efficient and effective civil service administration in the regional state.

As a participant observer, the present researcher has observed a lot of personnel actions indicating the rampant personal and political patronage in the Oromia state’s civil service. In his six months of stay in the civil service of Oromia, he noticed a lot of distressing personnel actions.

Following the removal of the head of a project office with no any rules, regulations and procedures, almost all of the department heads have been removed and replaced by persons loyal to the new project manager through transfers from other offices. The Administration and Finance Department head was the first person to be removed immediately upon the arrival of the new project manager, because it is believed that he was assigned to this position on the basis of personal loyalty and relationship to the removed project manager. What was surprising is that the new general manager not only removes subordinates from their positions and assigns them to lower grade but also reduces their salaries without reference to any guidelines. The Head of Construction Administration Department’s salary, for example, is reduced from Birr 3900 to 3500. The heads of the departments who were removed and replaced and the frequency within this short period of time is indicated below.

Table 4.4 – Turnover of officials in Oromia

Positions	Frequency
Project manager	2
Deputy project manger	3
Planning and programming Dept.	2
Administration & Finance Department	2
Contract Administration Dept	2
Audit Department	2
Legal service	2

The highly politicized public service in Oromia has been observed during a 10 days consecutive political teaching arranged at regional level to all civil servants. The session which was named “training” and compulsory to all civil servants in the head quarters was arranged in two rounds (April 25 – May 5) and (May 10-15) 2007 in the regional states council's, chaffe hall on Bole road. The subject of the 'training' was a book entitled Limat, Democracy and Abiyootawwi Democracy (Democracy, Development and Revolutionary Democracy) written in Amharc, with no author and with no any reference or acknowledgment to the source of ideas. The first part of the book is about globalization and Africa's position in the globalized world and the second part entirely deals with the ruling party's political line, revolutionary democracy. Added to the meager public service in the region, government offices were partially closed to the public for almost a month.

The blurring between politics and administration is more rampant as one goes from the center to the periphery. The decentralization of personnel activities gave a very good opportunity for the abuse of power and impetus for rampant political

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patronage. In the studies conducted by Meheret Ayenew and Paulos Chanie, these problems were emphasized as follows.

... Decentralization process in present day Ethiopia suffers from the lack of capacity in terms of skilled manpower to expedite devolved authority, thus necessitating the dependence of some regions on the Federal Government. The problem in this regard is compounded by the rampant practices of appointing officials and functionaries on the basis of political loyalty and patronage. This is done in utter disregard of merit and competence (<http://www.ossrea.net/rw/goodgover-07.htm>)

According to the information from Zegeye Yemane-Birihan, Head, Administrative Court of the Oromia Civil Service Commission, though partisanship and unfair personnel activities are common in Oromia, especially at woreda level, a lot of people are unable to appeal their case to the administrative court because of lack of capacity and fear of the worst action from local authorities.

Cases:

The other observation was the unfortunate case of a civil servant from Arsi Zone. On his first day appearance to the Oromia Civil Service to submit the letter of support to obtain data and information for this thesis, the present researcher came across a person in the name of Qaasim Dhaqaboo, a civil servant of Health Bureau who is suffering from the partisan politics in Arsi Zone, Aanaa Zuwai Dugdaa administration. The person is out of his job and with no any means of earning for over a year when the researcher met him in the Oromia Civil Service Commission with his files and papers to file his cases at the administrative court in the regional civil service, depressed and deprived with his dirty and very old clothes and foot wear.

Husen Dhaqabo, a guard with over 11 years of service and an elected member of the promotion committee, according to the information from him, simply for expressing a different opinion on two cases of promotion, was demoted and later, after appealing his cases to Arsi Zone Health Bureau, expelled from his job

by the decision of the woreda authorities. The Aanaa Health Bureau refused to obey the instructions (through the later dated 11/8/98 EC) given by the Arsi Zone Health Bureau to reverse the unfair promotion decisions on which the elected committee member, Husen Dhaqaboo, has expressed his disagreement and the demotion decision passed on him as a punishment for expressing his different opinion. The Oromia Civil Service Commission (through the latter dated 5/6/99 EC) has instructed the Woreda, based on the appeal by the victim, to obey instruction of the Arsi Zone Health Bureau and to allow the employee to continue working. The instruction, however, was passed for no avail owing to the disrespect and refusal by the Aanaa authorities. These all imply the absence of rule of law and partisan politics in the public service of Oromia.

#### **4.2.2 Public Personnel Administration Activities and Practices in Oromia**

The personnel activities in Oromia State civil service is the replica of the traditional administrative system in the feudal system. The only difference is the introduction of Afaan Oromo as an official working language of the region. The endeavor to develop the language itself, which has been neglected under alien administration for more than a century, for effective usage in the administration of the regional civil service has remained stagnant. Most of the civil service staff communicate either in Amharic or a blend of Amharic and Oromo, a style of communication shameful to the respect of the Oromo public and the regional state government. The view towards the civil service is that of suspicion rather than mutual respect, rigid application of rules, strict control of attendance, and downward decision making.

In the following few pages, we will look into the nature of personnel activities in the Oromia civil service which are based on such traditional approach.

### **A) Human Resources Planning**

Human resource planning (HRP) is a critical subset of an organization's strategic planning effort (Sylvia, 1994:129). Sylvia further described the planning context in which HRP takes place as follows:

- 1) Agency executives define the mission as precisely as possible.
- 2) They then decide where they wish the agency to be in three to five years
- 3) Various strategies and program options are explored as possible means of getting the agency from where it is to where it should be
- 4) Next, an alternative is selected and implemented
- 5) Finally, the new program is evaluated to see if the outcomes are those intended and whether or not new alternatives should be explored

According to Sylvia, assessing human resource needs is a vital part of 3 and 4 of the planning process. The existence of an overall agency plan enables the human resources division to plan for the recruitment and training of new workers and the retaining of current workers to achieve the mission. Projecting human resource needs is thus a vital and on going part of the personnel mission.

According to Bratton and Gold (1999:47) strategic human resources management (SHRM) has its roots in manpower planning; consequently the implementation of strategic business plans become more problematic if the human resources component is not an integral part of the strategic planning process.

The concept of human resource planning and SHRM are a new phenomena recently introduced into the civil service system of Ethiopia through the civil

service reform program. The practice and concept of HRP is, therefore, non-existent both at federal and regional levels until recently.

Human resources planning presumes at least a certain level of stability. In Oromia state government civil service, stability is a rare phenomenon. Restructuring is considered as a routine job and sometimes a kind of trial and error in the region. No professional contributions are sought in the reorganization process.

The Oromia Works and Urban Development Bureau (OWUDB), to cite an example, is one of the organizations in which frequent reorganization is made. The OWUDB was restructured four/five times within seven/eight years, as indicated below.

- a) Road construction functions were removed to form the current Rural Roads Authority (1999).
- b) Construction Design Authority and Institutions of Urban Planning were separated from the Urban Development Bureau (2003)
- c) Construction Design Authority was brought back to its mother institution, Urban Development Bureau (2004)
- d) Rural Roads Authority was brought under the Works and Urban Development Bureau, to its mother institution now keeping its autonomy (2005).

This kind of restructuring is common to all sector of the civil service in Oromia. In such setting, it is difficult to talk about planning, especially human resources planning which is a new development and closely related to strategic human resources management.

**B) Recruitment, Selection, Placement and Promotion**

The Oromia Civil Service has decentralized all personnel activities to implementing public agencies at regional, zonal and Aanaa (woreda) levels. The Commission has also developed personnel rules and procedures for recruitment, selection, promotion, transfer and other personnel activities. The Commission's capacity to enforce and follow up the proper execution of the rules and regulations, however, is very minimal. In the survey questionnaire, over 50% of the respondents rated the capacity of the Oromia Civil Service Commission as low or extremely low while 78% and 22% responded high and intermediate political interference respectively as indicated in the Table 4.1.

Table 4.5- Regulatory power and Implementing Capacity of Oromia Civil Service

Subject of Inquiry	High	Intermediate	Low	Extremely low	Total
Implementing Capacity	-	48%	30%	22%	100%
Political Interference	78%	22%	-	-	100%

N = 150

Personnel functions are entrusted to the administration and finance department/services in many Oromia civil service bureaus. The personnel manual prepared by the Regional Civil Service, moreover, provides for the establishment of a recruitment, selection and promotion committee in all civil service bureaus. The units responsible for personnel functions as well as the committee, however, are incapable on the one hand and partisan on the other. The responses of the randomly distributed questionnaire reveal the following responses.

Table 4.6 - Fairness of personnel actions in Oromia

<b>Subject of Inquiry</b>	<b>Fair/trusted</b>	<b>Unfair/not trusted</b>	<b>Serious problem</b>	<b>Total</b>
Fairness of personnel decisions	45%	50%	5%	100%
Trust in the personnel committee	20%	80%	-	100%

N = 150

The qualification and experience of people responsible for personnel activities has nothing to do with the profession in many organizations. This shows the low level of emphasis given to these important human resources functions. Both politicians and non human resources professional have the view that personnel functions are routine functions that can be handled by any one. Moreover, the consideration of political affiliation is very strong to enable the politically assigned officials' use of public offices for their personal and political ends. Placement of employees is also based more on the personal will of influential authorities and political fits rather than educational background, experience and skills and abilities.

According to the sample surveys, administration and personnel responsibilities are bestowed upon persons with irrelevant educational and experience background. The survey shows the following educational backgrounds in administrative/personnel positions.

Sociology

Physics

Accounting

Agriculture (diploma)

Law (diploma)

Management (diploma)

In this entire situation, it is naïve to expect a fair and modern approach to human resources functions including recruitment, selection, placement and promotion.

In general Oromia state civil service inherited, from the former centralized public administration of Ethiopia, all the awful practices: contempt of the public, inefficiency, loyalty to their superior bosses, service seeking and corrupt behavior. Added to this, the absence of rule of law and partisan politics resulted in suspecting even oneself leave alone coworker and any member of the public. As a result team spirit is extremely low in Oromia State civil service.

The loss of confidence and reliance on the central authority exists at all levels in Oromia, including the highest political authorities. The regional authorities, in their over 14 years of life, couldn't even establish a permanent capital and to build its own offices for the regional administration. The political winds at national level are the sources and indicators of the decisions of the regional government. The case of selecting Adama as a capital after a decade of stay in Finfinnee since the establishment of the Oromia Region and the spontaneous reversal of the capital to Finfinne following the upheaval of the 2006 election result, is an evidence of such unreliable decisions.

The Oromia civil service is still suffering from shortage of office and offices facilities after over one and half decade of existence. Almost all of the offices including the office of the state administration for this largest region in Ethiopia are sandwiched in a single building on the Bole road, built for a single

government department, Ministry of Agriculture in the socialist regime. The rest are dispersed all over the city and placed in awkward, dark and congested offices like the office of the Oromia Civil Service Commission. Still others pay a great deal of the public money for rental fee to the private owners. Among these offices are the Oromia Rural Roads Authority, the Oromia Trade, Industry and Transport Authority, the Oromia Revenue Authority and the Oromia Investment Agency pay altogether over Birr 5,000,000 every year to the private owners. As a reaction to this misallocation of the regional budget, there is a widely accepted saying among the Oromo nationals in Addis Ababa and the surroundings - "Private investors, nowadays, are motivated to invest in buildings for rental purpose in Addis, because there is a great potential – the Oromia State Budget."

### **C) Employee Security**

This is another area with serious problems in Oromia. It can be said that the employment security and welfare are at the mercy of political heads and affiliated authorities in Oromia. Collective actions for protecting employees' rights are unthinkable even at national level, let alone Oromia. On the one hand, there is a deep rooted suspicion and divisions/factions among employees based on political, religious and geographic categorization. On the other hand, there is a fear of being organized because this may lead to the following consequences:

The organized group might be politicized from within or without and, therefore, two things may happen:

- (I) The members might be accused of having relationships with opposing political organizations such as the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and detained.
- (II) The ruling party might infiltrate and turn the organization to fulfilling its own political interest

Hence employees prefer to bear all what has happened to them except appealing to court in serious cases like dismissal. In the surveys made regarding employees rights and grievance procedure 95 % of the respondents responded “employees have no rights at all” while about 86% of the respondents responded “there is no means of grievance”.

#### **D) Training and Development**

Long term training abroad is a rare phenomenon in Oromia nowadays. Whenever available, this is purely reserved for political members and peoples having affiliations to the ruling party. Short term local trainings are also given on un-programmed basis. Training and manpower development plan is strange to Oromia. On the survey questionnaire on the subject of training 60% of the respondents responded that trainings are given to employees upon supervisor’s request and 35% responded trainings are given on the basis of political partisanship.

#### **E) Quality of Employee’s Life**

Quality of life is a factor of employee welfare functions like salary, employment security, job satisfaction, personal development, fringe benefits and others. The civil servants of Oromia State Government, because of the rampant political patronage and unfair treatment, are frustrated, morally weak, dissatisfied and insecure. Because of these Oromia civil service is in acute shortage of educated, experienced and skilled manpower.

Brain drain is one of the biggest problems in Ethiopia. According to the UN Economic Commission for Africa (June –July 2000: p.10) ...Africa loses much of its intellectual capital and thus the benefits of investments in the primary,

secondary and even higher education of its population. ...the major sending countries (to USA) are Nigeria followed by Ethiopia, Ghana and Liberia. The brain drain Oromia is facing, however, is two-fold: Brain drain to abroad and brain drain to local and international NGOs.

The survey questionnaire revealed that 70% of the respondents are dissatisfied with their jobs and only 30% preferred working for the Oromia state government while 5% and 65% preferred working for the Federal government and NGOs respectively.

#### ***4.5 Comparison of the Federal and Oromia Public Personnel Administration***

Public personnel administration, with its regulating agency – the Central Public Personnel Agency is known to the Ethiopian public sector for over 40 years, i.e., since 1964. Personnel rules and regulations which were copied from the west have also been on the shelves of the Central Public Personnel Agency and the government agencies since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Personnel practices and attitudes throughout the feudal system and the socialist regime, however, remained highly patrimonial. In fact, in the absence of common national political objective and the prevalence of dominance of the minority over the vast and diversified national population, it is naïve to expect a fairly capable traditional administration leave alone a forward-looking and self improving public administration. It can be said, therefore, public personnel administration in its proper sense is non existent in Ethiopia until very recently.

The path of decentralized governance and public administration adopted since 1991 shows some promising trends in the federal civil service though there are

still many difficulties. Among the improvements in the federal civil service, compared to the regional/Oromia civil service, are:

- Better organized office, facilities and manpower.
- Better qualified and experienced civil service
- Better personnel system and personnel practices
- Better employee security and job satisfaction
- Better client response

On the other hand the Oromia civil service administration is at its primeval stage. It inherited all the evils of the past Ethiopian public personnel administration and is strengthening it.

The politics and the public service in Oromia has been on a cross road for over a decade. The expectations, motivation and the commitment of the civil servants and the public to lift the region from the dust, have now turned down. As a result, most of the educated and experienced, disciplined, committed, innovative, confident people have fled out to foreign countries, the private and NGO sectors. The majority of the remaining is waiting for options and opportunities to leave. Still others are in the state of frustration, indifference, loss of national feeling, and irresponsibility. In general, the Oromia civil service administration suffers from:

- High political interference/political patronage leading to exclusions of educated and experienced professionals
- Shortage of educated, skilled and experienced manpower
- Shortage of office, office facility and proper working environment
- Outdated personnel administration practices and attitudes
- Lose of team spirit/ spirit de corpse
- Very poor employee's work life and insecurity

## CHAPTER FIVE – CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusion

Public administration, being an executive arm of government, and its component public personnel administration is the product of the political system. Its strength, progress and reaction to change, therefore, is dependent upon the larger political system and in turn influences the overall development of a nation – political, economic, cultural and social development. The other determinant factor of the nature of public administration is the political culture. Political culture is the cumulative result of the long-held beliefs and attitudes of the society towards the political and administrative styles structures and ways of reacting to it.

The Ethiopian public administration is the result of war of expansion in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was created as an instrument of controlling the conquered regions and the peoples of the empire state and to serve and protect the interest of the conqueror not the conquered, the public. This political reality has shaped the nature of the public administration in Ethiopia which has remained simply the keeper of the status quo – keeping law and order by suppressing every reaction against the oppressors. Pausewang et al (1990:30) states this fact as follows:

The last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the expansion of the Abyssinian kingdom south wards through conquest, which eventually led to the rise of the modern day Ethiopian State by the 1930s. This process marked the dissolution of the gult system, the particular Abyssinian sytem of government through local nobility that depends on a share in the production of all peasants in their gult area.

Although the conquest initially meant the spread of gult to the newly incorporated regions, it eventually led to the conversion of the conquering gult lords from the north and some co-opted indigenou balabat (land lord) in to the landlords of one third to one half of the peasantry in the south. The new landlords were at the same time integrated into a newly emergent bureaucracy, or they were soldiers and officers of a standing army in the process of becoming a modern military force. (The phrase in bracket is ours).

The public personnel administration in the socialist regime was the extension of the feudal system. Feudal mentality and culture – political and personal loyalty, rent seeking behavior, inefficiency, contempt towards the public, etc. were the dominant characteristics of the administrative system.

In the absence of national consensus and democratic governance, it would be naïve to expect a strong and self improving public administration and public service. Administrative principles such as responsiveness, representative bureaucracy, decentralized administration, value for money and the like are all conceived and developed in democracy not in undemocratic system of governance. Public personnel administration too, what so ever rules, regulations, and procedures are there, cannot be different from the environment of its mother discipline, public administration.

In Ethiopia, the paths for national consensus and democracy have been tried and failed several times before its birth. It is only in 1991 that some sign of understanding on common national political objectives have been survived. The adoption of the principle of federalism, political pluralism, and decentralized administration are among some the positive changes, at least in principle.

Without denying the normal gaps between expectations and reality, however, the developments in the political as well as public administration still remains upsetting in many cases. Political immaturity and intolerance, administrative misbehaviors, political patronage, unfair representation of the different ethnic and social groups in the federal public service, corruption and inefficiency, still prevails rampantly both at regional and national level. In some cases the trend is

deteriorating. The condition of press and public media which plays a vital role in disclosing the unfair and poor practices of the public and private sector is an evidence for such down moving conditions. A number of private presses have been closed following the recent conflict in national election. Some of the private presses which have been closed were very active in revealing the regional malpractices in the political and administrative sphere.

The governments at national as well as state level are claiming that the civil service reform has brought changes in the civil service system. The objective condition, however, indicates that much has to be done to bring about the required change. The recommendations in the next few pages are forwarded to improve the public personnel administration system of Ethiopia in general and Oromia in particular.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

### **5.2.1 Strong Commitment for National Consensus and Regional Autonomy**

Democracy is a prerequisite for national political as well as administrative development. Consensus, respect for the beliefs and ideas of the different groups who have stake in the national development effort, fair and adequate regional autonomy and decentralized administration are essential elements for nation building which presupposes strong and development oriented public/personnel administration. For this, strong commitment of the politicians, especially of the ruling party is highly required. Excluding some segment of the society and political groups, relying upon the changing power balance and showing contempt to others erodes sense of unity and serves only short term political interest of the ruling party, but not sustainable national development, and

hence uses the public/personnel administration as machinery for these wrong missions.

The current governance system needs to reconsider its commitment for national consensus and regional autonomy. In the prevalence of exclusion and pseudo state governments, it is very difficult to obtain public confidence whatever changes and trends are tried. While healing the past social wounds by itself requires extra effort than otherwise, adding new social and political problems intensifies political and social conflicts and may result in disintegration. As explained in the UN Hand Book of Public administration (1961, p. 8), “a new government is often handicapped by public inertia and lack of understanding of the need for administrative reform. This may even take the form of hostility to all officials, inherited from long periods of subjection to oppressive regimes.”

### **5.2.2 Avoid the rampant Political Patronage and adopt Merit System**

Patronage system has been in practice in USA prior to the 1883 civil service reform. The system's advocate such as Andrew Jackson argued that the long ballot aspect of the system made government officials more accountable to the public for their actions. The long balloon system assumes that any body of average ability is capable of running the government; therefore making the maximum number of officials stand for election guarantees their accountability to the public. On the negative side, patronage increases the chances for corruption with the knowledge and consent of public managers. Businesspeople who wish to acquire government contracts can do so through participation in the political process (Sylvia, 1994, p. 4).

According to UN, A Hand Book of Public Administration(1961, p. 35), it is too common to find government employment regarded as a form of relief for the incompetent and the unemployed, and personal or political influence as the main requirement for an appointment. It is true that examples can occasionally be found of able men appointed to office under a patronage system. But this is the exception rather than the rule, and the general effect of patronage appointment is to demoralize a career service.

The current public personnel administration in Ethiopia is overwhelmed by political interference and patronage. Patronage appointment is more acute in regional states such as Oromia. Neutral or non political members are rarely considered for responsible positions and even when they are given such positions, they are kept under the surveillance of a political party member/s for their action. This is the major handicap in the Ethiopian civil service at present.

The general effects are:

- Demoralizing the career service by denying opportunities for the competent
- Discontinuity of the civil service system
- Overcrowding the civil service sector and;
- Intensifying corruption

The way to come out of these problems is to at least minimize patronage appointment and adopt merit system.

### **5.2.3 Transform the traditional approach to personnel administration**

In Ethiopia, personnel administration is considered a routine job that can be handled by any one. This shows that the old view of traditional personnel administration still prevails in the country. The new approach to personnel

management relies on a proactive, employee centered view, i.e., the human resources management (HRM). This new approach emphasizes the soft HRM, i.e., communicating well with employees to involve them in decision making, foster their commitment and identification with the organization. It is a strategic approach to the acquisition, management and motivation of people.

“The ‘soft’ version of HRM emphasizes the importance of high commitment, workplace learning and enlightened leadership. Assumptions about the nature of human potential and the ability to tap the potential are based on organizational behavior theories of Maslow, Macgregor and Herzberg. The ‘hard’ version of HRM emphasizes the calculative, quantitative and strategic management aspect of managing the workforce in a ‘rationale’ way.” (Storey, 1989: p. 17)

This latest development in the area of personnel administration is almost non-existent in the civil service sector of Ethiopia. Most of the personnel administration positions in Oromia state government are filled by the uneducated or unrelated professions. Their routine jobs are that of controlling attendance two to four times a day. They view people as irresponsible, disliking work, and apply standard approach to the problems of personnel, irrespective of the differences in educational status, family condition, and personal behavior.

The ongoing civil service reform was intended to bring about changes in this mechanistic approach. Among the elements of the sub program of the civil service reform is the human resources management. Included in this sub program are:

- a) The recruitment, selection, promotion and transfer project
- b) The civil service grievance procedure

- c) The result based performance appraisal project
- d) The manpower planning project,
- e) The job evaluation and grading project,
- f) The compensation systems and working condition projects,
- g) The manpower development project, and;
- h) The human resources information systems project.

Though some of these program elements are completed, the changes that they brought about is still minimal and in some cases the results were failures – example, the result based performance appraisal project. In the presence of appointments and promotions based on political and personal loyalty than merit, it is naïve to expect transformation in the personnel system as indicated in the UN Hand Book of Public Administration (1961).

“Improvements in organization, in methods and procedures, important as they are, will be ineffective if the personnel concerned are not qualified. Any plan for administrative reform will be successful only if they are accompanied by a changed attitude and heightened ability on the part of the public officials. Personnel administration therefore deserves the highest priority in any program of administrative reform. Competent personnel are the sine-qua-non of an effective public service” (1961:p. 35).

#### **5.2.4 Search for a strong and committed leadership**

The major problems in developing countries including Ethiopia is lack of genuine, committed, non-partisan and strong leadership at different levels. Extraordinary people like Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and Rajeev Gandhi of India were the prime movers of social and political transformation. Strong leaders are as important in the civil service as they are in

the higher political echelon. Dictatorship, partisan politics and public administration on the other hand push a nation towards disintegration.

“Leaders who are ‘open’ ‘participative’ and change seekers are more likely to adopt a ‘soft’ strategic human resources management (SHRM) model... than leaders who desire ‘control’ and are ‘challenge adverse’ and focus on ‘defender’ and ‘cost’ leadership strategies.” (Bratton and Gold, 1999: p. 57)

The way to look for strong leadership is creating the atmosphere of mutual trust, self development, creativity and challenge seeking behavior. Encouraging participation, appreciating divergent ideas, accepting failures as normal and praising genuine creativity and success enables to nurture and utilize human potential and promote the creation of strong leaders at all levels of the civil service and in political spheres.

#### **5.2.5 Need for a Strong Civil Service Commission.**

Central public personnel agencies need to be strong both in their authority to enforce the public service laws and in their staffs. The current Civil Service Commissions in Ethiopia have very limited capacity. Regional Civil Service Commissions such as the Oromia Civil Service Commission are unable to properly administer their own staff let alone regulate the regional states civil service. To the minimum, the Commission with its substandard and awkward office and office facility is unable to enforce the civil service laws it promulgated. The regional civil servants are, therefore, at the mercy of political cadres. As a result lack of confidence, insecurity, loose of national feeling, turnover, and apathy are common in the Oromia civil service. This is also true in the federal and other regional states with differences in the degree of the problems.

At present, the Oromia Regional State Civil Service Commission has very limited role to play because it has already decentralized personnel activities such as recruitment, promotion and placement to respective civil service agencies. Abuse of power, by using this decentralized authority as an opportunity by local authorities, is proceeding unnoticed in Oromia. The regional civil service has no mechanism, interest, and capacity to follow up the personnel administration practices at local level and to enforce fair treatment of employees.

The Oromia Civil Service Commission is constrained from two angles. On the one hand political authorities need the commission for their political ends. On the other hand due to the inefficiency, corrupt practices, and high political interference, there is a strong public inertia and distrust towards the Commission.

In order to overcome these problems the civil service commissions at federal as well as regional levels need to reconsider their level of capacity to influence public officials and to enforce public service laws. These need improvements from within and without. Politicians should recognize the importance of strong civil service commission in transforming the civil service system and give priority to sustainable national development than concentrating on short lived political interest of the ruling party. The major step to ensure this is appointment of a qualified and self-confident commissioner and providing adequate level of autonomy. Reassessing its internal organization and manpower, and compensation system is another aspect of the need for improving the civil service commissions.

### **5.2.6 Improving the Civil Service Compensation Systems**

Civil service is a reputable sector of employment in developed countries. This is because the civil service has a strong legal protection, job security and fringe benefits. The level of pay is also comparable with the private sector in these countries. The reverse is true in some developing countries like Ethiopia.

This is because of a range of factors including low level of pay compared to the private sector, low level of benefit packages, job insecurity due to political patronage and lack of legal protection. As result the public service is experiencing a big problem of brain drain to the private and NGO sectors. As a result the civil service sector is in a severe shortage of educated, skilled and experienced personnel. At the same time those few experienced and educated employees in the civil service are dissatisfied with the low level of pay, poor office and office facility, low or nonexistent fringe benefits, and poor working environment.

In the Ethiopian civil service the level of pay is very low compared with the private and NGO sectors. The maximum salary in the civil service is Birr 3500 at present. Only 0.3 % of the federal civil service employees earn above Birr 3000, while federal employees earning Birr 2000 and above constitutes 4% of the total. Those earning below Birr 1000 constitute about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the total, i.e., 76%. The pay level in the regional civil service is no better than the federal civil service pay.

When compared to the current cost of living, the pay level in the civil service system of Ethiopia is by far inadequate to cover the living cost of even a nucleus family, leaving aside the extended family which is common in developing

countries. It is difficult to think of even a minimum level of living without extra source of income.

Therefore, improving the compensation systems in the civil service is a basic requirement to attract and retain qualified civil servants. Compensation system is one of the components of human resources management sub-program which has not yet become practical. This urgent and crucial program needs special attention to lift the civil service from its current situation – low prestige, poor pay and insecurity, and poor staffing.

### **5.2.7 Need for Strong and Independent Civic Society and Organized Civil Service**

Except the existence of some professional associations in a scattered form, the Ethiopian civil service has never been organized in all encompassing nature. Public services in developed countries have a strong organization through which they bargain on conditions of employment with the government. According to Tizizno Treu et al (1987) in Japan for example, the employees in the civil service are organized in different levels as indicated below:

- a) National Civil Servants Association
- b) Local Civil Servants( including police, firemen, health and education) Association
- c) Employees of National Enterprises
  - Employee Union of National Railways and Postal service
  - Public Corporations Union
  - National Enterprises Union and National Civil Service Union- especially to protect the interest of lower grade employees

- d) The Federation of National Civil Servants Unions (the largest union in Japan).

According to Sylvia (1994:244) the two largest employees' unions in the USA are the American Federation of Government Employees and the Postal workers Union. State and local unions are generally local units of confederations such as the American Federation of state, county and municipal employees, the largest single union. The Fraternal Order of Police and the International Fire Fighters Associations are other confederations.

According to Pyper (1995:15), the British civil servants are represented by a range of trade unions, the seven most significant of which are affiliated to the council of Civil Service Unions. Numerically strongest are the Civil and Public Services Associations and the National Union of Civil and Public Servants which represent lower and middle managers as well as support staff such as cleaners, messengers and telephonists.

From these we understand that public employees have strong unions through which they bargain their level of pay and conditions of services with the government. In Ethiopia, however, this seems some what impermissible for unknown reason. Hence the civil service employees have no vanguard to protect their rights through organized way and for bargaining with the government on level of pay and condition of service.

Strong civic societies in general and organized civil service in particular are not a threat to the government as they are some times thought to be. Rather, in the conditions of mutual trust and compromise, they advance national development.

Therefore, those concerned and the government should work forward and promote independent and strong civic society and organized civil service that work towards the advancement of the civil service that stimulate the national political, social and economic development.

#### **5.2.8 Particular Recommendations to Oromia - Radical Transformation of governance and the civil service administration**

Transforming public administration and the civil service presupposes democratic governance. In the absence of democratic governance and rule of law, public /personnel administration is nothing but the instrument of political authorities through which they advance their personal and political goals.

The current public personnel administration in Oromia State Government is a typical traditional patronage inherited from the past Ethiopian regime. It is mechanistic in nature and lacks the required flexibility and adaptability to the current global condition. Those assigned or appointed to the post of administration or personnel lacks the minimum requirement for the post. Their major roles are controlling attendances and serving the interest of their bosses. As a result there is no mutual understanding and trust between employees and administrators and managers.

The current development in the human resources management is alien to the public service of Oromia. Personnel planning, computer-based human resources information systems, the soft version of human resources management such as communication, obtaining employees commitment, and positive thinking are unknown to the civil service of Oromia. Recruitment and promotions are largely based on political and personal loyalty.

The Oromia civil service is in acute shortage of educated and skilled manpower at present. Due to the poor working environment, there is a high level of brain drain to the private, the NGO, the federal civil service and to abroad.

Political instability is very high in Oromia. Political decisions are made overnight; it is difficult to predict what may happen the next day. Public opinion and protest are ascribed as driven by opposition forces. The change of regional capital from Finfinne to Adama and the reversal of the capital back to Finfinne following the conflicts of the 2006 election is an evidence of the fragile condition in the Oromia State Government.

Detention is the common practices in the civil service of Oromia as it is common among the public. The recent detention of 11 public servants from the Oromia Rural Roads Authority is one of the few cases. Civic and political organizations without loyalty to the ruling party have no places in Oromia.

The problems in the civil service of Oromia, therefore, require national and regional level political decisions and transformations. Trying small and incremental changes cannot resolve the problems in Oromia State Government.

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## Appendix

### Questionnaire on the Public Personnel Administration of Oromia

#### Dear Respondents,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to enable the researcher secure relevant information and data on the current policies, procedures and practices with regard to the public personnel/civil service administration of Ethiopia and Oromia state government. The work is purely academic and has nothing to do with personal or political interest and all information provided shall be kept in a strictest confidentiality to be used only for academic purposes. The researcher extends his thanks in advance for your honest answers to this questionnaire.

#### 1 Personal information

- 1.1 Sex \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.2 Age \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.3 Education level \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.4 Nationality \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.5 Name of public organization you are working for \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.6 Current position \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.7 Number of years in the civil service \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.8 Current Salary \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2 About the public organization you are working for

2.1 Life of the organization, please mark "X" in the appropriate box.

- $\leq 2$        2-5       6-10        $\geq 10$

2.2 The major objective of the organization

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3.3 Number of permanent employees, please mark "X" in the appropriate box or fill in the blank space.

- $\leq 20$
- 21-50
- 51-100
- $\geq 100$  indicate the approximate number \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3 About the personnel administration

3.1 How did you assume your current position?

- Newly recruited
- Promoted
- Transferred
- Temporarily assigned
- Through other method, specify \_\_\_\_\_

3.2 Does your current position suit your educational background, skills and ability?

Yes     No     I don't know

3.3 Are you provided with a job description?  Yes     No

3.4 Do you work within the limits given to you through your job description?

Yes     No

3.5 Do you have the necessary knowledge and skills required for the job are assigned?

Yes     No

3.6 For how long have you worked on your current position?

---

3.7 Have you ever been promoted?     Yes             No

How did you get the promotion?     Through competition

Without competition

3.8 What was your position as per your score in the competition?

1<sup>st</sup>     2<sup>nd</sup>     3<sup>rd</sup>     4<sup>th</sup>     other; specify \_\_\_\_\_

3.9 What were the evaluation criteria for the promotion? Please mark "X or fill in the blank space.

Merit/Education

Seniority/Experience

Performance evaluation results

Discipline

All of the above put together

Other, specify \_\_\_\_\_

3.10 Who was responsible for the evaluation for promotion

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3.11 Do you believe the evaluation was fair and unbiased?     Yes             No  
Why?

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3.12 Have you ever been given training/?     Yes             No

How have you been selected for the training? Please mark "X or fill in the blank space.

Through competition

Requested by self

Requested by supervisor

By seniority

By necessity (skill improvement was urgently needed)

Other means, specify.

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3.13 Who is responsible for personnel administration activities in your organization?  
 What is the education background of the person currently holding this position?

	<u>Field of education</u>	<u>Level of education</u>
Administration and Finance	_____	_____
Administration/Personnel Division	_____	_____
Personnel Section	_____	_____
General Service	_____	_____
Other, specify	_____	_____

3.14 Please explain the degree to which personnel activities are performed based on rules and regulations and how the administrative officials make endeavors to motivate and maintain the work force of the organization. Give examples if possible.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**4 About your supervisor**

4.1 To whom do you report, his/her position only (don't mention names)

\_\_\_\_\_

4.2 supervisor's personal information: sex \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_  
 Level and field of education level \_\_\_\_\_

4.3 How did your supervisor assume his/her current job? Please mark "X" or fill in the blank space.

- Newly recruited
- Promoted
- Transferred
- Temporarily assigned
- Through other method, specify \_\_\_\_\_

4.4 For how long your supervisor has been in his/her current job?

\_\_\_\_\_

4.5 How often is the head/manager of your organization changed?

\_\_\_\_\_

4.6 What were the reasons given by higher officials for the changes?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4.7 In your opinion, what do you think were the reasons?

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4.8 Did the changes bring improvements in the performance of the organization?

- Yes       No       I don't know

4.9 What were the improvements?

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## 5 Dispute/grievance settlement mechanisms

5.1 What are the rights that you think employees have? Please mark "X or fill in the blank space.

- Rights to fair and equal treatment
- Rights to participate in matters concerning his job and giving suggestions
- Right to be a member of trade unions
- Right to be a member of professional association
- other rights, please enumerate

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5.2 What options and procedures are available for employees to file grievances against breach of employee's rights? Please mark "X or fill in the blank space.

- Filing his/her grievances internally following the existing procedure
- Through representations to employees association
- Through representations to his/her professional associations
- Through filing his/her grievance to the civil service commission
- By filing his cases with court of law
- There is no any means or opportunity available; so remain silent

---

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- Other means, please specify

---

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5.3 Have you ever been unfairly treated or discriminated in your organization?

- Yes       No

5.4 If your answer for the above question is "Yes" please explain the case;

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## 6 About the Civil Service Commission

6.1 To what degree the civil service commission has the ability and freedom to exercise its responsibilities? Please mark "X or fill in the blank space.

- Adequate Ability and freedom  
 Average  
 Low  
 Not at all

6.2 What are the major problems of the regional state's civil service commission? Please mark "X or fill in the blank space.

- In-adequate powers/authority  
 Poor organization and system  
 Favoritism and corruption  
 Political interference  
 Others, specify

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## 7 About Job Satisfaction

7.1 Are you happy with the government job?       Yes       No

Why?

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7.2 If you had a chance which job would you prefer more? Specify your degree of preference by marking 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, etc.

- For Government of \_\_\_\_\_       Federal government       Regional state Government  
 Local government of \_\_\_\_\_  
 International NGO  
 National NGO  
 Being recruited in local private organization  
 To be self-employed  
 Others, Specify  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

7.3 Please explain the reason for your preference in accordance with the order that you have stated above.

1<sup>st</sup>

2<sup>nd</sup>

3<sup>rd</sup>

4<sup>th</sup>

5<sup>th</sup>

8 In general, please give us your suggestions concerning the overall condition of public personnel administration in Ethiopia, and particularly in Oromia state government. What do you suggest for the improvement or transformation of the civil service administration in Ethiopia in general and Oromia State government in particular?

## Declaration


I the undersigned declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for this thesis have been dully acknowledged.

Declared by: Kumera Baissa Ebba

Signature: 

Date: July 5, 2007

Confirmed by: Name: Professor Dr. C.D. Dash

Signature: 

Date: 31 July 2007

Place: Addis Ababa