

The Relevancy and Demand of Public Administration Today: The Case of Botswana

S Balisi

Botswana Open University, Botswana

Abstract: This paper draws from a needs assessment survey for a Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration that was carried out in Botswana during the academic year 2016/17. The main purpose of the survey was to determine the relevancy of a degree in Public Administration in Botswana through ascertaining its demand by prospective learners and the demand of graduates of the programme by prospective employers. The survey was prompted by a tertiary programme design process that requires development of programme proposal. One of the integral parts of that proposal is an empirically grounded justification of the programme demonstrating whether it is needed by the potential participants (prospective learners and employers) or not. Thus, specific objectives of the study centred on relevancy and the demand of the programme in Botswana. The survey targeted respondents employed by government ministries and departments at both central and local levels of government. It also included employees of local authorities and relevant parastatal organizations. Targeted respondents included junior officers, senior officers and top management officers holding administrative and management positions within these establishments. A total number of 109 respondents out of a total target of 150 respondents across the country were able to complete and return the study questionnaires. This was a cross-sectional study which used quantitative research approach. The survey results were analysed using the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The study found that a degree in Public Administration is relevant to Botswana due to a high demand for the programme by prospective learners in the country. In addition, the study found that there is moderate to high demand of Public Administration graduates by prospective employers in Botswana. Finally, the study recommended that a degree in Public Administration be introduced by the Botswana Open University.

Keywords: Botswana, Demand, Public Administration, Relevancy

1. Introduction

This paper is drawn from the Needs Assessment Survey for a Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration that was carried out in Botswana during the academic year 2016/17. The emphasis of this paper is on the relevancy and demand of public administration as a discipline and a field of study in Botswana. The transformation process from the Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL) to Botswana Open University (BOU) involved a lot of change management processes which included but not limited to the establishment of Schools with fully fledged departments and programmes of study. Amongst other schools, BOU has established the School of Social Sciences with three departments, namely; Public Administration, Environmental Sciences and Community Development Psychosocial and Behavioural Sciences. Each department must to develop its own programmes. Given this, the Department of Public Administration proposed to offer a Degree in Public Administration which will be offered through open and distance learning mode.

The Academic Quality Assurance Enhancement Policy and Processes for BOCODOL (2011) requires that before a programme can be offered by the institution, a thorough needs assessment survey should be done with all relevant stakeholders to determine the relevancy and the demand for the programme. The main purpose of the study was to determine the relevancy of a degree in Public Administration in Botswana through ascertaining its demand by prospective learners and the demand of graduates of the programme by prospective employers. The survey was prompted by a tertiary programme design process that requires development of programme proposal. One of the integral parts of that proposal is an empirically grounded justification of the programme demonstrating whether it is needed by the potential participants (prospective learners and employers) or not. Thus, specific objectives of the study are centred on relevancy and the demand of the programme in Botswana. The paper intends to assess the relevance of the Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration in Botswana, to establish the demand for the programme by prospective learners

and to determine the extent of demand for graduates of the programme by prospective employers in Botswana

2. Contextualising the Discipline of Public Administration

Public administration is a discipline and a field of study associated with government affairs. Its major emphasis is on public service delivery through the implementation of public policies, government programmes and initiatives. A narrow approach to public administration views the discipline as concerned with the executive arm of government. That is, the formulation and implementation of public policies. A broad approach defines public administration as a field of study that is concerned with the three arms of government (Executive, Legislature and the Judiciary). Here the emphasis is on studying the governance structures among these arms of government in terms of how they relate to each other, the checks and balances amongst each other, how their powers and responsibilities are separated as well as the functions and responsibilities of each arm of government. There are many scholarly definitions of public administration which can be dated back to the origin of the discipline itself. Hughes (2003:17) stated that public administration as both theory and practice began in the late nineteenth century and became formalized somewhere between 1900 and 1920 and that its theoretical foundations mainly derive from Woodrow Wilson (politics and administration dichotomy), Max Weber (theory of bureaucracy) and Frederick Taylor (theory of scientific management).

The classical and many contesting definitions of public administration include but not limited to; Pfiffer & Presthus (1967) who described public administration as a field mainly concerned with the means for implementing political values. Presthus (1975) argued that public administration deals with the study of the institutional framework of government, its socio-economic and political environment and the behavioural inclination of those who man the bureaucratic machine. Waldo (1980) describes it as the continuously active business part of government concerned with carrying out the law, as made by legislative bodies or other authoritative agents and interpreted by courts, through the process of organization and management while Wilson (1887) argued that public administration is the most

obvious part of government and, is the government in action.

Akindele, Obiyan & Olaopa (2002) argued that public administration, whichever way one looks at it, deals with the translation of policy decisions into practical and physical reality through the action efforts of bureaucrats who are expected to be politically neutral. Fenwick (2017) asserted that "public administration is a subject derived from a tradition of descriptive and largely institutional study rooted in law rather than in the social sciences or business. He further argued that in practice, its remit has changed so much that it is hardly recognizable and that public administration (as a term and as an area of both study and practice) has developed into public management". Given the definitions above, a conclusion can be made that public administration is all about governing the society, the provision of services to the citizens, the maintenance of law and order in the society and the implementation of public policies and government programmes to serve the public. Public Administration is at the core of governance and development. It is through public administration machinery that policies and plans are translated into development. National capacity building and establishing capacity needs is done through public administration. The rate at which nations develop, amongst other things, is dependent upon the strength of public administration machinery.

2.1 The New Public Management (NPM)

According to Hughes (2003:1), the traditional model of public administration, which pre-dominated for most of the twentieth century, has changed since the mid-1980s to a flexible, market-based form of public management, the New Public Management (NPM). Fenwick (2017) argued that public administration (as a term, and as an area of both study and practice) has developed into public management, which may or may not be the same thing. This change has been brought about by the shortfalls of the traditional model of public administration in service delivery and the attacks on government considering its size, scope, scale and its service delivery and operational methods (Hulme & Turner, 1997; Vigoda, 2002; Hughes, 2003; Tangri, 2005). The argument is that the size and scope of government is too big and it consumes more resources than it can generate hence it needs to be reduced (Hulme & Turner, 1997). The other argument is that the

provision of public service by bureaucratic means is increasingly regarded as guaranteeing mediocrity and inefficiency (Hughes, 2003:9). Thus, the New Public Management paradigm is a direct response to the inadequacies of the traditional public administration, particularly the inadequacies of public bureaucracies (Hope 2002; Hughes, 2003:5). The focus of the New Public Management paradigm is on results, a focus on clients outputs and outcomes, use of management by objectives and performance measurement, the use of markets and markets type mechanisms in place of centralized command and control style regulation, competition and choice and devolution with a better matching authority, responsibility and accountability (OECD, 1998:5; Hughes, 2003:5) while the traditional model of public administration is based on bureaucracy. The NPM is held to promote the efficient and effective provision of public services, while promoting responsiveness to individual need and user choice in service provision (OECD, 1998; Behn, 200; Hope, 2002; Vigoda, 2002; Hughes, 2003).

2.2 The New Public Governance (NPG)

"Public Administration has passed through three dominant modes, a longer, pre-eminent one of Public Administration, from the late nineteenth century through to the late 1970/early 1980s, a second mode, of the New Public Management, through to the start of the twenty-first century and an emergent third one, of the New Public Governance, since then" (Osborne, 2006:1; Gellen, 2013). After the emergence of "the New Public Management", "the New Public Governance" was a theoretical paradigm that more adapted to the contemporary government public administration (Runya, Qigui & Wei, 2015). New public governance (NPG) has come to the fore to describe the plural nature of the contemporary state, where multiple different actors contribute to the delivery of public services and the policymaking system (Dickinson, 2016). The New Public Management focused too much on the market power in the allocation of social resources and solving the problem of public, but it ignored the effect of other organizations in the public administration. "The New Public Governance", as the new paradigm of public administration science, emphasized pluralism, attached great importance to the links between internal and external organizations, and paid attention to organizational governance (Modell & Wisel, 2014; Runya, Qigui & Wei, 2015: 2). Rhodes (1996) emphasized that

"governance" was a process that market and third sectors participated in public products and services with government. Osborne (2009) argued that the "New Public Governance" was based on organizational sociology and social network theory, had the characteristics of pluralism, paid attention to the management of organizations, emphasized the process and results of service, used trust as governance mechanism, and had value of neo-corporatism.

As public services started to be delivered, not just by the public sector, but also by commercial and community organisations on the basis of contracts, government started to become more fragmented. Stoker (1999) argued that government was not the only power centre. Various public and private institutions as long as their authority of power were recognized by the public, they can be power centres on different levels. Public administration main bodies depended on each other. This power dependency must form a self-organization network. The governments needed to pass new tools to coordinate and integrate social resources, instead of using the authority and command (Runya, Qigui & Wei, 2015; Dickinson, 2016). The NPG as a shift towards networked forms of governance has a strong focus on collaboration and horizontal ties between individuals and agencies. "The New Public Governance is a conclusion to the Traditional Administration and the New Public Management. It not only focuses on the organization operation mechanism, but also pays more attention to the efficiency of the public administration and citizens' participation in governance issues." (Runya, Qigui & Wei, 2015:10).

2.3 Degree in Public Administration Areas of Specialisation

There are many areas of specialization in this discipline depending on the country and the university offering this programme. Areas of specialization are meant to cater for the country's economic and human resource needs as well as for global human resource needs. In most African countries, particularly countries in the SADC region a degree in Public Administration has the following areas of specialization; human resource management, public policy, administration, public health, public affairs, commerce and criminal justice. In other countries like the United States, Canada, United Kingdom and European countries areas of

specialization may include the above special focus areas and also including but not limited to cultural policy, environmental policy, transportation, information technology, community development, urban management, economic development, emergency management and urban planning (He & Wu, 2009; Jabeen & Muhammad, 2010; Kretzschmar, 2010).

2.4 Public Administration Degree Programmes and Core Courses

Public Administration degree programmes are named differently by universities and other tertiary education institutions throughout the world. The names are usually associated with the three dominant modes or phases of public administration named above. That is, the traditional model of Public Administration, the New Public Management and the New Public Governance. For instance under the traditional model of Public Administration we have, Bachelor of Administration, Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration, under the New Public Management we have, Public Administration and Management, Public Sector Management, Public and Development Management, Public Development and Management, Public Management and Administration and under the New Public Governance we have, Degree in Governance and Public Leadership, Degree in Public Sector Management and Governance as well as a Degree in Governance.

The core courses of the programme are also slightly different in these modes as each mode has added core courses that are relevant to its characteristics. Public Administration is a multi-disciplinary field which includes courses from political science, law, management, economics, sociology, information technologies and other social sciences programmes. Table 1 on the following page shows some of the core modules in Public Administration arranged according to the phases in Public Administration.

3. Significance of Public Administration

Public Administration serves to address the needs of the public sector and the particular challenges faced in this sector, and therefore aim to equip students with the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to manage the public sector professionally (Williams & Vanderleeuw, 2015). The Programme

prepares students to assume public sector managerial roles in the knowledge-based society; it provides them with exposure to administrative concepts, tools and practice, yet keeps them firmly grounded in the understanding of emerging public issues. Depending on the options for specialisation for degree purposes, students can also pursue careers in the private sector (Runya, Qigui & Wei, 2015). Public Administration prepares students for entry into a career in the public sector, either in non-profit organizations, central government or local government, international development agencies, tertiary institutions and public enterprises.

Arap & Yucebas (2017) argued that programme is designed to equip the students with both knowledge as well as practical and academic skills. These skills include, among others, the following; public policy analysis and decision-making skills, public management and organising skills, public human resource management skills, public financial management skills, project management skills, Interpersonal skills in the public sector, communication skills in the public sector, problem-solving skills in the public sector and research skills. Williams & Vanderleeuw (2015:1) argued that in Texas City "their findings revealed that an advanced degree in public administration is valued more than other educational backgrounds by city councils, and this value is independent of social and economic characteristics of cities and traits of individual managers". This, they argued that, "offers support for the presence of an isomorphic process, a process that points to the importance of professional associations such as the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA), the International City/County Managers Association (ICMA), and the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA) in promoting a field standard in which professional training in public service is highly valued". Therefore, Public Administration plays an essential role in capacitating both public service professionals and general professionals involved in the supervision, management and administration of public business.

4. Research Methods

The study used a cross-sectional survey as an instrument to collect data in which a quantitative research approach was adopted. The survey results were analysed using the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The survey targeted

Table 1: Core Courses Based on Public Administration Phases

Public Administration Phase	Core Courses
Traditional Model of Public Administration	Evolution of Public Administration Political Context of Public Administration Organization Theory and Behaviour Public Financial Administration Personnel Administration Public Policy Analysis Intergovernmental Relations Comparative Public Administration Introduction to Public Administration Administrative Law Constitutional Law Development Administration Local Government Administration Introduction to Political Science Social Science Research Methods
New Public Management	Strategic Management Human Resource Management Performance Management Public Financial Management Management Analysis Managerial Economics Local Government Management Human Resource Development Public Enterprise Management Ethics and Accountability in the Public Sector
New Public Governance	Democracy, Governance and Development Leadership and Governance Democracy and Human Rights Theories of International Relations Industrial Relations Network Governance Civil society/NGOs in Development Citizen Participation Governance, Public Policy & Institutional Reform Project Management Organizational Development & Change

Source: University of Botswana, (2018)

respondents employed by government ministries and departments at both central and local levels of government. It also included employees of local authorities and relevant parastatal organizations. Targeted respondents included junior officers, senior officers and top management officers holding administrative and management positions within these establishments. In each organization, 10 respondents were chosen and the 10 selected were made to toss between "yes" and "no". Those who picked "yes" were given the questionnaires to complete. A total number of 109 respondents out of a total target of 150 respondents across the country were able to complete and return the study questionnaires.

5. Data Presentation Analysis and Discussion

Data presented here was collected from twenty-five (25) organizations which included government ministries, government departments, semi-autonomous government agencies, local authorities and parastatal organizations. The survey was conducted during 2016/2017 academic year in Botswana.

5.1 Relevancy of a Degree in Public Administration for Botswana

The survey sought to determine whether a BA in Public Administration is relevant for Botswana.

Table 2: Data Collection Sites

Number	Organisation	Place	No. of Respondents
1	Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)	Gaborone	6
2	Ministry of Education and Skills Development	Gaborone	5
3	Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism (MEWT)	Gaborone	4
4	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning(MFDP)	Gaborone	5
5	Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM)	Gaborone	5
6	Ministry of Infrastructure Science and Technology (MIST)	Gaborone	4
7	Ministry of Labour & Home Affairs (MLHA)	Gaborone	5
8	Ministry of Lands and Housing	Gaborone	4
9	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLG)	Gaborone	5
10	Ministry of Health (MOH)	Gaborone	4
11	Ministry of Transport and Communications (MTC)	Gaborone	5
12	Ministry Of Defence Justice and Security (MDJS)	Gaborone	4
13	Ministry of Minerals, Energy and Water Resources (MMEWR)	Gaborone	4
14	Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI)	Gaborone	5
15	Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture	Gaborone	5
16	Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)	Gaborone	3
17	Office Of The Auditor General (OAG)	Gaborone	3
18	Office of the Ombudsman (OMB)	Gaborone	4
19	Parliament of Botswana	Gaborone	2
20	Tati Land Board	Masunga	3
21	Central District Council	Serowe	5
22	Tribal Administration	Francistown	3
23	Palapye Administrative Authority	Palapye	5
24	North East District Council	Masunga	6
25	City of Francistown	Francistown	5
Total			109

Source: Bachelor of Public Administration Needs Assessment Survey Data, 2016

Table 3: Is a Degree in Public Administration Relevant for Botswana?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	102	93.6
No	7	6.4
Total	109	100.0

Source: Bachelor of Public Administration Needs Assessment Survey Data, 2016

Respondents were asked to state whether the programme is relevant by answering either "yes" or "no" to the question which read "*Is a degree in Public Administration relevant for Botswana?*" Answers to this question are summarised in Table 3 above.

Out of 109 respondents, 93.6% of them indicated that a BA in Public Administration is relevant for Botswana while 6.4% of the respondents stated that the programme is not relevant for

Botswana. Survey results shows that the majority of respondents are of the view that a BA in Public Administration is relevant for Botswana. It is then safe to conclude that this is a relevant programme for Botswana. A cross-check statement reading "*A Degree in Public Administration programme is relevant for Botswana's context*" was placed on a likert answer scale to cross-examine the above assertion in Table 3 that a Degree in Public Administration is relevant for Botswana.

Table 4: A Degree in Public Administration Programme is Relevant for Botswana's Context

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	49	45.0
Agree	46	42.2
Neutral	12	11.0
Strongly Disagree	1	.9
Disagree	1	.9
Total	109	100.0

Source: Bachelor of Public Administration Needs Assessment Survey Data, 2016

Table 5: There is a High Demand for Public Administration Degree Holders in Botswana

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	24	22.0
Agree	31	28.4
Neutral	32	29.4
Strongly Disagree	7	6.4
Disagree	15	13.8
Total	109	100.0

Source: Bachelor of Public Administration Needs Assessment Survey Data, 2016

The respondents' opinions about this statement are summarised in Table 4 above.

Results shows that 45% of the respondents strongly agree that a degree in public administration is relevant for Botswana, 42.2% of the respondents agree with the statement, 11% of the respondents are neutral to the statement while 9% of the respondents strongly disagree and 9% of the respondents disagree with the statement. The combined percentage of those who answered either "strongly agree" or "agree" is 87.2% which is near 93.6% of the respondents who answered "yes" in Table 3. Similarly those who answered either "strongly disagree" or "disagree" amounts to 18% of the respondents, a low figure, as also indicated by those who answered "no" (6.4%) in Table 3. This largely confirms the extent to which this programme is relevant for Botswana.

5.2 The Demand for Public Administration Graduates in Botswana

On the question of demand for the programme by the country (Botswana) a statement reading "there is a high demand for public administration degree holders in Botswana" was also placed in a likert scale to sought opinions from the respondents. Responses to this statement are summarised in Table 5.

Out of 109 respondents, 22% strongly agree that there is a high demand for public administration degree holders, 28.4% agree with the statement, 29.4% are neutral while 6.4% strongly disagree and 13.8% disagree. Thus, 50.4% of the respondents either answered "strongly agree" or "agree" while 20.2% of the respondents either answered "strongly disagree" or "disagree". Given this statistics, a conclusion can be made that there is a demand for public administration degree holders by the Botswana public sector.

5.3 The Demand for a Degree in Public Administration by Prospective Learners

Having established the demand for the programme by the country, another statement reading "there is a high demand for a degree in public administration by prospective learners in Botswana" was placed in a likert scale for respondents to state their opinion about the statement. Table 6 on the following page shows a summary of the survey results regarding the demand of the programme by prospective learners in Botswana.

Results indicate that 25.7% of the respondents answered "strongly agree" and 32.1% of the respondents answered "agree" to the statement. Thus, a combined 57.8% of the respondents who either answered "strongly agree" or "agree" are of the view

Table 6: There is a High Demand for a Degree in Public Administration by Prospective Learners in Botswana

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	28	25.7
Agree	35	32.1
Neutral	36	33.0
Strongly Disagree	3	2.8
Disagree	7	6.4
Total	109	100.0

Source: Bachelor of Public Administration Needs Assessment Survey Data (2016)

Table 7: Who Would be Interested in Enrolling for the Programme?

		Frequency	Percent
	Public Servants	87	79.8
	Private Sector Employees	7	6.4
	Other	8	7.3
	Total	102	93.6
Missing	System	7	6.4
Total		109	100.0

Source: Bachelor of Public Administration Needs Assessment Survey Data, 2016

that there is a high demand for the programme by prospective learners in Botswana. On the other hand 33% of the respondents answered "neutral" while 2.8% answered "strongly disagree" and 6.4% chose "disagree" as their answer. This means a combined 9.2% of respondents who either answered "strongly disagree" or "disagree" are of the view that there is no demand for the programme by prospective learners in Botswana. Considering this results, one may conclude that there is a high demand for a BA in Public Administration programme by prospective learners in Botswana.

5.4 Categories of Employees Who Would be Interested in Enrolling for the Programme

An opinion was also sought from the respondents to state which employees would be interested in enrolling for a BA in Public Administration if introduced. The respondents were required to choose between Public Sector Employees (Public Servants), Private Sector Employees or identify any other sector of employment in whose employees would be interested in enrolling for the programme. The survey results for this question can be ascertained from the Table 7.

The sum of 79.8% of 109 respondents chose public servants, 7.3% of the respondents chose

other sectors employees, 6.4% of the respondents chose private sector employees while 6.4% of them did not answer the question. Thus, the majority of the respondents were of the view that public servants will be interested in enrolling for the programme.

5.5 Preferred Area of Specialisation

Respondents were asked to indicate their preferred area of specialization by stating their level of interest in either Bachelor of Public Administration with specialization in Administration or Bachelor of Public Administration with specialization Human Resources Management. Their responses are shown in the tables on the following pages.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of interest on the areas of specialization in Public Administration degree. 78.9% of 109 respondents answered this question, while 21% of 109 respondents did not answer this question. From those who answered this question, the results of the survey indicate that 47.8% of the respondents showed interest in a BA degree in Public Administration with specialization in Administration while 31.2% showed no interest in the programme. The 47.8% indicated above shows a combined percentage of those who answered "very interested" (23.9%) and

Table 8: Bachelor of Public Administration with Specialization in Administration (BPA-ADMN)

		Frequency	Percent
	Very Interested	26	23.9
	Interested	26	23.9
	Not Interested	34	31.2
	Total	86	78.9
Missing	System	23	21.1
Total		109	100.0

Source: Bachelor of Public Administration Needs Assessment Survey Data (2016)

Table 9: Bachelor of Public Administration with Specialisation in Human Resources Management (BPA-HRM)

		Frequency	Percent
	Very Interested	54	49.5
	Interested	31	28.4
	Not Interested	12	11.0
	Total	97	89.0
Missing	System	12	11.0
Total		109	100.0

Source: Bachelor of Public Administration Needs Assessment Survey Data, 2016

those who answered "interested" (23.9%). Table 8 also indicates that from the 86 respondents who answered this question, 52 of them showed interest in the programme by either answering "very interested" or "interested" while 34 of them indicated that there are not interested in the programme. Looking at the statistics presented above, a conclusion can be made that there is generally an interest in the programme.

Table 9 shows level of interest in a BA degree in Public Administration with specialization in Human Resources Management.

The survey results as shown in Table 9 represents responses to a question which asked respondents to indicate their level of interest in a BA in Public Administration with a specialization in Human Resources Management. Out of 109 respondents, 12 of them did not answer this question while 97 of them answered this question. From those who answered this question 49.5% of the respondents indicated that they are very interested in the programme while 28.4% indicated that they are interested in the programme. Overall, 77.9% of the respondents showed interest in a BA in Public Administration with specialization in Human Resources Management. 11% of the respondents

showed no interest in the programme by answering "not interested". The majority of the respondents are interested in human resource management major.

5.6 Most Preferred Area of Specialisation

Respondents were then asked to indicate their most preferred area of specialization as a cross-check question to responses presented in both Tables 8 and 9. The question wanted the respondents to choose between a Degree in Public Administration with a specialisation in Administration and a Degree in Public Administration with a specialization in Human Resources Management. The responses are shown in Table 10.

The survey results shown in Table 10 on the following page are that 72.5% of the respondents prefers a Degree in Public Administration with a specialization in Human Resources Management while 21.1% prefers a Degree in Public Administration with specialization in Administration. This is a clear indication that respondents prefer a Degree in Public Administration with specialization in Human Resources Management as compared to a Degree in Public Administration with a specialization in Administration.

Table 10: Most Preferred Area of Specialisation

		Frequency	Percent
	BPA-HRM	79	72.5
	BPA-ADMN	23	21.1
	Total	102	93.6
Missing	System	7	6.4
Total		109	100.0

Source: Bachelor of Public Administration Needs Assessment Survey Data, 2016

Table 11: Willingness to Enrol with BOU

		Frequency	Percent
	YES	81	74.3
	NO	22	20.2
	Total	103	94.5
Missing	System	6	5.5
Total		109	100.0

Source: Bachelor of Public Administration Needs Assessment Survey Data, 2016

Table 12: Preferred Mode of Delivery

		Frequency	Percent
	Distance Learning	37	33.9
	E-Learning	20	18.3
	Blended Learning	10	9.2
	Traditional (Face-to-Face) Learning	15	13.8
	Total	82	75.2
Missing	System	27	24.8
Total		109	100

Source: Bachelor of Public Administration Needs Assessment Survey Data (2016)

5.7 Willingness to Enrol with the Botswana Open University (BOU)

Having established interests of respondents in this programme, the next question was to determine their willingness to enrol for the programme with the Botswana Open University (BOU) if offered. Respondents were asked if there would like to enrol for a BA in Public Administration with BOU. Their responses are summarised in Table 11.

The study shows that 94.5% of 109 respondents answered this question while 5.5% of the respondents did not answer this question. 74.3% of the respondents showed their willingness to enrol with BOU for the programme by answering "YES" while 20.2% of the respondents indicated their unwillingness to enrol for the programme with BOU by providing a "NO" answer. Survey results for this question indicate that majority of respondents are

willing to enrol for the programme with BOU. The willingness to enrol with BOU can be attributed to the advantages of open and distance learning mode of delivery. That is, BOU is an open and distance learning Education and Training Provider (ETP).

5.8 Preferred Mode of Delivery

Respondents were then asked to identify their preferred mode of delivery by ticking against provided answers. Survey results for this question are summarised in Table 12.

Distance Learning as a mode of delivery scored the highest percentage of 33.9%, followed by E-learning with 18.3%, then Traditional (Face-to-Face) Learning with 13.8% while Blended Learning scored the least percentage of 9.2%. Out of 109 respondents, 82 (75.2%) answered this question while 27 (24.8%) did not answer this question. It is evident from the

survey findings that majority of the respondents prefer Distance Learning and E-learning as compared to other modes of delivery. It is worth noting that Distance Learning can be delivered through E-learning and Blended Learning with Face-to-Face tutorial support. Although these modes of delivery complement each other, the survey was interested in establishing the preferred mode of delivery which in this case is Distance Learning. The reason why many respondents preferred distance learning is because they are already employed and distance education will help them further their studies while continuing with their jobs.

6. DISCUSSIONS

6.1 Relevancy of a Degree in Public Administration in Botswana

It is evident from the research findings that a BA in Public Administration is relevant for Botswana. These results are not surprising as in Botswana the public sector and/or government is the largest employer followed by the private sector. A formal sector employment survey conducted by Statistics Botswana in June 2017 also shows that the public sector is the largest employer. Statistics Botswana (2017) indicated that the public sector has the largest share (52%) of formal employment followed by the private sector with 48% share of the formal sector employment. It is also imperative to note that the majority of BA in Public Administration graduates gets employed by the public sector as compared to finding employment in the private sector. This is because of the relevancy of the programme in public service delivery. Also notable, just like many African and/or developing countries, the size of the Botswana public sector is huge as compared to the size of the private sector (Tangri, 2005), hence the relevancy of this programme.

6.2 The Demand for Public Administration Degree holders by Prospective Employers in Botswana

Given the results of the study a conclusion can be made that there is a demand for public administration degree holders by the Botswana public sector. The demand is exacerbated by reasons mentioned above, that is, the size of Botswana public sector is huge and the relevancy of the programme to public service delivery. In many cases public administration degree holders are employed in the public

sector as Administration Officers, Human Resource Officers, Management Analysts, Strategy Officers and Performance Management specialists. These officers will then climb the ladder to most senior positions within their areas of specialisation. For instance, to positions like Chief Administration Officer, Principal Administration Officer, Human Resources Manager or Performance Improvement Coordinator.

6.3 The Demand for a Degree in Public Administration by Prospective Learners

Considering research findings of this survey, one may conclude that there is a high demand for a BA in Public Administration programme by prospective learners in Botswana. This demand can be explained by the fact that the government is the largest employer in Botswana and it is easy to find a job in the public sector as compared to finding a job in the private sector. Hence learners will rather choose a programme in which it will be easier for them to find employment opportunities. In addition, respondents were asked to state which categories of employees would be interested in enrolling for a BA in Public Administration if introduced by BOU. The majority (79.8%) of the respondents were of the view that public servants will be interested in enrolling for the programme, followed by other sectors employees (7.3%) and private sector employees at 6.4%. Although this is the case, it does not necessarily mean that Public Administration degree holders cannot be absorbed by the private sector when it comes to employment opportunities.

6.4 Preferred Area of Specialization

Research results indicate that the majority of respondents prefer to specialize in over specialization in general administration. Respondents stated that in many cases Public Administration degree holders are given human resource responsibilities to carry out in the public service hence this will help capacitate their knowledge, skills and attitudes towards accomplishing their tasks. This may also have attributed to the fact that with a specialization in human resource management one may also find employment in the private sector.

6.5 Willingness to Enrol with BOU and Preferred Mode of Delivery

Survey results show that majority (74.3%) of respondents are willing to enrol with BOU if the programme

can be offered, while 20.2% of the respondents stated that they are not willing to enrol with BOU. Majority of respondents are willing to enrol with BOU because of the flexibility of open and distance learning mode of delivery. Similarly, when respondents were asked to choose their preferred mode of delivery, majority (33.9%) of them preferred distance learning over traditional face-to-face learning (13.8%) and 18.3% preferred e-learning while 9.2% preferred blended learning. The reason why many respondents preferred distance learning is because they are already employed and distance education will help them further their studies while continuing with their jobs.

6.6. Implications of Theory to Practice

This paper has covered three phases of Public Administration being the Traditional Model of Public Administration, the New Public Management and the New Public Governance paradigms. The paper further looked at the menu of core courses under Public Administration relevant to these paradigms and programme naming in accordance with existing paradigms. The development and introduction of a degree in Public Administration should take into consideration trends in this discipline by offering courses that are relevant to the new paradigm in this field of study. This does not mean that courses in the old dispensation may not be included in the programme. Many courses in the traditional approach to Public Administration are still relevant today. The menu of courses is dependent upon human resource needs of the country. When developing this programme, the university should consult with curriculum development advisory bodies and accreditation bodies in Botswana like the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) and the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA). BQA is responsible for quality assurance. It ensures the maintenance and enhancement of quality in education by registering qualifications and accrediting learning programmes, by registering and accrediting assessors and moderators responsible for programme delivery and monitoring of the Education and Training Providers. The Human Resource Development Council is responsible for providing advice on all matters of the national human resource needs and development. The programme must be registered and accredited by BQA before it can be offered for quality purposes. The programme must also be subjected to periodic reviews for it to be relevant to the changing environment.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has looked at the relevancy of a degree in public administration by ascertaining its demand by prospective learners and through establishing the demand of graduates of the programme by prospective employers in Botswana. Considering findings of the study, a conclusion can be made that the programme is relevant to Botswana, there is a demand for the programme by prospective learners and there is also a demand for graduates of the programme by prospective employers in Botswana. It is worth noting that respondents preferred a degree in public administration with specialisation in human resource management over a generic degree in public administration. This is in line with the reforms in the public service and the new public management paradigm which emphasises managerialism or entrepreneurial government. Given the results, the study recommends that the Botswana Open University (BOU) introduce a degree in public administration with a special focus on human resource management. The university may also consider introducing a degree in public sector management and governance or a degree in governance and public leadership to cater for the New Public Governance paradigm. A strong emphasis in curriculum development should address public administration paradigms and the inclusion of African and indigenous system knowledge in the curriculum.

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