NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT IN ST. LUCIA:
The Challenge of Adoption and Implementation of NPM in
St. Lucia’s Public Service

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Map of the Caribbean

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ABSTRACT

The Government of St. Lucia (GOSL) engaged in an ambitious programme of New Public Management (NPM) reform, under a Public Sector Reform (PSR) classification, and by their own assessment, this initiative was unsuccessful. Yet, no analysis of the failure was carried out and there is very little documented information. This study therefore aims to understand the reasons for this failure. This thesis also explores why St. Lucia adopted NPM; in a national environment unlike those for which it was designed.

The qualitative approach and interpretive enquiry, permitted rich and indepth accounts to be gathered on the research phenomenon. Based on semi-structured interviews with public servants and trade unionists and the analysis of documentary evidence, the research finds a gap between the rhetorical convergence and the implementation convergence of NPM. Coercive isomorphism and external influences appear to have greater weight for the adoption of NPM; in an environment that was ill equipped to engage in its implementation. Government embraced NPM as a panacea to its many public service challenges; despite their limited understanding of the concept. Thus, the attempt to redesign the public sector according to an imported model failed because neither the concepts underlying NPM, nor the challenges of implementation were properly understood. A greater investment in capacity building to equip implementers for policy analysis discussions and policy implementation may have had different results.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAPRI - Caribbean Policy Research Institute
CARICAD - The Caribbean Centre for Development Administration
CARICOM - Caribbean Community
CSA - St. Lucia Civil Service Association
DESA - Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DFID - Department for International Development
DPADM - Division for Public Administration and Development Management
EA - Executive Agencies
EPA - Economic Partnership Agreements
ESC - English Speaking Caribbean
EU - European Union
FDI – Foreign Direct Investment
GOSL - Government of St. Lucia
GT - Grounded Theory
HRD - Human Resource Development
HRM - Human Resource Management
IFI – International Financial Institution
IGO - International Governmental Organization
ILO - International Labour Organization
IMF - International Monetary Fund
IPA - Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
NGO - Non-governmental Organization
NPA – New Public Administration
NPG - New Public Governance
NPM - New Public Management
OAS - Organization of Americas
ODA – Official Development Assistance
OECD - Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECS - Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OPSR - Office of Public Sector Reform
PA - Public Administration
PMS - Performance Management System
PPP - Public-Private Partnerships
PS - Permanent Secretary
PSC - Public Service Commission
PSM - Public Sector Modernisation
PSR - Public Sector Reform
SAP - Structural Adjustment Program
SIDS - Small Island Developing States
SLP - St. Lucia Labour Party
SMT - Senior Management Team
TA - Thematic Analysis
T&D - Training and Development
TQM - Total Quality Management
UK - United Kingdom
UN - United Nations
UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
UWP - United Workers Party
VAT - Value Added Tax
WW – Westminster Whitehall
1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

New Public Management (NPM) has taken its place on the global platform as a prevailing strategy to public administration reform. On the one hand, proponents argue that there are many positive benefits of NPM. Such as, “a public sector that has become more customer oriented, more efficient, transparent and focused on performance” (Haque, 2007:181). On the other hand, some theorists have described it as “all hype and no substance” (Andrews, Guarneros-Meza and Downe, 2016). It has also been characterized as part of a global neoliberal project, driven by supra-national organizations, international donor agencies and consultants; who market NPM as best practices for public sector reform (PSR). Its effectiveness however, has been a highly debatable subject within academia. Nevertheless, despite limited evidence on the effectiveness of NPM (Samaratunge and Benington, 2002), there has been a global convergence of NPM in both the developed and developing world.

Varying reasons have been propounded for the adoption of NPM; ranging from globalization pressures, national concerns and interorganizational factors (Sutton, 2008; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). This proliferation of the NPM doctrine, ideas and practices has been largely facilitated by the policy transfer process. The result has been a growth of institutional isomorphic processes, as governments drive to create more cost effective, efficient and responsive public services. Despite having similar problems, or desiring similar outcomes, NPM reforms differ in their implementation context. Reformers should therefore make special efforts to not only understand the principles of NPM, but the influencing contextual factors and the policy environment surrounding implementation. This thesis addresses these issues. This Introductory Chapter presents this study’s rationale, aims, research questions; the theoretical framework, the significance of this study and an outline of the thesis.
1.2. Introduction

Over the decades, many public services around the globe have been faced with various challenges which have ushered in significant changes. Many of those challenges related to the large public sectors, widespread wastage, socio-economic problems, out-dated systems and processes and globalization (Sutton, 2008; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). Changes were effected in the form of public management reforms. Public management reforms itself have evolved over the years. The period 1970 to 1980 were geared at changes in the ideology and practices of the traditional public service (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). Such initiatives are typically informed by a characterisation of traditional public service provision as highly bureaucratic, centralised and costly (Samaratunge and Bennington, 2002). NPM, a facet of the neoliberal ideology, then rose to prominence during the late 1980s (Steger and Roy, 2010). Neoliberalism is encapsulated in a common “set of ideological and political principles dedicated to the worldwide spread of an economic model emphasizing free markets and free trade” (Steger and Roy, 2010:10). Neoliberalism has been conceptualized in three different ways, namely as; (1) an ideology (2) a mode of governance (3) a policy package (Steger and Roy, 2010:11). This thesis focuses on NPM as the latter.

NPM has become a dominant paradigm for public administration (PA) reform worldwide. However, there appears to be no agreement on the standard conceptualization of NPM (Pollitt, 2002; Dunleavy et al., 2006). This is because different policy makers focus on different aspects. Generally, proponents of NPM advocate that public services adopt private sector management techniques for greater efficiency and cost effectiveness, and so NPM principles dominated and thus replaced the traditional model (Osborne, 2010). This shift in paradigm emerged at a time of global financial crises, rising governmental expenditure and considerable repercussions of a highly centralized state (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). This transformation continued in the 20th and 21st Century, as countries experienced a redefinition of the relationship between government, the public and the market for more effective governance (Patapas et al., 2014; Rigaud, 2012). The result was a changing role of the state. In the PA era, the focus was on a Unitarist state, where there is only one government and administrative managers are responsible and held accountable for 'public money' and for
fulfilling the plans of elected politicians (Osborne, 2010). However, the NPM construct is
centred on a more disaggregated state, in which the focus is on 'intraorganizational processes
and management', which work together to stimulate the economy and achieve efficiency
through a competitive approach amongst the various units (Osborne, 2010). The posited
efficiency gains have resulted in the governments of the developed world embracing NPM
because of its relativity during the fall of the welfare state to address issues relating to the
economy and public service delivery (Lane, 1997). Despite such global convergence of
NPM, it has been argued that there is no substantial evidence on its effectiveness
(Samaratunge and Bennington, 2002). Still, NPM principles continue to dominate
worldwide. This is due to the concerted efforts made by consultants, international donor
agencies and other advisers who sell the NPM package as what works best for public services
(Pollitt, 2000). Thus, this NPM approach to reinventing, re-engineering and encouraging an
entrepreneurial government has resulted in many nations "doing the same thing" (Pollitt,
2000: 184). Yet, no country has been able to adopt the total NPM package (Sarker, 2006).
This is because contextual factors influence the components that are adopted.

Context is a critical element in NPM reform. This can be seen in Pawson and Tilley's (1997)
reform formula; "CONTEXT + REFORM MECHANISM = OUTCOMES" (in Pollitt
2002:476). There may be a tendency to focus on one more than the other, and finding that
balance can be challenging. Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004) argue that oftentimes very little
attention is paid to those contextual differences when descriptions of public management
reforms are given. Instead, the major focus is on the reform mechanisms or instruments, such
as: "total quality management (TQM), performance contracts and results oriented budgeting"
(Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004: 39). Thus, the inadequate focus on one more than the other will
influence anticipated outcomes.

The proliferation of NPM reform worldwide is largely facilitated by the policy transfer
process. Policy transfer can be defined as an intentional or purposive step in a direction
which results in 'policy action' (Evans, 2009). The process usually involves an agent or agents
of transfer. For example, "politicians, bureaucrats, policy entrepreneurs, think tanks,
academics and international organizations" (Stones, 2006 in Evans, 2009:244). These agents
sometimes coerce the actors in the policy transfer process to adopt certain policies which are considered to be best practices. NPM is one case in example. However, policy transfer is not a straight forward concept. Massey (2009) views this concept as a "contested one" because surrounding contexts impact significantly on the shaping and implementation of a policy. Policy transfer is not a new concept and the emergence of policy diffusion studies has further fuelled NPM convergence worldwide. Research demonstrates that even Caribbean countries have adopted NPM reforms; or have dipped into the NPM shopping basket to retrieve specific NPM measures (Sutton, 2008). St. Lucia was no exception. Its public administration (PA) faced significant challenges and so, change was inevitable.

This research therefore seeks to determine how NPM was conceptualized and understood by participants in this study. It also seeks to ascertain why St. Lucia adopted NPM reform. More so, what were the underlying challenges that St. Lucia’s public service faced and the NPM approach to addressing them. Then this study attempts to determine the challenges to NPM implementation in St. Lucia’s public service, with a focus on contextual factors.

The scope of NPM reform in St. Lucia was the entire public service. Figure 1.1 presents the structure of St. Lucia's public service. The Ministry of the Public Service, Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Finance are its core ministries. Human resource management (HRM) and human resource development (HRD) matters are forwarded to the Ministry of the Public Service and then the Public Service Commission (PSC) for approval. The appointment, discipline, transfer and firing of employees lie with the PSC. The PSC also ensures that ministries follow the necessary compliance procedures in all of these matters. Embarking on such a large scale reform would be a challenging task for any government. Many countries in the Commonwealth Caribbean have embarked on various reforms and very few have achieved successful outcomes (Sutton, 2008). Additionally, research on PA reform in the region is limited (Sutton, 2008), particularly in the island of St. Lucia. Thus, this research is the first of its kind to investigate the challenges of adoption and implementation of NPM in St. Lucia's public service. It will therefore make a valuable contribution to future policy formulation and implementation in St. Lucia.
Figure 1.1
Structure of St. Lucia's Public Service


KEY

- Ministries
- Statutory Body
- Non-governmental organization
1.3. Rationale for the study: why NPM Reform in St. Lucia?

My interest in PA reform was first stirred during a four year work stint in St. Lucia’s public service. During my tenure, it was apparent that low productivity, high bureaucracy and centralization, among many other problems were key issues for many civil servants. As a matter of fact, the public services in the Caribbean region were generally being described as 'inefficient' (Swaroop, 1996). However, after that stint I migrated to Paris, France. The administrative system in France is very different to the English Speaking Caribbean (ESC). The ESC follows the Anglo-Saxon model that is based on the public interest ideology. Conversely, the French system is guided by the Rechtsstaat model which views the "states as the central integrating force within society" and therefore focuses on the development and enactment of laws (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004: 52). The Conseil d’Etat, which is a “hierarchy of administrative courts”, is responsible for overseeing this system (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004: 53). Thus, the French are known to have a very strong administrative state, and some of their key reforms focused on decentralization, modernization and privatization (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). However, St. Lucia is behind in both reform and research efforts. Hence, this study creates an opportunity for further research in the island.

In addition, literature, though limited, can be found on PA reform initiatives in some Caribbean countries (Sutton, 2008; Capri, 2011) but not St. Lucia. There is also little information on the policy implementation process and reform outcomes in St. Lucia. Clearly, it is this gap in knowledge that provides the justification for this research.

1.4. Research Aims and Questions

1.4.1. Statement of the Problem

Over the decades, St. Lucia’s civil service has been subjected to criticisms on all levels, that is, the "administrative, social, technological, economical and political levels" (GOSL Green Paper, 1999:7-10). The Government of St. Lucia (GOSL) White Paper (2000)
explained the underlying problems at these various levels. For instance, at the administrative level, issues of accountability, low productivity, size of the public service and failures with the existing systems and processes. At the social level, the principal concern was the rising dissatisfaction expressed by citizens, as they insisted on a better and more efficient public service that is focused on good governance. At the technological level, St. Lucia appears to be lagging in its use and application of information technology for more efficient systems and processes. The economic level was related to the constant challenges that government faced to reduce debt and secure grants and aid. It became even more difficult when trade preferences once afforded to St. Lucia were lost; thereby resulting in a significant reduction in revenue. All these problems were compounded by the unstable political climate of the country and associated problems with the existing bureaucratic system. Donor agencies were also demanding that public services in the region change their way of doing business to become more efficient (Sutton, 2008).

Thus, all these issues served as endogenous and exogenous impetuses to reform. The former relates to influential factors in the “domestic policy environment”; whilst, the latter pertains to factors in the “international and transnational policy environment” (Randma-Liiv and Kruusenberg, 2012:155). However, the exogenous impetus, like donor agencies, can be viewed as having a stronger impact on reform. This is because, strict conditions accompany the funding, which smaller countries are heavily dependent upon.

This research therefore aims to acquire a more in-depth understanding of the adoption and implementation of NPM reform in St. Lucia's public service, through an interpretive analytical framework. A significant benefit of this philosophical approach is that it stresses on participants’ ability to ‘construct meaning’ (Mack, 2010) and thereby achieve a rich and deeper meaning of the phenomenon (Angen, 2000). A more in-depth account of this framework is presented in the Methodology Chapter of this Thesis (§4.2. Research Philosophy).
1.4.2. Purpose of the Study

This study investigated the challenges of adoption and implementation of NPM reform in St. Lucia's public service. The government ambitiously engaged in NPM reform, but reform objectives were not achieved. This research was therefore guided by the following research questions.

1) What is NPM and how is it understood?
   -Was there an NPM alignment?

2) Why did St. Lucia adopt NPM reform?

3) What were the challenges of the public service and the proposed NPM approach to addressing these challenges?

4) What were the challenges to reform implementation in St. Lucia’s public service?
   -What contextual factors impacted upon the reform implementation process?

1.5. The Theoretical Framework

This study seeks to explore the adoption and implementation of NPM in St. Lucia’s PA. The theoretical framework developed on the basis of a literature review, provided the lens through which to examine this topic. It presents the central concepts and theories, and bring to the fore the various NPM components that were considered for St. Lucia’s PA reform. These include: performance management, private sector management style and hands on management, disaggregation of units and decentralization and tighter cost control. These doctrinal components of NPM were presented in Christopher Hood’s (1991) article – A Public Management for All Seasons? Elements of these five components permeated St. Lucia’s Green (1999) and White Paper (2000) on PSR. However, these were presented without any clear acknowledgement that the package of reforms, as a whole, conformed to the NPM criteria that had been applied in so many other countries previously. Rather, St. Lucia’s reform efforts came under the auspices of a comprehensive PSR program. The proposed NPM reform program was anticipated to result in cost savings; efficiency; greater
accountability; better quality output and a more modernized and innovative public sector, that embodies strong leadership, in a new public service culture. Undoubtedly, this will impact upon St. Lucia’s PA. Thus, this framework considers the applicability of the historical, political and cultural context; socio-economic context; the bureaucratic system and technological context, international and regional bodies and donor agencies and policy transfer on St. Lucia’s PA, in the adoption and implementation of NPM reform. Figure 1.2 presents the Theoretical Framework and the discussion of the diagram immediately follows.
The NPM concept is not very straightforward, partly because many different policies are grouped under this title, and partly because these policies are not politically neutral. Thus, the primary emphasis of NPM, as well as the concept’s political implications, differ (Thomas and Davies,
According to Pollitt, there are "two levels of the phenomenon"; where at the "higher level it is a general theory or doctrine that the public sector can be improved by the importation of business concepts, techniques and values; while at the more mundane level, it is a bundle of specific concepts and practices" (2007:111). In other words, there is a theoretical and practical perspective of NPM. This study seeks to determine Participants’ understanding of the NPM theory or doctrine, or of its practices. On the other hand, it can be argued that a sound understanding of the theory of NPM is not necessarily a prerequisite for NPM reform.

However, decision makers can make a more valuable input if they understand the policy that they are set to implement. In part, learning about the NPM policy fulfils a priority of policy transfer. Rose (2005) cited the ‘need to learn’ in public policy, as an essential priority for a policy maker. Additionally, learning about the implementation of NPM, what works or not, is even more critical because of its global dominance. Its dissemination has been largely attributed to the agenda’s of supranational organizations and international donor agencies who sell the package as what works best (Pollitt, 2000). However, the question here is this. Can similar results be realized from programs that have been copied from the more developed to the lesser developed or developing nations? Such nations differ considerably in resources, economy, infrastructure, competencies and skills, to name a few. It is for this reason, that this research also seeks to find out why St. Lucia adopted NPM reform.

The proposal for PA reform in St. Lucia was aimed at the abandonment of the Weberian system of government. This bureaucratic system is based on a strong hierarchy, strict regulations and procedures; and was to be replaced by new practices embedded in a more disaggregated government which focused on efficiency, output and performance (GOSL White Paper, 2000); some of which are also principal objectives of NPM (Hur, 2011). In light of this, St. Lucia’s reform framework proposed changes to the public service model to achieve a more efficient performance management system; disaggregation of units for corporatization and the decentralization of others; tighter cost control, based on a hands-on professional and private sector style of management. It was hoped that this would result in a new public service culture that is underpinned by a stronger work ethos based on high productivity and
efficiency. However, theorists argue that the applicability of these NPM principles are significantly impacted by contextual factors; such as, "history, culture, politics and managerial leadership" (Sozen and Shaw, 2002:476). The extent of influence will be totally dependent upon the country's relative context. Hence, this research equally aims to demonstrate how the following contextual factors: historical, political and cultural; socio-economic; the bureaucratic system and technological context, international and regional bodies and donor agencies and policy transfer, can impact upon PA outcomes in St. Lucia’s public service in the implementation of NPM reform.

Historical, Political and Cultural Context
St. Lucia has a long history of political unrest, which resulted in unprecedented snap elections. This unrest was due to demands being made by the private sector and pressure from the unions, which "forced the government to resign in 1982" and have "led to several changes of Prime Minister" (DPADM and DESA, 2004:3). Then in 1997, the recently elected government announced the launch of PSR. The timing of this announcement is interesting. Timing is considered to be a crucial factor in policy transfer studies (Rose, 2005). Thus, the government’s launch into reform during a political campaign amidst strained relations with stakeholders should not be down played.

Stakeholders refer to those persons, groups or organizations, whether internal or external to the organization, that are concerned and impacted by an organization’s decisions (Boddy, 2005:83). Reform usually involves diverse stakeholders, such as: trade unions, employees, citizens, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Collaboration with stakeholders is necessary for successful NPM reform implementation; because they each have a vested interest in the organization’s success or failure. Many countries pursuing NPM type reform have adopted such a collaborative approach with stakeholders (Capri, 2011). However, challenges are likely to emerge due to differences in motives and objectives. Considerable efforts will be needed to reconcile any differences in order to impact positively upon the public service’s culture. It has been posited that public service culture and even the

Culture in the public service typically refers to "public sector values, behaviours, languages, assumptions and attitudes" (Ryan and Lewis, 2007:271). Impacting public service culture will require affecting changes on these levels. This occurs through the addressing of organizational systems and structure, practices and procedures, and equally, employees' attitudes and behaviours. Brown (2008) stresses the role of the latter in bringing about culture change. He argues that reform is not only about impacting the structural and system dimensions of the public sector, but considerable attention has to equally be paid to employees' themselves and their attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours. Thus, understanding public service culture is critical when engaging in PA reform. Some researchers have argued that NPM reforms are able to have a positive impact on an organization's culture (Wyen and Verhoest, 2015). It is crucial however, that efforts are made to involve employees in the reform process. Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004) strongly recommend the latter. Consultation should be with employees at the various levels of the public service and not just with a limited few at the top. Quite often reforms are top down where employees at the lower end do not make a contribution (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). This hinders reform implementation and any achievements at cultural change. However, effecting change in the organization's culture can be difficult due to the high level of politicization in St. Lucia's public service.

Politicians in St. Lucia have often been accused of meddling in the administrative affairs of the state (CSA, 2005). Similar reports on the politicization of the public service have also been noted in other countries within the region (Sutton, 2008). This breeds corruption and a lack of trust in politicians. Moreover, it has been argued that there can be negative drawbacks when NPM is inserted in a "highly politicized and unprofessional" public service (Pollitt, 2007:114). Hence, for NPM reform to succeed, it requires the commitment of political leaders (Sutton, 2008). Political commitment should also come from the opposition in order to ensure political continuity of the reform (Draper, 2001). Political continuity can be
obtained if all politicians realize that there are benefits not only on the structural, technological and system level, but also on the socio-economic front.

**Socio-economical Context**

The volatility of St. Lucia's socio-economic context deemed it necessary for politicians to seek ways to stimulate economic growth; and so, reform appeared to be the appropriate response. However, it is crucial that politicians consult with key stakeholders to ensure effective policy analysis discussions, so that reform can result in significant economic gains.

St. Lucia’s main revenue following independence came from the Banana Industry and Tourism. St. Lucia received preferential treatment for its Bananas, but that ended by a decision of the European Union (EU) in 1999 (ILO, 2003). Tourism then became the central focus of the economy (ILO, 2003). Tourism is a volatile sector, which is impacted by factors outside of one's control, such as, natural disasters. Additionally, due to globalization pressures; decline in foreign aid, loan and grants (PSR Unit, 2004); increasing fiscal debt and wastage in the public service (GOSL, 2000); it became necessary for the government to consider ways to stimulate economic growth. For many countries, reform has often been viewed as a potential solution to economic woes (Kim and Moon, 2002). Thus, the government hoped for economic returns, through the implementation of the proposed reform mechanisms aimed at achieving efficiency gains (PSR Unit, 2004). Hence, the PSR Unit suggested that consideration be given to the following: "re-structuring of the economy; improving the global competitiveness of the private sector; improving the climate for foreign investment; raising the level of domestic savings and building administrative, managerial and technical capacities" (2004:3). These suggestions advocate changes on the economic and managerial level.

It has been propounded that NPM is "grounded" in not just managerialism (Hood, 1991) but also economics (Thompson and Jones, 1994) (in Eagle, 2005). The objective of streamlining the economy is based on utilizing market driven principles, mechanisms and techniques
aimed at improving the government’s performance; whilst at the same time reducing cost (Aberbach, 2001). To achieve this, the Government of St. Lucia will be required to also work closely with the private sector.

It has often been expressed that the private sector is the "agent of economic growth"; where the "public sector plays a supporting role" (Sutton 2008:10). This is often true for larger economies. However, the converse has been propounded about small island states. It has been advocated that their economies are driven mainly by government's spending (Herbert, 2003). In such cases, there can be deep repercussions for their economies when the government is attempting to achieve a lean organization. This is because the private sector may not have the capacity to support a rise in unemployment, thus giving rise to socio-economic concerns. Once again, joint consultation with stakeholders is therefore crucial. Politicians can consult with key stakeholders in order to achieve "policy dialogue, problem solving and the sustainability of policy" (Rahman, Naz and Nand, 2013:984). However, careful consideration also has to be given to the supporting bureaucratic system to ensure that the right structures, systems and processes are in place to support policy implementation.

**Bureaucratic System and Technological Context**

The government of St. Lucia selected the NPM model to redefine public service management. It was hoped that a more modernized and innovative public sector would help the government achieve the desired economic gains by eliminating inefficiencies. This would require the dismantling of the traditional bureaucratic system. Minto-Coy and Berman argue that the “actual performance of the Westminster Whitehall (WW) System has not matched the ideal or expected form in the English Speaking Caribbean” (2016:44). This ideal is related to achieving the proposed principles of impartiality, neutrality and anonymity (Sutton, 2008); which proved to be a more challenging task than governments anticipated.

Many Anglo-Saxon countries were confronted with the perceived shortfalls of the traditional bureaucratic system. Hence, NPM reforms were adopted in countries like New Zealand, Canada, United States and the United Kingdom (Kim and Moon, 2002). A commonality
amongst these countries is the United Kingdom’s Whitehall model of bureaucracy. Some countries embraced the original model; whilst others have reformed certain aspects. St. Lucia follows the original model; which was transferred at the time of Independence. This original model also exists throughout the Caribbean (Sutton, 2008). However, there is a high level of politicization of the public service in the region; and some countries also have a history of government instability (Sutton, 2008). High politicization in the public service, low accountability and unstable budgets are all precursors to unfavourable NPM reform outcomes (Pollitt, 2007). The politicization of a public service can have a negative impact upon ministerial and administrative accountability. This was demonstrated in Bangladesh's efforts at PSR (Samaratunge et al., 2008). The high level of politicization of their public service; lack of political commitment; along with ineffective institutions resulted in the unsuccessful implementation of political, administrative and legal accountability measures (Samaratunge et al., 2008). Thus, the prevalence of similar factors in St. Lucia's public service can be viewed as possible roadblocks to the successful implementation of NPM.

Pollitt argues that "NPM works best when it is built on the secure foundation of a stable Weberian bureaucracy" (2007:113). In such a case, a public service manifests strong political commitment and continuity, a stable financial model and institutional capacity to support the implementation of NPM reform and thus achieve increased accountability. Interestingly, Pollitt (2000) also views this as a paradox, because the rhetoric aim of NPM is to reduce bureaucracy in order to achieve efficiency and effectiveness. Hence, the paradox is this. More favourable NPM results are realized when the reform is premised on the very foundation that the NPM concept was intended to counter, that is, bureaucracy (Pollitt, 2007). Unfortunately, an examination of St. Lucia's public service revealed a high level of unprofessionalism, low political and administrative accountability and poor performance (GOSL White Paper, 2000). This can be viewed as potential inhibiting factors to the successful implementation of NPM.

St. Lucia's public service was also manifesting a high level of centralization, low efficiency, rising debt and an inflexible organizational structure (Ministry of Personnel Establishment
and Training, 1996). It was also criticized for its limited institutional and organizational capacity, poor human resource practices, poor budgetary and financial planning skills, poor policy making capacity and an oversized public service (PSR Unit, 2004). Additionally, the performance of St. Lucia's public sector was also significantly impacted by the limited use of information technology (IT) and the absence of innovative strategies. IT is "currently considered to be a panacea for improving managerial efficiency, not only in the private but also public organizations" (Kim and Moon, 2002:61). Thus, modernizing and adopting innovative strategies in the public sector are closely associated with the adoption of IT processes. Staff would require considerable training. Additionally, these modernization efforts are likely to result in numerous workplace changes.

It is therefore critical that due consideration is given to the cost of change in reform (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). Quite often "reformers underestimate the extent" of the cost of change "until they get close to the implementation" stage (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004: 33). This may be both direct and indirect cost. Direct cost may be associated with the financial expense of reform. The indirect cost may be associated with the drawbacks of an impending resistance. Any change brought about by reform is expected to meet some form of resistance. There are three types of resistance, this includes: resistance from "staff, management and politicians" (Phillips and Lewis, 2013:984). Staff may be non-participative and hinder management's effort at change. Top management, like permanent secretaries, directors and executives, sometimes sabotage the plans of politicians; whilst political resistance sometimes come from members of the opposing party. Political resistance may also come from members of your own party who may disagree with reform objectives, approach or scope. Hence, an accompanying change management strategy that is tailored to context may be advantageous to minimizing possible resistance. However, problems may arise when countries quickly draft reforms in an effort to capitalize on donor funding, thereby resulting in failed implementation outcomes.

**Regional and International Bodies and Donor Agencies**

International bodies and donor agencies play a key role in PA reform in developing countries.
Countries can gain considerably from joining regional and international bodies. For example, economic gains, security, knowledge sharing and advice, to name a few. International bodies and donor agencies often recommend solutions to developing and lesser developed countries which are based on widespread research, empirical studies and so called 'best global practices'. Thus, international bodies like the “OECD, IMF and the UN” play a significant role in the dissemination of “ideas, programmes and institutions around the globe” (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000: 11). Evidence indicates that countries in the Caribbean region have been susceptible to the prescriptive influence of such international organizations (Sutton, 2008). Accordingly, many Caribbean countries have adopted various aspects of NPM reform, since PSR began in the region in the 1980s (Sutton, 2008).

For some, the widespread adoption of NPM reforms have been viewed as a camouflaging agenda of international organizations and donor agencies to promote the neoliberal ideology through the “Washington Consensus’. Stiglitz argues that “the IMF and The World Bank became the new missionary institutions, through which these ideas were pushed on the reluctant poor countries that often badly needed their loans and grants” (2002:13). Kendall effectively describes these international financial institutions (IFI) as being “armed with the policies of the Washington Consensus” (2008:4). The Washington Consensus has been described as a ten point programme aimed at fiscal discipline, market dominance, with an emphasis on financial and trade liberalization, privatization, deregulation and foreign direct investment (Stiglitz, 2002). Accordingly, relative stipulations usually accompany fundings for reform.

Unfortunately, small island states sometimes embark hastily upon various reforms in an effort to secure external donor funding (Baimyrzaeva, 2011). The result can be a reform programme limited in both scope and content. Nonetheless, donors make a valuable contribution to reform through their multi-layered role. In addition to funding, they offer policy and technical advice and training.
On the contrary, donor agencies have been criticized for "taking little or no responsibility for the consequences of their advice and conditionalities, despite the substantial influence and power they yield over reforms in aid-dependent countries" (Therkildsen, 2001:38). Apparently, donor influence does not extend to the implementation phase of reform (Therkildsen, 2001). It is therefore left to the agents of the reform or the elite, to duly consider all relative contexts; and ensure that the reform achieves the support that it needs throughout its different phases. Additionally, the elite can make a more valuable input in the conceptualization of reform if they can effectively engage in the policy transfer process.

**Policy Transfer**

Effective engagement in policy transfer will require some understanding of the process. It is not always clear to what extent managers understand the policy transfer process in NPM reform. Bissessar (2002) argues that the adoption of NPM in the region was more "a case of direct coercive transfer", whereby international agencies coerced the region to pursue NPM reforms (in Sutton, 2008:16). Sutton on the other hand, believes that the region has a strong element of both coercive and voluntary transfer. He explained that "initial coercive transfer later becomes transformed into voluntary transfer as a program develops", which was the case for Jamaica (2008:16). Initially, policy goals, content, instruments and programs were imposed upon Jamaica. However, as the policy evolved over time voluntary elements or initiatives were adopted. Nonetheless, whether policy transfer is initiated through a coercive or voluntary process or lying somewhere along the continuum, this is ultimately the first step in the process.

A determination then needs to be made of the degree or gradation of transfer. Such policy transfer analysis discussions are of paramount importance as it shapes the reform framework; which refers to the content, tools or instruments, programs and ideologies that are adopted. Dolowitz and Marsh identified four degrees of policy transfer: "copying (total or partial), emulation, a combination or inspiration" (2000:12). These are discussed in more detail in the Literature Review Chapter of this Thesis ($2.4.2$-Policy Transfer).
In summary, this theoretical framework demonstrated that the promotion of NPM, a facet of neoliberalism, in the Caribbean, is not mere coincidence. Rather it appears to be an effort by international institutions to impose the neoliberal agenda upon the region. Randma-Liiv and Kruusenberg view the “presence of foreign funding as perhaps the strongest explanatory power when the choice of role models is considered; as limited financial resources make ready-made foreign solutions attractive to decision-makers in new democracies” (2012:163). It can therefore be beneficial to governments to understand the chosen policy, the dynamics of reform; the extent of influence and power of donor agencies and the policy transfer process, in order to more effectively engage in the conceptualization and implementation of reform.

1.6. **Significance of the Study**

The major significance of this study is the academic contribution that it will make to the literature on PA reform, particularly, in the Caribbean. Literature on reform in the Caribbean is very limited (Sutton, 2008). This is not surprising. Research on PA reform in the lesser developed countries in general, is usually very limited (Brown, 2008).

At the time of this study, this research was the first of its kind in St. Lucia. It is therefore hoped that this study will prompt further research on this subject, particularly as the government has since launched a Public Sector Modernization (PSM) project in 2012. The contribution that research can make to policy formulation and development is undeniable. It is therefore hoped that the findings of this research will further inform future reform and modernization efforts.

1.7. **Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of six main chapters. Chapter one, the Introduction, presents some background information. It also explains why this topic was chosen and gives details of the research problem and the purpose of the study. This is followed by a description of the theoretical framework guiding this research and the significance of this study. The chapter then concludes with an outline of the structure of the thesis.
Chapter Two, the Literature Review explores the literature on PA reform with a focus on NPM and policy transfer. It begins by defining the public service and examining the role of the public sector. An account is then given of the global challenges that public services faced, which led to the advent of PA reform and the promulgation of the NPM ideology worldwide. The origin, adoption and implementation of NPM within the global framework is then examined.

Chapter Three, PA Reform in the Caribbean, then follows. It describes the Caribbean's unique history and the perceived 'dependability mentality', along with the drive to promote the neoliberal agenda through globalization, which has contributed to the reform approaches in the region. The Chapter addresses some of the common problems of PAs in the region and the convergence of NPM. It then closes with a discussion on St. Lucia’s background to NPM reform.

Chapter Four, Methodology, gives an account of the sample, methods, procedures and methodological approach used in this research. This research is a qualitative study with an underlying interpretive philosophical position. A significant benefit of qualitative research is that it permits the compilation of rich data. Semi-structured interviews were the primary method of data collection and they were aimed at generating an in-depth account of this research phenomenon. The secondary method consisted of official documents, reports and speeches. Hence, this research combines these distinctive processes to investigate this conventional reform issue in St. Lucia's public service. Thematic analysis was then used to discover how participants conceptualized NPM reform; and determine their views on the adoption and implementation of NPM.

Chapter Five, Results and Findings, gives an account of the results of this study by research question. The findings for each entails data gathered from interviews and documentary evidence.
Chapter Six, presents the Discussion, Implications for this Study and Conclusion. It discusses the findings by research question as it relates to the literature. An explanation of the strengths and limitations of this study is then given; followed by implications for theory, practice and further research. The chapter then closes with a conclusion and a brief personal statement.

1.8. Conclusion

NPM reform was first adopted in the more developed countries. Through the coercive influence of donors, various aspects of the NPM packaged have been embraced by governments in the developing and lesser developed world. Accordingly, NPM reform appears to be a common approach in the Caribbean region to achieving a more efficient and responsive public sector. Unfortunately, not many successes have been recorded (Sutton, 2008). Often times, reformers presume that they would automatically reap the same measures of success when a successful policy is copied from another country; but this assumption usually fails (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000). Although many countries are confronted with similar problems, the principal difference lies in the reform context. How this context is understood, will positively or negatively influence, the reform content, design and implementation.

St. Lucia’s PA is influenced by historical, cultural, political, administrative and technological factors. The interpretation of these contexts will shape policy formation, implementation and outcomes. Thomas and Davies (2005) emphasized that the adoption, consistency and sustainability of NPM Reform is extremely context dependent. The next chapter now presents the review of the literature for this study.
2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter introduced this study’s research problem, its theoretical framework and further demonstrated the significance of this research project. St. Lucia PA was faced with significant challenges which demanded that government reconsider the way it does business. Thus, endogenous pressures occurring domestically, and exogenous pressures emerging from the regional and international environment provided the impetus for reform. St. Lucia’s reform package also incorporated NPM characteristics and measures in an effort to reform its public administration (PA).

This chapter therefore presents a review of the literature on the adoption and implementation of NPM. It begins with a definition of the public service and a description of its role; since it is the institution within which NPM is implemented. The discussion then ensues on some of the challenges that public services faced which stimulated the need for reform. NPM then emerged as the dominant reform paradigm during the 1980s, so its definition and history within an international framework is explored. This is followed by an analysis of the adoption of NPM and the underlying neoliberal agenda. The role of policy transfer in that process is equally examined. The subsequent section then reviews a number of internal and external factors that have been noted as influencing the implementation of NPM. The chapter then closes with a brief conclusion of the main arguments.

2.2. Definitions

This section begins by first defining the public service, since this is the institutional framework within which NPM is implemented. The essential role of the public service is then discussed; followed by an analysis of some of the emerging challenges that public services faced, which aroused the need for reform. After several reform attempts and the
pursuit of a neoliberal agenda, NPM rose to dominance during the 1980s. Accordingly, various definitions of NPM are then explored, along with areas of disagreements.

### 2.2.1. The Definition and Role of the Public Service

This section demonstrates the pivotal role that public services play in nation building. Since its conception, public services have been facing increasing demands by citizens; which have led to a deeper penetration of the public sector in rural and urban areas. Consequently, public services became more standardized, centralized and bureaucratic. Over time however, the problems with bureaucracy, coupled with the crises of the 70s and 80s propelled many governments around the world to seek alternative paths for increased efficiency and responsiveness. This ultimately led to a wave of public sector reforms (PSR) worldwide and the ultimate rise of NPM.

The public service can be defined as a specific service which is offered by government with the sole purpose of satisfying the public's interest (Martin, 2003). This service is usually funded using public money. The civil service is then responsible for the administration of the state or government affairs; and its employees are referred to as public servants or civil servants (Fowler and Fowler, 1995). In this study, public service is used interchangeably with civil service. Government usually provides a variety of services to the public, which falls in various sectors. This is enveloped in the term public sector. Dube and Danescu explained that the public sector "consists of government and all publicly funded agencies, enterprises and other entities that deliver public programs, goods or services" (2011: 3). The extent of services provided by the public sector depends significantly upon a country’s national context. The challenge then lies in government's ability to finance the public sector, so that it can efficiently carry out those services. Basically, this occurs through government taxation. In St. Lucia, the public sector encompasses employees of the "Civil Service, Teaching Service, Fire Service, Nursing Service and Police Service" (GOSL White Paper, 2000:8). St. Lucia’s reform programme was directed at the 'administrative machinery' of the state or civil service (p. 8).
Typically, two chief interests emerge as the purpose of the public service. Firstly, the relative interest of consumers, and secondly, government's fiscal interest (Martin, 2003). Thus, public services were established in an effort to respond to consumer needs, whilst at the same time addressing the economic concerns of government. Since the advent of the public sector, public services have played an essential role in the building of a state through "penetration, standardization and accommodation" (Van de Walle and Scott, 2009:9). Van de Walle and Scott (2009) provided a simplified explanation of these three concepts. They articulated that penetration simply refers to the state manifesting its presence in an effort to gain control through socialization with the people. Standardization refers to the constitution of a combined culture through the "presence of ready and identifiable public services" (Van de Walle and Scott, 2009: 11). Whereas, the process of accommodation "serves as instruments for dispute settlement and for the creation of political loyalty" (Van de Walle and Scott, 2009: 11). Thus, as public services became more visible in both rural and urban territories; the need arose to standardize its processes and operations in order to achieve uniformity and commonality across the board. Public sectors were also faced with increased citizens' demand. Thus, public sectors expanded in not just locality, but also workforce. However, the penetration of public services created new problems other than the role for which they were formed. Such as issues related to bureaucracy, inefficiency and corruption.

2.2.2. The Emerging Challenges of the Public Service

This section reveals some of the very similar problems that public services around the globe faced, irrespective of their varying contexts. Part of the problem was attributed to bureaucracy (Osborne and Plastrik, 2000) as public services were accused of being unproductive and inefficient (Brown, 2004; Mitchell, 1999); and many began to see the apparent misfit between the real versus the ideal of the Westminster Whitehall (WW) system (Minto-Coy and Bernan, 2016:44). The other part of the problem was attributed to a global financial crisis. In the context of global financial crisis of the 1970s and 1980s, many governments came under pressure to control costs and many ‘reform’ measures, broadly termed NPM, which were initially a feature of Western economies, became the model for a wide range of countries.
Reform therefore seemed to be the solution to the many public sector problems. However, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004) further argued that the drive for reform was fuelled by concerns about corruption. Nevertheless, reform did not become a one-off permanent fix. Rather, public services around the globe entered into an era of continuous reforms (Schacter, 2000); and PA reform then became "one of those things that no government can do without" (Lane, 1997:12).

The traditional public service was established on a bureaucratic and centralized framework. The bureaucratic concept was first formally defined by Max Weber (1922) and it refers to the establishment of a strict hierarchical system in which set rules and procedures govern an organization’s administration and where positions are filled based on qualifications (in Jary and Jary, 2000). It therefore relates to a strong hierarchical, organized and procedural system of bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is also achieved through the standardization and centralization of the management and administration of the public service, like, “budgeting, financial management and personnel and the establishment of centralized agencies as keepers of standards, such as civil service commissions” (Osborne and Plastrik, 2000:395). The latter has been adopted by many public services around the globe. This is because, such bureaucratic and centralized systems appeared to be a means to gain order and control. Stones describes it as an "immensely effective mechanism of control" (2008:71). Traditional public service was also founded on core values of: "democracy, accountability, equity, equality, probity and career service" (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004:191). This meant that citizens are given the choice to select the government to run the public sector and their choice reflects the confidence that they hold in the government to perform and do what it promises. Many civil servants are also career civil servants. They remain working for the public sector for many years. Civil servants are also expected to demonstrate fairness, honesty and high ethical standards in all of their transactions.

However, this model of public sector organisation came under scrutiny in many countries. Whereas a permanent, stable civil service had been seen as the best guarantor of neutrality and consistency, governments came to identify ‘traditional’ bureaucratic organisation with
nepotism, patronage, clientelism and corruption (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004; Baimyrzaeva, 2011). Thus, in practice, employees do not demonstrate the ideal or desired values (Shemueli and Capell, 2013). The bureaucratic system became to be seen as the cause of a multitude of problems in many public services around the globe (Osborne and Plastrik, 2000). Public services were then confronted with the challenge to improve efficiency, effectiveness and quality, whilst reducing cost and devising strategies to get closer to citizens (Rao, 2008). Thus, bureaucracy was seen as a hindrance to public sector efficiency. There are claims that bureaucratic red tape, viewed as "an obstructive official routine or procedure, time consuming bureaucracy" (McLeod and Hanks, 1982: 962) is an impediment to public service efficiency (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). It can be argued that the term ‘obstructive’ implies that red tape encourages an inflexible management style and therefore inhibits the cultivation of a an efficient public service that is sensitive to customers’ needs.

Public sector efficiency has been a major concern for OECD\(^1\) countries; as they struggle to provide greater services to the public at a lower cost (Curristine, Lonti and Joumard, 2007). Public sector managers in the OECD were accused of being unable to efficiently utilize their input factors for high outputs or better public sector performance (Afonso and Gaspar, 2006). Consequently, this incurs a high cost for the provision of services, as more resources are utilized to provide the same service (Afonso and Gaspar, 2006). Thus, the need for stricter budgetary control arose (Brown, 2004; Mitchell, 1999). Even more so, for governments of the developed nations, as the emerging welfare state following World War II was becoming strained (Lane, 1997). Thus, more efficient utilization of resources was critical for improved public sector performance, for both developed and developing nations.

It has been claimed that improving public sector performance requires a look at the performance management system (PMS) in order to make the necessary managerial and

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\(^1\) The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) consists of fourteen countries. These include: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, Slovak Republic, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States.
efficiency changes (Riley and Nunes, 2004). Problems with productivity and employee motivation has been attributed to a failure of the PMS to reward good performance (Osborne and Plastrik, 2000). On the otherhand, Osborne and Plastrik (2000) argued that public service managers could not be held accountable for results and performance; mainly because all decision making powers were taken from their hands and transferred to the hands of the centralized agencies, like the PSC. This restricts their freedom to manage.

Interestingly, the challenge of closeness to citizens, efficiency, effectiveness and quality were quite common to public services worldwide (Capri, 2011). In fact, some claim that they are ubiquitous to most, if not all public services, regardless of size, context and culture (Turner and Kavanamur, 2001). Brown (2008) stressed that they are even more similar and closely related in smaller countries. For instance, the public services of Jamaica, Barbados and St. Lucia were all faced with issues relating to a large public sector; tight bureaucracy; low productivity; inefficiency; a weak PMS and high government expenditure (Capri, 2011; GOSL White Paper, 2000), despite their varying historical, political and socio-economic context. Nonetheless, the culmination of all these issues only served one part of the impetus to PA reform.

The major impetus for ‘reform’ – particularly neoliberal reform- came with the economic crisis of the 1970s and 1980s. Although pressures on national economies existed already, crisis was triggered by rising oil prices following the 1973 Yom Kippur War (Parish, 2009). Price inflation in the UK, for example, led to a series of industrial disputes, but also provided justification for a radical restructuring of the public sector and the substitution of market mechanisms for democratic (or bureaucratic) state ones. The logic and ideology underlying such changes are conventionally termed ‘neoliberal’. The public sector neoliberal management techniques that have been taken from the private sector to be adopted in the public sector are grouped under NPM. However, there appears to be a lack of consensus on what NPM entails. The following section presents a description of its varied meanings.
2.2.3. Defining NPM

This section explores the definition of NPM within an international context and explores areas of disagreements. There appears to be no standard agreement on how NPM is defined (Pollitt, 2002; Dunleavy et al., 2006). A review of the various definitions reveal considerable overlaps (Hood, 1995), and a general focus on the adoption of private sector management techniques within the public sector (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004; Brunetto and Farr-Wharton 2005; Pollitt, 2007). The general assumption is that public sector performance can be improved by emulating private sector management practices.

The term NPM was coined because of the need to identify a generic label that will cut across the boundaries of “languages, projects or countries” (Hood, 1995:94). Thus, the NPM term described similar projects occurring in various public services around the world. The NPM terminology then became widespread in the academic, governmental and organizational domain. Yet, despite its extensive usage, some claim that it has hardly been defined (McLaughlin, Osborne and Ferlie, 2002: 34) as scholars have been unable to come to a uniformed agreement on its definition (Haque, 2009). This is because, two people would be analyzing NPM and would not understand it in the same way (Hood, 2002). Perhaps this is due to an individual’s interpretation being influenced by their relative context. Hood (2002) argues that one perspective would be to interpret it as a “PSR movement that incorporates an attempt to alter the way public service organizations are controlled” (2002:311). Of course, this is the objective of any program, to have more or less control on various organizational processes or functions. With NPM, this attempt to control the public service occurs through the adoption of private sector management techniques into the public sector. Extensive discussions have ensued on the elements or characteristics of NPM. This is presented in Table 2.1. It provides accounts of NPM by Hood, Pollitt, Osborne and Brown.
Table 2.1. Elements of NPM

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<td>a shift towards greater disaggregation of public organizations into separately managed corporatize units for each public sector product</td>
<td>attention to lessons from private sector management</td>
<td>being performance driven (targets, standards); commitment to continuous quality improvement</td>
<td>managing for results</td>
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<td>a shift towards greater competition between public sector organizations and between public sector organizations and the private sector</td>
<td>growth both of hands-on management</td>
<td>being structured in a lean and flat way</td>
<td>performance measurement</td>
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<td>a move towards greater use within the public sector of management practices which are broadly drawn from the private sector</td>
<td>focus upon entrepreneurial leadership within public service organization</td>
<td>practicing tight cost control with the help of modern commercial style accounting systems</td>
<td>corporate planning</td>
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<td>greater stress on discipline and parsimony in resource use</td>
<td>emphasis on inputs and outputs; control and evaluation upon performance management and audit</td>
<td>using performance related systems for recruiting, promoting and paying staff</td>
<td>devolution of authority</td>
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<td>more hands on management in the public sector, involving relatively autonomous bureaucrats at the top of public sector organizations, carefully fenced in by personnel management rules designed to prevent favouritism and harassment</td>
<td>disaggregation of public services to their most basic units and a focus on cost management;</td>
<td>highly decentralized</td>
<td>decentralization of activities and risk management</td>
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<tr>
<td>and more explicit and measurable standards of performance for public sector organizations</td>
<td>growth and use of markets, competition and contracts for resource allocation and service delivery within public services</td>
<td>being close to customers</td>
<td></td>
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A look at the above characteristics reveals considerable overlap in the various descriptions of private sector practices. It is for this reason that Haque claims that NPM is an embodiment of a "loose collection of ideas" which originated from private sector management (2009:2). Thus, within the NPM framework, it is believed that lessons could be learnt from the private sector, because it was seen to be more "competitive, productive, efficient, innovative,
responsive and customer friendly” (Haque, 2009: 4). To operate at such an optimum, the NPM outlook recommends an understanding of the market. The argument is, if the public sector directed its focus at the market, then it would stimulate a more competitive environment for services, which indirectly will lead to a higher standard of public service delivery and an ultimate reduction in cost. A higher standard of public service delivery would require increase in employee productivity and performance. This focus on the performance management system (PMS) is a common NPM characteristic, which proposes the use of performance standards, target settings and performance indicators; with a focus on not just inputs but providing quality output. Within the NPM framework, public service managers are also required to adopt an entrepreneurial leadership style and to demonstrate more creativity and innovation to ensure that customers receive value for their money. Thus, mechanisms like citizen charters, one stop shops, are implemented to demonstrate commitment and sensitivity to customers.

On the other hand, the NPM discourse has not been all consensual. For example, while some studies identify decentralization as a component of NPM (Hope and Chikulo, 2000); some opponents claim that “decentralization falls outside of NPM (Polidano and Hulme, 1999:125). Polidano and Hulme (1999) further argues that there is a difference in the interpretation of decentralization by the scholars and practitioners of the industrialized and the developing world. They explained that when industrialized nations speak of decentralization, they are really focusing on management decentralization; where line managers receive ‘greater managerial authority’; whereas in developing countries, the decentralization term means political decentralization, that is, the devolution of power to local government” (1999:125). They further clarified that “in the industrialized world, political decentralization is normally considered separate from public management reform” and such distinction is “absent in developing countries” (Polidano and Hulme, 1999:126). This argument illustrates differences in interpretation in the various spectrums of the globe, which may be influenced by country relevant factors.
Another area of contention pertains to the misfit between the projected outcomes of management decentralization versus actual results. The argument is that countries have actually seen an increase in checks and controls within the civil service, and even the introduction of new ones (Polidano and Hulme, 1999). This is contrary to the NPM prescription that alludes to a “relaxing of control over line management” or freedom to manage (Polidano and Hulme, 1999:124). Perhaps, it is because improvements in efficiency, accountability and quality actually requires greater checks and controls.

An additional critique is that some of the principles of NPM, particularly within the management domain are not NPM related; like, “controlling corruption, devolution and capacity building” (Polidans, 1999:15). Global economic crises, rising corruption, amongst other internal and external pressures, have caused governments to embark upon the quest to combat these problems. Polidans (1999) therefore argues that in light of these challenges, adopting such measures is just the natural route governments are compelled to take. Some critics also go on to doubt the heightened efficiency and accountability claims of NPM. Many studies assert that NPM measures are in essence, aimed at increasing accountability and efficiency (Kolthoff, Hubert and Hervel, 2007:4; Hur 2011; Hernes, 2005); which are two essential qualities for any significant improvement in the public service. However, these claims are not without its critics. NPM has been criticized for weakening accountability, particularly downward accountability because of the political appointment of managers to govern the process (Ferlie et al., 1997 in Doherty and Horne, 2002). Reducing political interference in the administrative affairs of the state can be a very challenging task and would demand the commitment of all parties. Vabo (2009) also argues that while achieving efficiency is may be a worthwhile objective, it is not the chief concern of citizens. Citizens are equally concerned about social security, the environment, cyber security and taxation to name a few. Yet, despite many criticisms, NPM continued to spread worldwide. Various reasons can be found in the literature for the rise and spread of NPM. This is examined in the section below.
2.3. Origin of NPM

This section addresses the origin of NPM. This requires a look at when and why it emerged; its theoretical underpinnings and how it is understood. There are various interpretations and contradictions on the origin and spread of NPM. There appears to be no standard agreement on either side of the argument (Hood, 1991). Some of those representations are discussed here.

PA reform has been on the agenda of the developed world since the 1970s (Hardiman, 2010). Prior to this time, the focus was solely on institutional building and investment in 'borrower countries', as the World Bank rejected any PSR “except in the building of institutions to carry out public investments project” with their financing (The World Bank, 2008:11). The primary objective here was to strengthen the macro-economy (Easterly, 2003). Then in the mid-1980s, the World Bank began to focus on policy reforms and institutional development and therefore recommended various structural adjustment programs (SAPs) to borrowers (The World Bank, 2008). These early reforms were referred to as PA Reforms (Osborne, 2010). However, the World Bank and the IMF later declared the failure of SAPs in developing countries, because of worsened economic conditions (Easterly, 2003). Moreover, that era also saw heightened criticisms of the large public sectors and poor quality service; thus, many countries embarked on major public sector changes (Melian-Gonzalez and Bulchand-Gidumal, 2009). Osborne and Plastrik (2000) claimed that public servants themselves also expressed a heightened desire for change, as they too were desperate to evolve from the stringent bureaucratic system that existed. Accordingly, there was an "increasing awareness of the governance agenda" (The World Bank, 2008). Thus, the political, economical, regional and interorganizational challenges impressed upon many governments to engage in major reviews of the public sector and the changing role of the state. NPM then emerged as a dominant paradigm to PA reform. There appears to be many arguments and counter arguments on its rise and dissemination around the globe.
2.3.1. Interpretations and Contradictions on the Rise and Spread of NPM

NPM has dominated PA reform in both the developed and developing world. The widespread adoption and acceptance of NPM may be explained in a number of ways. Academic purposes has been cited as one of the first reasons for the spread of NPM (McLaughlin, Osborne and Ferlie, 2002). The supremacy of donors and politicians shrewd riposte to both the economic woes and the dysfunctions of traditional public sector management (Osborne, McLaughlin and Ferlie, 2002; Keraudren and Van Mierlo, 1998; Labri, 1999), have been attributed as other possible reasons. This section equally considers four additional interpretations presented by Hood (1991). Namely, “Whim of fashion; Cargo Cult Phenomenon; The Attraction of Opposites and Universality” (Hood, 1991). These interpretations are not without their limitations and their validity has also been contested. NPM has been criticized for: being ‘all hype and no substance’; citing unattainable claims to universality; an enlargement of rules and regulations and being a case for particularistic advantage for top bureaucrats (Hood, 1991). The subsequent discussion therefore demonstrates the diversity of interpretations and the inability to find consensus on the rise and spread of NPM.

One of the first reasons that have been attributed for the introduction of NPM is for academic and commentary purposes (Hood, 1991). Here, it was a "conceptual device invented for purposes of structuring scholarly discussions of contemporary changes in the organization and management of executive government; as a point of view about organizational design in the public sector" (Osborne, McLaughlin and Ferlie, 2002:15). This meant that scholars and commentators focused on "institutions, politics and value system" (Osborne, McLaughlin and Ferlie, 2002: 38). Accordingly, this led to widespread discussions and analysis on NPM; its impact on the organization, politico-administrative relations, public service values and its convergence or divergence worldwide. As a result, there is a burgeoning of literature on NPM.

Various studies also revealed that donors and international organizations initiated major reforms and proposed the adherence to NPM principles as strict conditions for funding
Such interest groups packaged the NPM type reform as 'best practice', although its effectiveness has been contested. Scholars affirm that there is insufficient evidence to attest that NPM type reforms do produce the expected results, and rather, its success is highly attributed to the ideals, opinions and beliefs of politicians (Keraudren and Van Mierlo, 1998; Samaratunge and Bennington, 2002). It has been argued that politicians drive to adopt NPM to solve socio-economic problems has also contributed to its widespread adoption. Here, NPM was proposed as politicians response to the welfare crisis and also as a proponent of anti-bureaucratic philosophy (Keraudren and Van Mierlo, 1998; Haque, 2009). On this point, the origin of the NPM movement can be traced back to the “late 1970s and early 1980s” under the auspices of the Washington Consensus in the United States and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom, during a time of severe economic crises (Gruening, 2001:2). In light of this, the proposed NPM elements focused largely on tightening the budget to achieve a leaner, creative, innovative and more effective public sector. The results revealed some measures of success for these countries, and consequently, New Zealand and Australia followed suit and adopted NPM (Gruening 2001). However, countries implementing NPM did not all have the same measures of success. Yet, NPM continued to spread rapidly across the globe.

Hood (1991) claims that it is perhaps because NPM was viewed as a ‘Whim of Fashion’. Here, NPM is viewed as possessing the requisites which permitted it to endure a ‘period of pop management stardom’ (Hood, 1991). Thus, its characterics were ubiquitous to PA reform worldwide at specific pockets in history, with perhaps emphasis on relevant aspects in each country. According to Hood (1991), the limitation of this account is that it fails to explain why Hood’s seven precepts (as identified in Table 2.1, p. 31 ) continued to endure. Studies also revealed limited effectiveness of NPM (Samaratunge and Benington, 2002). So why didn’t other evolving characteristics emerge at times of NPM failures? The same NPM principles continued to be implemented, despite limited evidence of its efficacy. It is perhaps for this reason that NPM has also been viewed as a Cargo Cult phenomenon.
Here, NPM has been constantly rebirthed because of the “idea that substantive success ('cargo') can be gained by the practice of particular kinds of (managerial) ritual” (Hood, 1991:7). It can be argued that it is a ritual which many PAs whether coercively or voluntarily engaged in. This rebirth also continued despite NPM’s repetitive failures (Hood, 1991). Perhaps, the forces of indoctrination into this ‘cult’ could be attributed to the powers of the international organizations and consultants who push NPM. Or, perhaps the implicit belief by reformers that the same measures of success would be reaped. However, this interpretation fails to address why NPM emerged at the particular time that it did (Hood, 1991).

Another interpretation for the rise of NPM is the ‘epoch making attraction of opposites’; which includes the merge of “the German tradition of state-led economic development (Volkswirtschaft) by professional public managers and the Anglo-Saxon tradition of liberal economics” (Hood, 1991:7). Although, this interpretation fails to demonstrate “why those two public administrations” merged at the time they did (Hood, 1991:7). It does illustrate the complexity behind NPM. This interpretation demonstrates the merge of principles and practices despite differences in culture, national contexts, geography and time. It is perhaps for this reason that NPM has also claimed universality.

Hood claims this interpretation to be the most promising, because of its explanatory power to demonstrate the reason for NPMs prevalence at that specific time and place and “a variety of different auspices” (1991:7). Thus, this interpretation sells NPM as having universal “applicability” and therefore views NPM as a “public management for all seasons” (Hood, 1991). In this case, NPM has transposed geography, time, culture, space and context; whilst disseminating and implementing the same set of characteristics. However, this interpretation has been heavily criticized for failing “to take into account that “an all purpose culture does not exists” (Hood, 1991:10). Every country and even organizations have a culture and subcultures. This interpretation once again fails to show “where the incompability lies” and also to “show that there are different management-system implications of different mainstream, relatively orthodox values” (Hood,1991: 10). Polidano and Hulme (1999) also cast doubts on the universality claim of NPM, particularly in developing countries. Although, they do not
dispute that many countries are partaking of items from the NPM menu, they believe that
PAs, especially in developing countries are often simultaneously undergoing other reforms
that are unrelated to NPM; such as, “capacity building, controlling corruption, political
decentralization and local empowerment” (1999:124). On the other hand, it can also be
argued that the adoption of NPM in the developed or developing world can be any
combination of reasons. For instance, senior bureaucrats may consider NPM because it
seems to be universal and has enjoyed a period of ‘pop stardom’ or relative success in another
country. Whatever the reason, the country’s relative context plays a key role in the reason
for its adoption.

Nonetheless, NPM has been criticized as having “all hype and no substance”; and that
“underneath, all the old problems and weaknesses remain” (Hood, 1991: 9). In other words,
NPM is viewed as just a smoke screen and no real change has occurred. Hence, the reason
why critics have advocated that NPM has “created an opposing effect to its claim on public
services” (Hood, 1991: 9). In other words, NPM fails to do what is promises. For instance,
NPM has been accused of being “ineffective in its ability to deliver on its central claim to
lower costs per (constant) unit of service” (Hood, 1991:9). Rather, NPM has been accused of
an enlargement of management, regulations and control, instead of a lessoning of the
aforementioned (Vabo, 2009). Moreover, some critics believe that NPM is a “a vehicle for
particularistic advantage”, where the elite propel after their own career interest (Hood,
1991:9). This of course, goes contrary to the purpose of the public service; which is to serve
the public’s interest. Thus, these interpretations and contradictions on the rise and spread of
NPM demonstrate the complexity and lack of consensus on various issues in the NPM debate.
Perhaps, more consensus could be found in examining its theoretical origins.

2.3.2. Theoretical Origins of NPM

The previous section elaborated on the conflicting arguments and interpretations of the rise
of NPM. This section now aims to acquire an understanding of its theoretical origins. Such
an understanding can help the elite to better engage in the reform process. Nilsen affirms that
in project implementation, there is now “a wider recognition of the need to establish the theoretical bases of implementation” (2015:1). In light of this, NPM can be “traced back to a variety of theoretical origins, each of which may have influenced some NPM reformers; like, public-choice theory, management theory, classical public administration, neoclassical public administration, policy analysis, principal-agent theory, property-rights theory, the neo-Austrian school, transaction-cost economics, and NPA and its following approaches” (Gruening, 2001: 17). This section primarily explores two recurring theoretical perspectives; that is, public choice theory and neo-taylorism. It further examines the role of managerialism and new institutional economics in the birth of NPM characteristics.

To begin with, public choice theory and neo-taylorism appears to be two of the chief underlying theories of NPM (Keraudren and Van Mierlo, 1998; Martin, 2003). The distinction between these two theories is that "public choice focuses on the relation between the internal and external organization; whereas, neo-taylorism limits itself to the internal organization of bureaucracy" (Keraudren and Van Mierlo, 1998: 12). The principal objective of public choice theory is to highlight the discrepancies regarding the bureaucratic system and recommend an alternative management model for making decisions (Martin, 2003). It argues that rather than seeking the public's interest, bureaucrats propel after their own self-interest; and public choice theory therefore advocates the use of competition, privatization and choice (Islam, 2015; Keraudren and Van Mierlo, 1998) to minimize such practices.

Public Choice theory also permits the examination of the political context of public services (Keraudren and Van-Mierlo, 1998). In this way, the claim is that light can be shed on those issues that plague the political systems of public services. For example: nepotism, patronage, bribery, clientelism and even cases of politicians securing their own assets. Likewise, it permits the scrutiny of top bureaucrats and public service managers in their interface with politicians. Top bureaucrats have sometimes been accused of sabotaging the efforts of politicians. Whilst on the diverse end, public servants tend to demonstrate low productivity and output. This was evident in St. Lucia's public service (GOSL Green Paper, 1999). Such growing concerns have led to greater discussions on "how to get public servants (the agent)
to act in the best interest of the citizenry, represented by the elected officials (the principal)" (Eagle, 2005:23). This concept is referred to as principal agent theory. This theory's main objective is to get lower employees to comply or work well with their principals (Leruth and Paul, 2006); and it can be widely applied in the public management discourse. Leruth and Paul affirm that a "number of government operations can be assimilated to principal agent relationships" (2006:6). For instance, politicians being the principals are required to determine how they can get public servants (their agents) to fulfil their interest (Leruth and Paul, 2006). Likewise, "Parliament is the principal, whose objective is to make sure that government (the executive) implements the government's programs" (Leruth and Paul, 2006:6). Thus, the collective effort and commitment of all parties, principals and agents, are required for the achievement of public service goals. However, this is not as straightforward as it sounds. Principal-agent relationships can be complex and the surrounding context can present further complications.

Neo-taylorism on the other hand, focuses exclusively on bureaucracy and asserts that the principal problem of the bureaucracy is with the administration (Keraudren and VanMierlo, 1998). Neo-taylorism therefore proposes the adoption of private sector management techniques in the public sector (Keraudren and VanMierlo, 1998); and ultimately focuses on market rule (Peck, 2013). However, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004) argue that advocates of neo-taylorism fail to realize that those recommended 'methods and techniques' achieved such successes under relevant conditions. The techniques under neo-taylorism incorporate the notion of associating a cost for all activities or transactions of the public sector (Islam, 2015; Keraudren and Van Mierlo, 1998). This is typically referred to as transaction cost theory. Some recommendations within this theory relate to 'market testing and contracting out' where the aim is to reduce cost and stimulate competition (Islam, 2015:143). Accordingly, the "policy implications of transaction cost" put forward by NPM include: "performance monitoring structures and productivity standards" (Eagle, 2005:24). Hence, proponents of neo-taylorism recommend the use of a PMS that incorporates the use of standards, targets, performance indicators and reward mechanisms (Keraudren and Van Mierlo, 1998). It can be argued that comparatively, staff will be required to possess the requisite skills to
effectively operate in this system. The OECD (2013) also recommends partnering with the private sector, through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), as it helps to improve market competitiveness, develop local skills, improve productivity and even strengthen the private sector (OECD, 2013).

Another way of interpreting NPM’s origin is from the marriage of two stream of ideas (Andrews, Guarneros-Meza and Downe, 2016). A study of the characteristics of NPM as revealed in Table 2.1 (pp31) demonstrates two distinctive categories; namely, "managerialism and new institutional economics" (Labri, 1999:3). The former focuses on how government is managed and includes "management decentralisation, desegregation and downsizing of government, creating leaner and flexible organisational structures and systems, and giving managers more freedom to manage" (Labri, 1999: 3). The latter refers to the use of market mechanisms such as "franchising, vouchers, contracting out, internal markets, user fees and customer orientation" in an effort to enhance service delivery (Labri, 1999: 3). However, this viewpoint is also not without its criticisms. The NPM paradigm has been “predominantly criticized for drawing upon generic management theory derived from manufacturing and product-dominant experience. This has tried to understand public services as if they were discrete tangible products rather than service processes”; and the majority of public goods are intangible services (Radnor and Osborne, 2013:276). This can be conflicting, as consideration is not given to the differences in the contexts of a product and services environment, when deriving the characteristics of NPM. Still, NPM has continued to be widely adopted across the globe.

2.4. Adopting NPM

The previous section addressed various representations for the spread of NPM. This sections now narrows the focus on the neoliberal globalization agenda that underpins the adoption of NPM. Various countries adopted neoliberal management techniques to reform their public sectors due to coercive or voluntary pressures. Although there are claims of its success, the majority of literature read, revealed its devastating impact to the economies of the developing
and lesser developed world. Nonetheless, the evidence suggests a convergence of NPM, which is largely facilitated by the policy transfer process. The type of policy transfer and the nature of the NPM reform package that is adopted is then influenced by contextual factors.

### 2.4.1. The Neoliberal Agenda and NPM

Neoliberalism is a contested and complex term, but Crouch suggests that, “if we stay with the fundamental preference for the market over the state as a means of resolving problems and achieving human ends, we shall have grasped the essence” (2011:7). Typically, neoliberalism encompassed a “new wave of market deregulation, privatization and welfare-state withdrawal, that swept the first, second and third worlds. It then went on to expand accretively as a concept to signify not just a policy model, but a broader political, ideological, cultural, spatial phenomenon” (Venugopal 2015:168). There are conflicting views on the actual benefits of the neoliberal agenda. Harvey explained that the “reduction and control of inflation is the only systematic success neoliberalism can claim” (2005:156). There are several discourses on its many disadvantages. For example increasing class inequality, market failures (Crouch, 2011) and the “spread of corporate monopoly power” (Harvey, 2005:38). Some studies have also stressed that neoliberalism have resulted in worsening the state of developing and lesser developed countries (Steger and Roy, 2010). Nonetheless, despite the negative repercussions that have been attributed to neoliberalism, the spread of “public sector neoliberal management techniques taken from the private sector” continued (Steger and Roy, 2010:44).

The neoliberal agenda rose to prominence during the 1980s and 1990s. The United States and the United Kingdom are seen as the originators and their perceived successes caused other countries to follow suit (Steger and Roy, 2010, Harvey, 2005). This includes: Asia, Latin America, India, the Continent of Africa and even the Caribbean, to name a few. The adaptability of neoliberalism is due to its many ‘varieties’ which can be ‘adapted to specific social contexts’ (Steger and Roy, 2010:137). This is evident in the Chinese adaptation of neoliberalism. Harvey calls it “neoliberalism with Chinese characteristics” (2005: 120). The
Chinese documented some success because they carefully considered their context and limitations (Harvey, 2005). However, all countries did not reap similar results. In fact, the evidence illustrates that many countries experienced undesirable effects (Steger and Roy, 2010; Harvey, 2005). Thus, the unintended consequences of neoliberalism increased the fragility of economies, particularly in the developing and the lesser developed world. Consequently, this created a further dependence upon the more developed world.

This neoliberal agenda was pushed through voluntary or coercive pressures. The latter is true for the developing and lesser developed nations. For example, in the case of Latin America and Africa, the “Washington Consensus exercised enormous influence in shaping neoliberal policies” (Steger and Roy, 2010:98). This coercive influence stemmed heavily from the IMF and the World Bank. Stiglitz characterized these two major institutions as “missionary institutions which pushed its ideas on reluctant poor countries that often badly needed their loans and grants” (2002:13). During the 1980s these institution insisted upon developing countries to “restructure their economies according to neoliberal principles” in order to gain access to funds (Steger and Roy, 2010:98). This necessitated an emphasis on “production for export rather than on meeting the needs of national and local markets; severe spending cuts—especially for social programmes; sweeping privatization measures; reduced regulation on the activities of transnational corporations; and in a number of cases, significant currency devaluations” (Steger and Roy, 2010:98). The lack of resources, expertise and the dire need for funds, often forced these poorer governments to succumb to such pressures. The result has been a rise in social and wealth inequalities, accompanied by a bombardment of foreign direct investment (Harvey, 2005, Stiglitz, 2002 and Steger and Roy, 2010). It is for this reason that neoliberalism has been accused of being a “victim of its own success” (Venugopal, 2015:166). Unlike some notable successes for the United States and the United Kingdom in its earlier stages; the general tendency has been a growth in unfavourable outcomes (Harvey, 2005). Countries like Chile, India, Africa, Mexico and Argentina all experienced undesired outcomes (Steger and Roy, 2010). However, what options do the governments of these vulnerable economies have against the dictates of these large organizations?
Typically, the pursuit of the neoliberal agenda meant a comparative reorganization of the governmental institutions which execute neoliberal policies. This was to be achieved by considering “public sector neoliberal management techniques taken from the private sector” (Steger and Roy, 2010: 44); often referred to as NPM. The purpose was to make public services more efficient and effective and eliminate wastage. This was purported to be achieved through the creation of a leaner public service. The intention is to “improve the effective delivery of end-outcomes to the external users of public services and to add value to their lives in doing so” (Radnor and Osborne, 2013: 275). However, planned versus reality do not always correlate. In reality, there has been a greater concentration on the “internal customer and internal efficiency rather than external end-users and external effectiveness” and this has been proposed as a possible argument for failed PSR in implementing a leaner public service (Radnor and Osborne, 2013:279). Inevitably, critics have questioned whether NPM actually does what it says it will do. Alonso, Clifton & Díaz-Fuentes (2015) argued that there is very limited empirical evidence demonstrating whether NPM does what it says. Nonetheless, this did not deter the global spread of NPM.

It has been propounded that Australia and New Zealand (NZ) copied the UK’s NPM model and its ideological foundations (Steane 2008). Quite often, NZ’s case is referred to in discussions on NPM’s purported success. However, critics argue that claims of NZs success are excessive due to a lack of supporting evidence (Goldfinch, 1998). Nonetheless, Gruening (2001) argue that it was New Zealand’s success which propelled NPM to the top of the PA reform agenda and its model has been widely copied around the world (Lane, 1997) . The result was a global convergence of NPM. However, despite such widespread adoption, no country has yet adopted all seven NPM characteristics (Andrews, Guarneros-Meza & Downe, 2016). Instead, policy makers dip into the NPM shopping basket and select those components that are relative to their context.

Extensive debate has ensued on the convergence or divergence of NPM worldwide. For McCree, the NPM convergence, was “powered by globalization” where the adoption of NPM became the “fundamental framework for defining the approach of the State to public policy
and the development process in general” (2009: 463). Thus, the NPM convergence resulted in many nations "doing the same thing" (Pollitt, 2000: 184). This homogenization was distinct in terms of what is being spoken, written, decided and practiced, as well as outcomes; which represents the four key stages of convergence (Pollitt, 2002). Goldfinch and Wallis described this convergence on five levels, as a convergence of: "ideas; policy rhetoric or talk; legislation, policy design and organizational structures, policy decisions; policy implementation and policy practice” (2010:1101-1103). However, all stages may not be evident at the same time in NPM reform. Research demonstrates that there has been a greater focus on “the discursive and decisional stages than the practice and results stage, because the former are seen to be generally easier to research than the latter, given the problems of conceptualization, methodology and data availability” (McCree, 2009:464). This is not surprising. Since it is very easy to access “information about what the government talks about doing, as much of the information is available or accessible through public statements, media reporting, government documents, such as White Papers, commissions of enquiry, reports and the like” (McCree, 2009: 464). Additionally, there may be cases where the rhetoric or talk about a policy makes use of the NPM terminology. Some theorists argue that "rhetorical convergence has certainly occurred, but the same cannot be said for the implementation convergence of the NPM model" (Dollery and Lee 2004:4). It is this lack of information on results and outcomes which has been cited as a major limitation of the convergence debate (McCree, 2009). On the other hand, not all theorists agree that there has been a NPM convergence. It has been speculated that the NPM paradigm is far more complex and there is more of a divergence than a convergence (Pollitt, 2000). Caroll and Steane (2000) claimed that there is "substantial divergence in terms of sources, content, learning and structure" (in McLaughlin, Osborne and Ferlie, 2002:209). Nevertheless, there are key agents which push NPM on countries in both the developing and lesser developed world.

Accordingly, NPM convergence is also evident among commonwealth countries (Borins, 1998) and the Caribbean (Sutton, 2008). Commonwealth OECD countries were coerced into NPM due to large public sector debt, expenditures and pressure from consumers for equitable private sector service quality in the public sector (Borins, 1998: 53). Only the
Commonwealth nations in Asia, Malaysia and Singapore have experienced some measures of success; such as, economic growth, reduced debt and “fiscal surpluses’ and “Singapore civil service remains cost-conscious and efficiency oriented” (Borins, 1998: 53). However, Borins (1998) argue that the lesser developed countries of the Commonwealth seem to lack the basic fundamentals necessary for the adoption of NPM. So why was NPM widely adopted without first ensuring the necessary prerequisites? Borins (1998) claims that this was largely due to coercive pressure from the IMF and World Bank. This is largely facilitated by the policy transfer process.

2.4.2. Policy Transfer

Policy transfer can be described as the "process by which policies, whether identical, partial or selective are transferred from one country to another" (Birrell, 2012: 309). Hence, policy transfer captures a process by which policies from one environment or context, is incorporated into a different environment or context. Policy transfer therefore occurs between 'localities' (Lightfoot, 2003:22). However, it is of paramount importance that reformers pay close attention to the host context from which reform strategies are being copied, and the context within which the reform programme will be implemented. It is even more essential that these contextual differences are respected and comparisons aren't made (Wollman and Elgar, 2003). This is because "different countries start from different places, have different histories and pursue different trajectories" (Wollman and Elgar, 2003: 2). Hence, each country operates within a different context. Failure to sufficiently consider both contexts can result in poor reform implementation.

Policy transfer is not a new concept. In fact, it is an ancient process which has developed tremendously over time. Evans found its footprints in the steps of Aristotle 315BC, where he first recommended to the elite to consider the concept of 'lesson-drawing' in order to produce 'great city states' (2009:237). Lesson drawing has come to be known as a form of policy transfer (Evans, 2009). By the 1940s, the concept of policy transfer began to evolve (Lightfoot, 2003), and it has since taken global roots. It has gained “considerable momentum
within the last two decades” (Liiv and Kruusenberg, 2012). Although policy transfer has old roots, major movements in policy transfer actually commenced when the European Union (EU) copied the "American style welfare to work programs and workforce policies" (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000:5). At that time, the global environment was both a driving factor and a facilitator to the policy transfer process (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000). Additionally, skills deficiencies propelled public servants to seek responses from without the institution (Evans, 2009); or, in many cases, from outside the country or region. Thus, it appears that this widespread dissemination of policy transfer practices was due to the false conjecture of comparative success. There was a tendency to believe that if a policy was successful in one country, then it will have a comparative success in another; which is not usually the case (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000). The ease of engaging in the policy transfer process was also a deciding factor in the dissemination of policy transfer practices.

Marsh and Evans (2012) identify three primary factors that encouraged such diffusion of policy transfer. Namely; international financial difficulties, pressures from global organizations and the opening up of the communication network. Many governments were propelled to search for solutions from countries which experienced similar problems and economic challenges (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000). This process was facilitated by open communication networks, as it became easier to 'exchange ideas and knowledge' (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000). This on-going interaction would occur between the actors of the policy transfer process. There may be "two or more actors in this process" and they are referred to as a "policy lender, a borrower and a policy stakeholder" (Park, Wilding and Chung, 2014:400). Lenders or borrowers are those persons who exercise a high level of authority over the policy transfer process, like, "decision makers and policy experts at the local, regional and international level" (Park, Wilding and Chung, 2014:400). The policy stakeholders refer to those who receive the policy (Park, Wilding and Chung, 2014). At this level, the key actors are "politicians and bureaucrats" (Stone, 2001: 16). Politicians network with other politicians and regional or international organizations, to learn and adopt policy solutions which had been applied for sometimes, very similar problems. Top level
bureaucrats are intricately involved in the policy design process (except in cases of total transfer) and the implementation process.

These policy transfer discussions are shaped by root causes. Some specialists believe that determining the underlying causes to issues and relative solutions is a crucial step in reform (Radnor and Noke, 2013:874). This then helps in determining the objects of transfer. Dolowitz and Marsh (1997) categorize these "objects of transfer to include: (i) policies (ii) institutions (iii) ideologies or justifications (iv) attitudes and ideas (v) negative lessons" (in Stones, 2001:8). Determining the objects of transfer can be a complex process, as it requires a thorough analysis of all challenges; a systematic review of government's entire ‘framework’; its structure, functions and laws. St. Lucia's White Paper (2000) describes this as the principle role of a PSR. Such policy transfer analysis discussions are then further contextualized by a country's relative context.

Context influences both policy conceptualization and implementation. This is not a smooth, straightforward process. Quite often, translated policies change because they are re-inserted into a "different institutional, economic and political contexts" (Peck and Theodore, 2001:427). However, unfavourable outcomes are likely if context is totally ignored. Ignoring context is synomynous to adopting a one-size fits all approach. This approach has been encouraged by many international organizations. Liiv and Kruusenberg argue that it has been “promoted not only by foreign donors, but also by immature recipient governments” who believe that total policy transfer would yield similar results as the host country (2012: 164). This is unlikely to happen. Rather, institutions would experience policy implementation problems and a “risk of policy failure that only professional domestic policy-makers can alleviate” (Liiv and Kruusenberg, 2012: 164). Thus, the ‘one size fits all approach should be avoided at all cost. An alternative approach may perhaps be to engage in lesson drawing. This is because lesson drawing “accepts the contingency of public policy, in that it specifies the conditions that must be met for a programme to be effective, it can also identify under what circumstances a programme that works in one country will not work in another” (Rose,
By so doing, many policy implementation problems can be avoided. Lesson
drawing is a very common type of policy transfer.

Other common forms or types of policy transfer include: "bandwagoning and social learning”
(Evans, 2009:237). Rose (1993) also proposes "copying, emulating, hybridizing,
synthesizing and inspiring" (in Lightfoot, 2003:26). Copying entails the total or partial
transfer of the characteristics of a policy; whilst emulating refers to the reproduction of only
some of the fundamental aspects of a policy according to the countries' relative context
(Lightfoot, 2003). Hybridization and synthesis on the other hand, "combine parts of policies
from various places to make a new policy, and inspiration means inspiring a country to take
a new approach to a policy, while not necessarily taking the same policy approach" (Lightfoot, 2003: 26). However, a country's engagement in the policy transfer process may
not be as clear cut, because different forms of transfer may be incorporated into the process.
For instance, governments are sometimes forced or coerced by international organizations or
donors to adopt certain policies because of their relative success elsewhere. Then later,
politicians voluntarily engage in the process of transfer because they believe it to be the best
move for their country.

Coercive and voluntary transfer are two other forms of policy transfer (Dolowitz and Marsh,
2000), which may sometimes occur concurrently in the policy transfer process (Sutton,
2008). Yet, it may be difficult to make a "simple distinction" between them (Dolowitz and
Marsh, 2000:13). Quite often, policy transfer in the Caribbean region involves a process of
both coercive and voluntary transfer (Sutton, 2008). It has therefore been recommend that
policy transfer be studied from the perspective of "lying along a continuum that runs from
lesson drawing to the direct imposition of a program, policy or institutional arrangement on
one political system by another"; and that such a perception allows a more analytical
discussion of the subject, where the operation of different forms of transfer can be observed
(Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000:13-14). This perspective is also propounded by Massey (2009).
Massey (2009) argues against straightforward policy transfer. This is because the “historical,
geographical, economic, social and political context within which a policy is located informs
the dynamics that determine the way in which policy is made and implemented and its effectiveness (pp 383). Rather, Massey proposes that there are “levels of isomorphism within a given public administration” (2009:383).

The three types of isomorphic changes include: coercive, mimetic and normative isomorphism. Coercive isomorphism “stems from political influence and the problem of legitimacy; mimetic isomorphism resulting from standard responses to uncertainty and normative isomorphism is associated with professionalization” (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983:150). Coercive isomorphism is typical in the Caribbean region (Sutton, 2008). Here, governments are obliged to adopt certain policies in order to receive donor funding. This direct influence through funding requirements and indirect influence through the provision of “information and policies” are widely propagated at “their conferences and reports” (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000:11). Many public services in the Caribbean, particularly the smaller ones, usually lack the requisite skills to implement policy and programs (Sutton, 2008). Moreover, it is unclear how much politicians and bureaucrats grasp the theoretical underpinnings of the policies that are copied. In cases where such countries are unsure as to the best approach to their problems, they tend to mimic the "processes employed as a means of emulating best practice" (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991 in Dollery and Lee, 2004:2). Although, this can seem as a simple and quick solution, it can have devastating effects, if all factors are not considered. Uncertainty leads policymakers to opt for a “quick fix” to avoid possible constraints and even policy reversals that could accompany a lengthy reform process (Liv and Kruusenberg, 2012:163). Normative isomorphism “relates to the professionalization of the organization through the adoption of standards or norms set by some external body, like in the fields of law and medicine, which might not be coercive” (McCree, 2009: 463). Over the decades, there has also been an expansion of professional networks in the public management arena. This has been widely advanced by globalization and regionalization.

It has been argued that globalization has been driven by and also pushed policy transfer through “global public policy networks” (Stones, 2001:20). Some IGOs and NGOs are seen as “agents of coercive transfer” or equally “agents of voluntary transfer which again
complicates any model of policy transfer that may be developed” (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000:11). On the regional level, CARICAD\(^2\) fulfils this role in the Caribbean. Its principle aim is to network with other CARICOM countries and provide resources aimed at improving public service delivery and public policy. Professionals have joined forces to provide a cognitive base for their profession. There are many benefits of networking on both an individual and organizational level; with the chief of these being the easy dissemination of best practices. Hence, the emergence of such networks encouraged policy copying practices to 'diffuse rapidly' thereby resulting in the practice of normative isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983:152). However, the policy transfer process may not always be a smooth one and actors may sometimes disagree or contest a policy or aspect of it. Contested policy transfer is when a "country copies a foreign policy but their version in the end is extremely different from the original version; not because of differences in culture or an attempt to tailor it to the environment but because the actors contested on so many various points" (Mauricio and Dussauge, 2013:686). Policy transfer can therefore be seen as a very complex phenomenon. Hence, it is crucial that reformers are skilled to effectively engage in the process.

This is even more important because of the complexity of the NPM phenomenon. It is equally important that reformers understand what NPM means to them and are able to engage meaningfully in policy transfer analysis discussions in order to devise appropriate reform implementation mechanisms. Reform can only work if suitable reform mechanisms are adopted (Therkildsen, 2001, Caiden and Caiden, 1998) and actors have a thorough understanding of the reform implementation process.

\(^2\) CARICAD is a Caribbean Centre for Development Administration which specializes in public sector modernization in the region. Its headquarters is in Barbados.
2.5. Implementing NPM

The previous sections presented the origin of NPM and discussed some of its theoretical roots. It also demonstrated the global convergence of NPM within a neoliberal environment, and the role of policy transfer in that process. The levels of isomorphic changes within PAs were also examined. This section now focuses on the implementation of NPM reform; by considering factors in both the internal and external environment.

Implementing NPM can be a very challenging task. Rahman, Naz and Nand (2013) advise reformers to have a thorough understanding of the process. This can be difficult due to a lack of information. Research reveals that there is a paucity of information on reform implementation (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). Apparently, the acquisition of information on reform implementation is a lot more of a struggle for academics to gather, than on what the reform package is about (Pollitt and Bouackaert, 2004). Perhaps, it is because government fears criticism or that they lack a sound understanding of the process. Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004) argue that governments seem more eager to talk about the launch of a reform than any progresses in reform implementation. Ultimately, this poses great difficulty in evaluating reform. Accordingly, researchers advocate for greater research on reform implementation (Rahman, Naz and Nand, 2013) as the implicit knowledge of experts is not enough and evidence is needed on “what works for reform” (Blum, Manning and Srivastava, 2012:7). In such instances, this will lead to a blueprint, which can serve as an implementation guide. However, there are inherent dangers to this. NPM implementation vary from country to country, despite some resemblance in their development efforts (Ugyel, 2013). This variation is due to contextual differences. That is, factors in both the internal and external environment.

2.5.1. Factors in the Internal Environment

Factors in the internal environment primarily refer to people, organization and culture, and the nature and pace of the reform (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). To begin with, the people element will address the actors in the implementation process and the level of employee involvement. Key actors sometimes seek particularistic advantage, which often leads to
ingrained corrupt practices. Public service corruption appears to be a chief concern in both the developed and developing world (Samaratunge and Bennington, 2002). Mitigating corruption can be a very challenging task and requires the commitment of all actors. It is also critical that employees are involved in NPM reform implementation.

Generally, politicians and senior public service managers are key actors in the reform process. They are the ones who decide on the direction of the reform. Unfortunately, research has demonstrated that often times key actors pursue their own interest. For example, research on NPM reform implementation in Bangladesh, demonstrated that “politicians and bureaucrats were influenced by the narrow interest for personal or political gain rather than improving performance to better serve citizens” (Ferdousi, 2015:322). What is required is for actors to put the interest of citizens first, as corrupt practices and behaviour can hinder reform implementation efforts. The crippling effect of corruption on reform can be seen in many public services, such as, Kyrgyzstan (Baimyraeva, 2011).

Corruption can be defined on "social, moral, political and economic levels" (Mills, 2012:2). With regards to PA, it simply refers to the "abuse of public office for private benefit" (Leruth and Paul, 2006:8). Corruption is perceived to be "antithetical to the purpose of public administration" (Mills, 2012:3). In other words, it strongly opposes the values upon which the traditional public service was based. These relate to "concepts of integrity, transparency and accountability" (Armstrong, 2005:1). Some theorists therefore argue that public service corruption appears to be a by-product of traditional public service management; though it was established to eliminate such practices (Mills, 2012). Corruption can take many forms. Mills and Cooper (2007) presents various causes for corruption on the individual, organizational and external levels. This is captured in Table 2.2. below.
Table 2.2. - Reasons for the increase in corruption in public services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDIVIDUAL</th>
<th>ORGANIZATIONAL</th>
<th>EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public officials develop inappropriate relationships with clients;</td>
<td>Organizational culture of the agency or part of the agency;</td>
<td>Poor understanding of proper agency functioning by certain sectors of the community;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public officials fail to declare conflicts of interest (preexisting</td>
<td>inadequate knowledge, skills or experience of corrupt public official or related supervisor or manager;</td>
<td>Potential for significant gain - financial or otherwise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationships);</td>
<td>inadequate policies, procedures or systems; chronic failure to follow existing policies, procedures or systems;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inadequate supervision or work review;</td>
<td>poorly managed contracting or commercial relationships;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public officials have feelings of dissatisfaction or perceptions of</td>
<td>inadequate agency resources; inadequate legislative framework for the agency;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unfairness.</td>
<td>corrupt public officials had high levels of personal discretion, autonomy, power or influence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Mills and Cooper, 2007 in Mills, 2012:10

The proliferation of issues regarding public service corruption is visible worldwide. Typically, individuals engage in corrupt practices because of a perceived opportunity to seek personal benefits. The above table illustrates that on an individual level; managers may sometimes be susceptible to issues of unfairness or may be unhappy for other reasons. In such cases, they accede to their personal desires and pursue financial gain or abuse their power or authority. In other circumstances, politicians or senior managers engage in unprofessional or familiar relations with the public or respective clientele. Such occurrence is likely in Caribbean SIDS. Sutton makes reference to the development of such close knit relationships in the region which bring “politicians and public servants closer to citizens; which opens opportunities for nepotism and corruption” (Sutton, 2008:5).
The table also demonstrates that external factors such as, commercialization, political decentralization and misunderstandings on the part of the public; also give rise to public service corruption. Commercialization caters for closer ties with the market, suppliers, contractors and service providers. It is therefore essential that the elite are guided by clear rules and standards which guide commercial relations in an effort to mitigate corruption. This broadening of commercial ties is also facilitated by political decentralization. The latter can be defined as "a system in which government or administration is divided among tiers" and there is a transfer of power to local government (Triesman, 2002:5). This permits government to get closer to its citizens. However, some studies claim that it opens the possibility of rising corruption; but, there are nonetheless conflicting studies on the validity of this argument; as political decentralization have benefited some countries, like China (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2005). Hence, the argument for the impact of political decentralization on corruption is extremely context dependent (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2005). The argument has been made for the public to be better educated on government's operations and responsibilities, in an effort to mitigate corruption (Mills, 2012). Additionally, it can be beneficial if staff become more accountable and respect all rules and regulations guiding organizational operations and behaviour. Breaches could result in a high cost of corruption.

Research highlights that "corruption has a negative effect on government's performance" (Gratto et al., 2002: 5) and can result in lowered public confidence and wastage of resources, like, money for paying bribes (Mills, 2012). Such a path culminates in failed reform implementation efforts. Perhaps, a stronger state administrative and constitutional capacity may help to reduce corruption and contribute to successful reform implementation.

State capacity has been highlighted as a prerequisite for "successful implementation of NPM" (Sarker, 2006:184). In some cases, failed PSR programs have been attributed to a public services' deficient or weak 'administrative capacity' (Schacter, 2000). Administrative or state capacity refers to the ability of the state to adopt 'reform measures' with resolute (Schacter, 2000). So paradoxically, a set of policies designed to reduce the state can only be successfully implemented by strong states. Very often the "countries that are in most need of
reform are the ones with the least capacity to manage the process” (Schacter, 2000: 10). Reformers may also need to make ‘legislative changes' to support the reform implementation process (Chapman and Duncan, 2007:17). In general, regulation has been one of the instruments used by government to further reform because it determines the direction and sets the parameters for quality in service delivery and successful policy implementation” (Steane, 2008:456). Such improvements in both the state and constitutional capacity have augured well for Britain's reform. Britain has "constitutional and legal flexibility" that facilitates the development and implementation of policies and programmes and conversely, the aborting of "unsuccessful or unpopular" programmes (Andrews, Downe and Guarneros-Meza, 2013: 10). Typically, such capacity building is to ensure that the organization has sufficient resources to achieve its goals and therefore become more accountable (Barber, 2007). Generally, this will entail an investment in institutional development and institutional strengthening.

Institutional development refers to “the creation or reinforcement of the capacity of an institution to generate, allocate and deploy financial, human and material resources to meet its changing development objectives. This includes the capacity to reflect systematically and rigorously upon its role and functions, thereby enabling it to discharge its responsibilities” (Brown, 2008: 4). Hence, institutional development focuses on the optimization of an organization's resources through a strategic and methodological process.

Institutional strengthening refers to the establishment of goals that are “aimed at improving the effectiveness of existing structures, processes and systems, usually through training and coaching” (Brown, 2008:4). Thus, institutional strengthening is aimed at enhancing the capabilities and skills of the human assets necessary to drive organizational goals. It is important for both to occur in an organization in order to achieve a strong institution.

The other critical factor in the people element is the level of employee involvement. The approach to the reform, that is, whether it is top-down/bottom-up, will shed light on the level
of employee involvement. It can be very challenging for managers to determine at what point and to what extent employees at the various levels should be involved. Parys explains that it very much depends on the "potential of participation that is present in a given situation" (2002:14). This decision is made at management's discretion. Brown (2008) states that concerned departments should be allowed to participate and share ideas on system and service improvements and cost reduction. Such a perspective illustrates the relative ease for employees to engage in discussions on aspects related to their jobs. This exchange would require a good communication channel. Rahman, Naz and Nand (2013) believe that a strong communication channel facilitates employee involvement and solidarity with employees. Solidarity involves staff sharing with management and management discussing, reporting back and working along with employees. Achieving such perfection in management-employee relations in reality, can be extremely challenging. This is because this relationship is often fraught with many conflicts and constraints. Pollitt and Bouckaert therefore argue that there is no pure distinction in reform approach, but rather it lies on a "spectrum that passes through top-down guided bottom-up" approach (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004:94). A top-down approach with limited opportunity for bottom-up involvement is likely to result in strong resistance to reform. Resistance can hinder reform implementation goals.

Hence, successful NPM reform implementation would require the commitment of bureaucrats and politicians, as well as strong political and managerial leadership. Rao (2008) views 'political will' as a precondition, with the support of managerial leadership. Employees then depends on their "superiors to provide meaning and vision in order to execute tasks" (Van de Voet, Kuipers and Groeneveld, 2015:6). Leadership is a critical factor throughout the reform; particularly during the "initiation and implementation" stages (Lieven, Van Geit and Coetsier, 1997: 416). However, commitment is needed from politicians on both sides of the bench to ensure reform implementation and continuity.

The second element relates to the organizational structure and culture (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). They both can either support or hinder reform implementation. Many countries are quite eager to embark upon reforms. However, quite often "the basic infrastructure of
management is not developed enough to undertake market oriented reforms” (Sarker, 2006:187). Thus, reform implementation efforts are then supported by organizational restructuring. However, restructuring an organization to make it more decentralized, devolved or leaner is no easy task and an organization’s culture can thwart reform implementation efforts. It is culture which sets the parameters of “acceptable and unacceptable behaviour” (Hookana, 2008:320). The Theoretical Framework (pp9) defined public service culture. Negative impact culture factors, like corruption for instance, can greatly constrain reform implementation efforts. Corrupt behaviours are also fuelled by prevailing organizational culture.

The third component of reform implementation on the internal level refers to the nature and pace of the reform (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). The state has an essential role in this regard. Generally, "the nature and pace of reform is controlled by the state and it uses its political clout to limit any attempt to step outside these parameters" (Kirk and Sagebien, 2000:42). However, it will be prudent to involve all stakeholders, both internal and external to the organization, in the reform process. It is also prudent to adopt an incremental approach (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004); as it facilitates the various changes that are expected between actors in the process (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004; Samaratunge and Bennington, 2002). This encourages more thorough discussions and thoughtful decisions to be made. Whilst, a fast paced reform may result in strong resistance to change and poor implementation.

Change is inevitable in PA reform. In fact, Peters and Savoie view reform as a "continuous process of change" (1998:12); which can either be positive or negative. Generally, reform causes a change of "roles and values" for civil servants (Peters and Savoie, 1998: 12) and also "raise anxieties about the ability to perform, future job security and working relationships" (Draper, 2001:24). Thus, it causes civil servants to intrinsically examine themselves. An accompanying change management strategy can therefore be beneficial. This permits managers to more effectively manage change and respond to employee fears. Change management strategists recommend that allocations be made for employee voice, to both contribute and be a part of that change, in order to achieve a more favourable reception to
change (Osland et al., 2001). This is critical, as resistance always surfaces amidst change (Draper, 2001). This therefore justifies the need for a "carefully planned and phased reform" (Brown, 2008: 18). Unfortunately, NPM reform implementation is not always approached in this way.

2.5.2. Factors in the External Environment

When implementing reform, it is critical that equal consideration is given to the external environment, such as, the national, economical, social and political context. There is no consensus however on which factor is more dominant. Some theorists believe the 'national context' to be the most critical factor impacting upon reform outcomes (Baraldi, 2014). Whereas, other theorists speculate that reform outcomes are broadly shaped by the political context in as much as "managerial arrangements (Therkildsen, 2001:11). Sarker largely attributes the "non-implementation of reform programmes to problems in the political economy" (2006:197). However, he further contends that the "conditions for successful implementation of NPM oriented reforms - are the level of economic development and basic public administration processes" (Sarker, 2006:190). This paper proposes that each factor is relevant in its own right.

2.6. Conclusion

The preceding discussion presented the definition and role of NPM. It also highlighted some proposed claims and counter claims for the rise of NPM. The theoretical and practical underpinnings of the NPM ideology; and the isomorphic changes which occur in organizaitons were also examined. The critical role of policy transfer in reform was also highlighted. The chapter closed with an examination of those internal and external factors which impact upon NPM reform implementation. The next chapter now discusses PA reform in the Caribbean context.
3. Public Administration Reform in the Caribbean

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented a compact discussion of the definition, origin, adoption and implementation of NPM. It demonstrated the various arguments and counter arguments for NPM’s rise and the role of institutional isomorphism in the process. This chapter now begins with a brief history of the Caribbean and its adoption of the Westminster Model of Government. The wholesale copying of the model and other policy copying practices raised questions of Caribbean dependency. Thus, reasons for this dependency upon the more developed world are explored. This is followed by an examination of some of the problems which are common to public administrations (PAs) within the region and the subsequent NPM convergence. The next section then presents a brief insight into St. Lucia’s background to NPM reform. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main arguments.

3.2. Brief History of the Caribbean, It’s Public Administration Model and the Dependency Syndrome

This section presents a brief overview of the origin of the English Speaking Caribbean (ESC) and the subsequent adoption of the Westminster Model of Government. Various weaknesses have been attributed to this model. The total transfer of this model from the developed to lesser developed nations raised the question of Caribbean Dependency (Sutton, 1999). Evidence of total policy copying practices can also be seen in their constitution and laws. Thus, this section further explores the Caribbean’s dependency upon the more developed world.
3.2.1. Brief History of the Caribbean and the Adoption of the Westminster Model of Government

The English Speaking Caribbean (ESC) has a unique history of conquest, slavery and wars, which has shaped its unique context. Caribbean people were originally immigrants brought in as slaves; and their subjective acclimatization to life on the plantation resulted in a strong Creole culture (Thomas-Hope, 1993). Today, creole is a second language in St. Lucia and other Caribbean islands. Following the abolition of slavery in 1834, the Caribbean entered into an era of economic turmoil. Many countries of the ESC fought and successfully gained their independence; but, the economic crisis still remains the leading challenge of the region today (Sutton, 1999). The region's economy is highly dependent upon agriculture, tourism, light manufacturing, and international services; whilst countries, like Trinidad and Tobago, have natural resources, such as oil and gas (Rose, Chaison and Garza, 1998).

Upon gaining Independence from the British, the Caribbean adopted the Westminster Whitehall (WW) Model of Government, its core features and traditional public sector values. Typically, this model incorporates a Head of State that is separate from government and a Prime Minister. It also consists of three branches of government; namely, the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary. The Executive Branch consists of the Prime Minister, Cabinet Members and government departments and is responsible for drafting, implementing and monitoring policies and managing the administrative affairs of the state. The Legislative Branch is made up of all the members of Parliament and Ministers of Government, and are responsible for passing or approving policies and laws. The Judiciary Branch comprises of the court system which enact the laws. Each function has its substructure(s), which comprises of government ministries or departments.

The core features that were transferred include: "the convention of constitutionalism, the doctrine of civilian supremacy, the presumption of bureaucratic and police neutrality, the habit of competitive elections and the practice of pluralist representation" (Sutton, 1999:68). Thus, countries of the region adopted the British constitution, its public service management model and bureaucratic system. This demonstrates that policy copying is not a new
phenomenon. Other glaring examples of total policy copying practices in the ESC were provided by Elkins et al., (2011). They revealed stark similarities in content and structure of constitutional texts; with some aspects even beginning with the same phrase. The custom of giving citizens a voice to elect public officials to govern the country via an open and competitive system was also copied and still is practiced today. Public Service Commissions (PSCs) were also instituted to ensure neutrality of both civil servants and politicians in public sector affairs (Draper, 2001:10). This occurs by supporting the HRM function and thwarting political interference in the administrative affairs of the state; like "recruitment, promotion and discipline" (Draper, 2001: 10). However, PSCs have been cited as the cause for numerous problems in public services in the region (Sutton, 2008). St. Lucia’s PSC has also faced this criticism and has further been accused of being unable to prevent cases of political meddling (GOSL White Paper, 2000).

The WW system of bureaucracy has equally been condemned (Sutton, 1999). Instead of order, chaos arose in the region and a very different set of problems began to emerge (Sutton, 1999). Many governments worldwide were experiencing a high level of political manipulation (Sutton, 1999). Here, powers are concentrated at the top and top positions are filled by the Prime Minister (PM); whilst, on the opposite end, top officials or key personnel are easily targeted or victimized (Sutton, 1999). Sutton (1999) attributes these problems to not just the shortcomings of the system, but a failure to sufficiently consider the Caribbean’s context at the time of policy transfer. Girvan (2006) explained that this viewpoint was shared by the region's theorists, like Lloyd Best and Kari Polanyi Levitt. They felt that it was necessary to discover a way to study the Caribbean following the post colonization period, and therefore recommended the ‘Caribbean Dependency Theory (CDT). CDT gives specific consideration to the region’s context in policy transfer and application (Girvan, 2006). This is because the Caribbean became and still is, very dependent upon the developed world for funding and aid. Several reasons can be attributed for this.
3.2.2. Reasons for Caribbean Dependency

Caribbean dependency is not a new phenomenon. An argument has therefore been made for the Caribbean to be studied through the lens of a Caribbean Dependency Theory (Girvan, 2006). This section presents three reasons for a very dependent Caribbean. Firstly, the supposition that the Caribbean’s odious history has negatively impacted upon the peoples’ mindset, thereby resulting in an inferiority complex or a heavy reliance upon the developed world. Secondly, the global proliferation of the neoliberal agenda through globalisation, particularly to the lesser developed world, is viewed as a stimulant of this dependency. Thirdly, are claims that a skills shortage in the Caribbean created a dependency upon the more developed world (Draper, 2001).

How policy was made, appeared to be a real concern for Caribbean theorists. Girvan (2006) explained that policy experts should consider the region’s specific context in all policy analysis discussions, through the lens of the Caribbean Dependency Theory (CDT). CDT “emerged at the University of the West Indies in the 1960s and became particularly influential as a critical analytical response to evolving neoliberal policies in the 1970s” (Weedmark, 2013:3). CDT is based on epistemic and economic dependency (Weedmark, 2013). The former "showed that the root of the Caribbean development problem lay in the reliance upon imported concepts and theories of limited relevance to actual conditions in the region; and the latter referred to the external controls which dominated and diminished the domestic economy of the Caribbean states" (Wedmark, 2013: 3). Predominantly, imported theories originate from the more developed world. Undoubtedly, these nations have access to greater resources and are not exposed to the same vulnerabilities as the Caribbean. It can therefore be argued that implementation problems are imminent when engaging in policy copying practices which insufficiently considers the relative context. From the economic perspective, the Caribbean relies heavily upon foreign direct investment (FDI) and foreign aid. Exports are usually foreign owned and dependent upon foreign markets; and due to the government’s reliance on FDI, they are incapable of affecting the local market, thereby resulting in an economic downturn in the region (Girvan, 2006). Government’s likely
recourse is to seek assistance from International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and donor agencies. These external controls exert significant power over the Caribbean, because they provide funding, advice and technical aid. The elite are perhaps careful not to oppose any policy prescriptions for fear of losing funding.

This reliance on the outside has also been attributed to the long term effects of the colonial era; which according to Thomas-Hope (1993) has fostered a superiority-inferiority complex. Here, Caribbean people developed a "mentality of inferiority and dependency on the outside world"; as the developed world was perceived to be superior (Thomas-Hope, 1993: 142). Thus, this argument advocates that the Caribbean’s difficult history appeared to have framed the peoples’ mindset. So, bureaucrats shop for policies and programs from the more developed nations because they are perceived as better. Certainly, developed nations are graced with better research facilities and have reaped some successes with varying programs. On the other hand, conditions are imposed on vulnerable states, like the Caribbean, by IFIs and donor agencies and it becomes problematic if contexts are ignored.

These global institutions promote the neoliberal agenda, expressed through globalisation. Globalisation can be defined as “the integration of markets for goods and services, capital and labour” (Kendall, 2008:1). The impact of globalization on the Caribbean resulted in the signing of various trade and partnership agreements. Such as, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Organization of American States (OAS) and Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Globalisation has been driven by three chief factors. Namely, communications technology, innovations and policy studies (Kendall, 2008). Communication technology connects the globe through several mediums, like internet, email and telephone. Kendall describes that this ultimately lowers cost and further facilitates innovations in “computerisation, miniaturization, telecommunication and digitization” (2008: 3). Consequentially, this meant fiercer competition for FDI in the Caribbean (Kendall, 2008: 3). In such instances, an undesirable effect on the region’s economy is likely. Advancement in policy also had an undesirable effect upon the region.
Kendall (2008) explained that many countries in the Caribbean lost trade preferences in the 1990s due to market liberalisation, backed by IFIs. This can make the region further dependent upon external agencies, due to the threats of globalisation. There are proponents which support globalization. Wolf (2004) for instance, claims that the world needs more globalisation, but with better management of the state. However, globalization poses several threats for the Caribbean (Kendall, 2008:16); particularly, for Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

According to Briguglio, SIDS face special disadvantages associated with “small size, insularity, remoteness and proneness to natural disasters” (1995:1615). Such a combination creates vulnerable states and consequentially impacts upon their economic viability (Briguglio, 1995). Thus, the “narrow resource base and the paucity of external assistance are fundamental weaknesses with regards to the beneficial participation of the Caribbean in the new world trading order” (Kendall, 2008:10). Participation in this new world trading order is pushed by IFIs through the Washington Consensus (defined on pp18). Kendall argues that the Washington Consensus is “under substantial attack in the developing world, but still remains the dominant paradigm used by IFIs and by which economic policy is judged” (2008:18). Thus, one argument is that neoliberalism contributes to this dependency syndrome.

Venugopal explains that critics believe “this version of neoliberalism has a strong family resemblance to dependency theory in identifying a logic of unequal power relations, blocked development and adverse incorporation in the global economy” (Venugopal, 2015:176). Contrary to posited gains, many examples can be found of adverse outcomes, in not just the Caribbean but around the globe. Harvey (2005) and Stiglitz (2002) provide some indepth accounts of inequality, greed by the elite and economic failures. Peet (2003) argues that “the ‘Washington Consensus’ conveys the idea of a neo-colonial agenda promoted by the powerful triumvirate of the World Bank, IMF and the United States Treasury, and imposed upon an unwilling and vulnerable third world (in Venugopal, 2015:176). It becomes difficult
for politicians to retaliate due to the high level of dependency. However, this may not be the only inhibitory factor to SIDS having a stronger voice in policy discussions.

Claims have been made that the Caribbean lacks trained personnel (Draper, 2001) and possesses a small skills resource base (Kendall, 2008). This inhibits the region’s capacity to effectively participate in policy development; to respond efficiently to global and regional threats; and even crises which may arise within the public sector. It is for this reason external consultants are often sought in matters of PA reform (Sutton, 2008; Brown, 2008). Additionally, insufficient financial resources make “ready-made foreign solutions attractive to decision makers” (Randma-Liiv and Kruusenberg, 2012:163). It can be argued that seemingly quick solutions were needed for the multitude of problems which emerged.

### 3.3. Common Public Administration problems and NPM convergence in the Region

This section presents a description of some of the common problems confronting public services in the region. Interestingly, reform has been a common solution which has led to NPM convergence in the region.

#### 3.3.1. Common Public Administration Problems in the Region

Countries like Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and St. Lucia were all former colonies of Britain and have all adopted the WW government model and its public service system (Draper, 2001). The government is the largest employer in the region (Rose, Chaison and Garza, 1998), and so, many OECS countries were accused of having very large public sectors (Swaroop, 1996). Some common problems of public services in the region include:

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3 The Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) is comprised of eight members, which includes: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines.
"weaknesses with the existing governance systems: over concentration of decision making in Cabinet, shortage of trained and skilled personnel; weak planning and implementation capacity, seemingly undue political interference in many areas of the state, absence of a partnership approach to development, a political system that is extremely adversarial and seems to militate against national consensus building" (Draper, 2001: 8).

These challenges relate to weak state capacity; a top-down management style; poor policy implementation skills; poor stakeholder involvement and political obstacles to development. The region also became more vulnerable to 'external pressures' due to the abolition of preferential treatment (Girvan, 2006). The likely result is an increasing dependence upon foreign aid and international assistance. The combination of these problems create a strong incentive for policy transfer. Accordingly, various reforms have been attempted in the region. Trinidad and Tobago have been attempting PSR since the early 1960s (Riley and Nunes, 2004). Other reform initiatives include: Reforming Financial Management in Barbados (OPSR, 2004), Eliminating Corruption in Trinidad and Tobago; (OPSR, 2004) and PSR of the Jamaica Civil Service (Capri, 2011).

Despite the region’s various reform attempts, public sector size remains a major concern today (Sutton, 1999). Moreover, very "few successes" have been noted (Curristine, Lonti and Jourmand, 2007:12); with the exception of "Barbados and the Bahamas", noted as “high performers” (Swaroop, 1996:2). The region equally experienced considerable resistance from public servants (Sutton, 1999) and a lack of cooperation from the unions. Studies revealed that reform occurred "when the political influence of unions was declining" and so "unions in all countries responded defensively" (Rose, Chaison and Garza, 1998:12). Both employees and the trade union are important stakeholders in the reform process. The St. Lucia Civil Service Association recognized this in their response paper to PSR (CSA, 2005), but failed to expound on their own responsibility in the reform implementation process or comment on the selected reform model. NPM appears to be the dominant reform model in the region.
3.3.2. NPM Convergence in the Region

This section illustrates the convergence of NPM in the region and proposes foreign aid, through coercive policy transfer, as perhaps the strongest explanatory factor for NPM convergence. Although, there are seemingly many benefits of NPM, this section highlights a few of its weaknesses. It then goes on to present some specific factors which can impact upon NPM implementation in the region.

NPM has become a dominant model for PA reform in the region (Sutton, 2008; Borins, 1998). However, Borins argue that the “lesser developed countries in the Commonwealth appear to be deficient in many of the prerequisites for NPM” (1998:54). St. Lucia is also a member of the Commonwealth Caribbean. Sutton (2008) argues that the region presumably lacks the expertise required to effectively engage in reform. So, what is the driving force behind the adoption of NPM, in a region that is steep in resources and skills? The claim has been made that “foreign funding has perhaps the strongest explanatory power when the choice of role models is considered” (Randma-Liiv and Kruusenberg, 2012:163). In light of this, such institutions coerce SIDS to adopt recommended policies. In fact, Bissessar (2002) believes that the NPM convergence in the region, is due to direct coercive policy transfer by international agencies (in Sutton, 2008). Accordingly, Caribbean reforms were geared at a decreasing role of the state; new partnerships between government, citizens and the private sector; improved strategies for development and inclusion in the global economy (Sutton, 1999) and restructuring programs accompanied by significant public sector downsizing (Rose, Chaisson and Garza, 1998). This represents typical NPM objectives. Sutton (2008) highlights that governments were specifically advised by the World Bank to include NPM principles in their reform. It is common for international donors to have a say in such reforms (Rao, 2008:1), by stipulating strict conditions for funding (Sutton, 2008). Such institutions market NPM as best practice and failure to adhere to stipulated conditions can result in loss of funding.

4 Countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean include: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Lucia.
Undeniably, some passionate arguments have been made of the many benefits of NPM. Like, the emphasis on performance management and performance outcomes, focus on quality, disaggregation and competition in public services (Hood and Dixon, 2015 ). However, literature on NPM’s effectiveness in developing countries is limited (Polidiano, 1999). Hood and Dixon (2015) also presents a chief weakness, which can be viewed as a paradox for the region. They claim that NPM type measures have a negative effect on important administrative values. Here, NPM reforms put too much emphasis on cost cutting and in the process damage some traditional and important “Weberian” qualities of administration such as fairness and consistency, the careful framing and application of rules” (Hood and Dixon, 2015: 265). Could the adoption of NPM in a highly politicized environment have a double negative effect? The region is already plagued with issues of unfairness and seemingly undue political interference (Draper, 2001).

Additionally, there are some specific elements which can impact NPM implementation in the region. This includes: economic capabilities (Borins, 1998), political leadership (Borins, 1998), reform consistency and continuity (Hardiman, 2010), politico-administrative tensions (Draper, 2001) and stakeholder involvement. Borins (1998) strongly believe that despite widespread NPM convergence in the Commonwealth, the disparity in economic capabilities can affect implementation. This is because resources are needed not only for implementation but for reform sustenance. Political Leadership also appear to be a significant element in NPM reform implementation. Borins (1998) explained that many NPM initiatives have been supported by ‘strong political leadership’. However, leadership appears to be a very contentious issue in the Caribbean. Barro-Giles (2010) postulated that Caribbean nationals have a poor perception of the political leadership and often complained of their lack of accountability. Accountability merely "means that people with authority and responsibility for an area, are required to report on, justify their work, conduct and use of resources, to those above in the chain of command" (Boddy, 2005: 310). Peters and Savoie (1998) believe accountability to be the most essential matter in PSR. It is seen as more important for the public sector than the private sector, because the "demands for accountability, responsiveness and equity are greater" (Peters, 1986:96). In the public sector, the task of ensuring
accountability is primarily the role of top leadership. Which seems paradoxical, since PSR leads to an emphasis on bureaucratic/ managerial accountability, rather than democratic accountability.

In PA reform, strong political leadership is demonstrable in a leader’s ability to both sell the reform and ensure reform continuity and consistency. Hardiman (2010) advocated that government’s consistency and commitment to reform goals is essential for successful reform outcomes. To achieve this, collaboration is required with the opposing party (Petrescu et al., 2010) and its administrative directorate. The Canadian government adopted such a collaborative approach in an attempt to minimize any opposition or delay tactics at the highest level of government (Capri, 2011). This is because politico-administrative tensions can impact negatively on NPM reform implementation. Such tensions may arise due to "time difference" for reform implementation, "style difference" or "unclear vision and goals" (Draper, 2001:6). If not managed, this may result in rising "mistrust, anxiety" and clashes (Draper, 2001) during reform implementation.

Managing NPM reform implementation also necessitates collaboration with all stakeholders. By so doing, they each can assume 'ownership' of the reform (Blum, Manning and Srivastava, 2012; Curristine et al., 2007). Stakeholders may include employees, citizens, trade unions and even the private sector. Employees are involved in the roll out of reform and partnering with employees can help to mitigate against mistrust, fear and weak participation. Partnering with citizens can help politicians to achieve "legitimacy for public policy" (Peters and Savoie, 1998:148). The effort needed will depend upon the quality of public consultations. St. Lucia’s PSR Unit made a strong call for better strategies geared at greater citizen participation (PSR Unit, 2004) in an effort to minimize low citizen turnout. Politicians and bureaucrats should cooperate on such ventures.

Partnering with trade unions can be a step in a positive direction since the quality of labour relations in the region were on the decline (Rose, Chaison and Garza, 1998). Draper (2001) stresses that trade unions play a vital role in both planning and implementing reform (Draper,
They can assist in minimizing employee resistance to reform. Resistance is likely, because it can be difficult for employees to accept change. Hence, some theorists recommend that a change management strategy accompany all implementation efforts (Turner, 2013). It serves as a guide to managing change and employee resistance; which can be a very challenging task.

The private sector is also a key stakeholder in reform. Government can acquire a better understanding of the market. With reference to St. Lucia, Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) can shed light on those private sector management techniques which work in St. Lucia's context. This can aid in determining appropriate reform mechanisms. However, the question remains. How much power do governments have in designing reform models that are imposed upon them?

Additionally, achieving any sustained reform changes also depend on the ability of the elite to effectuate cultural changes in the organization. This is essential, as this is where any "sustained changes in behaviour" would result (Turner, 2013:58). However, culture change is a very slow process (Osborne and Plastrik, 2000). Long term commitment is therefore needed; since employees are usually quite resistant to any attempts at culture change (Robbins, 1991). Some researchers have argued that NPM reforms are able to impact an organization's culture (Wyen and Verhoest, 2015). Management’s dedication can perhaps be viewed as a principal requirement for any cultural change and sustained reformed behaviour in St. Lucia’s public service.

3.4. St. Lucia’s Background to NPM Reform

Context is an essential element in reform. This section presents a brief background of St. Lucia’s context in the adoption and implementation of NPM reform.

St. Lucia falls into the category of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). It is an island of 617 km², with a current population of 182,273 (World Bank, 2013). St. Lucia has notably
been referred to as the "Helen of the West Indies" because it has bounced between the British and French fourteen times. Thus, St. Lucia’s culture is an interweaving of slavery, colonialism and the impact of a historical association with the French and the British.

In 1979, St. Lucia gained its Independence from the British. However, Queen Elizabeth II remained the Head of State and is represented by the Dame Governor General Calliopa Pearlette Louisy, who was first appointed in 1997. The two main political parties are the United Workers Party (UWP) and the St. Lucia Labour Party (SLP). Similar to the rest of the English Speaking Caribbean (ESC), St. Lucia adopted the Westminster Whitehall (WW) system. The purpose was to organize PA in a way which permits the region to be well integrated “into the governance framework of the British empire and to reduce the cost of administering the islands, and improve efficiency” (Minto-Coy and Berman, 2016:36). The government succumbed to this grand plan. Minto-Coy and Berman (2016) believe that this governance approach was birthed from the superiority belief of English laws and institutions. Another demonstrable evidence of Caribbean dependency.

However, the WW system did not perform as was expected (Minto-Coy and Berman, 2016). In St. Lucia’s case, its PA was confronted with many challenges on the administrative, social, technical, economic and political level (see §1.4.1- Statement of the Problem). Government also encountered challenges in the private sector and this was compounded with “weak economic growth and high public sector debt” (Lashley and Moore, 2013:5). The global financial crisis and a contraction in the demand for Tourism and exports, greatly affected the economy (Lashley and Moore, 2013). Its high unemployment rate (21.4%), representing the highest unemployment in the region, with 40% representing youth unemployment (Lashley and Moore, 2013:5); placed additional pressure on government. Such as, concerns about rising socio-economic issues, like, crime, poverty and poor human capital. Thus, a weakened public and private sector created a significant incentive for reform or policy transfer. Significant coercive pressure equally came from donor agencies, as they impressed upon government to reform its public sector (PSR White Paper, 2000). So, PA reform was launched in St. Lucia in 1997.
Subsequently, a PSR Commission was established in 1999 (DPADM and DESA, 2004); and their report was presented to Cabinet in the form of a Green Paper. The White Paper was then approved in 2000. These policy documents outlined the challenges of St. Lucia's public service, policy initiatives and supporting legislation. In 2002, Cabinet adopted the PSR implementation plan. It presented the human resource strategy, programme management strategy, duration, cost and expected reform outcomes (PSR Unit, 2002). The categories for implementation included: “legislation and regulation; policies and procedures; organizational structure and functioning; management and training and operating systems and supporting processes” (GOSL White Paper, 2000: 2). A look at the implementation categories illustrates the magnitude of the reform program; and also raises the question of government’s ability to skilfully engage in such a major reform. Reform sustenance then requires the support of both sides of the bench. This can be challenging in St. Lucia’s volatile political environment (see §1.5.). This is why Randma-Liiv and Kruusenberg (2012) believe that factors like the degree of transformation needed across the public service, the volatile political environment, the need for various reforms simultaneously, as well as other challenges, like the lack of finances and skills, create an incentive for policy transfer.

While, this can be true on one hand. On the otherhand, governments of small islands are sometimes faced with limited to no choice in policy matters, due to the supremacy of donors. Nevertheless, politicians have been accused of utilizing this to their advantage. Minto-Coy and Berman highlighted that “external advice and conditionality’s have offered opportunities for blame shifting by local decision makers desirous of making changes that are not politically attractive” (2016:48). This illustrates the political sensitivity of reform. However, it becomes problematic when reform does not yield the expected results.

In St. Lucia’s case, an Office of Public Sector Reform (OPSR) was established to manage the reform and ensure results. Countries devise various ways to manage their PSR programme. Barbados also instituted an OPSR (Brown 2008: 14); whereas Trinidad and Tobago established a new ministry of “Public Administration in 1992” (Brown, 2008: 14). Jamaica, established Executive Agencies (EAs), charged with the creation, development,
execution, management and monitoring of PSR programme initiatives (Brown, 2008). Whichever method a country chooses to adopt, it is important that it is relevant to its context and that due caution is exercised. The management and implementation of a reform is one of the most delicate parts of any reform project (Larbi, 1999).

However, it appears that the OPSR was dissolved in 2007. There are no allocated funds in the government estimates for that year; despite given a budget of eight hundred and forty eight thousand, one hundred and seventy United States dollars (US$848,170.00) to cover the cost of implementation. Such a budget is an indication of the pertinent role of the OPSR. This OPSR’s fundamental role in the introduction and sustenance of the reform was recognized by the trade union (CSA Paper, 2005). However, the literature search did not unearth any written justification for the dissolvement of the OPSR. Could this have been due to a lack of funding? Or, was it due to the absence of tangible outcomes and strong political leadership? St. Lucia’s PSR Unit (2002) emphasized the importance of the latter, in both government and its opposition, for successful reform outcomes. This research is therefore timely in seeking to understand NPM’s adoption and implementation in St. Lucia’s public service.

3.5. Conclusion

The above discussion ensued on the impact of historical factors, such as colonialism on the shaping of the people’s mindset and the region’s political and PA context. It also explored a number of reasons for Caribbean dependency. Common problems that PAs in the region faced were revealed and the dominance of NPM in the region. The chapter closed with a brief look at St. Lucia’s background to reform. In the next chapter I give an account of the methods, procedures and methodological approach used in this research.
4. Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter examined the literature on PA reform in the Caribbean and provided a background to NPM reform in St. Lucia. This chapter now presents a description of the chosen research methodology, which is qualitative in nature. As a qualitative researcher, value is given to people’s subjective experiences and beliefs. So, the research questions were designed to elicit participants’ perceptions on the research topic. This chapter therefore begins by explaining my research philosophy, which demonstrates my views on social reality and how the desired knowledge can be gained. The chapter then addresses the research issues which must be considered when adopting a qualitative research approach. Accordingly, an explanation is given of the sample and sampling procedures, data collection methods, data management and data analysis procedures, that are aligned with a qualitative methodology. A justification for the trustworthiness of the results, along with a description of my role as a researcher, is also provided. This contributes to achieving methodological rigour in a qualitative study. The ethical issues surrounding this research are then discussed; followed by a conclusion of the main themes.

4.2. Research Philosophy

This section explains this researcher’s philosophical approach, which is aligned with a constructivism ontology and an interpretivist epistemology. This paradigm is one way of approaching qualitative research. This researcher views it as a more appropriate choice for understanding participants’ realities, experiences, interpretations and feelings, related to the research phenomenon. However, this approach is not without its pitfalls. These are addressed, followed by an examination of the research issues that were considered for a qualitative research design.
Research philosophy refers to the "development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge" (Saunders et al., 2009:106). A researcher's belief has an intricate role in formulating the philosophical assumptions that will underpin his/her research. Saunders et al., (2009) argue that a researcher’s beliefs, based on a set of preconceived values, influence the way a researcher engages in the research process. This researcher’s chosen research philosophy demonstrates this researcher’s proclivity towards the acquisition of rich and deep knowledge to understand this research phenomenon.

Ontology and epistemology are the “two major ways of thinking about research philosophy” (Saunders et al., 2009: 109). Ontology refers to the "nature of reality" and epistemology refers to "views on truth and legitimate knowledge" (Slevitch, 2011:74). The two common forms of ontology are objectivism and constructivism (Bryman, 2004). Objectivism “refers to the belief that social entities have a reality external to social actors”; whilst, constructivism questions "whether they can and should be considered social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors" (Bryman, 2004:16). This researcher considered a constructivism ontology. This is premised on the notion that participants have a role in shaping or constructing their reality and that this is a continuous process (Bryman, 2004:17). The constructivism ontology is in strong opposition to an objectivist ontology (Levy, 2006).

The latter attempts to eliminate subjective interpretation in order to acquire objective truth. This researcher is of the belief that an objectivist approach will limit one’s understanding of the barriers that impact upon the implementation of NPM in a public sector environment. NPM reform was not just a programme that constrained employees. Rather, stakeholders and even employees gave meaning to the programme and they all played an active role in shaping the reform context and outcomes.

This epistemology of scientific investigation based upon an objective reality is characterized as positivism (Mack, 2010). Al-habil (2011) explained that when PA emerged as a field of study by the end of the 19th Century, positivism was the dominating approach in the study and reproduction of knowledge. However, such an approach was incapable of revealing how people interact with the social world and how that world shaped their external realities. Thus,
positivism was heavily attacked for its limitations and inadequacy in handling PA issues, because of its failure to acknowledge the value system; which related to the tension between administration and politics, or bureaucracy and democracy (Al-habil, 2011). This is not surprising, as the positivist approach does not permit an understanding to be gained of the more subjective elements of PA. Positivists assert that it is “possible to obtain hard, secure and objective knowledge” (Levy, 2010: 375) and therefore focuses on the separation of facts from values (Slevitch, 2011). In light of this, alternative theories emerged, such as, interpretivism for both the "study and practice" of PA (Al-habil, 2011: 948). This study considered an interpretivist epistemology to understand and interpret the social world of participants.

The principal objective of interpretivism is to gain in-depth knowledge of "how humans experience the life world through language, local and historical situations and the intersubjective actions of the people involved" (Moss, 1994 in Angen 2000:386). Angen (2000) particularly places emphasis on intersubjectivity. He states that "interpretive research depends on the intersubjective creation of meaning and understanding" (Angen, 2000: 383). In other words, meaning and understanding are connected to each other when researching a phenomenon. The interpretive researcher is also "subjectively engaged in the research process" (Bryman, 2008:16). This requires the interpretive researcher to seek to acquire a deep meaning of the research phenomenon (Schaefer, 2008). By so doing, this researcher’s aim was to understand participants' attitudes, behaviours, language and interpretations of the social phenomenon. As well as an understanding of: their beliefs and values systems; culture and norms; politico-administrative contexts and management style.

However, subjectivity has also been identified as the chief weakness of this approach. Bryman (2008) also cited three other pitfalls of interpretivism. The first occurs on two levels. That is, "the double interpretation that the researcher is engaged in, which involves the interpretation of others" (pp 17). Here, the researcher is interpreting participant's interpretations of the social phenomenon. The third level is where the researcher’s
interpretations have to be interpreted by others (Bryman, 2008). However, to some extent, researcher bias can be minimized by, for example, ensuring that interview questions are clear and consistently presented. However, since it is not possible to eliminate the possibility of bias in this way, it was important to adopt a reflexive approach throughout, so, care was taken in analysing and interpreting the interview data and in writing up the thesis; to ensure that accurate as possible interpretations were given. The Data Collection and Data Analysis Procedures provides further insight into my research practices, which are aligned with a qualitative research approach.

4.2.1. Qualitative Research Approach

The previous section revealed this research’s philosophical underpinnings, which are usually associated with a qualitative methodology. This section demonstrates why the qualitative research approach was more appropriate for achieving the purpose of this study. It also provides a road map of the issues which needed to be considered for a qualitative research design. These relate to: designing the research questions; sampling; data collection and analysis; trustworthiness of the results; researcher’s role and ethics.

This study sought to identify the barriers to the adoption and implementation of NPM in St. Lucia’s public service. It was guided by the following research questions.

1) What is NPM and how is it understood?
   - Was there an NPM alignment?

2) Why did St. Lucia adopt NPM reform?

3) What were the challenges of the public service and the proposed NPM approach to addressing these challenges?

4) What were the challenges to reform implementation in St. Lucia’s Public Service?
   - What contextual factors impacted upon the reform implementation process?
In view of these questions, this study was characterised as qualitative. This is because this researcher’s aim was to both explore and understand how participants understood: NPM, the reasons for its adoption and the NPM implementation process. Such accounts are better achieved through a qualitative research approach.

Several definitions have been provided of qualitative research. Brikci and Green (2007) define it as the process of trying to understand the social world by analysing people's accounts and experiences and not through the analysis of numerical statistical data. Other theorists state that it aims to investigate the 'Why' question (Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge, 2007); whereby a deep understanding is acquired of the social phenomenon (Fossey et al., 2002). Hence, in a nutshell, it can be deduced that qualitative research is about seeking to acquire in-depth understanding of a research phenomenon. Mason presents a more comprehensive definition. She states that qualitative research is concerned with "how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced, produced or constituted" (2002: 3). Thus, the qualitative approach in this research is used to understand and interpret participants' accounts, experiences and practices; and thereby produce a rich and deeper perspective of this research phenomenon.

On the contrary, there are some who place more value on objective knowledge based on numerical data. This is attributed to a quantitative research design. Bryman explains that quantitative study “exhibits a view of the relationship between theory and research as deductive, a predilection for a natural science approach, and as having an objectivist conception of social reality" (2004:62). Although such an approach is beneficial for other types of research; in the current study, the aim is to understand not only the effects of policy decisions, but the reasons that these decisions were taken. Quantitative data, while relevant, is unlikely to be sufficient for this purpose. Accordingly, this study adopted research practices which were aligned with a qualitative research design.

Thus, for sampling, this study was interested in gathering employee perspectives at each level of the public service and with varying organizational tenure. Hence, grade classification and organizational tenure were the two key demographics. It was also
essential that participants had specific reform knowledge. This purposive sampling approach is discussed in more detail in §4.3. Adopting a qualitative research approach also means that the focus is on collating data that is primarily in the form of words. Hence, this study considered the use of semi-structured interviews as its main data collection method. Qualitative research also brings the researcher in close contact with participants (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). This was achieved through the interviews; thereby enabling this researcher to probe and acquire further details from participants. Relative policy documents were also examined in order to obtain additional information. These are listed in §4.4.3. Both data sources were then analysed using Thematic Analysis (TA).

TA was the chosen research method, primarily because of “rich and detailed, yet complex account of data” which can be gained and the flexibility of this approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006:5). TA can be described as a "method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within the data" (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 6). It employs “a set of procedures for coding data” similar to grounded theory (GT), but, is unlike GT, as GT is bounded by theory (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 8). TA has been found to have an element of GT, though not to the full extent (Tuckett, 2005). Additionally, TA is not attached to any prior theoretical framework and so it can be applied across theoretical frameworks (Braun and Clarke, 2006). One principle requirement of TA, is the "systematic management of the data for analytical thoroughness" (Tuckett, 2005:77). §4.5.- Data Analysis Procedures demonstrates how TA was used to analyse the given data.

However, lack of rigour has been cited as a typical problem of qualitative research (Mason, 2002). Nonetheless, sources can be found advising qualitative researchers on how to achieve trustworthiness of results or methodological rigour (Mason, 2002; Bryman, 2008). I describe in more detail how this is achieved by demonstrating this study’s credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability in §4.6. Achieving such methodological rigour does not exclude the researcher. A qualitative researcher is usually intimately involved in the research process. Mason (2002) therefore advises for a continuous process of ‘self-scrutiny’. Hence, this researcher engaged in a process of active reflexivity and
carefully examined her role throughout the research process; whilst abiding by all ethical
guidelines.

Nevertheless, despite a well planned research design, this study encountered a few
constraints. These typically related to time and cost, primary gate keeper access and a lack
of documentary information. The Data Collection Section of this Chapter (§4.4.) presents
a discussion on how these were overcome.

4.3. Sample and Sampling Procedures

The sampling choices for this research related to choosing the people and departments to
engage in this study. Choosing a sample is a very important decision in research. In
quantitative studies, the aim is to have a representative sample, and so, statistical sampling
procedures are usually employed (Silverman, 2000). However, qualitative research is not
concerned about having a representative sample. Hence, this study adopted a non-probability
sampling technique referred to as purposive sampling. Purposive sampling refers to the use
of "special knowledge or expertise about some group to select subjects who represent this
population" (Berg, 2001: 32). Accordingly, the sample was selected because they were both
available and had special knowledge about the research subject. This applied to persons who
were in the public service during the time of the reform. Thus, interested persons made
contact, based on the information provided in the Informed Consent Letter (Appendix 3).
Other key benefits of this sampling approach is "speed and practicality" (McQueen and
Knussen, 2006:96), bearing in mind, that time and cost were two constraining factors in this
research.

Since this was a small scale study, occurring within time constraints, accessibility to
ministries, in the capital where I worked, was a factor in their selection. This is because
ministries are also located north and south of the island. Accordingly, seven ministries were
approached. This includes: three Ministries that participated in the pilot study of the reform
project. Namely, the General Post Office; Ministry of Education, Human Resource
Development and Labour and Ministry of the Public Service, Sustainable Development,
Energy Science and Technology (PSR Unit 2002:12). Four non pilot ministries were also approached. This includes: Ministry of Health, Human Services and Gender Relations; Inland Revenue Department; Ministry of External Affairs, International Trade and Foreign Relations and Ministry of Infrastructure, Port Services and Transport (PSR Unit 2002). A description of the response from gatekeepers is provided in §4.4.1. The Civil Service Trade Union was also approached, following the same protocol, since they are key stakeholders in the reform.

Accordingly, this study’s sample size consisted of 26 participants. This includes: administrative staff; junior, middle and senior management employees and one trade union executive. In order to achieve the aim of qualitative research, which is, to acquire deep meaning from a limited number of participants (Hawkes and Rowe, 2008), the sample size was very small. However, it was difficult to decide on the ideal number of participants. Thus, practical issues and focus of the analysis were key deciding factors. Practical issues related to time and availability. Focus of analysis is where interviews were conducted until saturation point was reached. That is, interviewees’ accounts provided no new information following the initial phase of familiarising myself with the data.

The table below discloses the key demographics in this study. The majority of the sample had an organizational tenure of ten years and more. Such a mature sample would be expected to have a deeper understanding of what goes on in the public service: its history, culture and values.
Table 4.1
Demographic and Background Information of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade Classification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Management</td>
<td>18-22</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Management</td>
<td>15-18</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Management</td>
<td>9-14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical/Administrative and Support Staff</td>
<td>Under 9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Union Executive</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Tenure in public service (yrs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20+ yrs</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.4. Data Collection

A crucial part of qualitative research is thinking about what "constitutes as data" and how that data will be collected (Mason, 2002:52). This research considers people, organization and text to be useful data sources. Thus, this section discusses gate keeper access, establishing contact with participants and the approach to interviews and documentary evidence. It also addresses how any constraints were dealt with.

#### 4.4.1. Participant Selection and Establishing Contact

This study was primarily interested in understanding the perspectives of public service employees, and so, donor institutions or regional associations were not approached. Politicians also declined to be interviewed due to their busy schedule. Nonetheless, this did not derail this study from achieving the research aims, and obtaining a rich account of the research phenomenon.
This process began by establishing contact with primary gate keepers. The primary gate keepers were Permanent Secretaries, Directors and Heads of Departments. They all received a Data Protection/Informed Consent Letter (Appendix 2) which informed them of the purpose of this research and also requested permission to approach prospective participants in their ministry or department. They were clearly informed that participation was voluntary and that both anonymity and confidentiality were assured. Responses from primary gatekeepers were very slow. This was therefore dealt with by continuous follow up. Thus, after two weeks, a follow up phone call was made to gate keepers who did not respond. Unfortunately, many of those gate keepers were also unreachable by telephone. So a follow up letter was again sent two weeks after the attempted phone calls.

Once access was granted, primary gate keepers informed their staff that I would be conducting research. Staff were given my contact details and interested individuals made contact. Some gatekeepers also allowed me to freely approach staff and solicit their participation. Thereafter, all interested participants received an Informed Consent Letter (Appendix 3); which included my contact details, should they require more information. An Informed Consent Form (Appendix 4) was also enclosed in the package. All this was done in an effort to build trust with participants. Gaining participants trust is important in qualitative research (Bricki and Green, 2007). Participants were then given one week to reflect and sign forms; thus indicating their willingness to participate in an interview with me. They were also required to indicate their agreement or disagreement to a tape recorded interview by ticking in the appropriate box on the form.

Interview times, dates and locations were agreed upon between the interviewee and the researcher. All interviewees were contacted a day before the interview to confirm their attendance. Interviewees were reminded that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw at any time. The investigation was carried out in natural settings, such as, interviewees' personal offices, or an available office or conference room. The researcher believed that such familiarity and comfort with their surroundings helped interviewees to relax and stimulated their full participation during the interview. All efforts were equally
made to ensure that interviews were conducted in an environment which had no or minimal disruptions.

4.4.2. Semi-structured Interviews

Initially, pilot interviews were conducted in order to gauge the feasibility of the study, research structure and approach for providing insight into the adoption and implementation of NPM in St. Lucia’s PA. Of the three kinds of interviews that can be adopted in research, that is, structured, semi-structured and unstructured; this study adopted the semi-structured interview. This is because, the structured interview is usually associated with quantitative research and consists of closed ended questions which have pre-set responses (Punch, 1998). It therefore leaves no room for flexibility; nor does it capture participants’ own perspectives on the topic (Punch, 1998). Whereas, the unstructured interview is highly flexible and consists of open ended questions, which follows no preset format, and so it requires relevant training (Punch, 1998). However, the semi-structured interview was selected to be the primary method of data collection, because it utilizes open-ended questions and also allowed me flexibility in the format and order of the questions. All effort was made to avoid “direct, closed, factual questions (DCFQ) (Grossoehme, 2014: 110) as they do not permit an understanding to be gathered of participants’ perspectives. This interview approach also allowed me to probe participants for further clarification or elaboration. The interview script was approved prior to the interview. All participants were asked the same questions. The questions asked are reproduced in Appendix 5.

However, time was a constraint for both participants and myself. Hence, interviews were conducted during lunch hours or after work, and at a time convenient to both parties. On some occasions, interviews had to be rescheduled due to participant’s work obligations. All interviews were conducted by me. Interviews typically lasted from 30 to 80 minutes. All interview sessions begun with an introduction of myself, a description of the purpose of the study and a review of the informed consent form to ensure participants willingness to participate in the study. The recorder was always tested prior to the commencement of the interview, however, not in the presence of the interviewee. I also sought participants’ approval
to record the interview. Participants were then invited to complete a form which gathered demographic and background information (Appendix 6). Following which, they were invited to share any general information about their understanding of the reform. The interview then progressed to more specific questions on their knowledge, implementation and outcome of the reform. Particular attention was paid to participants' language, facial expressions and gestures. Since qualitative researchers demonstrates “respect for people’s individual sentiments and language” (Xuehong, 2002:51). Many participants were happy to participate in this dialogue and viewed it as a symbol of their voice. At the end of each interview, audio tapes were transcribed into a word processed document to facilitate data analysis (§4.5.).

However, the drawback of self-reported data is that the researcher has to take participants' opinions at face value. Nevertheless, as a qualitative researcher, I am interested in participants’ subjective experiences and beliefs. Angen views subjectivity as an “integral part of how qualitative researchers understand themselves, others and the world around them" (Angen, 2000:385). The interview data in this study was then complimented with documentary evidence.

4.4.3. Documentary Evidence

Documentary evidence is an unobstrusive measure that can provide meaningful accounts of the phenomenon under investigation. Obtaining documentary evidence was one of the most challenging aspects of data collection. I was sent back and forth between the Ministry of the Public Service and the Prime Minister’s Office to locate the documents produced by the PSR Unit. Neither department was able to produce any documentation, because they were unable to locate them. The Government Resource Library also indicated that they were never in possession of any of the documents from the PSR Unit, aside from the policy documents on PSR. Nevertheless, this researcher believes that the policy documents obtained, were still able to produce relevant information for data analysis. Accordingly, the documents obtained from the Government Resource Library include: Comprehensive Audit on Human Resource Management - Training (1992), The GOSL Green Paper on PSR (1999), GOSL White Paper on PSR (2000), PSR Implementation Plan (2002), PSR Unit - Economic Development and
Public Sector Reform (2004), the Review of Salaries and Anomalies in the Public Service (2006) and a PSR speech made by a public official. The Government’s Green and White Paper were essential documents in this compilation. Such documents dictate government’s policy (Pollitt, 2013) and therefore shed light on government’s official position on PSR.

The purpose of utilizing documentary evidence was three fold. Firstly, to further "contextualize" the reform and secondly to "clarify data derived from interviews" (Mason, 2002:108). Thirdly, to answer the fourth research question which seeks to understand the challenges to reform implementation. Such information cannot be gathered from other methods such as observation data. Again, I endeavoured to be reflexive throughout the process of both gathering and interpreting the documentary evidence. TA was then used to analyse the documentary evidence and interview data. It was a delicate and time consuming process.

4.5. Data Analysis Procedures

This subsection presents a description of the qualitative analytical framework that was used in this research. Qualitative data analysis is a "process of reviewing, synthesizing and interpreting data to describe and explain the phenomenon or social worlds being studied" (Fossey et al., 2002:728). To achieve this, all qualitative interviews were immediately transcribed following the interview and were then analyzed using TA.

4.5.1. Data Analysis using Thematic Analysis

The data was analysed using thematic analysis which involved six steps as posit by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Phase 1: Familiarizing myself with the data

This phase involved two primary stages. Firstly, the transcription process which begins the familiarization process with the data; and secondly, submerging into the data by reading and
re-reading the interview transcripts. Transcription is a very crucial stage in the research process. It is the transcribed data that is analysed and from which conclusions are drawn. The accuracy of transcription data is therefore a key influential factor in the outcome of a research project. Thus, transcription decisions were made with this in mind. According to Bryman, as a qualitative researcher, you are not "just interested in what people say but also in the way that they say it" (2004:329). Therefore, attention was paid to any pauses, laughter and all effort was made to ensure that all transcripts represent what was actually said by interviewees. So to facilitate data analysis, all audio-taped interviews were transcribed into a word processed document. Completed transcripts were then checked against audio tapes for accuracy. This was a very time consuming process. A unique identifier was used for all interviews. Here, participants rank level was used with the numbering of the interview. Departments or ministries were not specified in order to protect their identity. Both a hard copy and a soft copy were kept of each transcript. This process of data management is very important for data analysis (Tuckett, 2005).

Secondly, the reading and re-reading of the data was a very involved process. It involved active reading in order to identify meanings, patterns and anything of particular interest. Each transcript was therefore read through at least three times. Though, this was a bit time consuming, such an approach permitted a closer interaction with the data. Braun and Clarke (2006) warn that though it may be tempting to bypass this phase; one shouldn't. Familiarizing with the data was extremely essential to understanding the content and beginning the phase of identifying initial codes.

**Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes**

This is a very essential phase in the analysis. Basically, codes are "tags, names or labels and coding is therefore the process of putting tags, names or labels against pieces of the data" (Punch, 1998:204). Codes were derived from the data itself and consisted of individual words or phrases. This entailed a two-step process. The first level of coding was typically descriptive. This requires "little or no inference beyond the piece of data itself" (Punch, 1998:
This is "very useful in summarizing segments of data and which provide the basis of higher order coding" (Punch, 1998: 205). The higher order coding was more interpretive, "requiring some degree of inference beyond the data" (pp205). Data was coded manually. It was much easier to manually manoeuvre each transcript and make notes using a pen. Thus codes and exploratory comments were made on the right hand side of the documents. I then used the corresponding word processed document to cut and paste the data extracts and assigned them to their relevant codes. Each code and its extracts were saved in a separate computer file. However, there were instances where an extract may be coded more than once.

**Phase 3: Searching for themes**

Analysis at this phase involves identifying themes across the data set. TA employs an inductive approach where themes arise from the data and are not usually specified in advance (Meier, Boivin and Meier, 2008). At this point I have already assimilated a long list of codes. I reviewed the codes to identify potential themes and once again assigned the relevant coded data extracts with the relevant themes. I also compiled a thematic table. It documented the list of codes and their description and the emergent themes. Berg (2001) emphasizes that the benefit of such a display is that it enables the researcher to detect any patterns in the data or ascertain what further analysis is needed. A look at the table revealed some commonality between some themes. Hence, it was necessary to undergo a thorough review of the themes.

**Phase 4: Reviewing Themes**

Themes are not simple in nature. In fact, Fugard and Potts describe that themes are quite "complex and have a hierarchical nature" (2015:672). Hence, this active process of reviewing the themes revealed some core and sub-themes. Thus, in some cases, some themes were captured in another theme. For instance, the theme on rewards and incentives were captured in the core theme performance management. However, I ensured that all themes used the original words of participants. All the coded extracts were also re-read to see if it formed a logical pattern. Efforts were made at this point to code any data set that may have been missed. Re-coding is a normal process. Braun and Clarke see it as an "ongoing organic
process" (2006:21). Then each core theme and its clusters were put into another thematic table.

**Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes**

At this point in time I have thematic tables which consist of core themes and sub-themes. I then studied the themes to try to determine what each theme was about. What was each theme saying? What was the story that it was telling? I then went back to my collated data extracts for each theme and organized them into a logical account. Here, separate thematic documents were open. A detailed analysis of each theme was written up. The analysis of each core theme included its sub-themes which then gave further structure to complex themes. Any themes that were not relevant to my research question were discarded.

**Phase 6: Writing Up**

This last stage of the analysis was very challenging; since, writing up was not just about talking about the themes and reproducing the relevant extracts. It was more about producing a compelling analytical narrative that was pertinent to the research questions at hand. Only extracts that were clear and concise and were related to the story being told were used. The written narrative in this regards is referred to as the Results and Findings Chapter of this thesis.

### 4.6. Trustworthiness of Results

Mason advises that qualitative research should be systematically and rigorously conducted (2002:7). In a quantitative study, this involves assessing reliability and validity. However, qualitative researchers assess reliability and validity through a term coined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) called Trustworthiness of Results (in Bryman, 2004:30). Thus, this section illustrates the steps that were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of this study’s result. This involved assessing: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.
4.6.1. Credibility

Bryman states that credibility "parallels internal validity in quantitative research; that is, how believable are your findings" (2004:30). To achieve this, I used the triangulation method. Triangulation is the incorporation of various methods in your research (Mason, 2002). The purpose of this approach is two-fold. Here, one method is used to add value to your findings, or further validate your results, or to simply investigate different facets of the phenomenon under study (Mason, 2002). Hence, in this research, interview data was complimented with the findings from the documentary evidence. The objective of the investigation was to determine if similar themes emerged from both data sets. Additionally, documentary evidence was studied to further explore the data to see if any supplementary evidence could be found. Documentary evidence was also analysed in order to find the answer to the fourth research question. That is, the contextual factors which impacted upon NPM reform implementation.

The credibility of my research was also enhanced through the respondent validation technique. Here, participants were given the opportunity to validate what they said at the research interview (Bryman, 2004). However, I did not accede to the second aspect of the respondent validation technique; where participants are allowed to verify a researcher's interpretation, thus relinquishing some control on the part of the researcher (Mason, 2002). Although, participants do have some level of epistemological privilege, this researcher believed that it sufficed to have them verify their personal accounts of the interview. This also helped to achieve Confirmability of my findings. Finally, credibility was also enhanced through a consultative and strong reflexive process. The former refers to ongoing consultation with my Doctoral supervisor. We consulted regularly about the research plan, data collection and data analysis. The later pertains to a strong reflexive approach in the transcribing, analysis, interpretation and representation of the data (Mason, 2002).

4.6.2. Transferability

Transferability "parallels external validity" and relates to whether the findings apply to other contexts" (Bryman, 2004:30). Geertz (1973a) claims that this is achieved in qualitative
research through "thick description" (in Bryman, 2004:275). I therefore kept a detailed field
log of all my research activities such as interview times, dates, locations; contact information
of participants, as well as the procedures used throughout this process. According to Berg
(2001), such an approach of note taking encourages self-evaluation of a researcher's methods
and strategies and guides the way forward.

4.6.3. Dependability

Dependability "parallels reliability" and refers to whether the "findings are likely to apply at
other times" (Bryman, 2004:30). This was achieved through Guba and Lincoln's suggestion
of an "auditing" approach (in Bryman, 2004:275). Here, records were kept of each phase of
the research process; from the formulation of the research problem and questions, designing
the conceptual framework, fieldwork notes, transcripts of interviews, data analysis decisions,
display of results and findings.

4.6.4. Confirmability

According to Bryman, confirmability "parallels objectivity" and refers to whether the
"investigation allowed his or her values to intrude to a high" (2004:30). Bryman goes on to
say that confirmability is "concerned with ensuring that while recognizing that complete
objectivity is impossible in social research, the researcher can be shown to have acted in good
faith; in other words, he or she has not overtly allowed personal values or theoretical
inclinations manifestly to sway the conduct of the research and findings derived from it"
(2004:276). Again, such confirmability was achieved through the auditing process described
above.

4.7. The Role of the Researcher

Conducting qualitative research at the doctoral level was a challenging, but worthwhile
experience. The challenge began from the framing of the research question up until the final
stage. It was therefore crucial that I understand my role as a researcher and the role of
reflexivity throughout the research process. This was even more critical because of my prior work experience in St. Lucia’s public service. Hence, all efforts were made to reduce any personal biases, particularly in my interaction with participants with whom I may have been acquainted with. This was accomplished by ensuring that participants were not influenced in any way to provide expected responses. I also endeavoured to remain objective throughout my research, despite being primarily interested in participants’ subjective views. I therefore refrained from giving an account of my personal beliefs and preferences in relation to the topic, and ensured that participants were first made aware of the purpose of my research. In addition, I sought to maintain a focus on reflexivity throughout the research process; particularly throughout the data collection and analysis phase. Reflexivity is a "concept used in social sciences to explore and deal with the relationship between the researcher and the object of the research" (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009:323). Berg (2001) puts it simply as the process of continuous internal engagement with one's self. Hence, I repeatedly asked myself questions to minimize the interjections of any prior prejudices or biases. Dupuis (1999) emphasized the importance of being aware of one's own emotion in research and how that emotion can shape our understanding of participant's experiences. I therefore took particular care in writing up participants' experiences.

**4.8. Ethical Considerations**

In this research, I adopted a Universalist ethical stance, where all efforts were made to strictly adhere to all ethical guidelines and principles (Bryman, 2004). Throughout this study, I followed the ethical guidelines of both the University Research Ethics Code of Practice and the Ethical Codes set out in the British Sociological Guidelines. Ethical approval was received prior to the commencement of this research project (Appendix 1).

This study addressed four key ethical concerns. This includes: (i) informed consent (ii) confidentiality and anonymity (iii) researcher/participant relationship (iv) data protection. All participants received informed consent letters and were required to sign to indicate that they have received and read the document. This was also done to avoid any deception whatsoever. Prior to the commencement of all interviews, participants were verbally made
 aware of their rights to withdraw at any time and were reassured of their confidentiality and anonymity. It is worth stating, that none chose to withdraw. To safeguard the confidentiality and anonymity of all participants, participants rank levels were used both in transcripts and in citing excerpts from transcripts in this thesis. With reference to the researcher/participant relationship, all efforts were made to ensure that no harm was done to participants. That is, they were not subjected to any physical harm or stress. Neither was there any invasion of their privacy. Finally, following data protection guidelines, all data in both electronic form and hard copy, has been kept in a secured location throughout the research process.

4.9. Conclusion

This chapter presented a comprehensive research plan encapsulated in a qualitative methodology. Semi-structured interviews with open ended questions and documentary evidence were employed to answer this study's research questions. The data was analysed using TA, whereby a thick description of the research phenomenon was achieved. A clear account was also given of the ethical concerns in this study and how they were addressed. I also highlighted the role of reflexivity throughout this research process; particularly during the data collection, data analysis and writing up stage. The following chapter now presents the Results and Findings of this study.
5. Results and Findings

5.1. Introduction

Chapter Four presented this study’s research plan for gaining an understanding of the barriers to NPM reform implementation in St. Lucia. There are diversity of views on NPM’s origin and global convergence. Chapter Two and Three also considered the pursuit of the neoliberal agenda in developing countries. This chapter now uses interview data to discuss the reasons for the introduction of NPM in St. Lucia’s public service, how it was understood, the NPM approach to public sector challenges and the barriers to its implementation. This study was primarily interested in the perspectives of: public service leaders, its employees and the Executives of the Civil Service Association (CSA).

The findings revealed that St. Lucia’s reform was inspired by NPM; although, this was not explicitly articulated in the policy documents. Endogenous and exogenous factors emerged as impetuses to reform. The former relating to internal challenges within the public service and the domestic environment. Whereas, the latter pertains to coercive isomorphic pressures, external influences and policy bandwagoning. Participants believed that these exogenous influences were perhaps the strongest explanatory factors for St. Lucia’s adoption of NPM. However, the results revealed that managers were unaware of the NPM influence. More so, they possessed very limited understanding of what NPM entailed; although some participants made use of its rhetoric throughout the interviews. On the other hand, participants, particularly senior managers, demonstrated a better understanding of the more general concept of Public Sector Reform (PSR), the heading under which St. Lucia’s initiative was launched. All participants though, were unanimous on the need for reform, which they regarded as essential in overcoming the many public service challenges.

In light of this, four key NPM components were adopted to address major public service challenges. This includes: performance management system (PMS), disaggregation of units
and decentralization, private sector management style and hands on management, and tighter cost control. Participants shared several stories reflecting the profundity of these issues in St. Lucia’s public service. However, many participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the reform implementation approach.

The results indicated that the top-down implementation approach led to a poorly implemented reform. Five barriers emerged as the main challenges to implementation. Namely, no stakeholder buy-in, failed political and administrative leadership, political obstacles, poor institutional strengthening and development and public service culture.

Using the research questions as a guide, these findings addressed the purpose of this study. The themes derived from the analysis are disclosed when addressing the findings by each research question. The participants in this study fall into five categories: Senior Management, Middle Management, Junior Management, Administrative Staff and Trade Union Executive. There are instances where reference is made to lower level employees. This typically refers to junior managers and administrative staff. Direct interview quotes and excerpts from the official documents are used to both highlight and personalize the data.

There are four research questions guiding this study. Namely;

1) What is NPM and how is it understood?
   -Was there an NPM alignment?

2) Why did St. Lucia adopt NPM reform?

3) What were the challenges of the public service and the proposed NPM approach to addressing these challenges?

4) What were the challenges to reform implementation in St. Lucia’s Public Service?
   -What contextual factors impacted upon the reform implementation process?
5.2. Research Question 1 - What is NPM and how is it understood?

-Was there an NPM alignment?

St. Lucia’s reform programme was characterized as PSR. Hence, this interviewer first sought to obtain participants’ understanding of PSR. Thereafter, an effort was made to determine how participants’ comprehended NPM and their awareness of its inclusion in the reform, since, an analysis of the policy papers revealed NPM doctrine and characteristics.

The findings revealed a disparity in understanding between senior management and lower level employees on the conceptualization of PSR. In general, senior managers demonstrated a more thorough understanding of PSR, though this was rarely expressed in terms of the NPM paradigm. Whilst this is to be expected, given the limited involvement of more junior employees (see below), it has a bearing on the implementation of policy. The failure to communicate policy goals may be related to inertia and resistance to change. The proposed reform changes were in alignment with the NPM paradigm. The documentary evidence was permeated with NPM rhetoric, characteristics and measures; whereas, participants demonstrated limited understanding of the NPM concept.

5.2.1. Understanding NPM

St. Lucia’s reform was launched under the PSR initiative. This study’s results indicated a difference between junior employees and senior management in their conceptualization of PSR. Lower level staff demonstrated a basic understanding of PSR. A few articulated the notion of efficiency, which portrays an understanding that increased efficiency is an expected outcome of reform. However, they were vague in their definitions, even when probed, and merely reproduced the words ‘reform is about reforming’.

"Well the whole purpose of PSR is to reform the sector so that it is more efficient."

[Administrative Staff]
This lack of understanding of the reform’s purpose can be problematic, as persons are unable to effectively contribute to something that they don't fully understand. Such employees will therefore be unable to attribute the necessary importance to the reform.

Senior management, particularly those involved in higher level planning, demonstrated a better understanding of PSR. Their conceptualization of PSR was centred on the tools to make government more efficient and competitive, through increased accountability; improved organizational processes; modernized ICT; better resource management and a highly skilled workforce.

"I think everybody recognized that the public service had to change to keep up with the changing times and it was to improve our processes and whether the improvements had to do with the use of technology or getting more skilled personnel into the service or if we had the right persons in the right jobs. The thinking was changing and making the public service more efficient, more competitive”.

[Senior Manager]

“The whole PSR initiative had to do with reducing wastage of resources... Government has a mandate ...which is to meet the challenge of productivity; higher efficiency; accountability and the modernizing of management practices to meet an ever-changing global environment”.

[Senior Manager]

Further interpretation of the comments by senior managers revealed a general consensus that the public service needed to evolve in order to meet the challenges of the global environment. Senior managers therefore attached some value to the reform. Additionally, a comparison of their definitions of PSR and the stated vision, mission and strategic objectives of the reform (Table 5.1. below), indicated that managers understood the reform’s purpose. The strategic objectives are presented in paraphrase for brevity.
Table 5.1. The Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives of St. Lucia’s Reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VISION OF THE REFORM</th>
<th>MISSION OF THE REFORM</th>
<th>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“a more sensitive, responsive, efficient, cost conscious and accountable public service” (pp10)</td>
<td>“To develop a public service, imbued with a strong ethical, professional and national development orientation which is capable of delivering cost effective quality service” (pp10)</td>
<td>The efficient utilization of the State’s resources; the provision of a timely, high quality and cost effective customer service; to create a more customer sensitive environment and to enhance the transparency, accountability and governance of the state.</td>
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An interpretation of Table 5.1. also reveals two essential characteristics. Firstly, an acknowledgement by the elite of the key issues in the public service. Here, reformers acknowledged that wastage, low productivity, low accountability and poor customer service; were some of the factors that were contributing to the hybridization of a negative organizational culture and poor ethical and professional standards. Secondly, it demonstrates an initial indication of NPM alignment. Although, there is no standard definition of NPM; the literature review highlighted that NPM is primarily concerned with the adoption of private sector management practices in the public sector. Accordingly, there are terminology, jargon and characteristics that are typically associated with NPM. Some are revealed in the vision, mission and strategic objectives of St. Lucia’s reform. For example, the focus on cost containment, accountability, customer service orientation, quality standards and efficiency. St. Lucia’s policy documents were also permeated with NPM labels and characteristics. A few excerpts are presented here for the reader’s benefit. Subsection 5.4 (Research Question 3) presents further findings relating to each of the themes below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPM LABELS AND CHARACTERISTICS</th>
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| PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT | “…the management of performance encompasses the entire organizational effort in achieving greater productivity. The following strategies will be adopted: establishing performance standards and measurements (development of performance indicators); development of appropriate performance evaluation processes and procedures; appraising top management” (pp 82-84)  
“The changes to strategic planning are designed to shift management thinking across the Public Service from an input orientation to a focus on achievement of outputs” (pp40) |
| DISAGGREGATION OF UNITS AND DECENTRALIZATION | “The business of organisation re-structuring must be done in the context of existing budgetary allocations for personal emoluments. Wherever possible Ministries and Departments will consider the size of the Public Service and the use of such mechanisms as (i) privatising (ii) contracting and corporatising certain government services. (pp58)  
“...inherent in this are the concepts of decentralisation and devolution of authority with the involvement of a wider cross-section of society in decisionmaking and implementing aspects of the State”. (pp16)  
“The issue of transparency and governance is enhanced through the greater participation of civil society both organized and individually in the affairs of the state. In this regard, the following strategies will be employed: reintroduction of local government; policy on communication and consultation; strengthening community based organizations...” (pp 101-103) |
| PRIVATE SECTOR MANAGEMENT STYLE AND HANDS ON MANAGEMENT | “…the public service must develop new and innovative policies, structures and processes in order to respond to its various clients and to deliver the quality of goods and services expected of a modern public sector”. (pp17)  
“...we therefore recognize that setting standards and improving quality is also aimed at getting value for money and by extension a strategy for improving productivity” (pp57)  
“Problem identification - Limited power and authority of public sector managers to effectively manage the human resources at their disposal” (pp68)  
“Effective and efficient resource allocation requires a high degree of integration between the concepts of strategic planning, the budget and other aspects of the financial management of the public service” (pp23)  
“The strategy to address issues of accountability recognizes that action taken to improve the planning environment and financial management will, to a large extent also contribute towards improving accountability” (pp33). |
Even the recommended implementation strategies and reform mechanisms suggested throughout the policy papers are affiliated with the NPM label. Some of these strategies are presented in Table 5.3. below.

Table 5.3. Implementation Strategies and Reform Mechanisms that are aligned with NPM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Management</th>
<th>Disaggregation of Units and Decentralization</th>
<th>Private Sector Management Style and Hands On Management</th>
<th>Tighter Cost Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance objectives for each ministry/department</td>
<td>a transitional period as the Section/Unit moves from the Civil Service to a private entity</td>
<td>Establishment of customer focused values; Establishment of Quality Standards for each key output of ministries/Departments</td>
<td>Establishment of an Internal Audit Section in each ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing performance standards and measures; establishment of critical performance indicators at a strategic level</td>
<td>Re-introduction of local government – establishment of Local Government Authorities</td>
<td>Customer Charter</td>
<td>Implementation of budgetary control measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop appraisal system for top managers</td>
<td>Increasing reliance on the private sector</td>
<td>Strategic Planning Policy on Communication and Consultation</td>
<td>Development of programmes to ensure cost containment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Service Code of conduct</td>
<td>Decentralization of accounting services</td>
<td>Establish quality circles/work Improvement Teams</td>
<td>Setting quantifiable targets for the elimination of waste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express performance in terms of end results or outputs</td>
<td>Decentralization of Human Resources - creation of HRD Units within each ministry/department</td>
<td>Appointment of quality Coordinator in each ministry/department</td>
<td>Implementation of a computerized integrated financial information system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Development of a sound compensation, reward and incentive scheme

Establishment of a complaints bureau to ensure the attainment of quality standards

Introduction of contract employment


Tables 5.2 and 5.3 above reveal significant NPM rhetoric and approaches that are common to NPM Reform; such as: the implementation of customer charters, customer service care centres, expressing performance in terms of outputs and establishing performance standards for each ministry. They also mimic some of the doctrinal components of NPM (see Literature Review Chapter- p.30). For example, plans to decentralize and corporatize certain government functions; improve quality to ensure value for money and engage in resource allocation to reduce cost. However, it was not explicitly stated in any of the policy documents that the reform incorporated NPM characteristics and measures. Additionally, the majority of interviewees were unaware of the NPM influence in St. Lucia’s PA reform. Perhaps, this is because NPM was shrouded under the PSR label.

Or, participants were unable to recognize the NPM influence because of their limited understanding of the concept. The results revealed that the majority of participants possessed limited to no understanding of NPM; although, they made use of its rhetoric during the interviews without appearing to be cognizant of that fact. This illustrates a clear dissimilarity between the interview data and the documentary evidence.

Interviewees limited conceptual knowledge of NPM is illustrated in the comments below.

"I am still unclear about NPM. I am not aware that the PSR programme was based on the principles of NPM. This is quite interesting"  [Senior Manager]

"I have not heard about that concept, apart from the obvious meaning”  [Middle Manager]
A few interviewees hinted that the definition of NPM would be obvious, in that it is a new form of management; but they were unable to describe its characteristics. Only the trade union executive drew reference to the New Zealand Model when asked about NPM.

"at the time of the reform there were those who were advocating for the New Zealand Model... well the whole concept of Executive Agencies (EA), but nothing happened".

[Trade Union Executive]

The latter comment demonstrates that there was a policy transfer discussion on the adoption of the EA model. This model was already adopted by some countries in the region (Chapter Three - §3.4). Clearly, the elite of the reform were considering the decentralization of some of government’s functions in an effort to improve efficiency, effectiveness and the customer service experience. However, we know from Chapter Three (§3.4) of this thesis, that the EA Model was not selected to manage St. Lucia’s reform. Nonetheless, it is quite striking that NPM reform was adopted in St. Lucia’s PA without a clear indication of that fact. This therefore brings us to the question – why then did St. Lucia adopt NPM reform?

5.3. Research Question 2 – Why did St. Lucia adopt NPM reform?

The previous section demonstrated the NPM alignment in St. Lucia’s reform. This section considers why this specific initiative – which includes clear NPM components – was adopted. The findings presented exogenous impetuses as the primary reasons for NPM adoption in St. Lucia’s PA. This pertains to: external influences, coercive isomorphic pressures and policy bandwagoning. The impact of external influences primarily resided amongst participants from the middle management level and below. Junior managers and administrative staff also believed that government just engaged in policy bandwagoning. Whereas, senior managers were more likely to attribute the adoption of NPM to coercive isomorphic pressures. Although participants possessed limited understanding of NPM and its influence in St. Lucia’s reform, they explained that if St. Lucia adopted NPM, then it was primarily due to
the above exogenous factors. Participants made such assumptions based on historical factors and common public service approaches to major projects. Table 5.4. below shows the differing perceptions by various levels.

Table 5.4. Perception of participants on the reason(s) for NPM adoption in St. Lucia’s PA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>External Influence</th>
<th>Coercive Isomorphic Pressures</th>
<th>Policy Bandwagoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Staff</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Manager</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Manager</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Union Executive</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.1. External Influence

The external influence related to the input from an external consultant. Senior managers confirmed that the policy documents (Green and White Paper) on PSR were drafted by an external consultant. It is unclear who this party is; since the documents made no mention of the author. Still, the majority of respondents, particularly from middle management and below, believed that NPM was adopted because of this external influence.

"If our reform was NPM related then it is because it was drafted by an external consultant"

[Senior Manager]

The practice of contracting external consultants to work on policy issues and major public management programmes is not unusual. Interviewees explained that historically, it is a practice in St. Lucia’s public service. They went on further to present examples of projects that were presently being shepherd by an external consultant.
Generally, the contracting of external consultants to conceptualize major projects quite often involves the transferring of best practices. These consultants are often attached to regional or international agencies, which provide the platform for them to gain widespread experience and knowledge; through conferences and research. These bodies then make recommendations and often times coerce the lesser developed and developing world to adhere to preconditions in exchange for funding. Thus, such international influences have a significant input in reform design and policy adoption.

5.3.2. Coercive Isomorphic Pressures

Coercive isomorphic pressures relate to the imposition of donor agencies and IFIs on policy adoption and implementation. St. Lucia’s policy papers on reform highlighted the enormous pressure that the government received from international donors to change the way its public service was conducting business (GOSL White Paper, 2000). Interestingly, the perception of coercive isomorphic pressures as a reason for the adoption of NPM in St. Lucia’s PA resided primarily amongst senior management. Perhaps, this is due to lower level employees limited insight on the coercive pressure from international donors on governments of developing countries. This is not surprising since lower level staff execute management decisions and may not be privy to management discussions on policy matters.

“I don’t know much about what happens at those management meetings level one thing I know is that our public service needs to be modernized”

[Administrative Staff]

This need for a more modernized public sector was emphasized in the policy papers and strategic planning was proposed as a recommended approach to achieve this.

“The adoption of a strategic planning approach is therefore a prerequisite for the modern public service”

[GOSL, White Paper on PSR 2000: 22]
Many senior managers agreed with this official statement in the White Paper. However, they further indicated that the urgency to modernize the public sector is due to the pressure that government receives from international donors. Indeed the vulnerabilities of SIDS, like St. Lucia can make it susceptible to the prescriptions of foreign donors. The comment below by a trade union official, captures the sentiments of many senior managers.

"Are we really serious about a cost-effective public service or are we merely succumbing to the pressure of external forces; that are not sensitive to our particular and peculiar needs but yet seek to impose economic models only appropriate to peculiar cultures?"

[Trade Union Executive]

The above excerpt demonstrates an understanding of the impact of external pressures on St. Lucia’s specific context. It also illustrates an awareness of the importance of context in policy adoption and implementation. The Caribbean has its unique context and is vulnerable to external shocks, natural disasters and globalization. Such factors contribute to the Caribbean’s dependency upon international donors for financial aid, policy advice and even technical assistance. Figure 5.1. below shows the Official Development Assistance (ODA) for St. Lucia for the period 2000 to 2013. It presents data for both multilateral and bilateral funding.
Although the above figure shows fluctuations in donor funding; it clearly illustrates the significant amounts that St. Lucia received. Despite the decline after the spike in 2008-2010; which corresponds with the era of the global economic recession (Compton, 2015), St. Lucia continued to receive hefty contributions. Usually, such financial contributions are accompanied by strict conditions for funding. Politicians ascribe to set conditions because of the country’s reliance upon external funding, but it equally makes them ‘look good’. Announcing the launch of major projects can be advantageous to their portfolio. However, the problem then arises when the elite, politicians and top bureaucrats, possess limited knowledge about the policies that they are set to implement. Generally, these international donors are pushing the neoliberal agenda which is manifested through NPM. NPM practices are therefore consciously infused in their policy prescriptions, to developing and lesser developed countries. The onus is therefore on politicians and senior bureaucrats to inform themselves, in order to engage more meaningfully in policy discussions. A failure to do so,
can result in governments seeking to mimic other countries because it appears to be an easy way out.

**5.3.3. Policy Bandwagoning**

Policy bandwagoning typically refers to a country aligning its policies to that of another, because it is what other governments are doing. This perception was quite common amongst the majority of junior and administrative staff. Such respondents generally expressed that the government adopted NPM because it was what their counterparts were doing.

"As usual, I am sure that they just do what they see other countries are doing. Barbados did it, so we are doing it too".

[Junior Manager]

On the other hand, only one senior manager attributed St. Lucia’s adoption of NPM to policy bandwagoning. Senior managers were more inclined to highlight the coerciveness of international agencies. Thus, senior staff believed that policy was imposed from outside, whereas junior staff thought that it was voluntarily copied. This voluntary engagement in policy bandwagoning practices is symbolic of mimetic isomorphism at work. This is where an organization models itself after another organization. There are several reasons why an organization copies what another organization is doing. However, junior staff believes that it is in large part due to government’s inability to skilfully engage in policy design and adoption.

On the contrary, it can be argued that lower level employees may not be privy to the coercive demands imposed upon politicians and senior bureaucrats, by international donors. They therefore possessed limited scope to the background of reform. A background which, according to the findings, originated from significant pressure from the international community for St. Lucia to reform its public sector, along the lines of NPM. However, the NPM components adopted depends significantly upon the specific PA challenges. These are now discussed in the findings for the next research question.
5.4. Research Question 3 – What were the challenges of the public service and the proposed NPM approach to addressing these challenges?

The previous sections clearly demonstrated the presence of NPM characteristics in St. Lucia’s reform; and presented exogenous factors as the primary reason for its adoption. This section now presents participants’ experiences of the challenges of the public service. These challenges equally serve as endogenous impetuses to reform. Accordingly, five key NPM components were proposed to address these NPM issues. Namely: the performance management system (PMS); disaggregation of units and decentralization; private sector management style and hands on management, and tighter cost control.

Public Service Challenges and Proposed NPM Solutions

5.4.1. Performance Management System (PMS)

The PMS can be described as the 'big elephant in the room', because of the multitude of problems with the existing system. Undoubtedly, the efficient management of both individual and organizational performance is essential for the achievement of public sector goals. However, this is not straightforward as it sounds. St. Lucia’s PA was faced with many performance management (PM) challenges. The official policy paper on St. Lucia’s reform adequately presents the shortcomings of the existing PMS.

“An analysis of the processes, procedures and practices of PM within the Civil Service has revealed the following: no appraisal of top management; insufficient emphasis placed upon the performance appraisal system; no uniformity in standards set for performance; roles not clearly defined; overlapping responsibilities; performance management tends to focus primarily on performance appraisal; little correlation between successful performance and rewards systems; absence of or limited mechanisms for taking action against poor performers; absence of measurable standards of performance”

[GOSL White Paper on PSR, 2000: 81]
Interestingly, participants shared similar concerns to the extract above. Middle management and lower level employees explained that the performance review process was shrouded with elements of favouritism and bias. Whereas, some senior managers commented on the impact of political affiliation and party patronage on PA.

"When a promotion comes, if the person is your friend then you will be favoured over somebody else" [Junior Manager]

"Persons receive positions based on party affiliation" [Senior Manager]

"if you are the supervisor’s friend, then you will get an outstanding rating" [Junior Manager]

All participants however, were unanimous on the need for improvements in the PMS, but believed that any efforts would be thwarted, because of unfairness. Such practices can cause staff resentment, mistrust of management and a negative working environment. For many interviewees, particularly top management, these negative emotions were heightened because Permanent Secretaries (PSs) and Heads of Departments (HODs) are not appraised.

"I always say that we like to lambaste the politicians but at least we can get rid of them...; but we have PSs who just stay for twenty years, thirty years, untouchable...and the person that they report to could come and go. They could cause them to fail, they could sabotage and they are appraising people below them but they are not being appraised. That cannot work!" [Senior Manager]

An interpretation of the above comment indicates a significant gap in the PMS, with regards to performance evaluation. This senior manager opposed the idea that ministers are subjected to enormous scrutiny and are expected to perform and deliver on promises; whist, their PSs are not held to the same standards of accountability. Some participants commented that this may be challenging to change because most PSs are career public servants, with long organizational tenures. There may therefore be a tendency to bureaucratic inertia. Thus, participants advocated for mechanisms that would hold them accountable for their performance, behaviours and actions, like the performance appraisal.
Senior managers complained about the appraisal instrument. It was a one-size fits all appraisal with no set standards to measure performance; and the same instrument was being used to assess staff performance at every level.

"We want to have a PMS where we could have...a certain weighting that speaks to a certain level or function ... meaning, if you are an accountant, financial analyst - attention to detail, accuracy should be high. If you are a front line person, receptionist; then interpersonal skills and empathy should be high. Not that it is not important for an accountant to have interpersonal skills but it is not as important to the daily function as is the case of a person who interacts with the public every day"

[Senior Manager]

It can be argued here, that there appeared to be a lack of understanding of performance measurement. Employees at the various management and staff levels utilize different competencies. For instance, a manager would need to engage in strategic thinking whilst a receptionist would not. Or, staff may utilize similar competencies but at different degrees. So, a manager would need to demonstrate strong negotiating skills in comparison to a line supervisor. Hence, the appraisal instruments ought to reflect and evaluate employees’ true competencies. Consequentially, these deep seated PM issues have negatively impacted overall public service performance. A performance that has been heavily criticized by the public.

"It is a well-known fact that the general public have a poor perception of the performance of civil servants, in the service that is provided to the public"

[Review of Salaries and Anomalies in St. Lucia Public Service, 2006:2]

It can be interpreted here that the poor service quality, responsiveness and effectiveness of St. Lucia’s public service; is an indication that citizens are not getting value for their money. Many participants endorsed this viewpoint.

In light of these discrepancies, the grounds for the reform reflected a strategic focus on the following performance management factors:
"Clear definitions of the purpose of each ministry and department; establishing performance standards and measurements; development of appropriate performance evaluation processes and procedures; appraising top management".

[GOSL White Paper, 2000: 82-84]

A clear definition of the roles of ministries and departments was a significant first step to raising the awareness for higher performance standards. It was expected that these roles be reflected in the ministry's mission statement. The data then revealed strategies geared at improving both individual and ministerial performance. At the individual level, the performance appraisal instrument was to be reviewed so that it more accurately measures employees' performance. At the ministerial or departmental level, it was suggested that suitable performance indicators be established to measure a ministry's performance. In this way, performance improvement can be realized throughout the public service and on all levels. However, particular stress was made on the need for these performance changes to be clearly documented and more over, that performance measure focus on outputs.

"It is essential that these performance indicators be documented so that both employees and the general public are made aware of the standards expected of each Ministry".

[GOSL White Paper, 2000:83]

"A useful guide is to express performance in terms of end results"

[GOSL White Paper, 2000:83]

Such changes would help to stimulate improvements in the performance management processes. Paying more attention to the quality of the end results places a demand on managers to ensure increased productivity. A productivity level which participants found was not comparable to the private sector. Notable examples were given on the different approaches to productivity in the public and private sector.

"You have a young man in my department who left the private sector for government because he did not want to produce work. He was being paid for his work output...these problems are still prevalent today".

[Middle Manager]
"What makes a difference is the ability to get rid of people, or to discipline people, who are not producing. You can easily get rid of them in the private sector and that fear is what have private sector workers standing in line. The public service needs to model after that”.

[Senior Manager]

Although the private sector is also confronted with various performance management challenges. It can be argued that the ease of managing employees can be viewed as a contributory factor to driving high performance. The private sector is also driven by different goals, which are ultimately profit related. Nevertheless, many participants believed that the public sector should emulate a similar PM model.

In an effort to encourage high performance in the public service, a strong recommendation was also made for the review of the compensation, incentives and reward scheme.

“*The civil service must incorporate a system of incentives, which provide meaningful reward for the excellent performers and as a motivator for achieving organizational goals*”.

[GOSL White Paper, 2000:90]

Linking rewards to performance is a key feature of private sector management and NPM reforms. In essence, this focus on performance indicators, measures, outputs and outcomes and performance rewards are some of the characteristics of NPM as it relates to improving performance. NPM reform can only succeed if the recommended changes in the PMS are adhered to. Participants believed that as a totality, such changes were not achieved. The reform package also proposed an examination of the organizational system and structure to address performance and efficiency issues.

5.4.2. Disaggregation of Units and Decentralization

Presented here are participants accounts and experiences with regards to organizational restructuring exercises relating to the disaggregation of units and decentralization. Typically, proposals for the disaggregation of certain units and the decentralization of others are usually suggested to reduce public sector size, cost and to enhance service quality. The official document on PSR revealed that public sector size had become a major concern for
government (GOSL White Paper on PSR, 2000). Public sector size was also an issue for many participants.

“The service can operate a lot better. I am not sure if it is the size but most people think that the size is the problem”  

[Junior Manager]

Although this is a generalized comment, this participant believes that there is a general awareness that public sector size is an issue in the public service. Whilst the documentary evidence reinforces this point, by highlighting the need to pay careful consideration to public sector size; it made no mention of public sector downsizing. Was this perhaps to minimize any fears of job insecurity? Or was it related to politicians fearing that such an announcement may thwart their political ambitions? Rather, the documentary evidence proposed the disaggregation or corporatization of certain government services. However, the implementation plain failed to elaborate on how this would happen.

“Wherever possible Ministries and Departments will consider the size of the Public Service and the use of such mechanisms as (i) privatising (ii) contracting and corporatising certain government services”  

[GOSL White Paper on PSR, 2000: 56]

The interpretation here is that policy makers believed that such an approach would result in achieving a lean public sector. A lean and responsive public service is also one of the characteristics of NPM reform. Such an approach is also aimed at achieving increased efficiency and productivity. Quite often, international donor agencies are the major impetus for governments in the region engaging in reform (Sutton, 2008) and pushing for a leaner public sector. However, the St. Lucia Civil Service Trade Union had this warning.

"Are we really serious about a cost-effective public service or are we merely succumbing to the pressure of external forces; that are not sensitive to our particular and peculiar needs but yet seek to impose economic models only appropriate to peculiar cultures? Which sectors will absorb those displaced from the public sector? Is it going to be the weak manufacturing sector or a private sector which so far failed to adequately respond to the harsh realities of globalization?”  

[CSA Paper, 2005:2]
The above comment illustrates an acknowledgment by the union of the impact of the neoliberal agenda through external influences on a small island, like St. Lucia, which has its unique contexts and vulnerabilities. The union was very concerned about the socioeconomic backlash of privatization and corporatization, because they doubted the capability of St. Lucia's private sector to fill the gap.

However, for many interviewees, such organizational restructuring exercises would fail in the absence of a review of the existing bureaucratic system and the PSC. Both data types identified these two elements as impediments to realizing a new public service.

"Such bureaucratic pathologies stand in opposition to the flexible, lean, responsive and learning organization that is required for a new public service"

[GOSL Green Paper, 1999:19]

"In the PSR there should have been a review of the PSC. Everything in the public service has to go through the PSC and they slow everything down"

[Junior Manager]

Interviewees understood that bureaucracy certainly has its place in an organization, but advocated that excessive red tape is contributing to inefficiencies. It is for this reason, the majority of interviewees advocated for a review of the PSC. Three diverse views were found. Firstly, middle managers, junior managers and administrative staff blamed the PSC for administrative delays and a slow public service. Whereas, senior managers felt that the PSC did not give them the freedom to manage and therefore advocated for the decentralization of some of its functions. Although, the PSC delegates certain disciplinary actions against lower level employees (GOSL White Paper, 2000); many senior managers felt that it was not enough. They felt that the PSC inhibited their ability to hire, promote, discipline and fire employees. Thus, many senior managers articulated that reform failure should be expected in the absence of a PSC review.

"Everything is centralized in the PSC. They are the ones that could deal with discipline; they are the ones that could fire people. It is a commission that is far removed from what is
happening within the different ministries and parts of government. So any reform that would not have taken care of the commission which has its authority in the constitution...would just be a lot of talk." [Senior Manager]

Here, this respondent is equally implying that constitutional changes are required in order to address issues related to the PSC. This will be a very challenging task, due to the inability to find consensus on a more decentralized PSC. However, the trade union warned about the dangers of minimizing the PSC’s powers and relinquishing it to politicians and top bureaucrats.

"The PSC was created to insulate public officers from political interference...So you cannot say that the PSC is a hindrance, because... what you are looking to do...is to get rid of the PSC... You have seen that there are instances like the former <top government official> where Cabinet attempted to influence the PSC. If there was no PSC, they could have done what they want...what they want to do is to politicize the public service, to the extent that politicians can say what they want to do, who they want to employ and who they want to fire". [Trade Union Executive]

Thus, the trade union viewed the PSC as an essential body for public servants' protection. However, it maybe extremely difficult for the PSC to eradicate issues of nepotism, favouritism and clientelism, because they can only resolve reported issues. Participants should therefore be encouraged to report cases of biasness, without fears of prejudice.

Careful consideration also has to be given to what is decentralized and to what extent. Often times, decentralization of services are accompanied by a modernization of systems and practices. The importance for modernization and innovation emerged from both data types. These are also two essential characteristics of NPM reform.

"The public service must develop new and innovative policies, structures and processes in order to respond to its various clients and to deliver the quality of goods and services
expected of a modern public sector. In this milieu, the building of new or re-constituted systems and the decay and abandonment of irrelevant ones is an imperative"


In light of this, the policy papers proposed the decentralization of both the human resources and the accounting and budgeting functions.

"The establishment of human resource development units within each ministry and department"

[GOSL Green Paper, 1999: 32]

"Review of Accounting Systems, Decentralization of Accounting Services, greater autonomy to line ministries and strengthening the links between budget and planning arms of Ministries and Departments"

[GOSL White Paper, 2000:27]

The perceived benefit is a reduction in bureaucracy and increased public sector efficiency. Yet, some respondents believed that such perceived gains are circumvented by the existing top down management style.

"The problem in the public service is the top down management style. Management hoards information and lower level employees are ultimately resistant to sharing information and trusting management". [Senior Manager]

"Employees are never involved, top management make their decisions and then employees hear about it"

[Administrative Staff]

Indicatively, St. Lucia's public service has a strong top down management culture. Such style of management nurtures employee resistance and will hinder reform implementation efforts. Participants expressed that the corporatization of services did not occur but the accounting and human resources functions were decentralized. However, the majority believed that
significant improvements were needed in the public service management style and employee skills.

5.4.3. Private Sector Management Style and Hands-on-Management

One of the core tenets of NPM reform is adopting private sector management style and hands on management. This entails more flexibility in hiring practices, consideration of rewards, greater focus on the customer, enhanced public relations aimed at improved communication practices and stronger stakeholder relationships. The findings revealed that there were several plans to achieve these, but, many participants believed that things remain unchanged today. Strong evidence of private sector management style and hands on management can be seen in the excerpt below from the official policy paper on St. Lucia’s reform.

“Clearly stated aims for each organisation ...based on the organisation’s overall strategy. This involves identifying the core areas that each Ministry/Department must focus on to succeed. These critical success factors (e.g. quality focus, quick response, revenue generation, innovation, customer focus, cost control, learning etc) would be the principal focus of each Ministry/Department and on which all employees’ attention must be focused”

[GOSL White Paper, 2000: 75]

The jargon and terminology typically associated with private sector management can immediately be seen here. For participants, customer focus, quality and cost were at the top of their list. The latter is addressed in section 5.4.4. below.

The customers of the public service include citizens as well as public servants themselves who use the service. Poor customer service was an issue in both data types. The following excerpt illustrates that it was equally an issue for all stakeholders.

"the call for increased productivity and sensitivity to the consumers of the public goods and services, and the growing concerns for the value for money are some of the issues raised by the general public, private sector organizations, labour associations and other interested parties locally, regionally and internationally”

[GOSL White Paper, 2000: 1]
Some respondents claimed that it has been this way since time immemorial. They blamed career public servants who are stuck in their way of doing things. This demonstrates a potential for strong resistance to change.

However, poor work ethics and work practices emerged as two chief reasons for poor customer service. The following excerpt depicts a junior manager’s views on common work practice failures in St. Lucia’s PA.

"...customers do not get their requests attended to in a timely manner, not enough persons to serve the public; all personnel would take lunch at the same time and customers who happen to come to the ministry during the lunch hour are left unattended to or are told to come back...staff also are not coming to work on time".

[Junior Manager]

An interpretation of the above comment discloses a myriad of problems which impact customer service delivery. Lack of personnel and staff rotation relate to managerial issues. The customer insensitivity of employees demonstrate a lack of training. In both cases, it is the role of senior management to effectively implement appropriate strategies geared at enhanced customer orientation, quality service and accountability. The focus on customer orientation in a NPM type reform is to draw closer to your customers (Pollitt, 2000). To achieve this, policy makers recommended the implementation of a Customer Care Centre, Customer Charter and a Civil Service Code of Conduct.

"A Customer Care Centre and a Customer Charter for each Ministry will greatly enhance the customer focus of the public service"

[GOSL White Paper, 2000:97]

“The civil service code of conduct will lay the foundations for codes of behaviour for all public officers, thus assisting in improving accountability of public officers”

[GOSL White Paper, 2000:37]
The above measures contribute to the creation of a customer sensitive public service. Achieving the latter would equally require a focus on quality management. Thus, further mechanisms were proposed to:

"Establish quality circles or work improvement teams and develop a quality awards scheme"

[GOSL White Paper, 2000:58]

This focus on quality standards and customer service is also a key aspect of NPM. The aim is to give customers value for their services. As part of this process, policy makers believed that stakeholder relationships needed to be strengthened. This included fostering closer ties with trade unions, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector. In addition, many respondents desired to foster closer relations with citizens.

"In fact, the public service should work more closely with citizens. They might be able to give good advice on how to improve customer service"

[Junior Manager]

"I think that public servants will be happy to work more closely with citizens. They are the ones we are serving."

[Senior Manager]

There is value in participants' comments here. Perhaps, it can be advantageous for government to work more closely with citizens as they are able to give better insight into the problems that they face and their desired service level. Conversely, there are boundaries to maintain. Citizens should not be the sole method for performance evaluation, as they can be biased and decisions are made with incomplete information. Such as, knowledge of management’s performance targets. Caution should therefore be used in deciding what data to use and to what extent. Nevertheless, incorporating the citizen element can help government bridge the accountability gap and facilitate better management of resources.

On the other hand, some participants felt that to achieve better management practices, changes will first be needed in the recruitment process. Many participants highlighted that issues of nepotism, party patronage and clientelism plagued the public service.
Consequently, the right persons are not recruited for the right jobs. The policy papers proposed key private sector management practices related to human resources (HR) and training.

“*The proper selection, recruitment and placement of officers at the entrance level of the organisation; more structured induction, orientation and training seminars and mentoring; introduction of a probationary period for all new entrants within the Civil Service and for persons promoted to higher grades; ongoing assessment of the performance of officers; provision of incentives for performance and sanctions for non-performance*”

[GOSL White Paper, 2000: 79]

The interpretation here is that efforts to achieve a more efficient customer service that is focused on quality output will require proper investment in the HR functions of the public service. That is, recruitment, induction, training and mentoring. Components which many participants found to be weak in St. Lucia’s PA. Moreover, some participants, at both the junior and senior level, felt that such practices need to be supported with a clear communication strategy. One which they claimed was lacking in the reform.

“*with the reform one of the major things was the lack of proper communication*”

[Senior Manager]

The documentary evidence indicated that the communication strategic aims should extend beyond the contours of the public service.

“*the communication factor should cover efforts at improving communication within Ministries and action taken to improve communication with the public and other clientele*”

[GOSL White Paper, 2000: 85]

Communication is a key factor in private sector management. The communication element in St. Lucia’s PA was described as broken and fragmented, particularly with the private sector. Thus, strategies were proposed to strengthen public relations (PR) with the private
sector. However, participants believed that more needed to be done. The proposal was to establish an Office of Private Sector Relationship.

“This Office will continue to strengthen communication, co-operation and social partnership between Private Sector Organisations and Government. Strengthening of these links will ensure that the private sector’s views will be considered on all matters pertaining to the socio-economic development of the State. The Office, will in addition, support the strengthening and development of the Private Sector and its constituent institutions”


Undoubtedly, there are many benefits of public private partnerships (PPP). For example, private sector technology and innovation can be exported to the public service. Local private sector capabilities can be enhanced. Conversely, there can be severe drawbacks if performance goals are not clear and monitoring practices are not in place, to ensure that customer receive the best value for their money.

5.4.4. Tighter Cost Control

Cost control is one of the main characteristics of NPM reform. It has been inextricably linked to increasing accountability. Interestingly, participants were unanimous on the issue of wastage and lack of accountability in St. Lucia’s public service. Participants shared several related stories and further advocated for a change.

"I know of persons in government right now that are getting allowances but have not had their vehicle for years" [Middle Manager]

"Everybody knows that there is a lot of wastage in the public sector; financial, furniture and even office supplies" [Junior Manager]

"It is time for a change. Senior civil servants must be held more accountable for government's money" [Trade Union Executive]
Participants, particularly junior and administrative staff ascribed this problem to the lack of managerial accountability. It is quite usual for lower level employees to pass blame unto their managers. Yet, managerial accountability was also a key issue in the documentary evidence.

"Some of the issues critical to the budgetary and financial management processes are: the inability of the budget system to reflect priorities, analyse and cost programmes realistically, allocate cash and control expenditure in a way that makes managers accountable and provide timely and accurate financial and accounting information; ministries devote most of their effort on maximising funding rather than considering actual results; there is a strong tendency for the budget to drive the planning process rather than vice-versa".

[GOSL Green Paper, 1999:57]

Based on the above, it is apparent that weak managerial accountability is due to management's inability to skilfully and competently engage in the budgetary and financial management process. Their focus appears to be more on the maximization of funds than quality outputs and outcomes. Thus, customers were not getting value for their money. The comment below by a senior manager of twenty years organizational tenure illustrates the skills gap in the budgetary process.

"In the document called the Government of St. Lucia Estimates, you would notice the term I and II. Volume I of the estimates carries the (uhm) what you call the narrative plan. How you would do the assessment? How you would do the evaluation? Volume II will give you the actual financial plan....government has not done Volume I in a long time. It is difficult to find people that can do it".  

[Senior Manager]

The interpretation here is that the budget annual presentation is usually incomplete due to skill deficiency. This clearly signifies that a more competent budget and accounting staff would be required to work in a new and decentralized Budgetary Model and Accounting System.

"The new approach to Budgeting and Planning will require a stronger emphasis on policy analysis. Given this, an assessment will also be made of the capacities and skills of the staff of the Budget Division. Training will therefore be provided to the staff to address deficiencies where they exist".

[Green Paper, 1999:60]
Futhermore,

"Improving the financial management systems of Government also calls for a certain decentralization of some services currently undertaken by the Accountant General's Department. Consequently, full approval for payment will be delegated to Ministries and Departments"

[Green Paper, 1999:60]

Thus, the expectation was for ministries and departments to focus more on quality outputs and cost containment, in a more decentralized financial management system. However, it is essential that this modernized budgetary model is accompanied by proper accountability mechanisms in order to overcome inefficiencies. Some senior managers were therefore very concerned about the direct and indirect cost of inefficiency.

"We have to remember that it is also costing government in salaries when the public service keeps expanding like this. A lot of persons want to work with government despite the lower wages because of job security and opportunities for training and study leave. But government needs to curb the size of the public sector and work on making it more efficient."

[Senior Manager]

"The problem is that the inefficiency and low productivity of some in the public sector puts pressure on other employees. It is unfair."

[Senior Manager]

Addressing such financial and budgetary management issues is likely to enhance government's ability to respond to economic concerns and reposition itself in the global market. It is for this reason that the PSR Unit also hoped that St. Lucia's PSR would make an economic contribution.

"Within the past decade countries like St. Lucia have been confronted by the following: sluggish economic growth, trade liberalization, extreme vulnerability to external stocks, declining sources of aid, loans, grant funds and globalization. The achievements of PSR
objectives require new organizational relationships, HRM practices and policy environment. It is in this context the seeds of PSR can find fertile economic grounds.”

[PSR Unit, 2004:1]

Thus, the above challenges placed pressure on government to reconsider the changing role of the state in order to adapt to a changing environment. Consequently, reducing inefficiencies; enhancing public sector performance and service delivery; engaging in private sector management practices; instilling tighter cost control and strengthening the country’s economic position; were some valid grounds for St. Lucia’s reform; which were addressed through the lens of NPM. However, the findings revealed that many of the proposed NPM strategies and mechanisms were not implemented.

5.5. Research Question 4 - What were the challenges to reform implementation in St. Lucia’s Public Service? What contextual factors impacted upon the reform implementation process?

St. Lucia’s government adopted NPM reform in an effort to achieve new institutional arrangements and fiscal adjustments that will permit the attainment of greater public service efficiency. In this study, exogenous factors emerged as the primary reasons for the adoption of NPM in St. Lucia’s PA. Government joined the NPM bandwagon and retrieved specific NPM measures to address key issues relating to performance management; disaggregation of units and decentralization; private sector management style and hands on management and tighter cost control. Although the findings above indicated rhetorical convergence of NPM in St. Lucia; particular difficulties arose with regards to implementation convergence.

In this study, participants generally believed that the reform did not achieve the overall desired changes. They noted the decentralization of some services in finance and human resources, but felt that staff still lacked the requisite skills to perform effectively. The majority of participants highlighted that many of the original problems still persist today. Accordingly, the findings indicated little to no implementation of St. Lucia’s NPM reform.
Participants presented the following as barriers to implementation, namely: no stakeholder buy-in, leadership of the reform, political obstacles, institutional strengthening and development and public service culture. The key findings are presented below.

5.5.1. No Stakeholder buy-in

St. Lucia’s engagement in NPM type reform was typically aimed at: re-designing the PMS; disaggregation of organizational units and decentralization; adoption of private sector management styles geared at better communication practices, customer service efficiency and quality management; whilst reducing cost. These all represent major changes to the way things are done in the public service. Hence, for participants, it was important that reformers achieved the buy-in or commitment of all stakeholders. The administrative directorate is responsible for determining the degree and point of involvement for each category of stakeholders.

In this study everyone agreed that there was no consultation. It was viewed as a crucial factor for successful NPM reform implementation. The category of stakeholders include: public service employees, citizens, trade unions, the private sector and other non-governmental organizations. Each is discussed below.

The buy-in of public service employees related to both the vertical buy-in of staff and the horizontal buy-in of the management team. Neither was achieved during reform implementation. Participants attributed failed vertical buy-in to: the absence of an on-going dialogue and relevant communication tools, and a top-down reform approach.

"Management did not seek employee buy-in; and employees also had no forum to express themselves; neither did management come to employees and say this is what we are going to do"

[Junior Manager]

"It’s because there wasn’t any major consultation or on-going dialogue with employees; neither was there any on-going dialogue with departments. That never happened!"

[Senior Manager]
“Employees were not involved. If employees were involved, then I think that it was employees at the top, but not line staff.”

[Middle Manager]

The interpretation here is that the senior management team (SMT) did not understand how to achieve employee buy-in. Or perhaps, they did not see the value in employee input during reform implementation. Such top-down reform approach can hinder implementation efforts. Some respondents believed that successful reform implementation requires a bottom-up reform approach. Whilst others advocated for a two way; that is, top-down, bottom-up approach. Senior management has to decide which is most appropriate. However, management can encounter serious drawbacks when implementing major projects without employee input. Although, the SMT is charged with the task of policy implementation which affects work activities, expectations and behaviours; employees at the various levels can provide insight into functional and non-functional work processes and systems; the public service culture; customer complaints, and challenges to public sector efficiency. Thus, clear communication and dialogue with employees is essential. Employees are key players in the implementation of proposed NPM mechanisms, which are geared at improving customer service efficiency and public service delivery. The latter are two critical objectives of NPM reforms.

Unfortunately, the results indicated that the reform was not a priority for all the members of the SMT.

"PSR was not an agenda item. There was always a Committee of Permanent Secretaries, but it is what is discussed and that was not their priority and even when certain times when that was going to be addressed we saw Permanent Secretaries absent themselves. Perhaps, because they did not share the philosophy, they did not share the focus on where that was going"

[Senior Manager]

This comment illustrates that horizontal buy-in amongst the SMT themselves was not achieved, as they were not in unison on reform goals. In this case, the responsibility lies with
the Prime Minister to ensure the buy-in of senior management. Senior managers can then identify new and innovative ways to stimulate vertical buy in.

The policy documents highlighted the institution of change teams to achieve vertical buy-in, but participants claimed that they were never implemented.

"Each Change Team should comprise of no more than seven members of staff...Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments will serve as the main change agents of reform implementation in their Ministry/Department. Their main responsibility will be to spearhead the change teams in their respective Ministry/Department and liaise with the PSR Unit on all matters relating to PSR"

[PSR Implementation Plan, 2002:5]

"Like the change teams, who was the change agent at <my department>? Who were the members of the change committee? Nothing!"

[Senior Manager]

"What happened in the past PSR program is that there were no Change Agents. Change Agents communicate and channel the change for smooth transition"  [Middle Manager]

The above excerpt from the PSR Implementation Plan demonstrates the key role of Permanent Secretaries (PSs) and Heads of Departments (HODs) during reform implementation. However, if horizontal buy-in was not achieved, then how can management expect to achieve vertical buy-in? It is essential to establish a process to manage change for such major reforms. This is where accountability comes in. The PSR Unit was responsible for ensuring accountability of management, ministries and departments. They were supposed to oversee the change teams and the roll out of the reform. However, some participants believed that the Office of Public Sector Reform (OPSR) or PSR unit was poorly managed.

"Well my personal view is that the methodology that the OPSR adopted in the beginning was not the best. PSR seemed to be a little office in the building somewhere that was not
necessarily in touch with the real issues, they were not really going out, it was more like an academic exercise...so you ended up with a reform office that itself needed reforming"

[Senior Manager]

Based on this senior manager’s perception, it can be interpreted that the PSR Unit lacked the requisite reform implementation skills and the ability to achieve stakeholder buy-in. It is therefore not surprising, that participants perceived there to be major problems with the overall management of the reform.

It also appears that the repercussions extended beyond the public service. Participants claimed that, citizens, also key stakeholders in the reform, were alienated from the process. Interviewees revealed that very few public meetings were held; and further questioned the effectiveness of those meetings; due to low citizen turnout.

"I mean there were a few town hall meetings so the public was informed. However, did we do what it took to bring the masses in? No! Did we give the public sufficient information to motivate or stimulate their interest? No! ...The overall turnout from the public was poor."

[Junior Manager]

To the majority of participants however, low citizen turnout was not surprising. This is because citizen turnout is usually low on issues which do not seem to directly impact their pockets. Participants explained that politicians have been unable to devise successful public engagement strategies.

On the other hand, politicians declared a productive outcome of the public meetings which led to the drafting of the White Paper. The statement below was made by a Minister at a Meeting for the Caribbean Regional Working Group on Governance and Improved Public Sector Management.

"The results of the public consultation on the Green Paper facilitated the drafting of a White Paper."

[Compton, 2000:1]
Some participants at the senior level found this statement to be contradictory. They criticized politicians for not consulting senior management before making public announcements; because these announcements are oftentimes contrary to actual events.

"The political directorate make announcements at public gatherings and political platforms that I feel sometimes would have been better advised to first discuss with their technocrats. It often times turn out to be very different"

[Senior Manager]

Such practices can heighten feelings of mistrust between the politico-administrative directorate. Moreover, it degenerates the trust that citizens have in their political leaders. Additionally, these findings shed light on the communication link between politicians and the administrative directorate. Strengthening the communications network is an important function in achieving quality management. It is also a key component in private sector management practices.

Interviewees also expressed that better reform outcomes are likely if the elite and labour organizations collaborate on policy issues. Fostering healthy partnerships with trade unions can help achieve legitimacy for the reform and minimize potential resistance. The policy papers made a recommendation for the trade unions and staff associations to be considered equal partners and be represented on various committees in the reform implementation process. Equal partnership requires that consideration is given to the opinions from both sides. However, the remark by a Trade union executive gave the impression that it was not an equal partnership, when asked about the union’s contribution.

"Well the trade unions were involved from the point of view that whatever committee they had, the union was invited to participate on the committee that they had, for the purpose of implementing PSR; but that is as far as it went, being a member of the committee”

[Trade Union Executive]
On the other hand, participants had diverse views on the input of the union. Some believed that the union fulfilled their duty to consult with members but enough was not done. Others argued that there was a lack of thrust, which perhaps was politically motivated.

"The trade union had meetings once or twice, but it was general meetings and PSR was on the agenda but not at departmental meetings. Generally, it was the union that discussed PSR. At the time the union was pushing for PSR because of salary gaps, inefficiencies."

[Middle Manager]

"Well with unions it is very politically dependent. Meaning that the pressure they give is very dependent upon which government is in power...and what happened to PSR; it died and they turned a blind eye."

[Middle Manager]

Reform presents real concerns, such as, public sector downsizing, privatizing, contracting out and changing job roles and functions due to organizational restructuring and new institutional mechanisms. However, some interviewees emphasized that the trade union mobilises only when a government that they favour is in power.

Participants also shed light on government’s engagement with the private sector during the reform. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) are key during NPM reforms. The White Paper (2000) highlighted that efforts would be made to establish closer links with the private sector through the Office of Private Sector Relations. The advantages of PPPs are numerous; some of which includes: knowledge of private sector management practices, innovative technology and best practices. However, PSR implementation plan lacked details on this arrangement. In fact, a few participants thought that enough was not done to involve the private sector.

Thus, in summary, the findings demonstrated a failure to stimulate an inclusive approach with the stakeholders of the reform. This prevents management from acquiring a broader understanding of the surrounding reform context and achieving more favourable reform
implementation outcomes. Outcomes which many participants believed were equally impacted by the leadership of the reform.

5.5.2. Leadership of the Reform

Leadership was another prominent theme which emerged from the interviews, particularly for participants at the senior management level. All senior managers in this study criticized the leadership of the reform. On the contrary, leadership was not given a high priority in the policy documents; neither was there any mention of it in the PSR implementation plan. Nevertheless, interviewees demonstrated great disappointment with both the administrative and political leadership. Administrative leadership pertained to the Committee of Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Departments (HODs), and the OPSR; whilst political leadership pertained to the political directorate.

Senior managers felt that the administrative leadership failed because they did not all share the reform vision.

"There was a big divide on how people saw things and what their perception was. So in other words, all players were not moving in the same direction" [Senior Manager]

The OPSR was also accused of not doing enough to change this.

"The comments that I was hearing is that it was the paper [White Paper on PSR] from the Director of PSR. So it was a very personalized thing...so because of that many persons did not buy into the process. Persons did not make any effort to follow because they had already aligned it to the Director...No significant effort was made to have dialogue with persons one on one."

[Senior Manager]

The latter comments echo the findings above on failed stakeholder buy-in and the poor reform implementation approach adopted by the OPSR. It further reflects the inability of the OPSR and the political directorate to influence followers. For many respondents, the political
directorate, with the Prime Minister at the helm, should have had chief responsibility for reform implementation and outcomes.

"The PSR movement has never had a leader...one of the serious ways we can look at government intent and government focus on PSR would be in the leadership. ...There was a lack of a shared vision and a lack of leadership. You cannot have a reform without a visible leader. Certain countries, I know in the case of Barbados, the Prime Minister took leadership of the reform...The key for me that stood out in this whole program was the absence of leadership."

[Senior Manager]

This senior manager believed that the Prime Minister failed to drive the reform process and receive political backing for the reform. It can also be interpreted here that the elite failed to engage in lesson drawing from their own Caribbean counterpart, like Barbados which experienced better reform implementation outcomes.

Additionally, the majority of respondents also opposed the authoritative leadership style that was adopted for the reform and recommended a more participatory form of leadership for better reform implementation outcomes. Such participants desired to see a form of leadership that was contrary to the top-down, authoritarian style that existed. It was surprising to see that participants did not place any confidence in career leaders. Could this be due to bureaucratic inertia and the unwillingness to change and innovate by such leaders? Such leaders have long organizational tenures and often need to refresh their skills. Hence, leadership development training was strongly recommended by the majority of participants. Such training will permit leaders to enhance their competencies and skills in order to perform effectively in a more competitive and globalized environment. However, based on the findings, the political climate appeared to have a profound impact upon the politico-administrative leadership of the public service.

5.5.3. Political Obstacles

Politics can be considered to be a ubiquitous issue in public management reform. The literature review highlighted the political context as an important external factor that impacts upon the implementation of NPM. Based on the findings, political obstacles referred to the:
politico-administrative relationship, the political continuity of the reform and the skills and competencies of ministers.

To most of the participants, politicians crossed the boundaries of the politico-administrative relationship, which they claimed is demonstrable in the level of political interference in administrative matters, such as recruitments and promotions. They indicated that this is an archaic problem in St. Lucia’s public service. Several stories were shared pertaining to political meddling or micromanaging, nepotism and political favours. Such practices can negatively impact upon politico-administrative relations. Table 5.5 below presents participants’ perceptions on political interference in St. Lucia’s PA.

Table 5.5. Perception of Participants on Political Interference in St. Lucia’s PA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>DON’T KNOW</th>
<th>MAY BE</th>
<th>DIDN’T ANSWER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Staff</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Manager</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Manager</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Union Executive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of interviewees in this study, believed that there is political interference in St. Lucia’s public service. Interestingly, this perception was also shared by all participants at the administrative level. It is not unusual for lower level employees to pass blame unto political figures. However, participants at the junior and middle level were hesitant to answer. A few avoided answering the question all together. Such employees are quite desirous of upward mobility in the public service and perhaps are more guarded in their criticisms of their leaders. On the other hand, the majority of senior managers believed that there is a high level of political interference in St. Lucia’s PA.
The comments below express some strong views from participants.

"When governments are changing ... public servants could be very vulnerable. You have seen that there have been instances like, with the former <top government official> when cabinet attempted to influence the PSC."

[Trade Union Executive]

"Public servants are removed if ministers are not in favour, and then they place instead square pegs in round holes. They get the permanent secretary they want, but he or she may not be suited for the job."

[Senior Manager]

"... there is too much political interference. Politicians want to have a say in everything, appointments, promotions and everything."

[Administrative Staff]

An interpretation of the above comments not only gives an insight into the politico-administrative climate of St. Lucia’s public service; but it equally sheds light on the fragility of top level relationships. Accordingly, politicians were blamed, particularly by lower level employees for weak reform outcomes. Blaming politicians appear to be the panacea to organizational problems.

"PSR did not achieve what it wanted to achieve because of political interference... there is political interference in everything."

[Junior Manager]

"PSR has not been successful because it is too politicized. There is political micromanaging; key positions are directed by who is in power. Politics has a very negative taste for the whole PSR."

[Junior Manager]

Additionally, many interviewees felt that politicians did not recognize the importance of the reform, because they failed to achieve political continuity of the reform.
"...once the government changed...there was a change of focus when there was a change of minister or change of permanent secretary, and it is worst again if there is a change of government. Now if they all were on-board and there is a plan, the incoming government would have taken the plan and get involved; because they were party to it".

[Senior Manager]

"...at the planning stages, one party maybe in power and when it is ready to come off the ground another party comes into power. Hence the reasons why I think PSR should not be encircled around any minister or political party; but be written in law".

[Junior Manager]

In this study, participants appeared to understand that the political continuity of the reform is essential for its sustainability. Additionally, the instituting of NPM type reform often involves the implementation of new institutional mechanisms, which would incorporate new roles for ministers and top bureaucrats. Fulfilling the dual role of politician and minister can be a challenging task, especially for new recruits. Hence, any reform designed for public services should incorporate high level training for its elite. This is even more critical for those governments that have a history of political meddling or little to no reform experience. This helps to equip ministers to lead the reform implementation process and to function effectively in their new roles. Hence, many participants questioned the aptitude of politicians, particularly their leadership and ministerial capabilities and suggested the need for training.

"Our ministers should also receive some form of induction training when they come into office, like in leadership."

[Senior Manager]

The politics of reform is a complex issue. Reform implementation often involves organizations going through various transitions, employees adapting to new roles and the transference of power. However, the results revealed that weak institutional strengthening and development also contributed to poor implementation outcomes.
5.5.4. Institutional Strengthening and Development

Institutional Strengthening and Development are two critical factors in reform. The former focuses on strategic issues like leadership, strengthening partnerships and networks; and enhancing the organization’s systems and process by developing staff; whereas, the latter is concerned with the efficient use of the human, physical and financial resources of the organization. They both work together to build organizational capacity. The results suggest that both factors were weak during reform implementation. Participants placed emphasis on the absence of accountability mechanisms which contributed to weak institutional capability and poor reform implementation skills.

The importance of institutional strengthening and development was stressed upon by St. Lucia’s reform unit.

"The ability to successfully meet these challenges depends to a large extent on the capability and capacities of the government, private sector and individuals"

[PSR Unit, 2004:3]

An interpretation here is that the capability of stakeholders work together for successful reform implementation outcomes. However, participants believed that challenges related to: poor leadership; inefficient systems and processes, despite investments in ICT; and a poorly skilled workforce; greatly impacted reform implementation efforts. They further emphasized that such issues would have been addressed if accountability mechanisms were in place. Participants placed significant emphasis on the lack of ministerial and administrative accountability in St. Lucia’s PA and also during reform implementation.

"When you are looking at governance for instance, there should be a very high degree of accountability because you are spending public funds. You don't have proper reporting procedures, accountability".

[Senior Manager]

"I mean there is no accountability from Ministers. Government just interferes too much in the public service".
These comments appear to confirm the official view expressed in the 1999 Green Paper.

"The review of the processes, procedures and structures that supports and provides for accountability...are either weak or ineffective. There is an absence of or failure to apply rules pertaining to accountability; a weak system for monitoring actions and deviations from procedures and policies; weak, ineffective and sometimes poor supervisory and management practices; failure or unwillingness to apply corrective measures and sanctions; unclear roles and overlapping responsibilities; a general feeling that accountability is the responsibility of Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments... a culture of responsibility and accountability does not form part of the ethics of some Ministries."

[GOSL Green Paper, 1999:61]

The above excerpt portrays that the weak institutional and organizational mechanisms are in a large part due to the absence of appropriate accountability mechanisms. Various measures were put forward to address public service accountability, like, Quarterly Progress Reports and Action Plans; but they were not implemented. Some participants therefore felt that training and development should have been a priority for both politicians and OPSR staff. In many cases, politicians secure ministerial positions following general elections and maybe new to their new role. Thus, most participants advocated for specialized training for ministers to increase their efficiency and accountability and to minimize political interference. A few participants hinted however, that training was only reserved to the OPSR staff.

"...we saw a lot more travelling by members of the Unit to attend conferences, seminars; to see studies on what is happening; now imagine you have done all of that and ... these persons are no longer in the unit...to pass on or transfer that knowledge." [Senior Manager]

Exposing members of the PSR unit to opportunities for knowledge building and lesson drawing can be an excellent approach to reform. However, failure to engage in knowledge application and transfer, results in no return on investment. Regular staff also require relevant training and development opportunities, since they are intricately involved in the execution of implementation goals or will be required to function in new roles. It is apparent that
reformers understood this, as there were budget allocations towards staff training. Yet, no documentation can be found depicting how this money was used, the beneficiaries or the training needs analysis that was conducted. The latter would disclose the skills gap, in not just reform implementation, but equally in PA and policy as a whole; which many participants found to be lacking in the public service. It is for this reason, that many suggested the revamping of the Training Department.

"You need to reform the training department so that it functions as it should”.

[Senior Manager]

Greater organizational capacity, stronger human capital encapsulated in a more competent and skilled workforce would contribute positively towards reform implementation. This is particularly more essential for a holistic reform like St. Lucia's. It becomes even more essential because ministers and bureaucrats have limited reform experience. However, such institutional changes can significantly impact or are impacted by the organization’s culture, as this study’s results demonstrated.

5.5.5. Public Service Culture

Culture is undeniably a principal issue in public management reform. It would be unwise to introduce NPM measures without giving prior consideration to the public service’s culture. The introduction of new institutional mechanisms will often entail changes to the organization’s structure, job roles, systems and processes. These are all functions which contribute to shaping an organization’s culture. Additionally, the shared assumptions that people have on what may or may not be acceptable may change.

Participants shared account’s on how societal or national culture, and organizational culture affected both reform implementation and outcomes. The societal level pertained to the lack of citizen involvement and citizen pressure. The organizational level referred to the dysfunctional organizational culture. Participants advocated that a change management strategy and slower paced reform would have helped to overcome public service culture challenges during reform implementation. Both were absent in St. Lucia’s reform.
Prior to the adoption of NPM reform, the Green and White Paper on PSR were made available for citizens to read. The findings of the study illustrated that at the societal level, there was limited citizen involvement. Many participants also doubted that citizens embraced that opportunity and therefore stressed that more should have been done to stimulate public engagement.

"They advertised the Green & White paper, but the St. Lucia public is not a reading public. So other means of reaching the public should have been found" [Junior Manager]

"There was no major public debate on PSR. You have more comments being made on V.A.T. But given the nature of what is involved, they should have sensitized the public; because the public are the ones who interact with the public service...who call the talk shows every day, ...writing the newspapers; ... going to the news about the service of public officers when they are not satisfied. Our history for public consultation is not very impressive."

[Senior Manager]

It can be interpreted here that citizens appeared to be more concerned about the issues that directly impact their livelihood. Yet, they continuously complain to the media about poor public sector performance. The elite has a key role in ensuring that citizen buy-in is achieved. On the other hand, it is also apparent that citizens failed to recognize their power in holding the politico-administrative directorate accountable. Thus, the lack of citizen pressure appear to be one contributory factor to poor reform implementation outcomes.

At the organizational level, this study discovered a dysfunctional organizational culture in St. Lucia's public service. Participants shared several stories relating to: nepotism, clientelism, favouritism, political meddling, low staff productivity, tardiness, absenteeism and unprofessionalism. Participants’ comments appear to confirm the official views expressed in the policy documents.

St. Lucia's public service has been characterized as having a deeply entrenched culture of:
low productivity, efficiency, accountability and poor work ethics.

[GOSL, Green Paper, 1999:7-61]
Such issues greatly affect service quality, productivity levels and organizational climate. Reformers therefore advocated for a change in public servants’ mind set, in order to effectuate a new civil service culture.

“The creation of a new civil service requires a change in the existing climate and culture. Measures...such as: accountability, transparency and integrity; improving customer service; strategic planning and the focus on output; performance management and productivity - will all contribute to improving the organizational climate and culture of the public service. This culture can only be sustained if efforts at addressing the human aspects of the organization are undertaken and officers are instilled with the new work values”.

[GOSL White Paper, 2000:95]

Efforts to address the above mentioned measures have been presented throughout this chapter. However, the findings equally demonstrated that these changes were not achieved. For example, accountability, performance management, productivity and poor customer service continue to be a problem today. A middle manager simply said:

"All those challenges that we faced were there 10 years ago, it is still there now. The culture hasn't changed."

[Middle Manager]

Perhaps, it is because the proposed Civil Service Code of Conduct was not instituted. This was expected to modify behaviours and the public service’s culture. However, achieving drastic organizational culture change is a very challenging task; which many participants felt would have been made easier with a change management strategy. Such a strategy would support the reform implementation process and would equally contain government's contingency plan for eventual risks. Thus, it would demonstrate government’s commitment to change. Based on the findings, such a document was not prepared.

Hence, in summary, the findings indicated a gap in projected plans versus the actual results. Accordingly, many respondents believed that politicians were too ambitious and rushed into the reform.
"...It was done in a bit of hurry"  

[Determining a ‘right’ pace for reform, that is, a fast paced or incremental, can be a very challenging task. However, lesser developed countries may not be privilege to making such decisions, since reforms are usually bounded by strict conditions. St. Lucia’s holistic reform was projected to last three years (PSR Implementation Plan, 2002); although, in reality, some participants claimed it to be a reform that started with a bang and then became a silent reform of ten years that lacked tangible results. Thus, the majority of participants felt that St. Lucia’s reform was not a total success.

"we were just on our way but not sure what happened along the way."

[Senior Manager]

" Well there are no benefits to be seen; much of the problems are still there today."

[Jr. Manager]

Although, participants expected to see some tangible changes; it may be inappropriate to characterize St. Lucia’s reform as a definite failure in the absence of measurable data. Reform objectives were descriptive and were not able to be measured through a "systematic quantitative or qualitative assessment" of the organization's performance (Caiden and Caiden, 1998:12). Still, for the majority of participants, the intent of reformers are revealed in the expressed reform objectives.

Eventually, St. Lucia’s reform, which was launched in 1999, was no longer funded in 2007. Perhaps, this was due to poor reform outcomes. Nonetheless, five years later, in 2012, the government has embarked on a Public Sector Modernization (PSM) Project, without drawing any lessons from the last reform attempt. Moreover, many participants expressed that the problems during the last reform are still prevalent today. It is therefore hoped that the findings of this study can help inform future PA reform efforts.
5.6. Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated that St. Lucia dipped into the NPM shopping basket to reposition its PA within the global environment. Its reform strategies were geared at implementing key NPM principles and characteristics. However, participants were unaware of any NPM alignment, but did make use of its rhetoric throughout the interviews. The results also indicated that exogenous impetuses, relating to coercive isomorphic pressures, external influences and policy bandwagoning, appeared to be the dominant reasons for the adoption of NPM. The study also discovered that there were significant reform implementation challenges which resulted in a poorly implemented reform. Thus, the results indicated a gap in the proposed NPM implementation plans versus the actual results. The interview process was quite enjoyable and the participation of interviewees from all four levels of the public service contributed to making this study even more unique. The next chapter now discusses the findings of this study in connection to the existing literature.
6. Discussion, Implications for this study and Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

As mentioned in the Introduction (§1.6), this study is, at the time of submission, the first to explore the adoption and implementation of NPM in St. Lucia’s Public Administration (PA). Chapter Two and Three presented the literature surrounding the research topic. Chapter Four discussed the research design and methodology. Chapter Five presented the results and findings. This Chapter now discusses those findings in relation to the literature. This is followed by the strengths and limitations of this study, implications for this study and a conclusion.

Reform in St. Lucia came at a time of significant challenges for its public service, and so, participants were unanimous on the need for reform. St. Lucia’s reform was characterized as PSR. Senior management appeared to have a more in-depth understanding of its meaning than junior employees. Perhaps, this is due to the limited involvement of junior staff during the reform process. Consequently, such employees developed a poor perception of the reform; which ultimately harmed reform outcomes. This finding is supported by Addae, Parboteeah and Velinor (2008). They argued that successful reform implementation essentially requires that employees clearly understand the reform process and their role in that process.

Although St. Lucia’s reform was characterized as PSR, St. Lucia, like its fellow counterparts, adopted policies aligned with NPM. St. Lucia’s public service was under-performing, and struggling with customer service delivery, quality and effectiveness. The government was also faced with a high fiscal debt and its public service operations were rooted in various inefficiencies. These all represent endogenous issues which have been identified as common reasons for many public services adopting NPM type reforms (Rezende, 2008). Accordingly, the GOSL was coerced by international donors to address these endogenous issues (GOSL White Paper, 2000). However, participants cited exogenous impetuses, relating to external
influences, coercive isomorphic pressures and policy bandwagoning, as perhaps the strongest explanatory factor for St. Lucia’s adoption of NPM. The government therefore adopted the NPM framework which incorporated principles of: performance management system (PMS), disaggregation of units and decentralization, private sector management style and hands-on management and tighter cost control. However, participants were unaware of the NPM components in the reform. They nonetheless made use of its rhetoric throughout the interviews; as they expressed concerns relating to managerial decision making; accountability and performance; institutional capacity building - all of which are key issues in the NPM repertoire. Such gap in knowledge has a bearing on policy implementation.

It therefore comes as no surprise that the findings indicated a gap between the rhetorical and implementation convergence of NPM. This finding is consistent with claims made by Dollery and Lee (2004). They articulated that the implementation convergence of NPM seems to be lagging behind its rhetorical convergence. Consequentially, St. Lucia experienced implementation challenges related to: stakeholder buy-in, leadership, political obstacles, institutional strengthening and development and public service culture. Sozen and Shaw (2002) stated that the application of NPM principles are significantly impacted by contextual factors such as “history, culture, politics and managerial leadership” (2002:476). So, St. Lucia’s inadequate focus on context resulted in little to no implementation of the proposed reform measures during the given time frame.

The chosen interpretative analytical approach permitted a deeper insight to be gained of this research phenomenon and thus expanded our knowledge on St. Lucia’s reform efforts. This study was guided by four research questions, which will be used to steer this discussion.
Research Question 1 - What is NPM and how is it understood?

-Was there an NPM alignment?

6.2. Understanding NPM

St. Lucia’s reform was classified as PSR. The findings revealed that senior management had a more indepth understanding of the term. Their definitions encompassed strategies to make the public service more effective, competitive, innovative and modernized. Their collective accounts focused on structural and process changes, all of which are encapsulated in Pollitt and Bouckaert's (2004) definition of public management reform. Junior employees on the other hand, demonstrated a basic understanding of PSR. This was evidenced in their inability to elucidate on its meaning. This is perhaps due to their limited involvement during the reform process. Employee involvement is a key technique in private sector management. This is where the input of all employees are valued (Apostolou, 2000). Among the many benefits are: “higher levels of employee motivation, creativity, productivity and commitment” (Apostolou, 2000:8). Such posited gains can help managers to better manage the change process during reform implementation. However, a failure to involve employees can create adverse results. Additionally, management’s failure to communicate reform goals may be related to inertia and resistance to change. Management buy-in is therefore essential for reform. See §6.5.1. for further discussion on the latter.

Generally, St. Lucia’s reform was expected to result in changes that were in clear alignment to the NPM paradigm; under a PSR programme classification. Pollitt and Dan highlighted that “NPM reform and public management reform are not the same thing, and there are many other types of reform going on which cannot be classified as NPM, like, ‘joined-up government’ or collaborative networking” (2011 :9). NPM reforms typically comprise of several or all of the characteristics, identified in the Literature Review Chapter- §2.2.3. Generally, NPM is concerned with the adoption of private sector management techniques to manage the public sector; whereby the expected end result is increased efficiency, accountability and cost effectiveness (Fatemi and Behmanesh, 2012). Some theorists view it as a ‘marriage’ of managerialism and institutional economics or public choice (Hood, 2001;
Promberger and Rauskala, 2003). Thus, NPM is manifested through a combination of principles which focus on greater competition, disaggregation of units and decentralization, performance management, private sector management style, hands-on management and parsimony in the use of resources, for more quality outputs (Fatemi and Behmanesh, 2012). However, Sarker (2006) revealed that no country has yet adopted the total NPM package.

St. Lucia’s NPM reform mirrored some of these characteristics. The findings revealed a focus on cost containment; identifying explicit standards and measures of performance with a principal focus on quality outputs; disaggregating various units and the decentralization of certain functions and the adoption of a private sector management style. However, the results revealed a clear disparity between the interview data and the documentary evidence on the presence and understanding of NPM. Participants were not aware of an NPM alignment, and also demonstrated a poor understanding of the concept. Whereas, the policy papers were infused with NPM characteristics and measures. This is not surprising, since many of the Caribbean counterparts equally dipped into the NPM shopping basket (Sutton, 2008) amidst fiscal, organizational and globalization challenges.

This perceived knowledge gap on NPM is also not surprising. It has been noted that public services in the Caribbean have poor policy skills and policy analysis capabilities (Kendall, 2008; Minto-Coy and Berman, 2016). On the other hand, one may argue that it is not important for managers to be knowledgeable of NPM. However, such policy prescriptions are usually imposed upon the lesser developed countries, by International Financial Institutions (IFIs) that are well aware and knowledgeable of the chosen policies. It can therefore be beneficial if the elite understand the policies that they are set to implement, in order to engage in more meaningful policy analysis discussions. Zafaraullah emphasizes that a lack of understanding of these precepts can impact upon government’s search for “economic development and social advancement” (2013: 937). This is because the policy makers, top decision makers and other key personnel would lack the requisite knowledge needed for policy engagement, development and implementation. This seems to be the case for St. Lucia. Its government adopted the NPM reform approach, and employees appeared to possess very little knowledge about it.
Research Question 2 – Why did St. Lucia adopt NPM reform?

6.3. Adoption of NPM

The literature review presented various reasons for the spread of NPM. However, it can be argued that the impetus for reforms differs for governments of the developed world versus those of the lesser developed. Quite often the lesser developed nations are obliged to adopt reforms in exchange for funding. Thus, the supremacy of donors (Osborne, McLaughlin and Ferlie, 2002; Keraudren and Van Mierlo, 1998; Labri, 1999), play a key role in the spread of NPM in the region. Indirectly, such IFIs are pushing the neoliberal agenda. This neoliberal agenda has been described as a stimulant of the dependency syndrome for lesser developed nations (Venugopal, 2015). Neoliberalism advocates for privatization, marketization and an opening of foreign direct investments (Crouch, 2011); despite repeated criticisms relating to inequality, class domination and exploitation (Biebricher & Johnson, 2012; Venugopal, 2015). NPM principles are a key part of that agenda. Accordingly, Caribbean governments were given a directive by the World Bank to reform their public sectors based on the NPM Model (Sutton, 2008). The results of this study demonstrated that St. Lucia also adopted the NPM model, and exogenous impetuses emerged as the main driver for reform. This relates to external influences, coercive isomorphic pressures and policy bandwagoning. These are now discussed below.

6.3.1. External Influences

Undoubtedly, St. Lucia’s public service was faced with many internal challenges which impacted on service delivery and effectiveness. However, in this study, participants, particularly at the middle level and below, believed that St. Lucia adopted NPM reform because it was drafted by an external consultant. This is not an unusual practice in the Caribbean. Sutton (2008) explained that small island states do not usually possess the necessary policy making skills. Thus, "substantial external assistance" is needed for “NPM style reform to work adequately in low capacity small states of the OECS" (Sutton, 2008:
20). In this study, participants presented examples of many other projects that are being championed by external consultants.

Usually, such agents transfer their ideas or best practices when engaged in the policy transfer process, and are therefore known to draft reforms inspired by "ideas, principles and techniques of NPM" (Pollitt, 2000). However, this zealousness by external consultants to impose NPM principles on the lesser developed countries originate from the pursuit of the neoliberal agenda by international donor agencies. Theorists have therefore advised implementers in the region to give adequate consideration to the Caribbean context; because borrowed reform practices may not work in the same way or yield similar results. (Sutton, 2008; Minto-Coy and Berman, 2016). Such external policies were informed by and designed for the context in which they originated. Small Island Development states (SIDS) have their unique context and face very different vulnerabilities. It is therefore crucial that the agents of the importing country understand both the theoretical and practical components of the chosen policy and its surrounding context. Massey stressed that the "policy process exists within a narrative informed by the theoretical and practical context in which it is situated" (2009:384). Hence, the first crucial steps for the key animators of the reform is to understand the chosen policy; the policy transfer process and the implementing context.

Countries can also benefit from lesson drawing experiences. Barbados, St. Lucia’s neighbouring island, detailed their lesson drawing experiences from other Commonwealth countries, such as: the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Malta, Canada, Australia and Trinidad and Tobago, in their White Paper on PSR (Barbados White Paper, 1996). They gleaned important lessons on what worked and what failures to avoid. St. Lucia’s reform paper made no reference to any such lessons. It is unknown if such lessons were addressed during discussions on reform design. What is known however, is that the policy documents were embedded with NPM labels and characteristics.

6.3.2. Coercive Isomorphic Pressures

Coercive isomorphic pressures emerged as another reason for the adoption of NPM reform in St. Lucia. This belief resided primarily amongst senior managers. Perhaps this is because
senior managers are more privy to the coercive influence of donors than lower level staff. Coercive isomorphism creates pressure on government (Radaelli, 1997). In St. Lucia’s case, international donor agencies pressured the government to improve public service delivery (GOSL White Paper, 2000). The region was also pressured by the World Bank to include NPM principles in their reform (Sutton, 2008). This argument was also previously made by Bissessar (2002). She emphasized that NPM adoption in the Commonwealth Caribbean is a straightforward case of coercive transfer, arising from direct imposition from international donor agencies (in Sutton, 2008:16). Further evidence of coercive isomorphism and implementation convergence are also illustrated by the widespread adoption of strategic planning in NPM reforms in the region (Sutton, 2008). It was equally an element in St. Lucia’s NPM reform.

Thus, politicians in St. Lucia responded to these pressures by embarking on a comprehensive reform, which was announced during an election campaign. This comes as no surprise. Rose (2005) views timing as a crucial factor in policy transfer. It is also quite usual for the political leadership to be the source of reform initiatives in the region (Sutton, 2008). However, behind the political front is the pressure that governments faced from donor agencies.

Many countries in the Caribbean employed NPM techniques to reform their public services with the support of external donors and management consultants (Sutton, 2008; Brown, 2008). They were all "driven by similar ambitions to reduce debt and improve fiscal management, while increasing efficiency and modernization of the public service" (Capri, 2011:3). However, they all differed in the starting point for the reform and the reform context. Expectedly so, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000) assert that the chosen NPM components vary from country to country (in Pollitt, 2000). It is essential that actors in the policy transfer process have sound understanding of the process and the proposed policies in order to adopt the right components. This is supported by Draper (2001). He advised the governments of the region not only to resist the temptation to engage in total policy copying, but to equally engage stakeholders in the process. The challenge lies in “identifying the hierarchy of stakeholders and defining these engagements” (Steane, 2008:457). An understanding of the policy and the role of each stakeholder is required. Since the converse is an uninformed
government which operates in an immature policy environment; and consequently, may have a tendency to imitate policies of other governments because they are perceived as more successful.

6.3.3. Policy Bandwagoning

Policy bandwagoning as a reason for St. Lucia’s adoption of NPM was shared amongst the majority of junior and administrative staff. This refers to the belief that politicians engaged in NPM because they did not want to be left behind. However, governments maybe tempted to adopt policies, ideas, instruments or tools in order to be similar or resemble other organizations for a number of reasons. For example, the other organization is seen to be more superior and has had successful policy outcomes, or they have a poor understanding of policy or are uncertain about organizational goals (DiMaggio and Powell, 1982). The result is mimetic isomorphism. Indeed, institutional isomorphism often results in ‘greater homogeneity’ (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). However, it is crucial that implementers give due consideration to the both the host and receiving context. This requires great skill.

The findings revealed that politicians and senior bureaucrats lacked the requisite skills to engage successfully in policy analysis and implementation. This concurs with arguments made by Sutton (2008) and Draper (2001) on skills shortages in reform in the region. Skills shortages was also presented in Chapter Three of this Thesis as another reason for Caribbean Dependency upon the more developed world. Accordingly, such skills are usually imported. Conventionally, skill deficiencies have been noted in areas related to “governance, institutional reform and capacity building” (Dervis, 2000:15). Dervis therefore recommends that international organizations and donor agencies change their focus and determine the countries’ skills deficiencies and then make more concentrated efforts to develop their capabilities so they could “design and implement good policies themselves” (2000: 13). Donor agencies would therefore be playing a more significant role in empowering nations to effectively address policy problems. Consequently, governments would be making a shift from “haphazard policy copying to responsible policy transfer” (Randma-Liiv and Kruusenberg, 2012: 165). That is, governments would become more knowledgeable about the chosen policy for implementation.; and better equipped to more skilfully engage in lesson
drawing and policy analysis discussions on suitability and policy implementation. A failure to do so can result in a ‘vicious cycle’ with greater susceptibility to policy transfer and a tendency to engage in uninformed transfer, which may result in policy failure (Randma-Liiv and Kruusenberg, 2012). Uninformed transfer refers to the receiving country possessing inadequate knowledge about the transferred policy and its operational effects in the donor country (Randma-Liiv and Kruusenberg, 2012). This appears to be the case for St. Lucia. Cabinet approved NPM reform without possessing any substantial knowledge of the policy and its suitability within St. Lucia’s context. Additionally, the politico-administrative directorate was unable to achieve favourable reform implementation outcomes.

Research Question 3 – What were the challenges of the public service and the proposed NPM approach to addressing these challenges?

6.4. Public Service Challenges and NPM Approach

The previous sections discussed the NPM alignment in St. Lucia’s reform. A fact which participants were not aware of; and a concept which they appeared to know very little about. Exogenous impetuses emerged as the main driver for St. Lucia’s adoption of NPM. This section discusses the public service challenges, which served as endogenous impetuses to reform, and the NPM approach to addressing these challenges.

St. Lucia’s government embarked on a comprehensive reform. Such comprehensive reforms are very rare (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). Perhaps, this approach was adopted because government experienced strong coercive influences and were also confronted by significant internal challenges which created a demand for increased efficiency and effectiveness. Accordingly, four key NPM elements were selected to address major public service challenges.
6.4.1. Performance Management

Addressing the performance management system (PMS) is a key NPM technique (Goldfinch and Wallis, 2010; Rose and Waterhouse, 2004) which focuses on the establishment of clear standards and measurements of performance aimed at achieving quality output (Pollitt, 2000). Performance measurement has become an essential reform characteristic for many public services around the world, and has been best illustrated in NPM countries (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). PMS is equally a major issue for public services in the Caribbean region; as they have been described by some employees as ‘ineffective’ (Sutton, 2008). It was also a chief concern for participants in this study.

Middle management and lower level employees were primarily concerned with the elements of favouritism and bias especially at the time of performance reviews; where, preferred employees received excellent appraisals and promotions. Such practices trigger feelings of unfairness, which ultimately impact upon employee commitment and performance. Trade unionists believed that the issue of unfairness was not sufficiently addressed in the Green and White Paper on PSR (CSA, 2005). It was equally cited as a major issue in the region (Draper, 2001). Thus, the proposed performance measures, if implemented would assist in minimizing such issues.

On the other hand, many participants, especially senior managers seemed to be outraged because permanent secretaries are not subjected to a performance review. Submitting managers to performance reviews can be quite beneficial (Promberger and Rauskala, 2003). Generally, it “introduces disciplinary mechanisms which compel public sector bodies to focus on their specific responsibilities and carry out those tasks efficiently and effectively” (Promberger and Rauskala, 2003: 2); thereby permitting the public service to achieve the desired performance levels. However, it is essential that the instruments, measures and indicators used to assess performance are appropriate. In this study, senior management strongly criticized the one size fits all appraisal. They felt that it was incapable of accurately measuring their performance and as such needed to be revisited. There is merit in this claim.
The findings further illustrated that strong performance is encouraged by a complimentary compensation, incentives and rewards scheme. This motivation strategy enables an organization to both achieve and sustain effective performance. Performance related pay is a key management instrument in NPM reforms expected to raise efficiency and achieve quality output (Rosta, 2011). The reform proposed a review of the PMS, performance appraisal instrument, and the establishment of performance indicators and measures; all of which are predominant elements in the NPM doctrine (Labri, 1999). Unfortunately, the findings demonstrated that no substantial changes in the PMS occurred during the life of the reform. It would therefore be difficult to achieve NPM reform without making such requisite changes to the PMS.

A response paper on St. Lucia’s PSR by the St. Lucia Civil Service Association commented on the urgent need for changes to the PMS, because the subjectivity in the present system inhibits the realisation of performance goals and the continual development of public servants (CSA, 2005). This supports the unfairness claims by many respondents. However, obtaining the desired PMS changes would require a change in the performance culture. This can be quite challenging, particularly for small island states like St. Lucia, due to political and societal influences. Public servants have close knit social and family relationships which are translated into the workplace. Hence, it is not uncommon that issues of nepotism, biasness and unfairness arise. Consequently, such issues tarnish public sector values, like integrity and professionalism. Thus, it can be very challenging to change the performance culture when such practices have become inbred into the nature and structure of society, and by extension, the public service.

Yet, working in the public sector is appealing to many. Brown (2008) presents a paradox regarding public sector employment in the region. He explained that many persons seek to be employed in the public sector for job security and training and development opportunities, despite the wages being much lower. Research has shown that within the region, public sector employees are paid higher at the lower level, but lower at the "higher skilled, technical, professional and managerial levels" (Collins and Washington, 1997 in Brown, 2008:8). This however, has not been a deterrent to job seekers or even employees leaving the private sector.
to work in the public sector. Participants shared stories pertaining to the latter. However, a few employees articulated that some persons leave the private sector because of the tight grip on productivity. Others believed that nepotism and clientelism are additional reasons for the expanding public sector. This places significant pressure on government. Since, a major challenge, particularly for small island states, such as St. Lucia’s, is the cost of conceptualizing and implementing a new PMS with the widespread support it deserves to ensure its success (Sutton, 2008). Moreover, instilling a performance culture that is based on an ethos of efficiency and effectiveness would require the collective commitment of all stakeholders and a relevant organizational structure to support performance management changes.

6.4.2. Disaggregation of Units and Decentralization

The traditional public sector resides upon a bureaucratic system that is founded upon Weberian practices and principles which follows strict rules and procedures (Brown, 2004). Overtime, traditional public services have grown in size in order to fulfil the increasing demands on the sector. The findings indicated that public service size was a major concern in St. Lucia. It was also a key issue in the region and the wider world (Capri, 2011) and so, many public services downsized their public sectors (Pollitt, 2000). Smaller units allow for organizations to more rapidly achieve performance goals (Promberger and Rauskala, 2003). St. Lucia’s proposed NPM reform approach was corporatization, privatization, contracting out, disaggregation of units and decentralization of certain functions. The reform proposal only addressed the last two.

However, interviewees were unaware of plans to disaggregate certain units, whereas decentralization was an issue in both data types. Such measures are usually proposed to achieve a leaner and responsive government. However, Trade Unionists opposed the proposed measures for privatization, contracting out and corporatization of government services. They were concerned about the socioeconomic backlash due to a weak private sector. This is a credible concern, which can also have a political backlash. Kitten (1994) argues that "downsizing of the public service … is often not a viable option as the potentially
long term social distress and dislocation caused by enforced redundancies is politically unacceptable" (in Brown, 2008:8). Hence, politicians popularity can be greatly affected. Perhaps, this is the reason why such measures were not expounded upon in the implementation plan. Trade unionists also alluded to government’s subjectiveness to the coerciveness of external influences. However, small islands are in a challenging position because they are in dire need of the financial and technical resources, and therefore have minimal power to modify conditional terms of reform.

On the other hand, senior, middle and junior managers; administrative staff and the trade union executive all expressed varying views on the issue of decentralization of the public service commission (PSC). The PSC’s primary purpose is "to ensure due process, protect people from abuses and make sure that affected interests have a say in the policy process" (Aberbach, 2001:14). However, middle and junior managers and administrative staff blamed the PSC for the strong bureaucratic process and slow public sector. Whilst, senior managers argued that the PSC denies them the freedom to manage their staff. They desired more power to hire, discipline, promote and fire employees. The trade unionist executive feared that this will only lead to a greater politicized public service, since deep issues of clientelism and nepotism already pervade the public service. This is not unusual. Zafarullah states that "the social-cultural-political architecture of many so called third world countries, manifest certain traits historically acquired and socially embedded that have had remarkable influences on bureaucratic demeanour" (2013:934). Thus, this societal architecture has been enmeshed in society since the post colonization period. Zarfullah also claims that “clientelism or patron-client relationship; have existed in almost all societies since time immemorial" (2013:934). Such practices are not only filtered down by politicians but also senior civil servants. Such "bureaucratic patronage and nepotism generate positive outcomes in maintaining family and social ties but their implications for bureaucratic ethics can be extensively damaging" (Zarfullah, 2013: 934). The ethics of public servants have frequently been brought into question. The Civil Service Code of Conduct was proposed to address this, but, participants stated that it was not implemented.
Some participants also expressed concerns about the efforts at administrative decentralization that was made; in particular, the accounting and human resource functions. Generally, administrative decentralization “seeks to redistribute authority, responsibility and financial resources to provide public services among the different levels of government” (Ling, 2010:5). Participants claimed that this has happened to an extent, but service quality remained a key concern. Some participants also viewed the existing top-down management structure as impediments to effective governance. Within this structure, there is "very little opportunity for junior officers to provide any input in the decision making process" (Zafaraullah, 2013:934). It also creates a system where the elite have significant influence in matters such as, recruitments and promotions. This creates a weak and inefficient public sector which becomes pervaded with issues of corruption; thereby failing the whole purpose of the bureaucratic system.

6.4.3. Private Sector Management Style and Hands-on Management

Private sector management style is a key theme in NPM which focuses on making the public sector more efficient through the adoption of private sector business principles (Promberger and Rauskala, 2003; Sozen and Shaw, 2002). This refers to: more flexible working practices, greater consideration of rewards, enhanced public relations and communication practices and stronger relationships with stakeholders. It also proposes more hands-on professional management, whereby managers are more proactive than reactive in having the freedom to manage employees (Promberger and Rauskala, 2003). The policy documents revealed many plans to portray private sector business practices. Such as: proper selection and recruitment practices; stronger focus on orientation and training; implementation of incentives and sanctions; and mechanisms like contracting out. There were also proposals aimed at enhanced customer service and quality management; two key priority areas for participants.

Customer service and quality management are two essential components of the managerialism aspect of NPM (Promberger and Rauskala, 2003). Within NPM, the emphasis is on “treating service users as customers and on the application of generic quality improvement techniques such as total quality management” (Pollitt, 2007). Accordingly, two
related techniques for enhanced customer service are citizen charters and customer service care centres. These models send an explicit message to customers. Citizen charters are a promise of high level customer service. It tells citizens what they can expect from public servants. Customer service care centres are contact centres designed to handle a large volume of customer requests over the telephone. These techniques are all aimed at improving public sector responsiveness. Here, participants generally agreed. However, such measures were not implemented during the span of the reform. They have nonetheless been widely adopted in the region; as they have been posited by national governments as the means to obtain citizen buy-in (Sutton, 2008).

Achieving buy-in through stronger relationships with stakeholders was also a strong component of the reform; and customer sensitivity and service quality appeared to be an issue for all stakeholders. The proposal was for stronger ties with citizens, trade unions and the private sector. However, participants believed that enough was not done. A supplementary means of obtaining citizen buy-in is to encourage citizen participation in the formulation of citizen charters. This is supported by Therkildsen (2001). He explained that citizens are likely to have a more practical idea of the customer service experience that they wish to have. Many participants also believed that stronger ties should have been fostered with the private sector. Steane argues that such an approach by government to foster greater partnerships can be referred to as a “hollowing out of the state as the principal organizer and provider” (2008: 454). However, the trade union doubted the capacity of St. Lucia’s private sector. Limited institutional capacity of both the public and private sector has been an issue in the region (Kendall, 2008). Effective collaboration would therefore require a strong commitment to development by all parties.

Many participants believed that such collaborations can contribute to enhanced service quality. To achieve this, work improvement teams or quality circles were proposed (White Paper, 2000) but participants indicated that these did not come off the ground. It will equally be extremely difficult to successfully implement TQM principles amidst St. Lucia’s top-down management style and low customer orientation culture. This is because TQM thrives in an
environment of total commitment to quality performance, from employees at the top to the bottom (Boddy, 2005). On the PMS, senior managers strongly articulated that productivity issues and the lack of freedom to manage employees impede them from achieving the desired levels of service excellence. Such freedom to manage, participants claimed, is what drives staff productivity in the private sector. Generally, the freedom to manage permits managers to be more proactive and assume greater responsibility for staff performance.

Achieving excellent service also requires an alignment of recruitment practices; to ensure that the right persons are recruited. Recruitment was found to be a weak area in the public service. Many participants complained about the impact of nepotism, party patronage and clientelism on recruitment practices in St. Lucia’s PA. Within the private sector “creative recruitment and retention” techniques are adopted in order to make an organization a top performer (Martin, 2005:14). Hence, recruitment decisions should be made in the absence of political, social (family ties) and cultural (community ties) factors. Only then can a service of excellence be achieved. Instituting a service of excellence also requires solid accountability mechanisms.

Strengthening accountability is a key feature of NPM reforms (Larbi, 1999). Various OECD studies have indicated that the global convergence of NPM has resulted in many reforms focusing on not just “value for money, increased flexibility and customer orientation” but also on building accountability (Fatemi and Behmanesh, 2012:45). This research discovered a consistent demand for increased accountability, but this has been countered, to some extent, by the fact that citizens enjoy the benefits of clientelism, party patronage and nepotism. This appears to be a trend in the region (Sutton, 2008). Citizens demand that governments be more accountable to satisfying public needs and implementing results based budgeting and management practices (Hur, 2011). Yet, they continue to relish in some of the furtive practices of government; which can impact negatively on reform implementation. Nevertheless, participants believed that accountability and service quality measures will ensure that customers get value for money.
6.4.4. Tighter Cost Control

Fiscal adjustments, tighter cost control or "doing more with less" is a critical element of NPM (Pollitt, 2000). These were equally major objectives of St. Lucia's reform. At the time of the reform, St. Lucia struggled with high debt (White Paper, 2000); and this was only a reflection of public sector borrowing, since "data on the private sector borrowing is not available" (European Investment Bank, 2008:65). The reform proposal suggested the adjustment of the Financial and Budgetary Model in an effort to heighten managerial accountability, reduce inefficiencies and better manage costs. Management focused too much on maximizing the budget and less on quality outcomes. This focus on inputs, more than output and results, has been identified as a frequent practice of traditional public sector management (Promberger and Rauskala, 2003). St. Lucia's reform was aimed at shifting the focus to quality outputs; and by so doing, citizens would get better value for money. The value for money principle within the NPM paradigm advocates the need for “more careful planning of output and outcome steering” (Vries, 2010:5). This is inextricably tied to performance measures and targets (Promberger and Rauskala, 2003) and can contribute to a reduction in cost.

Concerns were also raised about the increase in direct and indirect cost of inefficiency in the public service. Some senior civil servants and trade unionists spoke about the indirect costs associated with low productivity. For example, the pressures and work load that are placed on other staff members who have to fill the gaps of workers due to absenteeism; the stained reputation of the public sector; the drawbacks of an uncommitted workforce and failure to achieve departmental goals. The documentary evidence highlighted the direct costs associated with an expanding public service and increased inefficiencies. A growing public service impacts a country's "economic performance" (Brown, 2008:8); indicated by an increasing wage bill. In addition, "increased inefficiencies are likely to translate into higher government taxes" (Afonso and Gaspar, 2006:6). Thus, inefficiencies related to wastage, low productivity, poor budgeting and management practices, puts pressure on government to recover lost funds; and raising taxes most often seems like a viable option.
For participants of this study, any discourse on controlling cost and budget management has to equally address issues of institutional strengthening. Senior civil servants criticized government for their inability to secure skilled personnel to prepare a budget that appropriately reflects priorities, demonstrates proper analysis and pragmatic costing with strong accountability mechanisms. Such a crisis is common to small states. Brown highlighted that “small states have a limited pool of skilled personnel to perform the vital roles in the public service; and also a lack of depth in specialization, which affects implementation” (2008:10). For NPM reform to work, institutional strengthening has to be addressed in order to effectively perform in the new roles.

Strong accountability mechanisms are also key; as Brunetto and Farr Wharton emphasized that "increased accountability has often been a pre-requisite for achieving the hidden cost-cutting goal" (2005:292). Instilling a culture of efficiency and accountability will be challenging for St. Lucia’s public service. Therkildsen argues that such challenges will entail overcoming any resistance to the “changes in power relations between government organizations, between politicians and bureaucrats and between the state and civil society" (2001:8). However, the implementation process is supposed to address any anticipated resistance to reform implementation measures.

**Research Question 4 - What were the challenges to reform implementation in St. Lucia’s Public Service? What contextual factors impacted upon the reform implementation process?**

**6.5. NPM Reform Implementation Challenges**

Generally the implementation of management reforms is to “effect compatibility between demand for fiscal adjustment and institutional change, within a wider effort to find a new role for the state” (Rezende, 2008:42). This too was the focus of St. Lucia’s reform. The proposed reform changes were in alignment with NPM principles. However, the findings revealed a
gap between the rhetorical convergence versus the implementation convergence. This is not surprising, because research has indicated that reform implementation is much more difficult than reform design (Blum et al., 2012:2). Several contingent factors, predictable and unpredictable can impact upon the reform implementation process and eventual outcomes. In this study, the results indicated that sufficient attention was not paid to certain contextual factors during the reform implementation process. Ugyel emphasized that quite often "when PSRs are initiated, the context within which the reforms are applied is overlooked by the implementers" (2013:3). This happens to be the case for St. Lucia’s reform. Accordingly, participants cited the following contextual factors, relating to both the internal and external environment, as the key challenges to reform implementation in St. Lucia. Notably: no stakeholder buy-in, leadership of the reform, political obstacles, institutional strengthening and development and public service culture. A discussion of these findings now follows.

6.5.1. No Stakeholder buy-in

Stakeholders are the persons or groups that will be impacted by any changes or decisions that an organization makes (Boddy, 2005). The evidence gathered indicated a lack of stakeholder buy-in. Thus, the political elite and top bureaucrats failed to communicate the reform visions and goals to employees, trade unions, citizens and the private sector; so as to secure their cooperation and participation in reform implementation. This can be extremely challenging due to differences in opinions and perceptions. Stakeholders may also differ in “interest and values” (Doherty and Horne, 2002:338). Thus, to minimize potential conflicts, it is essential that reformers develop an effective communication strategy that encourages open communication. Such a collaborative approach has been noted to benefit all parties through the strengthening of relationships; sharpening the skills of those involved in the process and working through difficulties (Osborne and Plastrik, 2000). However, many of the senior civil servants claimed that there was some division over who the principal stakeholders were. Consequently, mismanagement of the stakeholder process resulted in a failure to achieve both horizontal and vertical buy in.

Participants expressed that the horizontal buy-in of the senior management team (SMT) was not achieved; because permanent secretaries and top bureaucrats were not in unison on the
reform vision. However, if horizontal buy-in was not achieved; then it should come as no surprise that management failed to achieve vertical employee buy-in. Participants typically blamed: limited employee involvement; an absence of an ongoing dialogue and relevant communication tools and a top-down reform approach; for failed vertical employee buy-in. Dialoguing with employees permits them to acquire a more complete understanding of the direction the organization is going amidst the challenges (Rahman et al., 2013). Thus, limited employee involvement can hinder reform implementation efforts. The importance of active staff involvement in PSR is increasingly being recognized by many public services (Parys, 2002:2). The challenge for management is determining the extent of that involvement and this decision becomes more complicated as you descend the management ladder. This is supported by Parys (2002). He argues that management faces a difficulty in "identifying the appropriate ways of participation (direct vs. indirect), the appropriate phase of the reform (conception, development and implementation), and the content of the decisions in which employees can exert their influence" (p.14). This is a valid argument. This requires sound understanding of the chosen policy; skilful leadership and knowledge of the reform dynamics, the reform context and the administrative culture. Management also has to determine the suitable reform approach.

In this study, the strong top-down approach impeded reform implementation efforts, and fuelled limited employee involvement. Such an approach is usually taken in centralized governments, with the elite being responsible for key decision making (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004). However, as you descend the management ladder, reformers reach various roadblocks due to internal and external forces or unpredictable circumstances. Thus, the use of various communication tools is therefore essential to encourage employee participation and the realization of reform goals.

Additionally, the absence of total buy-in of trade unionists, citizens and the private sector can greatly affect reform implementation outcomes. Thus, it can be beneficial if implementers focus on its many benefits, since it is an extremely challenging task. Trade unions and the wider society can provide key support in the reform process (Brown, 2008); although such support takes time to build (Barber, 2007). This requires management to view the trade union
as a vital resource. On the otherhand, it is critical that the trade union is not politically motivated, and that they recognize their key role during reform implementation. Trade unionists can help drive the reform objectives by consulting its members on the perceived reform benefits and addressing any fears. Such directives align with their key purpose. This includes “bringing to bear the economic, social and political interests of their members in labour relations and the political system” (Schillinger, 2005:2). However, stronger stakeholder ties with the trade union would necessitate a collaborative and open communicative approach.

Citizens are equally stakeholders in the reform process. However, the results revealed low citizen engagement. Citizens appeared to be more interested in issues which have a direct financial impact, like the implementation of VAT. Yet, they continue to vent their dissatisfaction with public sector's performance over the media. It is therefore government's role to devise innovative and strategic ways to engage citizens in reform. Understandably, this is problematic due to the existing dichotomy between citizens and government. On the one hand, members of the public benefit from a corrupted and politicized public service, through clientelism, nepotism and patronage. On the other hand, citizens desire a high performing public sector which provides remarkable customer service; comparable to some businesses in St. Lucia's private sector.

Partnering with the private sector can help to gain insight on the market environment and best practices within St. Lucia's context. Such knowledge can help in shaping the content of the reform package; despite obvious differences in operations management between the private and the public sector (Radnor and Noke, 2013). It is therefore crucial that government recognizes that stakeholder buy-in helps to create a sense of ownership for the reform and achieve legitimization amongst stakeholders. This requires the guidance and direction of a strong and consistent leadership.

6.5.2. Leadership of the Reform

The introduction of NPM reform will result in changing roles for both the political and administrative leadership. This is supported by Tria and Valotti (2012). Both have been
identified as critical for successful reform outcomes (Turner, 2013). Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004) provide a clear explanation of their new roles. Within the NPM framework, politicians/ministers become “strategists and opinion leaders” (p. 150). Ministers will be responsible for “clarifying and communicating visions and values, choosing appropriate strategies, and identify, allocate and commit resources at the macro level; whilst “managers’ new role will be focused on achieving enhanced performance against clear objectives and targets” (p.150). It is therefore essential that both parties clearly understand their changing roles for favourable reform outcomes. However, this appeared not to be the case for St. Lucia’s reform.

The political leadership failed to achieve political backing for the reform. Rose emphasized that success as a policy maker requires skill in programme design but also the ability to “win the political support necessary to adopt and maintain it” (2005:16). The political leadership is essentially responsible for ensuring that the “policy analysis is situated within its proper context, and due attention is given to issues such as time, culture, economics, geographical location and political culture” (Evans, 2009:240). Political leadership therefore has a very crucial role in reform. A Capri report highlighted that the "quality and durability of reform are dependent on the quality of leadership, not only the quality of managers, but most importantly, political leadership" (2011:58). In fact, Rao claims that there is “evidence that indicates that successful reform requires strong domestic political leadership (2013:13). It seems this was not understood by reformers in St. Lucia. In fact, Sutton (2008) claimed that poor political drive appears to be the common leadership trajectory of the political directorate in the region. He explained that "in the Caribbean, when political leadership was waned, reform has slowed down and when it has lapsed it has all but come to a halt" (p.18). However, reform continuity necessitates the commitment of the political leadership, on both sides of the bench. Sutton found that the NPM experience in “five commonwealth countries, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago”, emphasized the “need for a high level political leadership in the design, promotion and implementation of reform” (p.18). The Barbadian government appeared to have understood this. Their policy makers reported that successful reform, requires the long term commitment from the political
leadership, because reform is an on-going exercise (OPSR Barbados, 2004). In this study, many participants believed that ultimate responsibility lies with the Prime Minister.

It is not unusual for the Prime Minister to have a strong leadership role in major reforms. Such "leadership sets the course for shared vision, achievable objectives and support from stakeholders (Rahman et al., 2013:987). Perhaps, the chief leader deferred his role to the OPSR, since that was the leadership model that was selected to oversee and manage the reform. However, senior managers believed that the OPSR failed to effectively guide both the political and administrative leadership. One participant viewed the OPSR's reform approach as a ‘text book’ or ‘academic’ one. In fact, Brown indicated that both Barbados and St. Lucia, established "offices to lead the PSR process but both became bogged down by laborious efforts to script perfect blue prints that were never implemented and neither could be said to have had genuine breed either from the political directorate or the public service leadership itself" (2008:14). Nevertheless, it is the chief leadership’s duty to hold everyone accountable. This therefore explains the disengagement also of the administrative directorate. The administrative directorate is responsible for influencing the wider public service. It is therefore crucial that they are equipped to effectively engage their followers. According to Givens, “leadership style has a profound impact on the organizational and personal outcomes of followers" (2008: 317). Hence, several participants recommended a more participatory form of leadership, accompanied by leadership development training for more successful reform implementation outcomes.

Despite similarities in the region, on leadership models; they all experienced mixed results. St. Lucia and Barbados both had an OPSR and Jamaica adopted the Executive Agency Model, based on the United Kingdom’s progress in the latter (Sutton, 2008). Barbados had a few successes (Swaroop, 1996), as opposed to St. Lucia. Jamaica experienced mixed results; but failed to make progressive developments in the overall reform program (Sutton, 2008). The latter is yet again evidence of the region engaging in the copying of ideas or policies from the more developed world. This is not only a Caribbean issue. African countries also adopt policies and programs from the European and Western World (Njoh,
Stones emphasized that it is much easier to “engage in the soft transfer of ideas, norms and information”, but the difficulty lies in structuring and implementing those ideas (2001: 34). This proved to be true for many countries in the region. The majority did not experience successful reform implementation (Sutton, 2008). However, political obstacles emerged as an impediment to successful leadership outcomes during reform implementation.

6.5.3. Political Obstacles

NPM was a major reform initiative in St. Lucia, that was launched during a political campaign. The launch of such major initiatives can serve to boost politician’s profile. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that politicians believed that such a move would secure political support. According to public choice theorists, politicians tend to place their self interests, for power and votes, above the publics' interests (Martin, 2003). It is critical however, that politicians endeavour to do quite the opposite. By so doing, they would engage more efficiently in the broader strategic and policy issues. It is equally essential that the senior bureaucrats who provide the administrative support to politicians can do the same.

The present study found a high level of politicization of St. Lucia’s public service. This appears to occur in the administrative affairs of the state, through political micromanaging; although the extent of political micro-managing is debatable. Political micromanaging is where politicians dictate appointments to be made or micro managed certain decisions during the reform process. Several stories were shared to illustrate the prevalence of nepotism, party patronage and clientelism in St. Lucia’s PA. Thus, political dynamics emerged as an inhibitor to successful reform implementation. Accordingly, participants particularly at the lower level resented and were suspicious of politicians. Newman and Lawler (2009) view this as typical drawbacks of micromanaging.

However, political interference in PA with negative effects, appears to be a concern for the wider region. Minto- Coy and Berman shared what happens in practice in PA in the region.
“Political leaders use their office to reward and punish, which compromises the principle of neutrality among public servants, and leads to serious questioning of the ability of public servants and the PA machinery to operate objectively. At worst, the prospect of job loss or falling out of favour with a politician has in some cases resulted in an emasculated public service” (2016: 4).

The results of this study aligned with Minto-Coy and Berman’s (2016) viewpoint above. Throughout the interviews, vivid pictures were presented to demonstrate the fragility of the politico-administrative relationship. Like permanent secretaries who lost their jobs because they didn't agree with the minister. Although, the extent of political interference is questionable, it is nonetheless important to emphasize the hampering effect that such corrupt practices can have on reform implementation. Many other countries around the globe have reported on the negative impact that political interference and corruption have had on reform implementation; for example, Kyrgyzstan (Baimyrzaeva, 2011) and Bangladesh (Sarker, 2006). Countries like Singapore on the other hand, have been praised for their strong political commitment, low corruption and high accountability in the public service (Yeo et al., 2013).

Problems of accountability usually accompany issues of political interference. In fact, the "accountability problem is complicated by deficiencies in the political process itself" (Therkildsen, 2001:8). The results indicated a lack of both ministerial and administrative accountability. Similar sentiments were shared by St. Lucia’s Civil Service Trade Union. They articulated that "bad management practices and political interference has had a severe impact on accountability in St. Lucia's public sector" (CSA, 2005:7). Such political interference can be diminished if both politicians and administrators understand their roles and the value of the politico-administrative relationship.

The politico-administrative relationship can be very complex. Overeem (2005) sees this relationship as a dichotomy; whilst Svara (2006) sees this as complementary. Many senior civil servants support Svara's viewpoint. They believed that reform implementation could have been more successful if politicians and administrators worked together and understood the value that they bring to each other. Furthermore, the findings indicated that induction training for new politicians can help reduce political interference and potential conflicts.
between ministers and permanent secretaries. This is because ministers often join the political arena without any "experience or preparation" (Draper 2001: 5). Such induction training for politicians or ministers has been widely recommended by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004). Hence, capacity building of both the individual and organization can contribute to better reform implementation outcomes.

6.5.4. Institutional Strengthening and Development

Institutional strengthening and development is a significant issue for not only St. Lucia, but the wider Caribbean. The depth of a country’s engagement largely depends on resources. Incidentally, smaller countries have a smaller talent pool (Minto-Coy and Berman, 2015), limited financial resources (Brown, 2010), and therefore “lack the capacity to adapt and/or fully implement programs recommended to them” (Sutton, 2008: 17). Both institutional strengthening and development have to be present for reforms to work and both appeared to be an issue in this study.

Issues of institutional strengthening are related to the skills set of the elite and training opportunities for the wider public service. The study found that both politicians and managers lacked strong technical and managerial skills to effectively engage in NPM reform. Consequently, this negatively impacts upon overall public service's performance. This is supported by Brown (2008). He views it as a problem of the wider Caribbean. He claimed that:

"Caribbean public services might appear to be bloated; at the same time, there is undeniably a critical shortage of skills in the technical, professional and managerial cadres. This impacts government's ability to develop sound policies and strong institutions to deliver quality services to the public and to implement even the smallest of projects in time and on budget" (2008:16).

Interestingly, skills gap was also cited as a potential problem for St. Lucia's health reform. The ILO (2003) report stated that St. Lucia’s health reform would reveal significant gaps in both individual and organizational capacity for health care delivery. This demonstrates that weak institutional strengthening and development extends beyond the administrative
directorates. Weak institutional capability of St. Lucia’s public service was also attributed to the absence of ministerial and administrative accountability; poor leadership and inefficient systems and process.

Various points in this chapter have elaborated on the first two issues. However, with regards to the latter, participants expressed great disappointment with the outmoded systems and practices; despite investments in ICT. This too is an issue in the wider Caribbean. Minto-Coy and Berman articulated that “even with investments in technology, outmoded techniques persist with analyses being conducted via pre-automation methods and records in some instances being kept in note-books” (20116:16). Similar practices still occur in St. Lucia’s public service. Consequently, participants advocated for a more competent and skilled workforce and special training for those individuals intricately involved in reform implementation.

Some essential public management skills for successful reform implementation include: "policy making capacity" (Birrell, 2010); "individual and team leadership" for better organizational performance (Thomson and Pamy, 2002:395); constituting suitable performance measures and "implementing accountability and transparency" (Caiden and Caiden, 1998:32). Customer service training was also added by lower level employees. The importance of skill development was also advanced by Harun (2007) in his study of the Indonesian public sector. In this study, policy makers recognized the importance of skill development and therefore proposed the need for better HRM and HRD practices, through the decentralization of human resources (HR) and widespread HR training.

Senior managers indicated that this has happened to some extent, but many managers’ still do not demonstrate the requisite skills set. This is not surprising. The public services in the region have been accused of being unable to adopt strong HRM practices geared at empowering both permanent secretaries and senior managers to develop those skills that are required to perform at the desired level (Draper, 2001). Although HR is not typically a NPM technique; "the development of new HRM systems has been among the most visible of NPM influenced PSR in the Commonwealth Caribbean" (Sutton, 2008:14). However, for HR to
work, interviewees suggested that it mimics best practices in the private sector. Such an approach encourages mimetic isomorphism of structures and practices in the private sector, because the private sector is typically viewed as more efficient.

Accordingly the proposals for the institutional development of St. Lucia’s public service focused on a review of the organizational structure, system and policies. This study discovered that there has been little implementation in that regard, because, the public service is still very centralized, hierarchical and rigid, with a dysfunctional organizational culture.

6.5.5. Public Service Culture

Wyen and Verhoest (2015) emphasized that NPM reforms are able to impact an organization’s culture. Societal or national and organizational culture challenges emerged as contributory factors to weak implementation outcomes. Societal or national culture pertained to the lack of citizen involvement and citizen pressure on government. Whilst, organizational cultural characteristics pertained to issues with high absenteeism levels, low productivity and poor work ethics. Sutton explains that usually "a poor work ethic is expressed as low achievement and high absenteeism" (2008:3). So, it is therefore no surprise that these factors were mentioned together. This culture is then re-enforced with elements of biasness, nepotism, patronage and clientelism, all of which feeds negative reform outcomes. St. Lucia's public service is further bonded by a culture of personal relationships, family ties, party affiliation and members of communal groups, like church. Participants related that a great deal of decision making with regards to: recruitment, promotions and training are influenced by these relationships. Consequently, the public service is filled with workers who demonstrate a negative attitude towards work. St. Rose, King and Preville (2006) blame the selection process and inherent cultural practices for the negative worker attitudes in the public service. They added further that recruitment and promotion opportunities are based on “loyalties and acquaintances (who you know and contacts) rather than performance and commitment to the employer and so the attitudes to employment will be weak” (pp 33). Such practices need to change for successful NPM reform implementation.
The findings also demonstrated that the deeply entrenched behaviours, values and beliefs in St. Lucia’s PA has to change for more favourable NPM reform outcomes. This is supported by Boxall and Macky (2007). They stated that if "management wants to bring about valued organizational outcomes; it needs to influence employees’ beliefs, attitudes and behaviour" (pp 267). Changing the organizational culture is an extremely challenging task; which can be better facilitated by a comprehensive change management strategy. Such a strategy helps management to plan and anticipate barriers and resistance to change. However, it would demand a significant "investment of management time and resources" in order to reap any "positive organizational change" (Gollan, 2005:21). St. Lucia’s public service records decades of: poor worker attitudes and negative mind-sets; mismanagement and politico-administrative conflicts, and so, a more structured process is required to effectively effectuate major changes. However, NPM reform in St. Lucia proceeded in the absence of such a strategy. It should therefore come as no surprise that St. Lucia experienced significant challenges during the reform implementation process. Such a strategy could have helped to alleviate employees’ fears and re-kindle the trust between management and employees.

Management-employee trust can also be ameliorated by giving employees a voice during reform. This ensures employee participation throughout the reform process. Weller and Van Gramberg (2008) strongly recommend that employees have a voice in the change process and even before any changes have occurred. This is because employee involvement is essential for "commitment to change and breaking down any barriers" (Parys, 2002:3). Additionally, low commitment and resistance to change impacts negatively on reform outcomes and have led to failed PSR programs (Parys, 2002). Thus, management has a responsibility to employees throughout the reform.

On the other hand, public servants must equally be willing for changes to occur. Barber emphasizes that unfortunately, "unhelpful and inflexible attitudes towards reform are often entrenched in the public sector. A more strategic and less bureaucratic government, requires a change in public servants mind-set. It is only at this point, can the required culture change begin to take hold" (2007:25). Supporting this view, the majority of participants acknowledged that the mind-set, attitudes, values and behaviours of public servants needed
to change. The public service code of conduct was proposed to achieve this. Generally, such a document "provides guidance on required behaviours within the service and prescribes required standards of integrity and professional conduct" (OPSR, 2004:2). However, it was not implemented during the life of the reform. This poses great difficulty in achieving the successful implementation of NPM in St. Lucia’s public sector. Samaratunge and Bennington emphasized that NPM “requires considerable attitudinal changes on the part of bureaucrats” (2002:89). However, it was clear from the findings, that the elite faced great difficulty in achieving those attitudinal changes in St. Lucia's public service.

6.6. Strengths and Limitations of this Study

A significant strength of this study relates to the composition of the interview sample. There were seven senior managers, four middle managers, eight junior managers and six administrative staff. Additionally, the organizational tenure for the majority of participants ranged from 10 to 20 years. This composition permitted diverse perspectives and rich accounts to be gained on the research phenomenon.

The second strength of this study refers to participants’ enthusiasm. Given that this research is the first of its kind in St. Lucia, participants were thrilled to share their experiences. In most cases, such eagerness is valuable as it demonstrates a willingness to be open and honest in discussions. This study can also serve as the foundation for other studies on PA Reform in St. Lucia.

On the other hand, this study encountered a few limitations. The first limitation refers to the lack of available information. I was unable to acquire any documentation that belonged to the OPSR, because senior managers were unsure of its location. The second limitation of this study refers to the sample composition; as I was unable to secure any interviews with permanent secretaries and politicians due to their busy schedule. Nevertheless, the
documentary evidence and interview data provided rich accounts of the research phenomenon.

The final limitation of this study pertains to the lack of internal and external validity. Internal validity could have been strengthened by adopting the participation verification method; whereby the data analysis is verified by participants to ensure that what is said is what was intended. However, this researcher believes that credibility was achieved through the adoption of the first part of the respondent validation technique (see §4.6.1.). In qualitative research, external validity is a proven problem due to the small sample size (Bryman, 2008). It is therefore not possible to generalize the findings beyond this research context.

Despite these limitations, some level of methodological rigour was maintained through an on-going commitment to reflexivity throughout the research process. Moreover, the qualitative inquiry and thematic analysis based on an interpretive philosophy permitted the compilation of a rich and thick discussion.

6.7. Implications for this Study

My findings from the analysis respond to this study’s research question and permitted the attainment of the research goals, which are to explore the adoption of NPM in St. Lucia’s PA and the barriers to its implementation. Clearly, the results of this study are context specific. Nonetheless, these findings have significant implications for theory, practice and further research.

6.7.1. Implications for Theory

This study contributes to the limited literature on PA reform in the Caribbean (Sutton, 2008). Through a qualitative and interpretive nature, this study has deepened our understanding of the adoption and implementation of NPM in a small island like St. Lucia. It presents new insights into the contextual nature of the implementation of NPM and further reveals the complexity of importing prescribed policies from major institutions in exchange for funding
and technical assistance. This study also appears to support the argument that policy adoption and implementation should consider the region’s specific context. Girvan (2006) proposes that this occurs through the lens of a Caribbean Dependency Theory. However, this will continue to be a significant challenge for the region because of the coerciveness and supremacy of donors; and the limited conceptual knowledge and technical skills of policy implementers in the region. My study also offers suggestive evidence that there is a gap between the rhetorical convergence and implementation convergence of NPM in St. Lucia’s PA. Throughout the literature, it has been demonstrated that NPM, a facet of the neoliberal agenda, continues to have global prominence that is powered by globalisation (McCree, 2009). It is therefore crucial that practitioners in St. Lucia become more knowledgeable about the theory and practice of NPM.

6.7.2. Implications for Practice

The data from this study present several practical implications for creating a more efficient, effective and responsive public service.

I. Training and Development - A revamping of the Training and Development (T&D) Department. Skills gaps should be determined by proper training needs analyses; which identifies core and critical competencies. This study revealed that some of the critical skills lacking in St. Lucia's PA are: policy drafting, leadership and management, auditing, customer service, performance evaluation and measurement and research skills. Additionally, relevant T&D opportunities should be provided to all staff. Moreover, Chapter Three demonstrated the rise of normative isomorphic practices in the region. More efforts should therefore be made to further expand such professional networks and partnerships.

II. Change Management Strategy – This should be an accompaniment to any major PA reform. Sufficient thought ought to be given to the practices, tools and techniques
that would be used to effectuate those changes and how any resistance to change would be addressed. The change vision should be clearly articulated to staff; and employees ought to have a voice in the change management process. This helps to achieve buy-in and minimize employee resistance.

III. Practices of organizational assessments – A culture assessment and a customer service survey can gather reliable data for the efficient implementation of a new customer sensitive service. Such an approach demonstrates government's commitment to culture change and customer service efficiency. It requires the commitment of both political and administrative leadership. Setting performance targets along those lines will help ensure their commitment to those goals. Secondly, a proper efficiency assessment could be done to select an appropriate structure that can efficiently respond to internal and external demands. Thirdly, the adoption of a rigorous recruitment method that incorporates private sector management recruitment strategies for the attainment of a more competent staff. Such as: behaviour based and competency based interviews, psychometric testing, position profiling and behaviour profiling for internal recruitment. Forthly, all major programs should entail a stakeholder analysis where a determination is made on who should be consulted, on what and to what extent.

IV. Elimination of Corruption - A Public Sector Transparency Board may be established. In general, this can be beneficial to both the government and the public. Possible corruption in the public service could be reduced, due to greater transparency and increased accountability to open data. Public trust could also be enhanced when government is open and transparent and access to data is much easier. Additionally, policy making in the public service will be based on sound data. The competencies and skills of experts in both the public and private sector will be enhanced, since this Board will be required to network with other experts in the field nationally, regionally and internationally in order to engage in setting global standards.
V. Stronger accountability mechanisms - This can be achieved through a strengthening of the audit department. The skills and competencies of its staff should be enhanced; to reflect a more modernized workforce, capable of performing complex analyses and competent reporting. This will help to increase fiscal, managerial and programme accountability. The level of corruption and politicization of the public service could also be reduced.

6.7.3. Implications for Further Research

The findings and implications of this study indicate the need for further research in three key areas. Firstly, participants in this study perceived St. Lucia’s efforts at NPM reform to be unsuccessful. However, evaluating the effectiveness of the reform is beyond the contours of this research. It will therefore be useful to explore this research area. Such an analysis will complement the results of this study and perhaps help in further understanding the impact that the findings of this study had on the effectiveness and outcome of NPM reform in St. Lucia.

Secondly, the findings of this study revealed significant insight into the organizational culture of St. Lucia's public service. That is, a culture of low productivity, low efficiency, politicization and customer insensitivity. Thus, it will be worthwhile to conduct further research on the impact of organizational culture on reform. This will help guide future reformers in organizational culture alignment for better reform outcomes.

Finally, this study revealed that several countries implemented NPM type reforms in the region. However, there is very little empirical evidence on the effectiveness of NPM reforms in developing countries (Samaratunge and Bennington, 2002:88). It will therefore be useful for further research on the implementation and effectiveness of NPM reforms in the region. By so doing, further insight will be gained on the region’s institutional environment; how reform ideas are copied and translated and the different trajectories that countries take for sometimes similar outcomes.
6.8. Conclusion

NPM has become a dominant paradigm for PA reform worldwide. There has been a convergence of NPM in the Caribbean region, but empirical data on its effectiveness is very limited (Samaratunge and Bennington, 2002). There is also a lack of research on the implementation of PA reform in small island states (Brown, 2008). Thus, this lack of data provides the justification for this study.

This study sought to explore the reasons for the adoption of NPM reform in St. Lucia’s public service. St. Lucia adopted four key NPM components to address major public service challenges. However, implementing NPM in SIDS, like St. Lucia’s can be very challenging. Thus, this research also endeavoured to unearth the contextual factors which impacted upon NPM implementation. At the time of this research, this study was the first of its kind in St. Lucia. It therefore sets the premise for future studies.

The literature review revealed some of the complexities surrounding NPM. It demonstrated areas of disagreement on its definition and components. It equally addressed some of the interpretations and contradictions on the rise and spread of NPM. Its spread in the Caribbean region has been examined through the lens of Caribbean dependency. Many reasons were presented for this dependency upon the more developed world. Although many countries in the region have adopted NPM to address similar public service challenges; the primary differences lie in the implementation context and the reform trajectories.

The qualitative methodological approach, based on an interpretive enquiry, and thematic analysis permitted that a rich understanding be gained on the perspectives and experiences of employees at the different levels of the public service and its trade union. The analysis revealed similar themes like those raised in the literature review, as well as new emergent themes.

This study discovered that exogenous impetuses, relating to external influences, coercive isomorphic pressures and policy bandwagoning, were the dominant reasons for St. Lucia adopting NPM. However, the results indicated little to no implementation of NPM. Thus, the results demonstrated a gap between the rhetorical convergence and the implementation
convergence of NPM. The policy documents were dominated by NPM principles; but managers had limited understanding of NPM and poor policy implementation skills. Although, St. Lucia’s government may have limited say on what is copied (policy, program, idea, instruments or tools); since strict conditions usually accompany donor funding (Sutton, 2008); implementers should possess the requisite skills for successful implementation of NPM. However, it was clear from the analysis, that factors in the internal and external environment, relating to, stakeholder buy-in, leadership, political context, institutional strengthening and development and public service culture; presented challenges for the implementation of NPM reform in St. Lucia’s PA. These findings support Bach’s summary on reform implementation. He states that “policy analysis often focuses on the technical elements of reform without sufficient attention being given to implementation issues, especially the specific institutional and contextual factors that facilitate or constrain reform” (2000:2). Hence, the political and administrative leadership need to work with stakeholders to overcome those challenges which have become embedded in the national and organizational culture of St. Lucia’s public service, since the post-independence era.

6.9. Personal Statement

I encountered many challenges on this doctoral journey; but pursuing this programme has been worthwhile personally and professionally. In addition to my skills (research, writing, analysis, communication) and personal (confidence, motivation) development; it feels quite rewarding to contribute to the much needed literature on PA reform in the Caribbean. Minto-Coy and Berman (2016) indicated that the existing literature on PA in the Caribbean is limited and antiquated. I believe that the region needs to embrace further research in this area, as it seeks to reposition itself in the global environment to meet the ever changing demands by citizens for increased efficiency and effectiveness.

One of the most worthwhile aspects of this study was engaging in heartfelt discussions with participants. Respondents were happy to participate in the interviews. They were all unanimous on the need for change in St. Lucia’s public service. I am of the view that
institutional strengthening and development should become major priorities for government; in order to reap more favourable reform outcomes. Borins argues that the “commonwealth’s less developed countries appear to be deficient in many of the prerequisites for NPM” (1998:54). Perhaps, by so doing, governments in the region may be able to have a stronger voice when confronted with the supremacy of donors, as they are able to demonstrate better competence and accountability. However, the coerciveness of international donors will continue to be a challenge because of the paucity of resources in the region. Hence, there is need for practitioners and analysts to pay attention to the possibilities for genuine collaboration on policy issues in an attempt to redefine policy issues.
Appendix 1 - Ethical Approval Letter

To: MELISSA TRANQUILLE

Subject: Ethical Application Ref: mmt11-ed12

(Please quote this ref on all correspondence)

13/02/2013 16:31:13

Labour Market Studies

Project Title: Thesis

Thank you for submitting your application which has been considered.

This study has been given ethical approval, subject to any conditions quoted in the attached notes.

Any significant departure from the programme of research as outlined in the application for research ethics approval (such as changes in methodological approach, large delays in commencement of research, additional forms of data collection or major expansions in sample size) must be reported to your Departmental Research Ethics Officer.

Approval is given on the understanding that the University Research Ethics Code of Practice and other research ethics guidelines and protocols will be compiled with

- http://www2.le.ac.uk/institution/committees/research-ethics/code-of-practice
The following is a record of correspondence notes from your application mmt11-ed12. Please ensure that any proviso notes have been adhered to:

Feb 13 2013 12:49AM I did not attached the informed consent letter as I am not yet at that stage of the research. I am currently working on my literature review.

Feb 13 2013 4:30PM Thank you Melissa. The only thing to note for future reference is the point you make about possibly offering an "appropriate form of reward". If you do believe that this is necessary, we will need to discuss it before you proceed. <BR><BR>Other than that, this seems fairly straightforward. <BR><BR>Good luck

--- END OF NOTES ---
Appendix 2 - Informed Consent Letter to Gate Keepers

Monday August 19th, 2013

ADDRESS

Dear Sir/Madam,

DATA PROTECTION/INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

I am undertaking this research as a part of a Doctorate degree which I am studying with the University of Leicester, England. This research seeks to acquire a more in-depth understanding of St. Lucia’s past Public Sector Reform Program. The topic reads “St. Lucia’s Public Sector Reform- what went wrong?”

Your Ministry was selected to take part in this research because the Public Service serves as a catalyst for any attempted public sector reform. I therefore seek your permission to approach prospective employees in your ministry to be interviewed by me. Of course, participation will be totally voluntary and participants will be free to withdraw at any point in time.

I will also like to reassure you that the information provided will be treated in the strictest of confidence and will be used for the sole purposes of this Doctoral Thesis. In addition, all data collected will be treated in accordance with ethical codes set out in the British Sociological Guidelines.

If you have any questions or would like further clarification, do feel free to contact me at 287-3390/458-9252 or at mtranquille7@outlook.com. I look forward to your favourable response.

Yours sincerely,

Melissa Tranquille
Appendix 3 - Informed Consent Letter to Participants

ADDRESS

Dear Sir/Madam,

DATA PROTECTION/INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

I am undertaking this research as a part of a Doctorate degree which I am studying with the University of Leicester, England. This research seeks to acquire a more in-depth understanding of St. Lucia’s past Public Sector Reform Program. The topic reads “St. Lucia’s Public Sector Reform- what went wrong?

You have been selected to take part in this research because the Public Service serves as a catalyst for any attempted public sector reform. I am therefore requesting your consideration to take part in an interview with me at your convenience. Of course, participation will be totally voluntary and participants will be free to withdraw at any point in time.

I will also like to reassure you that the information provided will be treated in the strictest of confidence and will be used for the sole purposes of this Doctoral Thesis. In addition, all data collected will be treated in accordance with ethical codes set out in the British Sociological Guidelines.

If you have any questions or would like further clarification, do feel free to contact me at 287-3390/458-9252 or at mtranquille7@outlook.com. I look forward to your favourable response.

Yours sincerely,
Melissa Tranquille
Appendix 4- Participant Informed Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Public Sector Reform in St. Lucia: What went wrong?

I agree to take part in an interview as part of the above named project. The research has been clearly explained to me and I have read and understood the participant informed consent letter. I understand that by signing the consent form I am agreeing to participate in this research and that I can withdraw from the research at any time. I understand that any information I provide during the interview is confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than the research project outlined above. The data will not be shared with any other organisations.

I agree that the interview can be audio taped by voice/tape recorder: YES  □  NO  □

Name: (please print) ............................................................

Signature:.................................  Date: .................................
Appendix 5 - Interview Questions

Research Question

Public Sector Reform in St. Lucia: What went wrong?

Background Information

All interviewees are given a form to gather demographic information on their job role, educational level, grade and tenure in the public service.

Objectives (for interviewer):

The principal objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To determine the underlying grounds for engaging in PSR in St. Lucia.
2. To investigate how St. Lucia's PSR was planned, designed, implemented and managed.
3. To comprehend how participants’ conceptualize NPM.
4. To understand how participants conceptualize PSR and if there was an NPM alignment.

Interview Questions

The interview questions are grouped into categories. All questions may not be asked as responses may be given in the answers to another question. Questions may not necessarily be asked in the same order as it depends on the flow of the responses.

Category 1: To determine the underlying grounds for engaging in PSR in St. Lucia.

1. What would you say are the core functions of the civil service?
2. Can you recall the launching of the PSR programme?
3. What would you say is PSR?
4. What were some of the challenges facing the St. Lucia Public Service prior to the introduction of the Public Sector Reform programme?
5. Were there any specific occurrences; specific questions or specific issues that prompted or stimulated the discussion on PSR? (that you may be aware of)
6. What were highlighted as some of the overall benefits of the PSR programme?
7. Have you ever heard the term NPM?
8. What do you understand it to mean? Do you know if St. Lucia’s PSR was based on principles of NPM?

Category 2: To investigate how St. Lucia's PSR was planned, designed, implemented and managed.

1. What discussions were held for the planning and implementation of PSR?
2. Was any formal or informal feedback received from employees?
3. After the pilot project, can you explain to me the roll out of the PSR program?

Category 3: To discover the perceptions of public servants at the varying levels on St. Lucia's PSR efforts.

1. In your own words, describe employees’ reaction to PSR?
2. Do you think that management got employees’ buy-in into the PSR project?
3. What forums were provided for employees’ to voice their concerns or offer suggestions during the PSR?

Category 4: Overall Effectiveness of St. Lucia’s PSR Initiative

1. Please share your views on political interference. Would you say that there was some political interference in the PSR project?
2. What would you say should be the role of politicians in the PSR project should be?
3. In your opinion, how would you say the public reacted to the introduction of the PSR?
4. How do you think the public service is viewed now? Have there been any improvements in service delivery?
5. What kind of leadership would successfully reform St. Lucia’s public sector to improve the sector’s responsiveness?

Category 5: To get an understanding of what worked and what didn’t work for St. Lucia’s PSR initiative.

1. Can you tell me anything on the outcome of the four (4) pilot projects? (Ministry of the Public Service; General Post Office; Ministry of Planning, Development and Environment and the Ministry of Education, HRD and Youth and Sports)
2. How would you describe the relationship between the political leaders/ministers and the administrative machine/management?
3. On a scale of 1 to 10 – how would you rate the overall effectiveness of St. Lucia’s PSR program?
4. Would you say that overall St. Lucia’s PSR program was successful? If yes, what worked very well? If no, what didn’t work well?
5. Are there any significant lessons to be learnt?
6. If government decides to embark on this project again, what do you think should be done differently?

**Additional Insights**

1. What do you think of the new Public Sector Modernization Project?
2. Would you say it is a rebranding of the PSR?
3. Do you know the objectives of the Office of Public Sector Modernization (OPSM)?
4. Can you shed light on some of the challenges of the public service that drove the implementation of an OPSM?
5. Are you aware of some of the management initiatives that have been implemented? Can you identify any?

**Follow-up prompts (if necessary)**

1. What are your views on PSR in general?
2. In your opinion, what do you think really went wrong with PSR?
3. What do you think are some of the changes that St. Lucia's public service really needs?
Appendix 6 - Demographic and Background Information Form

Public Sector Reform in St. Lucia – what went wrong?

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather demographic, personal and background information. It should only take you about 5 minutes to complete. The results of this survey will be used solely for academical purposes. Please endeavour to answer all questions as truthfully as possible. All information will be held strictly confidential and pseudonyms will be used to preserve identities. I thank you for participating in this research.
**DEMOGRAPHIC AND PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Name:………………………………………… Job title:………………………………………………

Ministry: ………………………………. Department………………………………………..

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Marital Status: Single Married Divorced

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What was the subject of your highest level of qualifications? (please tick two max)

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What is your current grade classification?

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What is your tenure of employment with the Public Service?

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<th>6-10 yrs</th>
<th>11-20 yrs</th>
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Appendix 7 - Sample Interview Transcript

Transcript SM3

Time: 35 mins 57 secs

Interview M: What would you say are the core functions of the civil service?

SM3: The civil service is a government run agency which has a sole responsibility of providing goods and services that are in keeping with the mandate of government for governance of the state. There are essential goods and services that have to be provided by the state and I think that is the core responsibility of the government service to provide those services.

Interviewer M: Going back to the launching of the PSR - how did you get involved in that project? What do you understand by Public Sector Reform?

SM3: I joined PSR as a _______ and most of my responsibilities were focused around doing research into various public sector initiatives whether it was related to management audits or reviewing of various policies; especially because there were quite a bit of policies that had been in place so there was need for them to be brought up to date. Some of them had been in existence for decades and they had not changed to reflect the changing times. So a lot of my responsibility was to review the policies that were in effect in government, as well as, effecting some of the recommendations coming out of some of the management audits that had been done. Some of the management audits were done on the fire service, boys' training centre and so on. There were some recommendations that had come out of those audits but they had just not being implemented. So it was my responsibility to see how those could be executed.

Interviewer M: What would you say was the whole purpose of PSR?

SM3: The purpose of PSR then was because there were a number of studies, reports and assessments done in the public service and there was also a thrust to modernize but at the time it was not called modernization, I think everybody recognized that (pause) the public service had to change to keep up with the changing times and it was to improve our processes and whether the improvements had to do with the use of technology or (pause) getting more skilled personnel into the public service or if we had the right persons in the right jobs. It was a very broad (pause) the thinking was changing and making the public service more efficient, more competitive even because unfortunately many persons seem to think, that
because we are the public service people are bound to accept our services but that is not always the case, we are still competing with the private sector for human resources even. How we manage our finances, all of those things are important whether or not you are in the public or private sector. The thing is that we needed to change our thinking. There had to be almost a paradigm shift, stop thinking along the lines of persons are obligated to accept our services but let us be competitive and look at best practices in other regions and see how it can develop us for even government is driving our country. We are wasteful and that can actually start impacting upon our social and economic development and the ripple effect was that the performance of a public sector was beginning to be felt. So PSR then had to start looking at all the policies that were being articulated. For instance or even within the ministries themselves, government change over time and so it means that the policies will change. (Ahm) what technocrats need to look at now, that based on the new vision, how can we implement those new policies? So the Office of public sector reform was supposed to look at improving services within the public service.

Interviewer M: Do you know if the reform was based upon any theory? Or that St. Lucia’s PSR program was influenced by NPM?

SM3: I do not recall what theory was used to engage in public sector reform at that time. When I joined ______ there were a number of initiatives already going on for a number of years and there was no clear indication of the basis for the implementation of those initiatives per any management theory.

Interviewer M: So have you ever heard of new public management? What do you understand it to mean?

SM3: New public management to me appears to be more dynamic, more inclusive, especially with the introduction of ICT as a modernization tool in the public sector. Diversities in economies make it vital to facilitate keeping up with the changing global environment.

Interviewer M: Can you share with me some of the challenges that existed at the time that necessitated the launching of the reform? Do those challenges still exist today?

SM3: There were some challenges when you look at (ahm) the structures they didn't really fit anymore. Even within ministries and I think that one of the main or things that came up quite a lot is that with changing governments there were departments that were tacked onto ministries, but they never stopped to look at whether they fit, what is the best fit, will it fit better with another ministry. (pause) So if there is such a disparity, it filtered down because it is not a matter of whether you take another department and you put it into or add it unto another ministry. The staff themselves, you want to drive whatever policies that they put in place. They now want to be part of it, they need to understand your vision, goals and so on and that was not happening. (pause) You see you have a structure and the reporting procedures were not in place and it is still happening today unfortunately. And I think that one of the major challenges is that persons were not sure. Depending on the government of the day, it may seem like a trivial thing but it is significant because these were the departments
and the personnel who are supposed to implement PSR and to provide the services, the goods and services that government is supposed to provide and if you don't have a solid structure in place that persons could clearly see the lines of authority, the reporting procedures and so on there will be problems and challenges later on.

Interviewer M: Were there any issues with productivity? Can you share those with me?

SM3: That also and I think that the productivity would be also one of the ripple effects of not having a proper structure in place. If you don't have proper reporting procedures, accountability and especially when you are looking at governance for instance there should be a very high degree in the public sector, a very high degree of accountability because you are spending public funds, you are receiving that money from your population or populace and you are going to use that money to do certain things. (pause) Again, productivity if persons again and I suppose it comes down to your HR. If persons don't understand where you are heading or they don't understand that there are implications for them not performing, or they don't understand what the best practices are well that is going to affect productivity.

So well in my view and that was one of the things in being <job title>, those thing came out and then we had to step back and realign the departments efficiently into a ministry that everything so that there is that flow and you know that everybody had to understand what that role was in the organization and had to understand that not just within the organization but the public as well, for they are responsible for paying their salaries. They had to understand that they had to deliver something at the end of the day, so all the little issues like punctuality, absenteeism and so on. These were (ahm) it was almost symptomatic of a bigger problem; so while people complain that public servants were always absent or they were always late or out sick but there was a fundamental problem that had to be investigated. That is what we need to spend time looking at - investigating.

Interviewer M: So how did the OPSR went about selling that initiative and getting that buyin from management?

SM3: (ahm) well my personal view is that the methodology that the OPSR adopted in the beginning, it was not the best. Public sector reform seem to be a little office in the building somewhere that was not necessarily, not in touch with the real issues, they were not really going out, it was more like an academic exercise, so there were lots of reports done and when I came in as <job title>, there was work done before, like I said it was purely academic, there were lots of reports. But like I said it is purely academic, there were reports that were done to say, okay yes there were management audits and yes you have done those and they end up on a shelf somewhere, but what did those audits really tell you? How in depth were they? You know and how involved were the persons in doing those audits? Because yes you would find that those audits are done, but did you really get the the (pause) sense from the end or the front line staff, the persons who were responsible for the day to day operations of the service, cause yes you look at management audits but management is just one one sphere of your thing but you have to look at all the other personnel as well and I think that is one of the things that was lacking so it was purely an academic exercise that never took into consideration what the other issues were. One of the things that I tried to look at was ethical
conduct within the public service, because I felt that that was also important. (pause) You will (pause) all those other reports on fraud or so but was there a policy to really deal with those issues? When you look at the staff orders they will tell that it is not necessarily a legal document. And if it is not a legal document what do we have to guide staff and guide PSR. If we do not have that kind of legislative teeth (pause); because if we acknowledge that the staff orders is not what we wanted then let us draft something. Unfortunately the draft bill has come way way after. But you are supposed to document those issues and let that inform your bill and that was not done at all. So you ended up with a reform office that itself needed a reform. You do all your research and all your documentations but it is like you are putting the cart before the horse and that was one of the main challenges to the reform department. The methodology was wrong. It did not start out correctly.

Interviewer M: Now you spoke about the methodology being used was wrong? Can you explain the methodology that they used?

SM3: My understanding was that there was an office set up and the Office was just to reform the public sector. But how much dialogue did we have? I know there was a green paper that was prepared and then a white Paper. I know the green paper was printed and circulated and so on but I don't know that any significant effort was made to have dialogue with persons one on one. Yes you printed a paper and circulated it but how many comments did you get back. How much involvement was there, even into preparing the paper? Was it just one person that sat down and decided to come up with a paper? Or was it a group of persons who sat down collectively together? You know, what was the representation like? Was there a proper representation of people from different ministries? From the comments that I was really hearing is that it was the paper from the director of PSR so it was a very personalized thing, it was his paper, so because of that many persons did not buy into the process, persons did not make any effort to follow because they had already aligned it to the director; so that instead would have killed any initiatives that would have come out of it any way. So persons who wanted to make a valuable contribution, didn't, because they saw it as being his paper.

Interviewer M: Was any effort made to get employee involvement or buy in PSR?

SM3: no not at all,

Interviewer M: I know there was mention in the green paper of change committees and contact persons. Was there any implementation? And how did that happen?

SM3: no not at all. I think that those ideas were good but how well do you know the persons that you are dealing with to say that this would work. So while you are saying that change committees and so on it is almost like you are imposing this on them And if you are looking at public sector reform , yes. You want to have some sort of structure but you want to make this thing to really work. So you may want to just call people and have a chat, you know a water cooler kind of thing as opposed to bringing persons into a formal setting and they may not tell you what they think, but if you speak with them one on one and they will be more free to tell you what needs to be done, you will learn a lot more from them. My thinking also
is that there was very little recognition to the majority of public sector workers, and when I say majority I mean persons that are in at least grade 1 to 5 or even a little higher because that is where the majority is. Many of those persons have little academic or intelligence level. If you are going to prepare a paper, do not expect that these persons will want to sit down and read that kind of academic instrument; and that is what I am saying, that they are not going to grasp it. When you come with a thick document with big words and procedures and theories that many persons don't understand people will not be able to relate. And that is what I am saying, PSR was a little too academic, stringent, you needed to come down to their level to have that kind of involvement. Because those persons are not going to be drawn to those things, so it will not work. So the public service that you are trying to reform does not even understand what you are doing. You are saying that you've prepared a green paper and white paper and persons don’t relate to it. I think that was one of the fundamental challenges of the process that it was not properly filtered down to the persons who really mattered.

Interviewer M: How did employees react? Were forums provided for employees to voice their concerns?

(interruption from her secretary)

SM3: I don't recall off hand because it was such a long time ago back in the 1990s when it first began. What I do remember is that they were circulating the green paper but that is what I can remember. I can't recall anything being done for employees to voice their concerns.

Interviewer M: What was the outcome of the pilot ministries? The green paper made mention of four pilot ministries.

SM3: They did but then again it was not successful. That much I can recall. I don't know what the ministries were but it did not go very far.

Interviewer M: One was the post office, ministry of planning, ministry of youth and sports.

And

SM3: No it did not go very far. Again if you have a problem at the entry level on how you start up your process; then it will not be successful.

Interviewer M: What about the relationship between the political directorate and the administrative machine of the public service; how would you describe that relationship?

SM3: Well back then and now it is the same thing. I have been in the public service for 26 years and it's the same thing. Governments have changed but nothing has changed, the governance has not really changed. People talk about political interference and all those sought of things; and yes you know with each changing government they each come with their new ideologies, vision and projects and so on; but at the end of the day it is the same thing. I think that the political directorate sometimes fail and very often fail to take (ahm, ahm) advice from the technocrats or the administrative heads of the ministry for these are the
persons that have been there and they have been there for quite some time and they understand certain things and very often they just ignore the advice and want whatever results that they want and that sometimes causes potential conflicts.

Interviewer M: Would you say that the PSR did not achieve its intended objectives due to political interference?

SM3: Not that I can recall. I do not recall that there was ever any interference.

Interviewer M: How did the public react?

SM3: The public was very luke warm. Most persons would thing that it is just another one of those things. The public service cannot change. Persons are stuck on their ways, it is just another of those projects. I don't think that anyone really believed that the public service would change. And again when you talk about disciplinary action, the process for disciplinary action is not very clearly defined, persons who had been sent out on disciplinary action were still getting paid although they sent them out on compulsory leave, and up to this day there are still people out on compulsory leave 10-15 years later. So if you don't have the legal teeth to deal with those issues that are very clear cut. How can you now ask to deal with people who are coming in late, disrespectful or caught stealing or one of those things? So the perception was not very favourable.

Interviewer M: What about the Trade Union, what was their level of involvement?

SM3: I know that they had discussions with the trade unions and because union representation is closely linked to employee situation. They had several meetings with the unions just to discuss some of those issues that were coming up. Because PSR was being driven by the ministry of the public service and the prime minister's office and it was back and forth between the two. One time it was with the ministry of the public service and another time with the prime minister's office. I know that there were issues that they knew had to be resolved so the unions would have wanted to have some kind of input but I am not quite sure how much input it had, because then again, just like everything else, it just died down.

Interviewer M: On a scale of 1 to 10 how would you rate the overall effectiveness of past PSR project?

SM3: I will say about 3 or 4. Well because of some of the reasons that I mentioned earlier. Well the way the process started. It seemed to have been a one man show and there was very little involvement and I mean based on my little experience, having studied management and so on; even participatory involvement; and you must have stakeholders interest, whatever you are trying to implement you must have participation from persons, well your stakeholders. And I just find that there was very little of that and even as a young public servant at that time I did not understand the process and I had this book that was given to me but I did not know what it meant. I think the process itself was wrong and that contributed significantly to the failure of PSR. It was too academic a process. I don't think academic is
wrong but you do your research and get you information and then you put it together and marry the two; the practical and the theory. So it was not at all successful.

Interviewer M: So what lessons do you think should be learnt?

SM3: It's a tedious process but there has to be that one and one. When I say one and one, I mean that you go to each department and ministry and break it down. Take your time and when I say take your time, I mean break it down; because you have to reform every single individual because that is what PSR is about. If you want to reform me you need to take time for me. I want to see that what I am doing is going to impact you and vice-versa. That leg work has to be done. I think also whatever new initiatives come on board they need to first understand how each and every single department works. It is tedious like I said, but it is important. When you talk about PSR you are looking at every single department. You need to understand how all your departments work. What it is that we are doing that we need to improve upon and what it is that we are doing that needs to change or does it need changing amendment, or training on the part of the staff. Do we need to improve our technologies? So when we talk about PSR it is not just an academic kind of process. You must look at every individual process within the ministry. So if you say that you are looking at the <name of ministry> you need to look at every individual process or departments, how does it impact on the public and how they function? So we know how to go about the reform. So when we look at the departments; we can say well ok, this is what <name of department> is supposed to be doing? and therefore you will need the staff to make those kind of adjustments and that is one thing that will make it successful. So we can get buy-in on those initiatives.

Interviewer M: What about the new thrust in PSM? Do you understand what PSM is?

SM3: I think that PSM is a rebranding of the PSR initiative. I haven't seen much that convinces me otherwise. I think that they just changed the name but I have not seen anything. They have had meetings with all heads of departments on PSM. But my thinking is, yes you have had meetings with all heads of departments, but PSR is not happening at that level really, but down there. So they are not on the ground, you have to take it to the grass roots. So to me it is like another academic exercise that may not get the kind of results we want. So yes there is some shift in using information technology and so and those are broad areas but if you are talking about PSR; yes if you talk about PSR who is going to use the new technology or implement the new procedures. Let us look at customer service. You must first ask what is wrong with customer service and what it is that you are trying to fix. So you have to start backwards. Find out the problems and address those problems. Only then you can more forward to actually fixing it and be successful in the fixing.

Interviewer M: Are you aware of any of the PSM initiatives?

SM3: The one thing I recall is that they wanted to have a central PBX system for the entire public service. So if anyone call, they call 311 and they will be able to access any government service or something like that. There was also the issue of a web portal for the entire public
service. So persons can go online and access any information on any government ministry. Those were the only two things that I can recall. I don't know of any other.

Interviewer M: What sort of approach is being used to get employees involved?

SM3: Since the last set of meetings with management there hasn't been any follow up. Nothing saying this is where we were at, since our last meeting; and as a manager you have that information shared with you. You can now filter it down to your staff. But that is not happening. Right now PSR is the last thing on my mind, if it is there at all, because I am not even thinking that there is stuff happening. I mean there is an office of PSM and I know they are working but I don't know anything else as a manager. So this is one of the things that need to happen. It's a one man show and you must not have that kind of isolation. People think like it is them doing their thing. Just like <name of SM3 department> I can say is my thing, I don't want that kind of perception. We don't want that to be attached to PSM. Like it is this individual doing their thing. It should be shared by all.

Interviewer M: What kind of leadership is required for successful PSR?

SM3: By leader I am looking at, I think first of all, the person must be somebody who is a career public servant. They have been in the public service for a number of years, they are career public servants. It would be good if that person has experience in different ministries. Because unfortunately you find some people who have grown up in just one ministry so they don't have that kind of breadth of experience and knowledge compared to someone who has moved around. Because even though it is the public service each department would have had its own culture; and the network is very important as well; as it helps you to gain buy-in for whatever you are doing. So the person has to be somebody who has that kind of character to see things happen, they have to be a leader, being able to articulate some of the things that they have to put in place, the strategies, and they have to be able to get persons to buy it. Of course that person has to be dynamic, because when you are dealing with the public sector that has such a large employee base, it is very important that that person is able to motivate persons to keep persons interested; you know they have to be able to keep momentum with the process and all that they have doing. And they also have to be able to, that person has to be surrounded by persons who share that same vision and be willing to work alongside that individual who would have the necessary skills and experience to drive that process.

<END OF INTERVIEW>
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