

**ASSESSMENT OF THE RECRUITMENT AND POSTING PROCESSES
OF FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS IN THE GAMBIAN FOREIGN
SERVICE, 2017 – 2023**

ALPHA MANKA

Supervisor Dr. SOLOMON AYEGBA USMAN

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ABSTRACT

This study assesses the recruitment and posting processes within the Gambian Foreign Service in the past six years, that is, from 2017 to 2023. It specifically investigates the methods used in the recruitment as well as the posting processes in the country's Foreign Service and its Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) with the view to determine whether the recruitment and posting processes comply with established regulations. It also examines the implications of the current mode of recruitment and appointment of the country's foreign service officers. Further, it explores the challenges confronting the recruitment and posting processes in the country's foreign service and suggested ways of tackling them.

The research made several key findings. First, it reveals that the recruitment and posting processes in the Gambia's Foreign Service do not substantially comply with the existing rules and regulations. Based on participants' responses and evidence in existing literature, it is revealed that the existing rules and regulations that regulate the recruitment and posting processing of FSOs are flaunted by authorities responsible. This way, many unqualified people find their way into the sensitive foreign service job. Also, the study finds out that the regulations guiding the recruitment process and posting of FSOs were insufficiently strong to address these lapses. The implications of this are that the Gambia's foreign service undoubtedly under performed during the period under review.

For this study, combination of primary and secondary data was utilized. For primary data, both questionnaire and interviews were used to generate relevant information from selected key informants and interviewees (KIIs) using purposive sampling. Of the selected 12 participants, 10 were interviewed, while 2 were administered with questionnaires. Those interviewed were drawn from the Gambian National Assembly, that is, serving members in the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Banjul (2 KIIs), lecturers from the Department of Political Science, the University of The Gambia (2 KIIs), personnel who are mostly senior civil servants of the Gambian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (2 KIIs), Permanent Secretary of Personal Management Office, PMO (1 KII), Gambian politicians with expertise on the country's foreign policy (2 KIIs), and former Gambian diplomat (1 KII). Of those administered question, they were drawn from Gambian Academic and Citizen Abroad (1 KII) and former Permanent Secretary of MOFA (1 KII). Secondary data were sourced from textbooks, journal articles,

internet materials and other archival sources. While data collected from primary source were analyzed using thematic and content analysis, secondary data were analyzed descriptively.

The study concludes that the insufficiency of policy document guiding the recruitment and posting of foreign service officers in the Gambian Foreign Service did not only contribute to compromised recruitment and posting process but also created a foreign service that did not perform optimally in setting both foreign policy goals for the country and accomplishing them.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The decisions and actions of states in international arena are dictated and guided by their foreign policy. Foreign policy is a substantial need in today's age. It is the mechanism that helps states to set goals and realize their national interests through their relationships with other actors in the international community. Thus, the importance of foreign policy is accepted worldwide because it helps countries to maintain diplomatic relations with one another (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2012). States in international relation, as Potvorov (1994) writes, perpetually engage one another with the motive of fulfilling or securing their national interest through their foreign policy. Foreign policy, therefore, being the strategic course of action, which is mostly underpinned by the vital interest of the welfare of the people, shapes, dictates, and influences the behaviour of states in their engagements (Ikedinma, Ndu, Terhembe, 2012).

Therefore, in like manners, scholars argue that foreign policy, as the strategic objective that guides the behaviour of a state in its international engagement is as important as the personnel that formulate and implement it. Marc Grossman, former US Director General of Foreign Service, delineates that in a globalized competitive world, one needs not to have only sound foreign policy but also to recruit the best and most diverse personnel to protect and promote one's national interest. To this end, the people who represent a country in diplomatic mission need to be people of integrity and knowledgeable in diplomacy and international relations (The Standard, 2023). Tijan Sallah acknowledges this with special regards to small states:

In this increasingly bloc-competitive world, small countries are generally overlooked. Unless, by dint of fortune, they have some strategic resource, or have leaders who are globally vocal and visible, or can link themselves to the fortunes of larger political units, they may very well stand to be poor (Sallah, 2010) (Emphasis mine).

This shows that personnel who implement their country's foreign policy should have good understanding and the susceptibility to pursuit their national interest through their foreign policy. This is more so for small state like the Gambia whose foreign policy is largely focused on resource mobilisation for national development.

The Gambia is one of the smallest countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The country, since independence, has an uncodified foreign policy. It lacks basic economic or natural resources, which informs its foreign policy goal which is geared toward resource mobilization for national development. At independence there were expressions of doubt about the country's survival as

a newly independent nation in 1965. The basis of pessimists' argument that the country should not be given the independence or would not survive the independence as a nation-state was deeply economic rooted, Secka (2020) writes. Sallah (1990) also posited that, the poor endowment of natural and mineral resources in The Gambia triggered a wave of pessimism and labeled against the country by many people during the struggle for independence. The viability of the country to become an independent nation was questioned in many quarters, prominent of which lies on small land mass, slight population, and unknown natural resources, (Kah, 2018).

Moreover, the economic challenges of The Gambia, plus the doubts and uncertainties surrounding the country were aptly epitomized by an American writer Berkeley Rice 1967 in his book; *Enter Gambia: The Birth of an Improbable Nation*. Rice stated that the total annual revenues of \$6.5 million; two small groundnut oil mills, of which one is privately owned, 95% of the country total export was groundnuts; six cabinet members, only one had a college degree [Michael Baldeh], the rest were high school graduates or drop-outs, a two-man Foreign Ministry then known as external affairs; a four man Foreign Service, 150 member Field Force, one Teachers Training College, one bank, one sea port, ; one technical school, one hospital, two restaurants; three high schools; less than ten primary schools countrywide; one bookstore; one fire engine; one pharmacy; one dentist; one civil engineer, these and many more beyond all questions, informed the pessimist argument but also shaped and conditioned the Gambia's foreign policy. For these reasons, The Gambia uses her foreign policy to mobilize resources for national development and security. This foreign policy is pursued by both the democratic government of the first republic and the 'authoritarian' regime of the second republic.

In the First Republic, under Jawara, between 1965 and 1994, The Gambia's foreign policy was 'pinned on three main objectives, namely security, economic development, and national prestige', (Touray, 2000; Lenn, 2021). The Gambia has a strategic foreign policy toward the Western World which is mobilizing resources for its economic development since it lacks the resources at home. The orientation of the country's foreign policy toward the West was due to the leadership of President Jawara, and his advocacy on human right and peace. The Gambia also has strategic security foreign policy towards its immediate and only neighbour, Senegal. The Gambia cuts Senegal into north and south. This creates 'a semi-exclave' region in southern Senegal, Casamance which, for the past thirty years, is locked in an arm rebellion (Evans, 2020). Senegal surrounds The Gambia on all sides except on the West that leads to the Atlantic Ocean. This geographical vulnerability has always risen fears in The Gambia that the country may lose its sovereignty to Senegal. Although, there is no immediate threat that Senegal may or will invade The Gambia, but there were talks of integrating the two states. In fact, the two states were integrated into a federation in 1982 but shortly separated in 1989 partly due to the national security concern of The Gambia, (Sallah, 1999; Jawara, 2009).

In the Second Republic, under President Jammeh, The Gambia's foreign policy relied heavily on foreign expatriates through bilateral cooperation and other times as Sanyang (2013) puts it by 'incurring exorbitant costs in the maintenance of such expatriates'. Sanyang maintains that President Jammeh's acute stance and critics of the West especially in their relationship with Africa and many Third World countries earned him an outcast branding. However, it could be stressed that President Jammeh's personality, traits and ideology of the world also shape and condition The Gambia's foreign policy. In fact, the country's foreign policy under Jammeh as

Jeng (2018) puts it was an 'erratic foreign policy' which means that the country's foreign policy does not have a consistent pattern of logic or direction. Jeng criticizes Jammeh for his unilateral approach of foreign policy packaging and the shifting of The Gambia's foreign policy direction from the West to the Gulf Arab and Asian countries. However, Janneh (2017) reasoned that a shift of focus of foreign policy direction from Western World to the Gulf and the Middle East countries is largely because Jammeh was not getting much aids from the West compared to his predecessor, Jawara. This is so apparent because Jammeh came to power through military coup and the West were not keen to support a military government. Be that as it may, the underline tenet through which The Gambia's foreign policy breeds under Jammeh was no different to that of the country's foreign policy under Jawara. Therefore, Saine (2000) asserts that the goal of the foreign policy [under Jammeh] was to extract external resources to fund its internal programs and maintain territorial sovereignty of the country.

This is to say the objective of the country's foreign policy under both Jawara and Jammeh regime was driven by the need of economic development and territorial integrity. Fast forward in 2016 to present, the content and conduct of The Gambia's foreign policy under President Barrow is resembled to that of the first republic in its foreign policy direction and advocacy for human right. Interestingly, what is unique in all of these regimes is that the country's foreign policy has been shaped and conditioned by viable multiple factors - prominent of which is resource mobilization for national development of recent, The Gambia has 23 diplomatic missions with 2 consulate general posts geared toward advancing the national interest of the country through diplomacy, peace, and security of her citizens in the diaspora, (MOFA Strategic Plan, 2017 – 2021). Despite the existence of the country's foreign policy in all the regimes in [different forms and facet], there has never been a Foreign Service Posting Policy (FSPP). Consequently, the recruitment and posting processes of Foreign Service officers is not guided by principles, rules, and regulation. This can denigrate Foreign Service institutions and by extension its foreign policy into ineffectiveness. In The Gambia, the recruitment and appointment of Foreign Service personnel are politically motivated.

Furthermore, people with the required skill set are not at most put in the right position; as a result, the last three decades has witnessed the country recorded many unpleasant histories in its Foreign Service domain. For instance, 'Gambian diplomats in UK guilty of tobacco fraud' case. A group of Gambian diplomats turned an embassy into 'warehouse' smuggling and selling tax- free tobacco, have been caught, stripped off their diplomatic immunity, prosecuted and jailed. Upon the verdict of their case, the judge asserts 'you were sent to London to represent your country and you were certainly expected as diplomats to maintain the highest possible standard of integrity and honesty' (BBC, 2014). On a similar vein in July 2023, Gambian diplomats were caught in visa scandals in the United States (US), and were charged, and convicted by the US Federal Government and were expelled back to the Gambia (The Standard 2023; The Point, 2023). This and many other illegal activities of diplomats could seriously stain the image of the country's Foreign Service.

All countries including the Gambia have two personalities: national personality and external personality. The external personality, in the context of Foreign Policy Studies, is the external institutions of the state and the personnel in those institutions, who serve as the embodiment of country's culture, personality, and its interest, (PDOIS Manifesto, 2021). Thus, the state's institution outside of its territorial borders are meant to shape it external personality. Therefore,

people who work in the country's foreign institution must have the capacity and capability to shape the external personality of the country because that is what makes it possible for the country to have easy access to international community and try to get its interest satisfied, either in terms aid, in terms of loans, cooperation or relation. A notable assertion is that a country that knowingly appoints people who deserve no honour as its diplomatic representatives, such country itself deserves no honour. Thus, one does not appoint people who are not honourable in their Foreign Service, and they intend to get anything honourable. The politicisation of The Gambian Foreign Service, and the denigration of service delivery and performance is one of the key premises that spark the interest of this research - to make an assessment on the methods of recruitment and appointments of officers in The Gambia Foreign Service. In so doing, the research will tease out the implications of the method on the country's foreign policy, and map out a way forward, by advocating for Foreign Service Posting Policy (FSPP). The following subsequent pages contain research problem, research questions and objectives of the research. Therefore, the thrust of this study is to assess the recruitment and posting processes of foreign service officers in the Gambian Foreign Service

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

The former President Jammeh uses Foreign Service to get rid of politics or military officers that are seen as a threat to his regime whilst President Barrow uses the Foreign Service to compensate his political affiliates or loyalists recruiting and appointing them just because they lost election or they could not bid any positions for themselves in the government, therefore President Barrow patronizes and sympathizes with them by recruiting and posting them as Gambian diplomats to represent and pursue the country's foreign policy. This raises an alarm; a public outcry to many Gambians since the appointed individuals are not known to be experience or being expertise on Foreign Service mission or international relation. Thus, this indicates that, there is no principles, rules, or regulations use by The Gambia Government to recruit and appoint foreign officials. The Gambia has no specific document that outlines criteria for the recruitment and appointment of ambassadors/high commissioners, first secretary, second secretary, third secretary protocol officer or consular representative. There is no policy or methods of recruitment and appointment of personnel who will carry out the Foreign Service mission. Also, key, or higher positions are not advertised by Personal Management Office (PMO) of the government, instead direct appointments are made through the influence of the President. This has also created a room for politicization of Foreign Service institutions, hence in many instances validates ineptocracy over meritocracy.

1.3 Research questions

For this study, the following research questions would guide its findings. There are as follows:

- a) What are the methods used in the recruitment and posting processes in the Gambia's Foreign Service?
- b) To what extent does the recruitment and posting processes in The Gambian Foreign Service complies with regulations?
- c) What are the challenges, if any, confronting the recruitment and posting processes in The Gambian Foreign Service and how can there be addressed?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main aim of the study is to examine the recruitment and posting processes of foreign service officers in the Gambian Foreign Service since independence. However, the specific objectives of the study are to,

- a) identify various methods used in the recruitment and posting processes in the Gambia's Foreign Service.
- b) Determine the extent to which the recruitment and posting processes in The Gambian Foreign Service complies with laid down rules and regulations; and,
- c) describe the challenges that are confronting the recruitment and posting processes in The Gambian Foreign Service with the view to addressing them.

1.5 Working Research Assumptions

The following three working assumptions are guiding this research. They are as follows:

- a) The absence of Foreign Service posting policy framework is entirely responsible for the inefficiency of the Gambia's Foreign Service and by extension, its foreign policy.
- b) The Gambia's Foreign Service posting is heavily compromised to favour the elites and their children to the exclusion of the ordinary citizens of the country.
- c) The fact that The Gambia does not have well-articulated foreign policy thrust and goals is reflective of the haphazard character of its foreign service recruitment and posting processes.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study examines the recruitment and posting processes in the Gambian Foreign Service. Thus, thematically, and periodically, the scope of the study covers the recruitment and posting processes in the country's foreign service from independence period in 2017 to 2023.

1.7 Significance of the study

This research is significant for a number of reasons. First, the chosen topic is not well researched by scholars, and this makes it relatively new. Second, when completed, it would serve as a springboard for future studies that would use it as a reference material. Third, it will help the Gambian foreign policy makers in decision-making process with respect to the formulations and implantations of the country's external relations and conduct of diplomacy. Fourth, it will contribute to the existing body of knowledge particularly in the areas of the Gambian foreign policy as well as international relations and political science discipline. Finally, it would close the identified gap for this study.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

The following key concepts that the centrality of this study revolves round would be defined as used in the context of this work. They are foreign policy, diplomacy and diplomatic relations, foreign service, foreign service posting policy, and national interest.

- Foreign Policy: a strategic objective that underpinned and guide the behaviour of state in its interaction with other states and nonstate actors.
- Diplomacy and Diplomatic Relations: practice of a state trying to influence the behaviour of others to their advantage or for mutual benefits through non coercive means.
- Foreign Service and Foreign Service Posting Policy: The Foreign Service is the post occupied by diplomats or Gambian civil servants severing in the mission abroad while Foreign Service Posting Policy is the framework that guide appointment and posting process of foreign service officials.
- National Interest: a strategic objective or goal that informed the decision or action of a state at a particular time. It could be political, economic, social or security.

1.9 Organisation of the Study

This research is structured into six chapters. Chapter One introduces the topic and consists of the background to the study, statement of the research problem, research questions, objectives of the study, working research assumptions and scope and significance of the study, among others. Chapter Two reviews the existing literature on the chosen topic with emphasis on conceptual, empirical, methodological, and theoretical reviews as well as theoretical frameworks and gaps in literature. While Chapter Three examines the study methodology and research design, Chapter Four provides detail and historical analysis the Gambian foreign policy especially with respect the recruitment and posting policy frameworks of the country's foreign service and the organizational structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MOFA. For Chapter Five, collected data from the primary sources would be presented, analysed and findings discussed. Lastly, Chapter Six summarizes, concludes, and make policy recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literatures on the concept of foreign policy, Foreign Service Posting Policy, the recruitment, and appointment of diplomatic corps in the Gambia with special focus on literatures on the Gambia and her international engagements. The chapter is divided in parts. The first section conceptualises and operationalise concepts that are sacrosanct to the study by reviewing different scholarly definitions and adopting working definitions. The section, however, does not cover all definitions. In the second section, the chapter does an empirical review of literatures on the Gambia's foreign policy orientation, making and setting. The review highlights the dearth of literature on country's recruitment and appointment of diplomats; however, it also sets the scene to situate the central question of this thesis. The third section shed light on different theories by dissecting abstract world of theory and real world of policy in making study of foreign policy and service. The final sections examine the significant of this research by highlighting the gap that will be fill by the research in literature on Gambia's foreign policy making and setting. The following section focuses on the conceptual review of foreign policy

2.2 Conceptual Review

Central to the foreign policy study and relevant to this research is the concept of foreign policy, international relations, Foreign Service, Foreign Service Posting Policy, national interest, diplomacy, and diplomats. These concepts, as Smith (1986) argues, are useful in analysing and understanding international relation. Therefore, these concepts are conceptualized in this research and then operationalized to draw research variables. Conceptualizations provide a framework in explaining complex terms. It is a process, Reddy Asi (2013) notes, through which the research attempt to arrive at a common agreement of the concepts under study, aims at specifying exactly what the research means and does not mean by the concept. However, concepts in international relation like in many political science fields are difficult to define in a straightforward manner as many scholars have different views.

‘No general agreement exists among those who study international relations about what we are studying or how it should be studied, and when attempts are made to secure general agreement in this regard, they often produce a counter-reaction or are simply ignored’ (Sharp 2009).

This shows that there are different perspectives and views among scholars regarding the study of international relation and some key concepts. Concepts are competitive thought games in the sense that scholars, depending on their theoretical positions, give their views and thoughts on subject matters relevant to a particular topic. In fact, people always ‘differ on even how the same sort of thing is best apprehended.’ ‘How could one agree once and for all upon the definition of a field whose scope is in constant flux,’ Stanley Hoffman says ‘indeed, a field whose fluctuation is one of its principal characteristics.’ Although, this research is not a comprehensive survey of concepts in foreign policy studies, it contrastively examines them, noting their convergences and divergences. This will help the researcher to adopt a working definition of the concept for the thesis and avoid ambiguity and misinterpretation for the readers.

2.2.1 Foreign Policy

The conception of foreign policy has somewhat become an essentially contested concept, what is seemingly considered a domestic or foreign for country A, most often than not, is not so for country B. For this reason, it is noteworthy to distinguish briefly the two terminologies. “Foreign” is meant to apply to policy toward the world outside states’ territorial borders, and “domestic” is meant to apply to policy made for the internal political system (Beasley K.R et al, 2013). Foreign policy is the general objective that guides the activities and relationships of a state in its interactions with other states (Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d). It involves totality of the country’s policies toward an interaction with the environment beyond its borders (John, 2019). Foreign policy of a country includes maintenance and enhancement of a country’s power and security, ranging to an economic relationship with other countries and the country’s integrity. It is the general principles that guide the decision and actions of a state in its interaction with other states. In the words of Tangara (2022), it is a strategy or planned course of action aimed at achieving specific goals that define national interest. For Weber and co: [F]oreign policy is composed of the goals sought, values set, decisions made, and actions taken by states, and national governments acting on their behalf, in the context of the external

relations of national societies. It constitutes an attempt to design, manage and control the foreign relations of national societies (Weber et al, 2013).

This research adopts the operational definition of the concept of foreign policy as instrument or policy that guide and connect a country with the outside world. It is what defines a country in its interaction and reaction with other international actors in the realm of international system.

2.2.2 International Relations

The concept of international relations is very crucial in the discipline of political science and diplomatic studies. Hence, Sharp (2009) opined by saying that, 'We are always involved in the world of international relations (IR), whether by choice or implication' regardless of the influence or reason behind our involvement'. However, international relation is defined by scholars differently. Jackson and Sørensen (2012) in their work Introduction to International Relations define international relation (IR) as 'the study of relationships and interactions between countries, including the activities and policies of national governments, international organizations (IGOs), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and multinational corporations (MNCs). It is an interdisciplinary subject that borrows from history, economics, law, and philosophy. International relations are a theoretical subject, a practical and policy subject, and academic approach, (Jackson and Sørensen, 2012). Leftwich (2004) views international relation as 'a complex web of processes' than a location (cited in McGlinchey 2017). But for Morgenthau, international relations are the struggle for power between different political actors, (Gonzalez 2018). The cited definitions converged that international relations is the engagement between state actors in the international system.

2.2.3 National Interest

National interest is central in the interaction between and among states as far as international relation is concerned. In fact, the states' interactions are dictated and directed by their national interest (Potvorov, 1994). So, the foreign policy of a state, for Morgenthau (1951), is to promote and protect their national interest (cited in Samba and Jatta, n.d). The national interest can be political, economic, security, cultural and ideological (Nuechterlein 1976). However, it is difficult to define what really constitute a national interest, nevertheless, when states are to enter in a relation they are dictated by their interest. The national interest according to some scholars 'should be clear, fixed, and politically bipartisan', (Samba and Jatta, n.d) because states in international relations are always in struggle for power for their survival.

2.2.4 Foreign Service

Another concept relevant to this research is Foreign Service. As the name implies, foreign service or foreign posting is defined by the Government of Pakistan Cabinet Secretariat Establishment Division (Pakistani Government, n. d.) as 'foreign appointments, and postings in missions' abroad, international, and regional organisation etc. The definition excluded postings related to 'defence, intelligence and security affairs and foreign posts which are the cadre posts of any service, cadre or occupational group.' The Foreign Service is the post occupied by diplomats and civil servants severing in the mission abroad. Foreign Service positing policy is the guideline for foreign appointments and posting of Foreign Service.

2.2.5 Diplomacy

Diplomacy is another integral concept in this study. Relations and interactions between and among states and non-state actors alike often begin with bargaining which is formally conducted tacitly by both parties involved in the process called diplomacy. It is asserted that before the label of the term 'diplomacy', the very act and process was in existence. States communicate through their professional diplomatic agents and other officials designed to secure agreement (Berridge, 2015). The sole aim of diplomacy was to secure states' objective via their foreign policy without resort to force, propaganda, or law. Thus, Mingst (2004) defines diplomacy as a practice of a state trying to influence the behaviour of others by negotiating, upholding, or withdrawing (from) a specific action, however, with the full knowledge of its own and opponent's capabilities. Watson (1982) views it as a negotiation between political entities which acknowledge one another's independence. For Halisah Ashari, diplomacy is 'government's process of communicating with foreign publics to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, its institution and culture, as well as its national goals etc.' Cornago (2008) see it as 'the conduct of international relations by negotiation and dialogue or any other means to promote peaceful relations among states.

Without a substantive interpretation of these definitions, what can be summed up is that diplomacy is nothing, but a negotiation and it often begins with bargaining through communication to reach agreement on the issue. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy to mention that due to the increasing change of globalisation in today's competitive world, diplomacy has taken somewhat different dimensions and facets, varying from traditional diplomacy to public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy. Despite this, it should be stressed that what underlines all these types of diplomacy is negotiation and bargaining between states and their counterparts (Rostami, 2014).

In diplomacy, diplomats representing their states virtually conduct and maintain relations of their respective states with those of others by the help of diplomatic corps. In many democracies, diplomats are political appointees whose life and dead of service are hinged on the government of the day, (Gold, 2012). In other instance, diplomats come up through the ranks of bureaucratic Foreign Service and so they are called career diplomats because they outlast changes in the administration of state. Diplomats, as Coenell Law School writes, is a person appointed by a state or national government to conduct diplomatic activities with a foreign state or government, or with a foreign entity such as international organisations. The highest diplomatic rank being an ambassador and all other diplomatic corps and forms are part of a collective body of diplomats. Their sole responsibility includes but not limited to represent the country, protect the state's national interest, negotiate, and bargain. In the Gambia, the 1997 constitution, section 79, subsections (a) and (b) empowered the president to conduct relation with other state and non-state actors. Also, to appoint principal representative of The Gambia abroad, which is willy-nilly known as ambassador and of course the reception of envoys accredited to the Gambia.

2.3 Empirical Review

The Gambia like any independent country is never shorthanded in having a foreign policy in her interaction with other states. The country has a pro-western foreign policy in the first republic between 1965 and 1994 under President Jawara, who was democratically elected but

overthrown in mid-1994 by the military Junta. Jarawa's human right record earned him relative worldwide recognition. And Jammeh's decisive and outspoken words against the West in the destabilisation and underdevelopment of Africa portrayed him as an outcast.

In his doctorate thesis 'the Foreign Policy Problems of Developing Micro-States: The Case of the Gambia, 1975-1990' Touray (1995), being one of the first scholarly work on Gambia's foreign policy asserts that Gambia's foreign policy during the period under examination reflected greatly personality of the president Jawara, beliefs, and conviction. For Dr. Omar Touray 'Gambia's foreign policy was to a large extent a personification of Jawara's neutrality, moderate stand on both African and International issues, and a great support for humanitarian causes such as democracy and respect for human right'. Despite examining the decision makers in foreign policy and implementation Touray's work did not look at any personality other than the personality of the president, hence his work is limited in that it does not shed light on the personality of diplomats who served as representatives and embodiment of country's external personality.

Substantially, Janneh (2017) asserted that leadership does make a huge difference in the success and failure of a country's foreign policy. However, Janneh's work on The Gambia's foreign policy does not provide sufficient explanation, in that it fails to highlight any significance about the individuals that carry out the task of pursuing and implementing the country's foreign policy.

The military junta assumption of power shows a shift in the country's foreign relation between 1994 and 2016 leading to an "erratic yet assertive foreign policy under President Jammeh". In explaining the reason for Jammeh's decisive foreign policy and gradual shift toward Asian countries, Janneh (2017), delineates that there are various reasons for Jammeh's shift and tilts of foreign policy from the West toward the Gulf. For example, at the initial stage of Jammeh's leadership, his government was brutally condemned, even sanctioned by the international community. Thus, according to Jannah, it was convenient for Jammeh to recraft and reshape The Gambia's foreign policy towards the Asian countries. The leadership style and the personality of a leader greatly affect the form and facet of foreign policy. In fact, leadership traits determine the process and direction of foreign policy of a country (Janneh, 2017). It influences the content and conduct in packaging and as well as in implementing a country's foreign policy.

Similarly, in his account on The Gambia's foreign policy from 1994-99, Saine extrapolates historical yet in theoretical context The Gambia's foreign policy by situating and analysing The Gambia's foreign policy. However, what stands out from his deliberation is that The Gambia's foreign policy under the given study period is somewhat no different from that of the 1965 foreign policy under Jawara. Saine (2000) asserts that in the aftermath of the coup 1994, the primary objective of the Arm Forces Provisional Ruling Council (AFPRC) cum (APRC) foreign policy was driven by two main objectives: First, struggle for recognition and survival of the regime in international community. Second, to ensure the county's economic survival and stability in the face of mounting Western sanctions and threats. Saine's work tried to answer the question whether there has been a changed or continuity in the country's foreign policy goals and orientation under Jammeh. He therefore boils down to the specifics and domestic incidents that conditioned the country's foreign policy from 1994/99. But Saine, just

like Janneh, did not put any serious emphasis on those who implement the country's foreign policy in Foreign Service sectors.

Furthermore, Jeng (2018) posits that 'domestic intervening variables' such as leadership image, perception and even cultural norms can direct and influence leaders' insight and decision when crafting and pursuing foreign policy. Jeng exemplifies that President Jammeh's strong Islamic identity and his 'controversial' speeches at the UN were dressed up by geopolitical interest and strategy to extract resources from the oil-rich Arab and the Gulf states. Notwithstanding, Jeng, just like many liberal scholars drastically falls short since he did not buttress any significance of any other actors beyond the persona of the President. Other actors and diplomats such as ambassadors/high commissioners, deputy ambassadors, first secretary, and consul representative etc in terms of processing and in pursuit of the country's foreign policy.

In his masters' dissertation, *The Role of Small States in The International System: The Case of The Gambia's Foreign Policy in The Post-Cold War (1990-2016)*, Muhammed Lenn, arguably deconstructs the popular discourse analysis in studies of small states by using a constructivist approach. Traditionally, the study of small states and their foreign policy is hinged on two predominantly lens (realist school and liberal school). The former delineates that a country's foreign policy is influenced by their quest for power and their sense of insecurity while the latter posits that a country's foreign policy breeds on their quest for mutual benefit, cooperation etc. Nevertheless, Lenn (2017) argues that foreign policy of a country could be influenced and shaped by viable multiple factors, such as identity, ideation, norms, beliefs, culture and even the regime type; and The Gambia, as a developing nation, is no exception to these factors. Despite the lucid deliberation on cultural affiliation and identity of the leader, Lenn does not put any serious examination on methods of recruitment and appointment of the persona of those who package and implement a country's foreign policy in the Foreign Service sector. Many IR scholars remark that internal factors of the state are one of the major considerations that orient and shape the foreign policy of a country. Another incredible and insightful account on the country's political history and economic phenomenon is postulated by Sallah (1990) and Perfect (2008). Both Sallah and Perfect put little or no emphasis on the country's foreign policy or external relation. In like ways, Wiseman & Vidler (2000) gives the holistic view of the nature of security forces to the unexpectedness of the July 1994 coup, with factors that trigger it and the reason for its success. However, the account could be fairly considered as domestic hence it lays no emphasis on the country's external relation.

Meanwhile, from 2016 to present, the content and conduct of The Gambia's foreign policy under President Barrow has resembled and recycled to that of the first republic. Therefore, despite the existence of the country's foreign policy in all these regimes in different forms and facet, there has never been a Foreign Service posting policy. Although, there is no scholarly work done on foreign policy of the Barrow government. However, the works on Jawara and Jammeh's governments' foreign policy does not explore foreign policy beyond the tutelage of the presidents. Therefore, Gambian diplomatic corps is the focus of this research.

2.4 Theoretical Review

International politics is complex and dynamic. The debates about this complexity, as Barbieri (2019) urges is that 'researchers to acquire new attitudes towards social and political

phenomena' which is done through different theories. International relations are about the interaction of state and non-state actors in the international system that is complex. Theories are key in exploring complex and dynamic relations among states and non-state actors. De Beneti rightly state that 'theory is used as a plausible general principle or body of principles offered to explain a phenomenon.' This is true; whether one is predicting or observe a phenomenon, theories are key in dissecting your perspective. The interaction of states in the international system could only be explained through theoretical frameworks. Garrison et al. (2003) states that to analyse and understand foreign policy, scholars need theoretical framework. Walt (1998) states that reality of the world cannot be detached from theories used to explain it. '[T]here is an inescapable link between the abstract world of theory and the real world of policy. We need theories to make sense of the blizzard of information that bombards us daily'. Theoretical framework, therefore, is used in this research like in any other research to assess the recruitment and positing of Gambian Foreign Service official. This chapter review realist, liberalist, constructivist, and bureaucratic-politics approaches to the study of foreign policy because 'The study of foreign policy is characterized by a plurality of theoretical perspectives and approaches' (Senadera, 2023).

2.4.1 Realist Approach

Realism views the international system as an anarchy where states interact to maximize power and security to survive. States are in constant struggle for power and must rely on their military and economic muscle to stay alive, therefore, emphasizing competition. This views states as the primary actors of international system. Foreign policy in realist perspective is a 'self-help policy', (Wivel, 2017). The focus of the realist in analysing foreign policy is more on the behaviour of the state in international system. 'Classical realists believe that the sole aim of states is to acquire power even at the expense of other states', (Daniel 2020). The realist although argues different ways on how to promote and protect the national interest of a state through three levels of analysing foreign policy.

The fundamental assumption in the international arena is that the state as a primary actor of the world is equipped with resources and thus, is willing and able to make rational decisions. While the inclination towards the most rationale choice is obvious, the decision of choice making does not stop there. As a matter of fact, at many times, it does not start there as well. There are a lot of factors that influence the foreign policy decision making process (Kharel, 2020).

The three levels of analysis are individual, state and system level. The emphasis of this research lies on the individual level of analysis in foreign policy. Within the realist tradition, classical, neo- or hegemonic realist fails to capture the role played by diplomats or discuss how they should be recruited. The realist views an individual as selfish, power hungry, and fearful, like an analogue is also extended to states in the international arena. Thus, states act in a unitary way in pursuit of their national interest defined in terms of their foreign policy. Realist also views the individual character of leader in foreign policy (Hermann, 1980). Therefore, the realists' focus on the individual in foreign policy making does not capture individuals such as diplomats that implement foreign policy. The recruitment and appointment of Foreign Service officials is fundamental in foreign policy realisation. Foreign policy is as good as those who implement them. Realism in short focuses on the behaviour and the interest of states.

2.4.2 Liberal Approach

The Liberals do not see the international system as anarchy as the realists do. They see the international system as a combination of cooperation and conflict. They argue that foreign relation of states is based on cooperation and compromise; therefore, states can achieve their interests through international institution (Beasley et al. 2013). The liberalist believe that globalization has reduced competition and promoted cooperation. 'The distribution of economic wealth as a primary characteristic that affects state foreign policy (Kaarbo et al. 2013). The interdependent nature of the global economic shapes state foreign policy. Moreover, international organisations are key in promoting cooperation among states for mutual gain. Liberalist posits that domestic factors and groups such as executive, legislative, and bureaucratic agents and so on can hugely influence foreign policy process. Thus, understanding the individuals and types of groups that compete for control of government is necessary to understand how states behave in international relation (Pease, 2010). The focus of liberals' approach to the study of international relations focus on international organisation and the state behaviour characterise by cooperation. The liberalist just like the realists do not capture the people who implement the foreign policy of a country.

2.4.3 Constructivist Approach

Constructivist approach sheds light on the role of ideas, beliefs, and interest in shaping the interactions and understanding of actors in world politics (Pease, 2010). It maintains that ideas, beliefs, and norms should not be left out when explaining the foreign policy of a country. Constructivist contends that decisions and actions of state actors in international relation are often underpinned by identities and culture of the personnel who work in the making and realization of state policies (Dasanayaka, 2023). However, constructivism, as Goldstein and Pevehouse (2006) put, is unlike the two mainstream theories [realism and liberalism] in that, it does not rest on framework of assumptions or propositions that say anything about world politics per se. Constructivist relies on the notion that interests are socially constructed and states are bound by their interest which is heavily informed by their values, norms, and ideas. Even though Constructivism has been used by many in interpreting the foreign policy especially in discourse analysis setting in The Gambia (see Lenn, 2021), Constructivism as a theoretical tool does not make any comprehensive analysis on the actors of foreign policy especially beyond the personality of the president or leader of a country. In sum, it only stresses the role of ideation and beliefs in shaping the behaviour and foreign policy of a country.

2.4.4 Bureaucratic Politic Approach

Whereas realists approach in conjunction with liberals and constructivists approach were inapplicable to constructively explain the method of recruitment and posting processes of Foreign Service officers in words_ diplomats in international relation, bureaucratic politic model took the novel root in providing a satisfactory account on those who implemented foreign policy of a country and as well as foreign policy decision making process, thus, Olajide Aluko, (1983) writes '...there is hardly any modern state in which the bureaucratic play no part in either formulating or implementing foreign policy decision'. Bureaucratic politics approach seeks to understand foreign policy as the result of decision-making processes inside and between government organizations characterized by conflict, bargaining, and compromise, (Bach, 2021).

Bureaucratic politics model as explanatory framework sets out to examine the actual role of president in decision-making process [see Graham Allison: the Essence of Decision 1971] and the foreign policy preferences and the central players. Further, bureaucratic politic model does not only explain the process through which foreign policy decisions or actions are made or taken but also explain how civil servants should be recruited, integrated, and appointed. Thus, Aluko writes:

Bureaucratic politics model does not perceive there to be a unitary actor; rather it considers many actors to be players: players who focus not on a single strategic issue but on many diverse intra - as well as international problems as well. These players are seen to choose in terms of no consistent set of strategic objectives, but rather in accordance with various conceptions of national security and of organisational, domestic, and personal (Aluko, 1983).

Having understood the significance of diplomats in bargaining of pulling and hauling which are the central dynamic element in diplomacy and pursuit of state foreign policy, Marc Grossman, former Director General of the Foreign Service, and Director of Human Resources delineates 'We are in a war for talent'. We need to recruit the best, most diverse group of people for the State Department [referring to America] if we are to successfully defend and promote our nation's interests overseas and lead diplomacy for the 21st century", (Lindstrom, 2002).

Bureaucratic politic argues that the recruitment and appointment of civil service should not be subjected to the political decision of a single person. There should be well-encompassing laws that will set forth the criteria for one to be recruited as a diplomat. "There should be no one actor within the group that may be predominantly such that his/her opinion is sufficient to decide the issue" (Dorani, 2018). Bureaucratic model asserts that decision-making in foreign policy is derived from more institutionalised political system not merely from a personality of individual leader.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

Bureaucratic politic approach is adopted as a theoretical framework for this research because it is the analytical tool that examine not only foreign policy decision-making but also the behaviour of actors who formulate and implement foreign policy. Bureaucratic politic model contends that decision-making process and recruitment of bureaucrats in Foreign Service should not be subjected to the decision of an individual leader but from politically institutionalised group, guided by rules and regulations to foster meritocracy in pursuit of state national interest, defined in terms of foreign policy.

2.6 Existing Gap in Literature

There exist a handful of literature about Gambia's foreign policy. Aside from the scare of literature, there is no account that explicitly explain or examine the methods of recruitment and appointment of officers in Foreign Service domain. Therefore, the country's Foreign Service posting system and the expertise of the diplomats is not examined beyond the personality of the president (see Jannah 2017; Saine 2000; Jeng ,2018). In a comparative study, one realises that Jammeh's regime and Barrow's regime slightly differ in choosing their diplomats. Jammeh's diplomats are mostly season diplomats that are selected to represent the country

whilst Barrow's diplomats are mainly politicians that are either defeated in elections or holds no ministerial positions, (The Standard, 2022; Cham, 2022; Gagigo, 2022; Taylor 2023). This is largely due to the two regimes geopolitical interest and perception. This research examines the Foreign Service posting process and the type of personality chosen as diplomats such as ambassador, first secretary, second secretary, third secretary and protocol officer etc. This thesis will conduct a scholarly study of the recruitment and appointment of Gambian diplomats. This is going to be seminal as it fills the gap in literature on the method of recruitment and appointment of Foreign Service officials in The Gambian Foreign Service.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will expound on the methods and methodology used in this study to collect and gather data. The research uses qualitative methodology. Various categories of people were targeted and interviewed in structured and semi structured. Questionnaires were also used to elucidate data. The chapter will further highlight that qualitative research embedded on an explanatory case study approach has been used and it is grounded on empirical study which ultimately enhance the testimonies of the respondents that has been used to establish a case for the researcher. Also, the chapter will also present the various tools and techniques adopted in the research in analyzing and interpreting the data. In what follows, contain the research design, methods of data collection and analysis and validity and reliability of research instruments.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is the 'glue' that holds all the elements in a particular research project together and gives it direction (Trochim, 2005). The design of this research is a case study that seeks to find-out the methods and approaches of recruitment and the posting processes of Foreign Service officers in The Gambia's Foreign Service. Thus, for this study, mix method would be used to elicit relevant data. Descriptive analysis and explanatory case study were used to provide a summary of the data collected.

3.3 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

This study utilized purposive sampling method to collect data. Hence, data were sourced from participants who have competence, expertise and practical experiences in the recruitment and posting processes within the Gambian Foreign Service. In this respect, a sample size of 12 key respondents were targeted for this study. The respondents are mainly from the Greater Banjul Area given that Banjul is the administrative headquarters of the country as well as recruitment and posting of foreign service officers. The data which were collected within a period of three months, were sourced from staff members of the MOFA and Gambian diplomats, serving and retired.

3.4 Method of Data Collection and Analysis

The study utilized the combination of primary and secondary data. For primary data, both questionnaire administration and interview were used to generate relevant information from selected key informants and interviewees (KIIs) using purposive sampling. Of the selected 12 participants, ten (10) were interviewed, while two (2) were administered with questionnaires. Those interviewed were drawn from the Gambian National Assembly, that is, serving members in the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Banjul (2 KIIs), lecturers from the Department of Political Science, the University of The Gambia, Faraba Banta Campus (2 KIIs), personnel who are mostly senior civil servants of the Gambian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Banjul (2 KIIs), Permanent Secretary of Personal Management Office, Quadrangle Banjul, PMO (1 KII), Gambian politicians with expertise on the country's foreign policy (2 KIIs), and former Gambian diplomat (1 KII). Of those administered question, they were drawn from Gambian Academic and Citizen Abroad (1 KII) and former Permanent Secretary of MOFA (1 KII). Secondary data were sourced from textbooks, journal articles, internet materials and other archival sources such as National Library of the Gambia, Nation Archives, Quadrangle Banjul. While data collected from primary source were analyzed using thematic and content analysis, secondary data were analyzed descriptively.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

The validity and reliability of the instrument that was used in this study was critical in ensuring accuracy. Data are collected as the selection of the study instrument to be appropriate for the study questions and objectives. The study ensured that the method of recruitment and posting processes of Foreign Service officers is consistent in its findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYZING THE GAMBIA'S FOREIGN SERVICE RULES

4.1 Introduction

The Foreign Service Cadre of the Gambia composed of different officials with their functions, recruitment and appointment processes as highlighted in The Scheme of Service for The Foreign Service Cadre, and The Gambia Foreign Service Rules. The former highlights the functions of the officials whilst the later highlights the qualification and recruitment processes. However, analysis on these two documents alongside with MOFA Strategic Plan is given in the following subsections. It also highlights the different Foreign Service cadres in the Gambia with especial focus on the cadres that are the object of discussion of this research. Their functions are also highlighted to give an appraisal understanding about their roles and duties in the sector. This is key in this research that seek to understand how the recruitment and appointment processes of Foreign Service official impacted the Gambia's foreign Policy.

4.2 Interrogating the Gambia's Foreign Service Scheme of Service Rules and Strategic Plan

In the context of the Gambia's foreign policy, The Scheme of Service for The Foreign Service Cadre, and The Gambia Foreign Service Rules were adopted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad in 2020. For The Gambia Foreign Service Rules, the adopted was the Third Edition which revised to replace the Second Edition

that came into effect in January 2009. The Scheme of Service for The Foreign Service Cadre aimed to achieve the following objectives. It seeks to attract people with the appropriate ability, attitude, and integrity by providing a clear career path in diplomacy and international relations; ensure that The Gambia has a wealth of seasoned Diplomats; prescribe realistic qualification requirements to maintain professional standard; and provide a system of training for staff in the form of courses and seminars including specialized courses.

Similarly, The Gambia Foreign Service Rules highlights the basic procedures and guidelines that govern the conduct of Foreign Service Officials in the day-to-day discharge of their duties and activities. It aims to facilitate Foreign Service administration as an indispensable operational tool for achieving the Foreign Policy objectives of The Gambia Government.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) Strategic Plan 2018-2022 serve as the guidelines for the Ministry and its officials in the conduct Gambia's Foreign Service and policy. The Strategic Plan was first adopted by The Ministry in 2010 as MOFA strategic plan 2010 – 2015. From there on the strategic plan was reviewed and reinvention to respond to the strategic evolution of the ministry and the national foreign policy. Since 2017 – 2021 strategic plan and now 2018 – 2022 validated strategic plan. The document highlights mission and vision statement of The Gambia Foreign Policy and Service with its core value.

Remarkable about the document is its recognition of the weakness of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the implementation of the Gambia's Foreign Policy. In fact, the Ministry has more weaknesses than strengths. 13 weakness are highlighted in the document compared to the 7 strengths. Four of weaknesses concern personnel under the Ministry which signifies concern about the incapacity of the sector. They noted concern over experience, expertise, knowledge, and capacity to serve and implement Gambia's foreign policy. Whilst two of them are concern with the law on foreign policy and Foreign Service.

Interestingly, the strategic plan recognized that there is an inadequate awareness among staff about the mandate of MOFA and where it is derived from which beg research question on the recruitment and appointment of Foreign Service official'. Further on that, over 60% of professional staffs lacks the expertise of this special ministry. Therefore, there is 'lack of a diplomatic career and human capacity developed within the same context.' In fact, there is no 'diplomatic academy to adequately train and groom MOFA staff and pool of diplomats. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs receives personal from PMO without regard for the peculiar nature of skills necessary for the foreign relations management. This affects the experience and expertise base work force of the ministry. The Strategic Plan recognised the absent of clear law on foreign policy and Foreign Service. There is an 'Absence of an Act of Parliament or an agreed and detailed foreign policy to elaborate the mandate (powers and functions) of MOFA and baseline foreign policy of the nation to allow the institutional functionality of MOFA and predictability of policy stance of The Gambia.' Moreover, there is also lack of clarity regarding which Foreign Service Rules are in use. The three mentioned documents are the most important documents in Gambia's diplomatic engagement and international relation. However, it is the constitution of the Gambia that set the general orientation of Gambia's foreign policy which is protection of sovereignty, preserving national prestige and mobilisation the much-need resources for national development. The Gambia lacks a codify legal framework that guidelines its foreign policy not only in terms of its orientation but the methods of recruitment and posting

process of Gambia's Foreign Service, besides, the lack of clarity on the rules that are in use. Arguably, the constitution blanket mandating of the president over Foreign Policy Affairs without any effective parliament oversight on orientation, rules, recruitment, qualifications, appointment, and duties of the Foreign Service Officials makes Foreign Service and policy of the Gambia an executive affair.

4.3 Assessing the Gambian Foreign Service Officers (FSOs)

On a broader scale, Gambia Foreign Service constitute two categories of staff: Home Base Staff and Local Staff. The local staff [in principle] are derived from civil service which is the administrative cadre of the government. Staff in this category include but not limited to Deputy Head of Mission, Deputy Ambassador, consular representative, first secretary second secretary etc. Gambia's Foreign Service Officer, according to The Scheme of Service for The Foreign Service Cadre, refers 'a member of the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs including staff of Foreign Missions abroad'. This includes the members of the diplomatic service such as Permanent Secretary/Head of the Diplomatic Service, Head of Mission, Director (Deputy Permanent Secretary)/ Director of Protocol, Deputy Head of Mission/ Consul General, Counsellor (Principal Assistant Secretary, First Secretary (Senior Assistant Secretary)/Senior Protocol Officer/Senior Translator Interpreter, Protocol/Welfare /Private Secretary 1, and Finance Attaché.

However, this research is concern about the top brass of the Gambia Foreign Service administration. The research concern about the cadres such as permanent secretary and deputy permanent secretary, head of missions and deputy head of missions, consul general and counsellor. And it is this cadres whose functions are highlighted in the section below to set the tone of the research.

4.4 Functions of Gambian Foreign Service

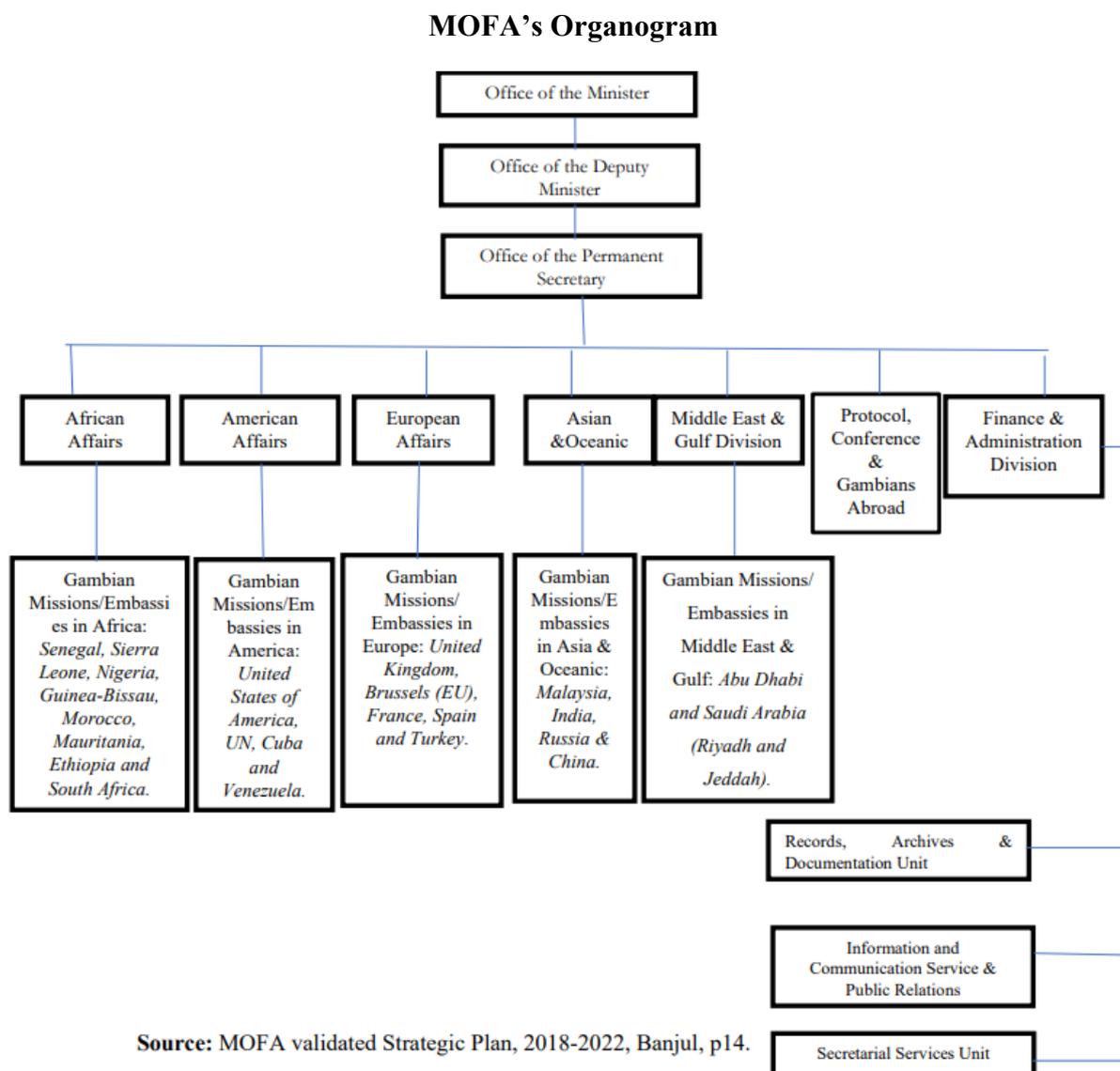
The main duties of the Permanent Secretaries regarding foreign policy implementation are to formulate and implements Gambia's foreign policies and provide guidance and advice to government in relation to its dealings with nations, organizations as well as private institutions or individuals. Besides, he/she should facilitate / set / monitor performance targets for heads of departments and missions. Permanent Secretary should also represent government at major meetings involving negotiations of agreements, treaties, and protocols etc. Not only that, but also to help interprets foreign policies of the government.

Ambassadors or High Commissioners are to ensure the implementation of Gambia's foreign policy as well as oversee the function of the Missions. Most importantly, they should protect the interest of Gambian's abroad and lobby for funds, projects, and programmes in the interest of the nation. They should represent the Government of The Gambia at international meetings and other functions; and Promotes trade and investments. The Deputy Head of Missions/Minister Counsellor are to supervise all functions of the mission; co-ordinates and supervises the day- to -day operations of the mission; facilitates the inspections of the Embassy; and coordinates and supervises the spending of the mission's finances; besides, recruiting local staff.

The Counsellor/Principal Protocol Officer is to deputize in the absence of the Director: Analyse Gambia’s relation with other nations and providing accurate information to provide policy guidance and advises on administrative and policy issues to ensure conformity with given regulation and policy. He/she should coordinate all protocol and conference functions in collaboration with the Director of Protocol and provide consular services and provides guidance to subordinate. He/she should participate in the preparation of cabinet paper and coordinates the preparation of Agreements in consultation with the Director.

Below is the organogram showing the administrative structure of The Gambia’s MOFA.

Fig. 1: Showing the current functional Organogram of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Service



CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data of this research obtained from primary and secondary sources. The data draw an empirical case, 12 respondents were interviewed in structured and semi-structured forms. The respondents include senior government officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International cooperation and Gambians Abroad, steward politicians cum National Assembly Members in the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, academics specializing on Gambia's foreign policy and domestic politics, and a former Gambian diplomat, and topknot members of the Personnel Management Office (who serves as the centre for human resources management and development for the Gambia Government). In the analysis of the data, the informants are labeled with their names and at the end of the chapter a brief background information is provided for the respondent. The analysis is arranged thematically. The data analysis is followed by recommendations, the expected contribution of the work on the existing knowledge on Gambia's Foreign Service and Policy studies. It ends with suggestions for further studies on the subject matter.

5.2 Data Presentation and Analysis on the Objective-by-Objective Basis

In Chapter 4, I have highlighted the Foreign Service Cadre of the Gambia which composed of different officials with their functions. The focus of the research was also established. Just to reiterate, this research is about Foreign Service Cadre such as permanent secretary and deputy permanent secretary, ambassadors, head of missions and deputy head of missions, first secretary, consul general and counsellor. This section highlights their qualifications, recruitment and appointment process as stated in The Scheme of Service for The Foreign Service Cadre, and The Gambia Foreign Service Rules.

5.2.1 Qualifications of FSOs

Before highlighting the recruitment process, it is important to comment on two key words central in this subsection. The terms as direct and in-service entry method of recruiting officials. Direct entry method refers to officials' appointment without going through the administrative ladder of the institution. Whilst in-service entry method refers to officials' appointment of an individual who went through the ranks of the administrative ladder of an institution before assuming a post. To be a permanent secretary either through direct or in-service entry method you should have a master's degree in Diplomacy /International Relation or relevant fields with at least 10 years post-qualification work experience in Foreign Service or related fields. Or you should acquire a master's degree with minimum of at least 5 years satisfactory service as Director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

For Ambassadorial post, one ought to have a master's degree in relevant field of studies with at least 8 years work experience or a bachelor's degree with 10 years' work experience in related fields; or master's degree with minimum of at least 5 years satisfactory service as Director in the Foreign Services/ redeployment of a relevant Permanent Secretary/Deputy Permanent Secretary. Relevant field of studies or in related fields refers to field related to diplomacy and international relations. Deputy Head of Mission should have a master's degree

in diplomacy/International Relations or related fields with at least 7years post-qualification work experience in international relations or related fields; or he/she should have a master's degree with minimum of at least 4 years satisfactory service as Counsellor/ redeployment of a relevant Principal Assistant Secretary. Counsellor/Principal Protocol Officer should have master's degree in diplomacy/ International Relations/Protocol or relevant fields with at least 6years work experience in related fields; Or Bachelor's degree with minimum of at least 5years' experience; or a master's degree with 3years' experience as First Secretary/Senior Protocol Officer/ redeployment of a relevant Senior Assistant Secretary.

5.3 Objective I: Identifying Various Methods used in the Recruitment and Posting Processes in the Gambia's Foreign Service

In this study, several methods in the recruitment and posting of the Gambian Foreign Service officers have been identified. Imperative to say that the Gambia Foreign Service comprise of bureaucrats, technocrats, and politicians. The recruitment processes thus are done by different sectors hence different entities are involved. However, I would highlight the recruitment and appointment processes permanent secretary and deputy permanent secretary, head of missions and deputy head of missions, consul general and counsellor because they are the focus of the research. Needless to mention that in the past two decades, Gambia government relied on Personnel Management Office (PMO) to identify and recruit potential Foreign Service officers, however with the consultation of the president. The technocrats like first Secretaries and Consular desk are nominated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the consent and assent by the president. Ambassadors are appointed by the President. However, officers who posted to a Mission but are not 'from the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs required to spend a minimum period of one to three months in the Ministry in order to undergo adequate induction training relevant to his/her duties and functions in the mission to which he/she is posted' (see The Gambia Foreign Service Rules). This is to ensure that they are conversant with the missions and foreign policy before assumption of duty. In explaining the nitty-gritty of recruitment process the Director of admin and finance, Suwaibou Barry, (MoFA) in conjunction with Permanent Secretary, Lamin Jawara, (PMO) assert that the recruitment and posting process of foreign service officers is orderly, official and transparent hence the two respondents maintain that the vacancy position of foreign service post are always advertise through reputable government and non-government media in which criteria are explicitly set, and then prospect candidate are invited for interview through the office of Public Service Commission (PSC) and Personnel Management Officer (PMO), eligible candidate are trained on the necessary skills before given any international assignment.

5.2.2 Objective II: The Extent of Compliance of the Recruitment and Posting Processes in The Gambian Foreign Service with laid Down Rules and Regulations

Here, the focus is to examine the extent to which the recruitment and posting processes of the Gambian Foreign Service Officers comply with the existing regulations as well as the effectiveness of the recruitment process. The recruitment and appointment of Foreign Service officers are presented by those working in the government as official, neatly organized almost blueprint -like in appearance, yet more time than not, these presentations fail to describe the hard reality of recruitment processes – which is the lack of a policy document that outline recruitment process. There is no specific model of recruitment and there is no specific

personality that the authorities of the Gambia look into as guide when making recruitment and appointment of Foreign Service officers.

The existence of rules on the qualification, recruitment and posting procedure shows that there is some degree of acceptable guidelines for the sector. However, there is a mismatch between the rule on paper and in reality, showing inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the recruitment process. This is caused by the lack of proper institutionalised methods of recruitment and appointing Foreign Service officials that will examine competency than political loyalty.

For many government officials especially in the Foreign Ministry and Personnel Management Office, the existence of rules on the qualification, recruitment and posting procedure means there is total degree of acceptable guidelines for the sector. But there is mismatch between the theory and practice. For instance, Lamin Secka⁴ recognised its weakness whilst Suwaibou Barry⁵, a senior officer at Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Gambians Abroad said it is transparent contrary to the facts known outside. In fact, this is what is stated in the Strategic Plan that said that over 60% of its professional staffs are cognisant of the professional institutional need to serve the nation's foreign policy. For instance, the Gambian ambassador to Guinea Bissau, Amie Fabureh is no specialist or expertise on foreign policy but agriculturist, and her deputy Lamin Kabba is an economist rather than a diplomat. Whilst Fafa Sanyang, the ambassador to Dubai is an expert on petroleum not foreign policy or diplomacy. For Lamin Jawara⁶ such people being working in the government for years has qualify them to be ambassador. 'This is all how our embassies are and if this people cannot represent a country I don't know who can,' Lamin Jawara said. He is a key figure in the Personnel Management Office.

The topknots of the Foreign Service cadre appointed by the President or by the Gambia Personnel Management Office (PMO) in consultation of the president. The office of the PMO does not follow the rule on the appointment which is clear on its statement that 'by virtue of being a minister for five years you are a diplomat, you are an envoy'. Whether you are agriculture minister or health minister they are all diplomats.' This total violates the rules which look at skill, expertise and knowledge in foreign policy and diplomacy but for our key PMO informant having diplomatic passport and knowing Gambia's nonalignment policy is enough for one to be ambassador since the country does not call a shot in the international system, there is no need for expertise and knowledge in the field of diplomacy, or international relation. In fact, the Strategic Plan 2018- 2022 highlights that there is a lack of institution responsible for the recruitment and training of Foreign Service officers which affects their performance since wrong people are recruited and appointed in the service. The generally standard one must climb through the ladder from the lowest rank and must go through the designated state institution that are responsible for training people who will go into foreign service as seen in United Kingdom the Foreign and Commonwealth Services, US, and Russia etc.

'So is like every country has it standard and have a designated and recognised institution through which people must pass first before getting into Foreign Service. In the case of the Gambia is completely different, you can be taken from anywhere and direct into Foreign Service without any training,' Muhammed Lenn⁷ said.

The president total control over foreign relation, policy formulation and orientations many are times make the rules useless. In fact, the process of recruiting is marred by political factors.

Respondent Lamin Jawara⁸, a key official in PMO recognised politics that marred the appointment of ambassadors, but he also tries downplays its impact on Foreign Service. ‘They (NAM) served there five years, you see serving in national assembly for five years, making laws that experience is more than University degree,’ he said in reactions to NAM who lost election and are compensated with foreign service appointment. But this is not actually true because being experienced in law making does not mean you have a diplomatic skill or understand foreign policy issues. Even in the mist of government officials whitewashing of the recruitment process, there is an undeniable fact of Foreign Service recruitment process in reality do not follow the rule of the books. For Hassoum Ceesay⁹, this is so because the diplomacy is under the domain of the president who is prerogative to appoints ambassadors, and the executive officers in the embassies without check and balance.

Considering the lack qualification of most of the direct appointed officials, in the case of the Gambian ambassador to Guinea Bissau, Amie Fabureh, an agriculturist and her deputy Lamin Kabba is an economist as well as the Gambian ambassador to Dubai, Fafa Sanyang is an expert on petroleum shows the rule on the recruitment and appointment of foreign service officials in the Foreign Service Rule violated. Although, the rules do not rule out direct recruitment and appointment, but it is unequivocal on the skill, expertise, and knowledge requirement of the personal. In fact, MOFA Strategic Plan 2018- 2022 highlights this need of appointing people with foreign policy knowledge and diplomatic skills. It even suggested for an establishment of an institution responsible for the recruitment and training of Foreign Service officers.

The generally standard requires one to study foreign policy, diplomacy, or related field. It also an institutionalised methods of training and recruiting Foreign Service officials. A diplomat is required to go through the designated state institution that are responsible for training people who will go into Foreign Service as seen in United Kingdom the Foreign and Commonwealth Services, US, and Russia etc. So, taking of individuals from anywhere and directly put them into Foreign Service without any proper training will deduce the performance of the foreign service because the diplomats may not have all it takes to engage in diplomatic engagement and promote the interest of his/her country. In the case of the Gambia, the president equivalent control over foreign relation policy formulation, orientations, and his prerogative to appoint ambassadors, and the executive officers in the embassies as well as the PMO drawing members of the diplomat’s core without a proper institutionalised methods compressed the effectiveness of appointing Foreign Service officer.

5.2.3 Appraisal of Gambia’s Foreign Service

Commenting on the Gambian foreign service, Lamin Secka¹ insisted that, as a small state, the Gambia has no hard power. To him², The Gambia does not direct any foreign policy, rather it follows the international trends and uses its soft power wherever her interest lies. In fact, the Gambia has no clear-cut foreign policy toward any country including Senegal which occupied critical geopolitical position for the country both in term of security, political, and economic stability of the Gambia. The Gambia’s foreign policy orientation since independence is directed toward resource mobilization for national development as well as the protection of its territorial integrity and national security.

However, Gambia’s foreign policy has not been doing badly considering how Jawara and Jammeh regimes used their foreign policy and bilateral ties to mobilise resources and promote

the territorial integrity of the country. This was manifested during the early years of the Jammeh regime. Following the coup, Jammeh faced sanctioned from the West, he shifted his foreign policy and ties to the Gulf and Asian States like Taiwan. And through Taiwan's Cheque Book Diplomacy, Jammeh was able to secure funds to keep his government ruling. On the security front, the Gambia has the phobia of territorial integrity and national security from Senegal that enclosed the country like a tongue in the mouth. Therefore, Gambia uses its foreign policy in international organization like ECOWAS, AU, and UN to cement its integrity recognition but also keep good relationship with Senegal to avert any physical threat. However, this relation as it ups and downs resulting into erratic bilateral ties especially under Jammeh. Meanwhile, the performance of Gambia's Foreign Service and foreign policy cannot be satisfactory as the Foreign Service marred by party politics and unprofessionalism whilst the foreign policy is unclear or specific for the personal implementing.

Gambia's Foreign Service may have mobilized resources for the incumbent president's national development agendas or provide fund for regime survival, but the Foreign Service institution has not done much in Gambia's bilateral and multilateral engagement of the country. Foreign Service institution is not being put in best use neither does the country has any clear-cut foreign policy or law that guide the sector. Thus, for Suwaibou Touray³: 'we are not making the best use of the foreign service institution'.

5.2.4 Latent factors identified in Barrow and Jammeh's Foreign Service

Two latent factors can be identified in the recruitment and appointment of Foreign Service officials. The factors are party-politics and security concern under the government of Adama Barrow and Yahya Jammeh, respectively.

When Jammeh was in power, security concern over Gambians in the diaspora was a concern to Jammeh. His security orientation was a key factor that play a very much important role as he appointed security personnel as ambassadors base on how much information they can they provide, how much security details they can provide to the government or the state about diaspora activities or military officers. Therefore, Jammeh recruit and appoint security personnel as ambassadors etc. not based on their qualification but based on his political interest needed for the survival of his regime. However, this factor changed when Barrow came into power. Many APRC government diplomats were recalled and replaced by coalition government supporters. The diplomatic cadre was used to compensate political loyalty. This manifested more when the coalition disintegrated. Barrow and UDP fallout, many diplomats loyal to UDP were recalled whilst those who decided to stay with Barrow continue working. People like Saikouba Jarju (NAM) who loses his seat to an independent candidate Kanteh was appointed as first secretary at the Gambian Mission in Mauritania. Saikou Marong, NAM of Latikunda, who also lost to opposition candidate was appointed as counsellor at the Gambian embassy in Morocco. Similarly, Alagie Jawara NAM of Lower Baddibu, who also loses his seat to opposite candidate was also appointed as first secretary at the Gambian Embassy in Riyadh. And Fatoumata Jawara who could not bid any position for herself in the foreign mission was nominated back into the parliament by the president. For Suwaibou Touray¹⁰ Gambia's foreign service is a political camp, and the rule is as simple as this 'be in my camp or else you are removed from service'

5.2.5 Its impact on Gambia's Foreign Service delivery

The politicization of Foreign Service denigrates professionalism and impede functional delivery in terms of performance. Party-politic, partisanship and individual interest of the leader has affected the delivery of the Foreign Service. The appointment of the political loyalist as ambassadors come with a price that experience ambassadors are redeployed to other areas where they may not be needed at most. The recalling of diplomats because of their political support for the opposition disrupt diplomatic works as this frequently happen with the change of government or fallout of political allies. Even though, the ones who appointed based on political reasons are required to receive about three months of training before their deployment. This would not provide them with all require knowledge and skill. It can only train them on protocols and other frivolous issues. In fact, this defeats the purpose of The Scheme of Service for The Foreign Service Cadre which aim to ensure that The Gambia has a wealth of seasoned Diplomats with prescribe realistic qualification requirements in order to maintain professional standard.

The political issues that marred appointment of Foreign Service officers have the potential weaken the institution's core values when it come performances because people with the required skill set may not at most put in the right position. Or they will not be right appointed which may cause lack professionalism in Gambia's Foreign Service as seen clash in Gambian embassies between Gambian diplomats, Fabou Sanneh and Lye Conteh in Jeddah Saudi Arabia. Also, in Morocco - one of the Gambian diplomats has beaten the other. In UK, Gambian diplomats were involved in tobacco smuggling case, and of course, recently Gambian diplomats in US involved in visa scandal. All of this affects the external personality of the country.

As a country, the Gambia depends on its foreign relation or policy for resource mobilisation, the ineffective delivery of Foreign Service will have far reaching impact on the country development especially on foreign aids and intervention. The economic diplomacy of the Gambia requires much more than political supporters of the president rather those who will bring economic benefits to the country. And the ambassadors can only bring things if they are aware of the priority need of their country and have the skill and knowledge to engage in activities that will bring them.

5.2.6 Objective III: Challenges Confronting the Recruitment and Posting Processes in The Gambian Foreign Service

Respondent Lamin Secka¹¹, a topknot officer in the Directorate of America Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Gambian Abroad, Suwaibou Barry¹², also a topknot at Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Gambians Abroad (MoFA), and Respondent Lamin Jawara¹², a topknot at the PMO argue that there are no serious challenges facing the recruitment processing of Gambia Foreign Service. This contradicts the Strategic Plan 2018-2022 that highlighted more than ten challenges including the recruitment and appointments of the needed personnel with the skill, knowledge, and expertise. But it also contradicts vehemently the submissions of other respondents, for instance Respondent Sedia Jatta¹³, a former Chairperson of National Assembly Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, catalogue the challenge as 'lack of transparency in the recruitment and posting processes and absence of policy document on foreign policy'. In fact, Respondent Madi Ceesay¹⁴, a current member of National Assembly Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs said the political agenda behind some of the

appointment questioned the transparency nature of the process. Respondent Muhammed Lenn and Respondent Mubine Jatta¹⁵ see the challenges as ‘interference of politicians and politicization of foreign service sector’. Respondent Kemo Fatty¹⁶ and Lamin Tarro¹⁷ itemise the challenge as ‘inadequate expertise and experience staff’ in the foreign service’ in the foreign service sector.

In detail, one of the biggest challenges is there is no functional Foreign Service policy or foreign service posting policy for which should guides the recruitment process as well as foreign policy orientation, respectively. Politicians who are chosen as diplomats and reign over career diplomats affects Foreign Service delivery. It is seen that diplomats who are unqualified engage in unethical behaviours, Gambia diplomats using some dubious means to bring people into United State, and it alter boomerang. That does not tell well, so ethics, integrity, and educational background all these things matter.

Lack of trained diplomats in the foreign field. The recruitment should be based on merits, professional field, and qualification and that is a challenge in the Gambia. However, this is overlooked by the PMO that thoughts an experience economists or agriculturist can make a good diplomat. This causes inadequate expertise and experience staff in diplomacy. We do not look at Foreign Service as a professional field or domain rather it is seen as place were employed top individuals in the government. So, service delivery orientation is lacking, generally in those recruiting and in those recruited.

This resulted to uncompetitive selection of officials. The positions in most instances are not advertise and so they end up with ones they have at hand, or the ones politicians nominates. Another big challenge is the inference of the powerful men and women in town so even whereas the recruiters will want to be professional to recruit people with requisite qualification they would not want to go against the people, the politicians who put them in those offices. Another key challenge is that those who should recruit themselves did not have qualification for recruitment. Because of that sometimes they tend to overlook even given to qualified ones. Besides, the lack of institution to train diplomacy is another challenge. The Gambia did not have university until 1997 -99 so where one can study anything related to Foreign Service or diplomacy. Moreover, there is no other institution dedicated in the training of Foreign Service officials of the country.

5.3 Discussion of Findings

In this study, several findings are made. First, it reveals that the recruitment and posting processes in the Gambia’s Foreign Service do not substantially comply with the existing rules and regulations. Based on participants’ responses and evidence in existing literature, it is revealed that the existing rules and regulations flaunted by authorities responsible. This way, many unqualified people find their ways into the sensitive foreign service job. Also, the study finds out that the regulations guiding the recruitment process and posting of recruited FSOs were not sufficiently strong to address these lapses. The implications of this are that the Gambia’s foreign service undoubtedly under performed during the period under review.

5.4 Limitations of The Study

The research encountered several challenges that constitute limitations to this study. First, there was no funding for this study, and this put the researcher under financial pressure especially with respect to transporting to Banjul and other places during data collection. Second, several attempts were made before having access to participants for interview sessions. For example, at the Ministry of Foreign affairs in Banjul, the researcher could not conduct interviews at the first attempt. Besides, a bureaucratic process of writing letter and waiting for approval before interview could be conducted was witnessed and recorded in the cause of this study. Also, to access the foreign service rules, the researcher was requested to formally apply, which took time before access was eventually granted by sending it electronically. All of these many more constitute major limitations to the study. However, these limitations do not affect the quality and outcome of the study substantially. After the stressful procedures were followed, interviews were granted and the existing policy document in the recruitment and posting processes of the Gambian Foreign Service Officers was eventually sent. Also, existing information from the secondary source were used to augment the data provided through interview and questionnaire administered on the selected KIIs. This makes the study worthwhile.

Endnotes on Interviewees

1. Mr. Lamin Secka is civil servant, a first secretary at the Division of American Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad. He granted this interview to the researcher on February 26, 2024, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Complex, Banjul, the Gambia.
2. Ibid
3. Mr. Suwaibou Touray, a steward politician and a National Assembly Member for Wuli East. He is a Pan-African Parliament Member. Chairperson Public Petitions Committee. Also, a member, Public Appointments Standing Committee NA and a member of Standing Committee on Human Right and Constitutional Matters. He granted this interview one-on-one with the researcher on January 03, 2024.
4. Ibid
5. Mr. Suwaibou Barry is the Director of Admin and Finance at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians abroad. He granted this interview to the researcher on February 26, 2024 at his office, MOFA complex, Banjul, the Gambia.
6. Mr. Lamin Jawara is a veteran civil servant, currently a Permanent Secretary (PS) at the Personnel Management Office (PMO) Banjul, the Gambia. The researcher had an interview with PS Jawara at his office quadrangle, PMO complex Banjul on February 05, 2024.
7. This interview was granted by Mr. Muhammed Lenn, an overseer and adjunct lecturer at both University of the Gambia and Management Development Institute (MDI). Lenn is a Researcher/Overseer, on Democratic Governance and Programmes in Center for Research & Policy Development, CRPD, The Gambia. He is also the Monitoring and Evaluation Manager; Future In Our Hand, the Gambia (FIOH). The interview took place in his office (FIOH) Kololi on Thursday, December 21, 2023.
8. Ibid
9. This interview was held at Banjul on January 03, 2024 at National Meseum Complex with Mr. Hassoum Ceesay an academic, a historian, Political Commentator, curator Gambia National Museum, and Director General of Art and Culture, National Museum of the Gambia.
10. Ibid
11. Ibid
12. Ibid
13. Mr. Sidia Jatta, a seasoned Gambian politician, former member of the Gambian National Assembly in Banjul, who was once a Chairperson of the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, granted this interview to the researcher on December 6, 2023, at the PDOIS Bureau in Serekunda, The Gambia.
14. Mr. Madi Ceesay a former president of Gambia Press Union (GPU) and currently National Assembly member for Serrekunda West. Mr. Ceesay is also a member of Foreign Affairs Standing Committee NA. He grants this interview with the researcher at OIC complex, the Gambia on February 13, 2024.

15. Mr. Mubine Jatta is career diplomats who served in different missions, in different portfolios and in different countries. He served as First Secretary Gambia embassy in Cuba and former First Secretary Gambian embassy in Venezuela. Former consular attaché, Gambian embassy in Saudi Arabia. Domestically, He also served as Principal translator Ministry of foreign Affairs and a counsellor (Principal Assistant Secretary) MOFA and currently he is serving as an administration officer Ministry of Agriculture. Mr Jatta, grant this interview to a researcher at his resident Busumbala on February 12, 2024.
16. Mr. Kemo Fatty is a former research consultant at African Development Group (ADG) and a Research Assistant Fellow, Penn State University. Currently a candidate, Master of International Affairs on Public Policy. He responded on the questionnaires on January 07, 2024.
17. Dr. Lamin Tarro is an academic and administrator, former director of admission & Financial Aid, University of The Gambia and Currently the registrar and lecturer at University of the Gambia (UTG). The researcher had this interview with him at his office on January 11, 2024, Kanifing, Peace Building complex, UTG Campus.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION AND SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

6.1 Summary

This chapter will conclude the research by briefly cataloging the main debates of the research_ varying from the lack of policy document that out- rightly delineates the methods of recruitment as well as the posting process of foreign service officials, party-politics, interference of politician among many challenges which in turn drastically affect functional delivery of foreign service officials and professionalism in the diplomatic apparatus. In corresponding to the mapping out of challenges confronting the foreign service sector in terms of recruitment and posting processes, the research then suggests an illuminating solution with a practical recommendation but of course even suggest further investigations to be done on topics relative to the subject matter. In what follows is the brief review or conclusion, recommendation, suggestion for further studies, bibliography, and appendices.

6.2 Conclusion

This research shows the inefficiency and insufficiency of policy document that out- rightly explain the method of recruitment or posting process of foreign service officials. Thus, it sought the need for the sector to have Foreign Service Posting Policy because the existing policy frameworks such as The Scheme of Service for The Foreign Service Cadre, and The Gambia Foreign Service Rules and MOFA Strategic Plan do not explain in any form how recruitment and appointment of foreign service officials should be done. In fact, a critical review of these documents has shown that the Scheme and Rules highlight the functions and qualifications of foreign service officials, respectively. While the validated Strategic Plan which served as a guide to MOFA operation and activities also do not make any significant emphasis on the recruitment and posting process of foreign service officials.

For many that are working in the government especially in the foreign ministry and personal management office, the existence of rules on the qualification, recruitment and posting procedure means there is some degree of acceptable guidelines for the sector. But there is mismatch between the theory and practice. Hence the sector lacks the institutionalised method

of recruitment and posting process of foreign service officials. In fact, eight out of twelve respondents characterise the Gambia's foreign service as being politicize and denigrate in term of service delivery.

6.3 Recommendations

The 21st century international relation and diplomatic engagement of the states have shown that the world does not need only sound foreign policy but also most diverse and dynamic personnel that can pursue and implement one's national interest define in terms of foreign policy. As such, I will suggest that for Gambia to realise its sound foreign policies the country need but most robust and diverse personnel who are acquainted with Foreign Service knowledge, international relation, and diplomacy.

The first step towards realising a more robust and democratic foreign service is that there should be a level playing ground for all potential Gambians, thus the methods of recruitment must not be partisanship or party-politics rather it should be based on the individual capability, competence, experience, and expertise. The key requirement for the recruitment and posting of diplomats should be their expertise and professional knowledge. Recruitment and posting process should be transparent advertisement on any post for which prospect Gambians will apply and be assess based on their merits and experience.

Over and above that foreign service sector should be separated from other ministry in terms of recruitment, training, and appointment. The recruitment, training and appointment should be institutionalised to avoid politicization of the processes. For instance, the appointment could be done by the president and approved by the Standing Committee of National Assembly on Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign affairs and Foreign Service Commission. Whereas the president appoints, the Foreign Service Commission should look into the appointment when it met all the criteria before given it a green line. The recruitment process for Foreign Service should be separated from other national services.

For the institutionalization recruitment, training, and appointment of Gambian diplomats, we should have a Foreign Service Institute which will be responsible for the training of Gambian diplomats, or we have department of Foreign Service in an established institution that can train administrative staff etc. So that people who wants to go into Foreign Service will be excuse from all these other courses and they just focus on the courses that are relevant for job. The National Assembly Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs should push this agenda.

Besides that, there should be diplomatic and foreign policy that clearly set Gambia's foreign policy orientation and also set out the procedure for recruitment process and appointments of foreign service officials. A good policy that details the different categories, the qualifications for recruitment processes, the interview processes, what would qualify one and all these steps and processes is important. There should be an awareness about the existence of this which should be guided by the policy. The foreign policy plan should be robust and in line with the country's immediate and aspirations. Experts should engage in the development of a strategic framework that will outline key policy interventions for a perfect foreign policy.

There should be Foreign Service Commission responsible for the recruitment, and promotion of foreign service officials without the interference of the politicians, yes constitutionally it is

the president who is mandated to appoint the highest level, but the other positions and levels should be left to Foreign Service Commission to deal with that. The Foreign Service Commission perhaps can be constituted in a way similar to some of the national bodies, which are independent of the executive. The tenure of Foreign Service officer must be precisely and clearly stated, thus, whereas recall of a diplomat exists, it should be approved by the standing committee of foreign affairs of National Assembly. The tenure of the post must be rigidly fixed in that it must be extendable and whereas recall happens, it shall be approved. The revised Standing Orders of National Assembly maintain that Foreign Affairs Committee shall duly be responsible to scrutinize the executive branch through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs and proffer advice on foreign policy and other connected matters.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should ensure the 'Selection process is completely transparent and merit-based such transparency and merit shall be clearly visible from the processes, procedures and practices that are adopted for selection'. Whereas vacancies exist in Foreign Service [in any post] it must not last for one hundred days without filling that post. The currently serving staff should have a capacity building training to enhance their efficiency before new diplomats who are knowledgeable, skill and experience diplomats are generated.

There should be robust study on Gambia's foreign policy and service to recommend policies that are needed, orientation of the country's foreign policy because officials should be well trained to understand our country's interests in the global stage and foster alignment with nations who are ready to work with us collaboratively, they should also undergo rigorous training and background checks before being appointed by the Gambian government. Also, there is a need to reconstitute the whole foreign policy issue because there is a proliferation of embassies with a lot of challenges in their works. For instance, Gambians normally get stranded abroad and the ambassadors or embassies are doing nothing much to help them.

6.4 Suggestion for Further Studies

The research suggests the following suggestions for further studies to better understand Gambia's Foreign Service and foreign policy.

It is important for one to study by investigating the effectiveness of parliamentary committee's oversight on Gambia's Foreign Service administration. This will help in understanding the degree and extent to which the executive is held accountable and responsible for their actions and decisions in the Gambian Foreign Service.

There is need for further research to understand the impact of the politicisation on the recruitment and appointment of Gambia's Foreign Service. This will aid our understanding about the manner in which political appointments affect the delivery of our foreign service.

It is imperative to investigate whether diplomats that are appointed based on political reason do actual go for three-month training as stipulated in the scheme and if they do what skills, knowledge, and experience do they gather that aid the delivery of foreign service of the country. This will help us to know whether the three-month training is enough for one to become a diplomat.

Literatures have shown that, the evolving nature of international relation, migration and international cooperation is at a rate and pace never exist in human history. Thus, the foreign relation and diplomatic structure that caters for the need of the people two or three decades back might no longer be effective and efficient without modifications. That is to say diplomatic service of the Gambia in three decades back cannot be functional and satisfactory in today's age and time. Recently Gambia had 23 diplomatic missions and 2 consulate general posts worldwide. This is not satisfactory hence there are Gambians with huge population in certain countries with no diplomatic representation. In fact, Statistics have shown that there are over 50,000 Gambians in Germany and Italy combined without any resident diplomatic mission. By making an objective cost benefit analysis, I think one can argue for Gambia to scale down some of its Diplomatic Mission in most African countries and replace them with consular post to give consideration to countries like Italy and Germany. Therefore, a study is needed to examine Gambian populations in different countries in order to establish embassies and consulate in that country or areas.

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