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***Training Practices within Human Resource Management
Policy Implementation and Public Sector Reform in CEE
Transition Countries: Case Study about the Bulgarian
Ministry of Finance***

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Present paper delivers an analysis of training outcomes in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance. I focus on those in their role of increasing organizational performance. I find it relevant, since the goal for improved performance arises from the need of Bulgarian public administration to be more professional. This need results from the in-between condition that they are facing. Some rules and procedures from the old communist regime enable this condition of difficulty to break the initial status quo and establish democracy and market economy. In addition, the insufficient knowledge and understanding of democratic and market economic operations add up to the obstacles that the communist structure poses. These consequently lead to a slower process of transition that prevents state's political, social and economic development to foster.

The transition circumstances that CEE countries experience at the moment are no exception for the state of Bulgaria. After the collapse of the communist regime, the Bulgarian government also realized the need to speed up the establishment of democracy through public sector reform. The problem of insufficient qualification of civil servants is among the main problems and reform areas for Bulgaria too. Due to that the government puts a lot of reform efforts in building administrative capacity in the public sector. Additional motivation for this main goal of the state is the accession to the European Union. Since the beginning of the public sector reform in Bulgaria overlaps in time with the start of the EU negotiations process, I conclude that EU is a strong factor that influences the reform process. This is due to the fact that most reform efforts target to fulfill the requirements for joining the EU. And among the EC recommendations for Bulgaria to join the EU, the emphasis on modernization of public administration represents a main precondition. Due to that I have decided to focus the current research on investigating whether the level of qualification of Bulgarian public administration had increased as a consequence of this public sector reform and EU accession process.

The way I have chosen to do it is through an organizational case for the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance. I would like to see whether there are currently better methods for improving civil servants' qualification. If there are qualified methods, this will consequently mean that the level of qualification is increasing too. Since, I relate degree of professionalization to performance levels; I will estimate factors that enable the increase of performance. A main factor here is the provision of training and that is why I focus on analyzing training results. Therefore, I want to check specifically whether implementation of training has improved in the ministry. I will do that through analyzing documents and training results for the period of 2006 – 2007.

Research Questions

How has the process of training within HRM policy implementation in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance changed in the year of 2007?

(1) What are the training results from HRM training policy implementation within the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance for 2006?

(2) What are the training guidelines that result from EU measures?

(3) How training guidelines transform further into organizational activities?

(4) How does the Ministry of Finance monitor the results from training activities?

In order to answer the main research question, I will use four research sub-questions. The first one will help me make a comparison between 2006 and 2007 training results. In addition, I have formulated sub-questions two, three and four in line with the theoretical model of the paper. Thus, these questions represent the three main policy cycle stages: (2) policy design; (3) policy implementation; (4) policy assessment. There is further explanation of the meaning of these policy stages for the analysis in the literature review section.

Literature Review

The aim of the literature review chapter is to construct a theoretical model, which will assist the analysis of the problem. It consists of three main sections, the first one of which introduces training literature. In this section I present training as a cornerstone in improving organizational performance and provide theoretical arguments that demonstrate this connection. These training arguments are in terms of four generic concepts that influence organizational performance, and namely: output, employee satisfaction, service quality, client satisfaction. Then the second section I include in the theoretical model consists of policy implementation literature. The purpose of this section is to put the concept of training within an overall strategy. This is relevant, since training in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance is part of the broader human resource management strategy of the organization. The strategy in this case means policy and therefore I check the manner of attaining policy goals. I do that through combining training with policy implementation. I find it relevant, since policy implementation explains the process of achieving policy objectives. This process, however, does not consist only of policy implementation. It also depends on the design of policy goals, which influences the following implementation stage. Except for policy design, policy assessment also affects implementation phase. It is so, since it provides estimation on the extent of policy goal attainment and thus helps evaluate effectiveness. This is also relevant, in order to verify progress and thus derive conclusion about further continuation and/or adjustments. Arguments above demonstrate the strong influence of policy design and policy assessment on policy implementation. Thus, when analyzing the stage of policy implementation, I will keep in mind the whole policy cycle. Through combining this cycle with training, I arrive at the training policy cycle with respectively: training policy design; training policy implementation; and training policy assessment stages.

The implementation of this cycle, however, needs to have a basis for successful execution as well. What I mean here by this basis is higher standards that guide the training policy cycle. These standards will help execute respectively good policy design, policy implementation and policy assessment, since they provide the means for their effectiveness. In this paper, I derive these higher standards from the EU governance literature. I find it relevant, since it addresses the policy process and provides the methods for executing it. It is also applicable, since the paper discusses a problem within the EU accession process, and thus I want to verify the convergence with EU guidelines. Therefore EU governance literature completes the theoretical model with the specific techniques that EC promotes for executing an effective training policy process.

Methodology

The theoretical model above I use in building the methodological approach of the paper. This approach represents qualitative case study analysis on organizational level. I investigate policy documents with secondary data for a specific time framework. Based on the EU accession reform process, I chose to analyze outcomes for the year of 2007. This is the first year of membership of Bulgaria in the EU and respectively the one that puts an end to the pre-accession period. I do a comparison of organizational training results between 2006 and 2007. In this comparison I apply indicators, which I have derived from the theoretical model. According to it, I incorporate indicators to investigate the quality of the training policy cycle,

which create the training policy cycle indicators. Beside theory-based indicators, here I also support qualitative findings with statistical data about the organizational training outcomes from the years of 2006 and 2007. This demonstrates the numerical results from the training policy implementation efforts of the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance. The quantitative values I search for in secondary sources again. There is also another set of indicators that verify whether the training policy cycle is in correspondence with the EU standards extracted from the EU governance literature. Their purpose is to see if the methods for governing the policy cycle effectively are present in the policy documents I investigate in the empirical analysis. All these I apply in answering the research questions. For each one of them I provide an explanation of the way I am going to do it. Therefore, I include for each of the questions the necessary indicators, documents and application method that will help me derive findings to answer them.

Analysis and Discussion

The empirical section of the paper includes descriptions of the policy objectives that selected documents include and an interpretation, in terms of the theory-based indicators. According to the interpretation of this comparison, EU and national documents demonstrate good results. This I conclude by evaluating the quality of the policy objectives through the training policy cycle and EU governance indicators. In the same manner, I go further to organizational documents, where the quality of training policy objectives becomes poorer. This makes me assume that there is a lack of sophisticated training policy cycle in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance. The assumption show further grounds in analyzing the statistical data. According to the quantitative indicators, some values in 2007 are much lower than the ones in 2006. In total, numerical data testifies for the lack of sufficient change of training results from 2006 and 2007. An interpretation of what these results mean for answering the research questions I provide below.

(1) When providing an answer to the first sub-question, it is visible that in the year of 2006, the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance training results score higher than in 2007. This is particularly valid for the provision of training data that the numerical values show. However, when combined with other quantitative outcomes, one can see that there is not much change between both years.

(2) In going further, EU requirements set as final targets for national training policy design promote a good policy cycle with the application of the principles of EU governance. They should result in the greater effectiveness on a national level training goals attainment. However, the EU policy design do not guarantee adequate application in the member states, and thus national training policy design was subject to assessment, in order to verify its comprehension. It showed an overall comprehensive policy design of the training policy areas, which implies positive consistence between EU and national policy design. This results in the general conclusion that final EU targets on a policy design level are met by the policy documents of the Bulgarian government. Therefore, EU and national level training policy guidelines promote good training policy cycle that relies on the application of EU governance principles. In order to check, however, the acknowledgement of the guidelines of this policy design, I deliver the results from the examination of organizational data.

(3) The organizational policy cycle provide broad training measures for 2007. Based on these I can not conclude that guidelines have transformed into more specific measures for training organizational activities. I can assume that due to that training delivery results are lower. There may be a correlation between organizational HRM training objectives and the training outcomes for the specific year. This makes me assume that strategic policy documents do not contribute sufficiently to the HRM training process in the Ministry of Finance. It may also mean no adequate internal activities for operationalization of EU and national policy

guidelines. This is due to general formulation of measures that the organizational documents include that I can not consider as more specific practices.

(4) Moderate specification of training organizational activities is followed further by weaknesses in the monitoring as well. When it comes to the application of tools and techniques to verify the progress of training activities, organizational documents show even less specification. There is broad formulation of training assessment, without explication on specific tools, techniques and indicators.

Conclusion

In evaluating training results through theory, I generate a number of possible explanations for the lack of improvement of those in the ministry from 2006 to 2007. As main performance influential factor, training results here may mean no increase of productivity. These, however, can not eliminate external productivity factors and thus do not necessarily represent the only precondition for its level improvement. Lack of change can also result in insufficient employee satisfaction, since according to theory both are interdependent. Consequently this implies for moderate service quality and even customer satisfaction. These results may be so, due to weak training policy cycle process, for which internal policy documents testify. It is due to the general formulation of training objectives on internal level that make me think so. However, EU standards are the ones that should contribute exclusively to the process. They are missing in the policy documents of the organization, which generates assumptions that they are the actual major weakness of the internal training policy cycle.

In conclusion, from the empirical analysis it turns out that on EU and national level, there is good training policy cycle, since it scores high, when compared to the indicators. The same training policy cycle, however, gets weaker when going down to organizational level. The Bulgarian Ministry of Finance does not include in the documents sophisticated training policy mechanisms that should guide effective accomplishment of results. I see that further when comparing 2006 and 2007 training results, which in total demonstrate no significant change. This can generally mean lack of effectiveness in the process that impedes generating progress. I can argue for that when comparing findings with the theoretical model of the paper.

However, further research is needed in order to be able to confirm or reject this statement. Due to the usage of limited number of secondary data, the research shows constraints. Also, lack of field research utilization and primary data gathering is a limitation too. It prevents from making more precise estimation about the training input in the organization. It thus do not provide for drawing clearer picture on the specific pitfalls that need further improvement.

Therefore, a future research on the matter should rely on including mainly primary and quantitative data, in order to increase the quality of the analysis and the validity of findings. This will further provide for drawing better conclusions on the level of organizational HRM training policy implementation, and potential means for improving it.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Current analysis provides an estimation of training results in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance. In analyzing them, I would like to see what the precondition of the organization for improving performance is. This is necessary, due to the need for professionalization of Bulgarian public administration. Since, I relate degree of professionalization to performance levels; I will estimate factors that enable the increase of performance. A main factor here is the provision of training and that is why I focus on analyzing training results. I do that through building a theoretical model for effective training policy execution. From this model I then derive the research indicators as instruments of the methodological approach. The approach also encompasses a qualitative organizational case study analysis. It relies on secondary sources that include EU, national and organizational documents. I will analyze the policy measures in these documents with the help of the research indicators I derive from the theoretical model. This will help me estimate the effectiveness of organizational training policy cycle in qualitative terms. These qualitative findings I will also support with quantitative data that will make me evaluate the level of consistency between both. Then I will deliver a final conclusion, based on the overall research findings and provide some recommendations.

1.1. Background of the problem

Central and Eastern European countries in transition experience some problems and challenges in executing public sector reform. More specifically, they lack professional capacity in the public administration. The cause for it is the in-between condition that they face. Some rules and procedures from the old communist regime enable this condition. They make it difficult to break the initial status quo and establish democracy and market economy. The insufficiency of knowledge and understanding of democratic and market economic operations add up to the obstacles that the communist structure poses. These consequently lead to a slower process of transition that prevents state's political, social and economic development to foster.

The transition circumstances that CEE countries experience at the moment are no exception for the state of Bulgaria. After the collapse of the communist regime, the Bulgarian government also realized the need to speed up the establishment of democracy through public sector reform. The problem of insufficient qualification of civil servants is among the main problems and reform areas for Bulgaria too. Due to that the government puts a lot of reform efforts in building administrative capacity in the public sector. Additional motivation for this main goal of the state is the accession to the European Union. Since the beginning of the public sector reform in Bulgaria overlaps in time with the start of the EU negotiations process. Therefore, I assume that EU is a strong factor that influences the reform process. This is due to the fact that most reform efforts target to fulfill the requirements for joining the EU. And among the EC recommendations for Bulgaria to join the EU, the emphasis on modernization of public administration represents a main precondition. It means that Bulgarian civil servants need to increase the capacity of administering adequately the new legislative framework, programs and policies. This main focus of the Bulgarian public sector reform and EU recommendation for membership thus became a motivation for me to elaborate this paper.

For me developing modern public administration means enabling its administrative capacity to perform effectively in the public sector. One way of building this capacity is through the provision of training. It represents a delivery of knowledge and skills for improving performance. Due to that I have chosen to concentrate on investigating how training helps in

increasing performance levels. I see the relevance in that, since performance should result from professional manner of achieving goals. In other words, this means that the level of professionalization relates to level of performance delivery. Thus I will investigate it as a consequence of training provision. I will analyze training results, as a manner of improving performance levels. More specifically, I focus on the training efforts of the Bulgarian government and the effectiveness of their results in increasing civil servants' performance. Due to time and scope limitations, I concentrate on the training input in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance. This means that the paper will represent an organizational case study analysis. It will focus on training results of the organization as representative findings for its level of internal performance.

Training practices in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance fall within the HRM policy of the organization. It is a part of broader HRM strategy that the organization applies to manage human capital. This means that it is relevant to be familiar with the specific HRM context that the organization experiences. HRM methods here are subject to a general trend that Bulgarian public and private sector face.

According to this trend, it was not until the mid -1990s when personnel departments were able to resurface as autonomous divisions inside the enterprise. Their role was always seen as mere personnel administration (Soulsby & Clark 1998 and Aguilera & Dabu, 2003) instead of integration of HR practices with corporate strategy. (Kiriazov, Sullivan, Tu, 2000 and Vatchkova, 2001) Therefore, HRM methods in Bulgaria at that time were neglected and underdeveloped. It was due to the communist system that promoted a hierarchical operational system. Manpower consisted of a flow of subordinates, without much empowerment that treats them as distinctive resources. Due to that the proportion of experienced HR managers in Bulgaria nowadays is substantially lower than in other EU countries. Their experience with HRM as such is not so long, which means that Bulgarian personnel managers are less prepared to apply modern HRM methods. (Brewster, Mayrhofer & Morley, 2004). In Bulgaria the line managers carry much more responsibility for decision – making in the whole spectrum of HRM problems, compared with the ones in the rest of the European countries. (Vatchkova, 2000) The main responsibility for the decisions on personnel management in 60% of the Bulgarian organizations lies on the chief executives, followed by the administrative directors – 22%, and the production directors – 5%. Almost half of the organizations, which were included in the Cranet survey, states that the line managers are mainly responsible for taking the decisions for: pay and benefits – in 48% of the surveyed organizations, industrial relations – 42%, training and development of the staff – 49%, workforce expansion/reduction – 38%, recruitment and selection – 33%, health and safety – 27%. (Vatchkova, 2000)

HRM development results of Cranet surveys for the period 1996 – 2003 shows important areas that progress towards the rest of the EU countries. (Vatchkova, 2004) Two of the most significant ones are under the process of a considerable change. Those represent the low popularity and the unstable position of the HRM department, as well as the low strategy orientation of Bulgarian companies. (Vatchkova, 2004) In 2003, the number of Bulgarian companies with an HRM department increased from 71 to 82%, the participation of the HR heads of departments in the managerial bodies altered from 22 to 29%. For the same period, the share of companies with written corporate strategies attained 62%, compared to 31% in 1999. There are enough reasons to state that Bulgarian HRM is on its way to converge with the positive European trends, but it really needs a qualitative new type of training support. However, although the training area is recently gaining more and more popularity, compared to all other European countries, Bulgarian organizations are well behind in assessment of employee training needs – only 42%. (Vatchkova, 2004)

Thus, there is a positive trend of acknowledging the importance of HRM and integrating it into the organizational strategy and operations. HRM and its training component, however,

still need a greater input and increase of quality. It will help acquire the necessary knowledge and skills and apply it as main part of organizational activities. That is also why I formulate the current problem investigation as addressing training results. It will help see the development of this process that is among the significant factors to improve private and public sector operations.

1.2. Research Problem Statement

Given the lack of qualified professionals to facilitate the reform process in Bulgaria, there is a critical need of enabling administrative capacity. It is necessary, in order to boost reform outcomes and establish administrative system with highly skilled civil servants. The need results from the general lack of capacity of public sector participants to operate within the new system of democratic and market –oriented rules; that impedes the process of transition and creates obstacles for the political, economic and social development of the country. This general lack of capacity in the public sector as a whole is a problem in the Ministry of Finance as well. The organization lacks adequate qualification of its civil servants in order to deliver sufficient performance. Due to that the ministry needs to focus on greater provision of training, so that it can increase the professional level of civil servants in the organization and thus better performance. I see training as a main factor of achieving higher performance. That is why I focus on assessing training results as a mean for estimating levels of performance. **It arises from the problem of unsatisfactory performance outcomes in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance, influenced by insufficient training delivery efforts.** I will therefore check whether training results altered as a main drive for performance improvement.

1.3. Time Framework of Problem Analysis

I have chosen a specific time frame of the analysis with respect to the reform and EU accession processes. Bulgaria is a new EU member state that joined the Union on January 1st 2007. There were numerous administrative reform efforts that the government put in order to meet the requirements for membership during the accession period. The European Commission designed and supported financially most of the reform measures. The goal of European Commission's grant support was to enhance overall political, economic and social capacity of the state, in order to accelerate the process of transition and EU accession.

Although still an ongoing grant support process, the idea of the current paper is to evaluate training efforts, based on the pre-accession input. Therefore, my main focus is training results of Bulgaria from the accession period. This means that I will assess the annual training outcomes for the year of 2007. I have chosen this year, since January 1st 2007 ended the pre-accession period. Therefore, I believe that analyzing organizational training efforts for that year will help me estimate the impact of EC pre-accession support.

However, in order be able to make this estimation for 2007, I need to refer it to previous period, in order to make a conclusion about the level of change. I have chosen a previous period of this comparison to be the year of 2006. Therefore, the reference point of the case study will be the year of 2006. I will check training progress through comparing end results between 2006 and 2007.

1.4. Research Questions

As a result of the need to for an improved way of delivering training to boost performance; a verification of its effective outcomes; and the specified time period of the analysis, the main research question of this paper is: *How has the process of training within HRM policy implementation in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance changed in the year of 2007?*

The annual organizational analysis for 2007 and its reference to 2006 training results relate to the first sub-question: *What are the training results from HRM training policy implementation within the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance for 2006?*

Next three sub-questions I have formulated in line with the theoretical model of the paper, which I present in details in the literature review chapter. Thus, these questions relate to the three main policy cycle stages: policy design; policy implementation; policy assessment. There is further explanation of the meaning of these policy stages for the analysis in the literature review section.

The second sub-question therefore relates to the identification of measures, in terms EU standards, guiding the process of training. It suggests verification of transfer of EU policy design objectives on national level: *What are the training guidelines that result from EU measures?*

The third sub-question relates to the policy implementation stage, as a continuation of the design process. I try to deliver an overview of the way policy design measures have been internalized as organizational practices: *How training guidelines transform further into organizational activities?*

The fourth sub-question intends to complete the policy cycle with the last stage that is an inseparable part of the entire process. It relates to the assessment of policy implementation outcomes, in order to check effectiveness of results and, if applicable, review further implementation methods: *How does the Ministry of Finance monitor the results from training activities?*

1.5. Structure and Methodology

In order to provide precise answers to research questions above, the next step will include an elaboration of literature review chapter that will develop the theoretical model of the paper. The conceptual framework will encompass *training literature*, as well as *policy implementation*, and *EU governance* sections. I will build the model first by explicating how training relates to performance. After explaining the relationship in terms of training, I introduce policy implementation literature. This I use to bring in the policy cycle and its three main stages. These stages I consequently unify with training and transform into training policy stages as part of the overall training cycle. I then complete the theoretical model with the EU governance section, which purpose is to demonstrate the EU standards that should navigate the effective execution of this training policy cycle.

The methodological approach of the paper will rely on qualitative organizational case study with a secondary analysis data collection method. Secondary sources within the 2007 time framework, will serve as an analytical material. The theoretical model will help me create the training policy cycle and EU governance indicators. These I will apply in doing document analysis, in order to derive findings to answer the research questions.

Indicators will help me evaluate the selected EU, national and organizational documents in the analysis chapter. I will compare them to policy document information, in order to derive empirical findings. At the end, all data collected will enable the grounds for making final conclusions.

Before, delivering these final remarks, I will discuss the results of analysis. These I will include at the end of the analysis chapter in the form of answering the research sub-questions.

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This last, concluding chapter will summarize findings and interpret them through theory. In the end this will result in the general concluding reflection in accordance to the main research question and deliver recommendations.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

The literature review section of the paper serves the purpose of building a theoretical model that will help analyze the practical problem. The first main part of this theoretical model includes a set of training literature. I begin this section with the argument that training is a main factor of increasing organizational performance. Then I go further with theoretical viewpoints on the way training proves this relationship.

Then in building further the theoretical model, I introduce the policy implementation section. I find it relevant to include, since the case suggests that training is process of an overall strategy. It is due to the fact that in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance training falls within the broader human resource management strategy. This strategy here means policy, so I want to see how to achieve policy goals. Therefore, I combine the training section with the policy implementation literature. This literature introduces policy implementation as the process of executing policy goals. However, successful implementation of policy goals does not rely only on policy implementation. There should be first good formulation of policy objectives, in order to achieve them in the implementation stage. And good implementation also relies on analyzing the achievements, in order to check the effectiveness of results, i.e. policy assessment. Thus, all these testify that policy implementation can not exist separately from the policy design and policy assessment stages. Therefore I will analyze the implementation process in line with the whole policy cycle. And this cycle now becomes training policy cycle that encompasses training policy design, training policy implementation and training policy assessment.

In order to have a good execution of the policy process, however, it should follow certain standards. These standards will help execute respectively good policy design, policy implementation and policy assessment, since they provide the means for their effectiveness. In the current problem investigation, I have chosen to search for these higher standards in the EU governance literature. I find it relevant, since it reflects the policy process and explicates the methods for executing it. It is also relevant, since the paper addresses a problem within the EU accession process, and thus I want to check the correspondence with EU guidelines. So, due to that EU governance literature complete the theoretical model with the specific methods that EC promotes for enabling an effective training policy process.

As mentioned before, I understand professionalization in an organization as an effective delivery of performance on internal level. Organizational performance is "a broad construct which captures what agencies do, produce and accomplish for the various constituencies with which they interact." (Ezell, 2005) I see the level of professionalization as the capacity of individuals within an organization to understand and delivery effective performance. This means acknowledging and performing tasks in accordance to all necessary aspects that these comprise of. For example, a lot of organizations nowadays try to manage their organizational performance through applying a multi-dimension methodology. Different organizations rely on different mixes of dimensions for increase of performance. Among the basic ones that corporations normally build their organizational strategies on are: output (which means also productivity); employee satisfaction (the extent to which workers are satisfied with their work and condition in the agency); service quality (the extend to which service techniques and methods are completely delivered, which is compared to certain standards) client satisfaction (the extent to which clients are satisfied with the accessibility, costs, processes, and results of service delivery). These main components for improved

organizational performance rely on training as a mean for enhancing their separate impact. Therefore, most managers acknowledge the need for training and naturally believe that training is worthwhile. They can reasonably claim that training helps significantly for end result measures such as productivity enhancements, quality improvements, cost cutbacks, and time savings. They also believe that training can enhance customer satisfaction, improve morale, and build teamwork. (Phillips, 1997)

The term training itself refers to “a combination of activities, capable to maintain the integrity of the personnel individually and collectively to the degree of competence, required by the activity of the enterprise. This competence refers to the knowledge, abilities and the wish of every individual and every group to work. Competence is the successful integrator of these three notions: knowledge, abilities, wish.” (Vatye, 1958, as quoted in Vatchkova, 2002) Their meaning relates to the expectations of workplace performance, i.e. the standards and results that people should achieve in carrying out specific roles. (Armstrong, 2003) More specifically, these performance expectations should rely on efforts that impact the main performance dimension of improving: output/productivity; employee satisfaction; service quality; and consequently from all these – customer satisfaction. And according to different training literatures, the process of training develops knowledge and competencies that improve all these performance dimensions.

2.1 Training Literature

For example, some scholars see training as a type of return-on-investment (ROI), in terms of the level of training input. According to human capital theory, provision of training means boosting productivity of the organization. (Becker, 1964 and Strober, 1990) Some studies, conducted in London relied on comparative analysis between Germany and the UK. They examined the effect of training delivery on the productivity of the labor force. (Steedman & Wagner, 1989) The comparison derived the conclusions of Germany being more effective in its employer training systems. These systems enhance the skills and competencies of the labor force and contribute to the higher quality and productivity in a great number of German industries. Based on the findings from these studies of human capital theorists, I conclude that there is a correlation between training delivery and level of productivity. Organizations that invest more in training should consequently expect higher levels of output / productivity within their overall internal performance. Effective provision of training for boosting organizational productivity, however, should rely on two main types of training - generic and specialized one. According to human capital theory, organizations will invest more in training that is distinctive to the corporation, since it integrates employees and is not applicable for competitors. Due to that there is less interest in generic trainings, compared to specialized ones. They represent a threat for outflow of trained employees to rival organizations. Both types of training however are an important part of the organizational strategy for boosting productivity. This is due to the fact that it is hard to estimate the separate impact of both trainings, since some generic trainings include specialized elements, and the other way around. (Maglen, 1990) Therefore, I think that it is also relevant to claim that both types are interdependent. This I presume, since having a specialized training without the foundation of basic skills formation may be inappropriate. This will mean that the adequate knowledge that generic training provides is missing and thus can not be strengthened further through delivery of training for more special abilities. On the other hand, the provision of only generic trainings may appear insufficient too. Since this type of training relies on delivering individuals within an organization with a wide spectrum of basic skills, this may not be enough for specific tasks execution. In other words, a particular job requires basic knowledge with some position-specific skills, in order to be able to perform duties effectively. For example, for the position of a sales person this means not only provision of basic training for presentation and negotiation skills, but also specialized one for product/service details and functions.

Except for boosting organizational output/productivity, generic and specialized trainings have an impact on employee satisfaction as well. Some studies show that training employees is positively related to job satisfaction. The analysis calls for greater understanding of training quality and its effects on job satisfaction. Based on the findings, it emphasizes the need to pay greater attention to provision of training as a manner of improving employee contentment. (Chiang, Back & Canter, 2005)

Human resource management literature also sees training as a way of enhancing employee commitment to the organization. (Rainbird, 1994 and Heyes & Stuart, 1996) It was as early as the 1980s, when Harvard Business School pioneered with the initial formulation of HRM conceptual framework. (Beer et al., 1984) The formulation introduces training as one out of many strategies for flows management of human resources. This, together with the other HRM practices; derive the “four Cs” of human resource management, and namely congruence, commitment, competence and cost effectiveness. Other HRM models emphasize training as an element of HRM strategies, designed to deliver similar high performance results. (Walton, 1985 and Kochan & Dyer, 1993) In addition, according to Fombrun et al. (Fombrun et al., 1984), individual performance is highly significant and training and development is the manner to enhance it. Many of these literature viewpoints provide a life-cycle method in analyzing HRM. They claim that different HRM practices are suitable for different phases of the organizational development. (Lengnick-Hall & Lengnick-Hall, 1988 and Schuler & Jackson, 1987) Nevertheless, the explication of the role of training in these practical methods is often too general. Only the literature on resource – based HRM strategy emphasizes the concept of human resources, as being a core competence for organizations. (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990 and Barney, 1991) And if human resources are unique competence for the organization, it is logical that training has a crucial place in developing and maintaining these competencies on internal level. (Boxall, 1996)

In other words, developing and maintaining human resources through training means again to make them satisfied. This I conclude since relying on training to preserve employees shows that they are satisfied with their work and working environment. Only if satisfied with these, can make them continue working within an organization. In addition, HRM literature shows further that no matter if having it as a main goal, or as an additional consequence, training helps increase employee satisfaction. The process of training, as explained above, may have different purpose and performance focuses. In addition, it can also be an overall strategy or a part of one. Still, no matter its form and goal, it also helps integrate employees more through satisfying their needs. This I believe also, since individuals appreciate the opportunities that training delivers for higher qualification and consequently improved career perspectives.

In going further, there is also a significant literature by Pettigrew et al on the role of training in the corporate strategy. It investigated training as a part of the overall HRM strategies of a number UK – based organizations. (Hendry & Pettigrew, 1989) The investigation resulted in a training model that enables the responsiveness of organizations to the competition pressures they face. Thus, managers deliver training decision-making, in accordance to the extent it will contribute to the achievement of organizational strategic goals. This causal relationship highlights the role of managers in delivering important training decisions, along with other stakeholders, such as individuals and the government. This is essential, since it introduces the crucial component of management choice. Managers can decide upon a specific combination of HRM policy tools, formulated to enable a successful match with the strategic results organizations are aiming at. (Finegold & Soskice, 1988)

This successful match between HRM tools and organizational goals should consequently result in qualified output. When taking about quality, I can assume that this means also service quality, which I claimed earlier, is among the performance dimensions that training enhances. This I also conclude, due to the HRM training aspect on which organizations

focus, in order to meet competition pressures. In other words, training human resources to deliver better service quality means gaining a competitive advantage over rivals. This is due to the fact that quality is a main factor that increases competition levels of organizations.

In order to check service quality one needs to have certain standards, as defined earlier. In the current literature section, I find similar meaning for it in the decision-making that managers provide that should be in accordance to organizational strategic goals. This means that as standards for comparison here in checking service quality represent also corporate objectives. When comparing quality levels to organizational goals, one will be able to estimate whether service quality results match strategic targets of the organization.

In enabling service quality as main competitive advantage, through comparison of its levels with organizational goals, corporations are normally able to increase customer satisfaction as well. This I conclude, in accordance to the definition of the term I provided in the beginning of the chapter. It refers to the satisfaction of clients with accessibility, costs, processes and results of service delivery. These should results from the increased levels of productivity, employee satisfaction and service quality that training is able to enhance. Or in other words, I believe that customer satisfaction is a performance dimension that appears to be also an end result of training efforts. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that the process of training has a significant impact on it as well.

All arguments I have explicated up to this point demonstrate the relationship between the provision of training and increase of performance. I do that through providing theoretical proofs that training enhances the main performance dimensions of: output / productivity; employee satisfaction, service quality and customer satisfaction. These are basic performance preconditions that training can influence positively. However, as being a broad encompassing process, performance can depend on numerous other factors that can either have a positive or negative impact on its overall levels. Nevertheless, theory on human capital addresses this relationship; the method shows also some limitations. For example, when talking about output/productivity, it is difficult, to estimate its level as a way of training ROI. (Maglen, 1990, Strober, 1990, and Bishop, 1994) It can not isolate external factors that affect organizational productivity levels, in order to deliver precise evaluation of training impact. (Cutler, 1992) It is hard to estimate the separate impact of both generic and specialized trainings as well, since some generic trainings include specialized elements, and the other way around. (Maglen, 1990)

This means that just relying on a combination of both generic and specialized training is not enough, in order to increase performance results. It is due to the fact that each organization should estimate its specific situation, in order to decide upon the precise proportion of generic and specialized trainings that it should deliver. What I claim here is that there should be estimation about the exact generic and specialized skills each individual in the organization needs. I believe so, because if an employee necessitates a greater level of specialized skills to improve performance, but is provided with generic training instead, will not help meeting organizational goals. On the other hand, if a good expert lacks some significant basic skills, but is given specialized training instead, it will not help him/her perform better. Furthermore, even if the combination of generic and specialized trainings produces the targeted results, there can not be an exact estimation of their separate impact. This means that it is difficult to estimate which type of training and skills that employees applied have influenced good performance delivery. In addition, it is also difficult to estimate that, since as mentioned above, these types of training can not be merely generic or specialized. They both contain to some extent generic and specialized elements.

Furthermore, there is another limitation of the current approach. As mentioned earlier, training can represent a strategy or part of a strategy that has certain performance goals. This means that even if we can isolate a perfect training element, it may be due to some

weaknesses of the overall design that performance does not increase. For example, there may be a right estimation of trainings that should be delivered, but the actual provision of it may be poor. Also, the provision of training may be excellent, but if it is not delivered to the exact individuals or in the sufficient amount, it may not have satisfactory effect too. This means that it is not important to see training only as a process, but also as an overall strategy or part of one. And this strategy should also be consistent enough, in order to achieve the desirable effect.

This is the reason why, in building the current model of this paper, I focus not only on the specifics of the training process that help increase performance. I also place the concept within an overall strategy, in order to construct a theoretical framework that enables an effective method for provision of training. The first step for me to do that is through putting the process of training within the public sector context. In administrative terms strategies refer to policies, which is why I will be talking about training policy. In addition, in the public sector, training strategy execution is the training policy implementation. Therefore I find it relevant to harmonize training theory with the policy implementation concept. This provides an improved way of acknowledging the delivery of training, within the implementation of an overall policy cycle. In other words, it will help me derive the manner of executing training policy. This means that within the context of a broader policy framework, I want to see how training is supposed to happen in reality. Therefore I concentrate on policy implementation literature, in order to do so.

2.2. Policy Implementation

I build further the theoretical model by introducing policy implementation term. I find relevance in using it, since I aim at investigating policy outcomes. More specifically, I would like to check what are the policy outcomes from the delivery of training. On an administrative level this means an investigation of training within the policy aspect. And provision of training within the policy process is the policy implementation phase. This is based on the definition of policy implementation. It is a significant element of the overall policy process and refers to the so-called "textbook conception of the policy process". (Nakamura, 1987, p. 142, as quoted in Treib, 2006) The notion suggests that the policy process may be separated into few noticeably distinctive phases, varying from problem identification and agenda-setting to policy design, policy implementation, assessment, as well as policy termination or adjustment. Policy implementation is "what happens after a bill becomes a law" (Bardach, 1977, as quoted in Treib, 2006) or the phase that translates policy into action. (Barrett 2004, p. 251, as quoted in Treib, 2006) It is also "what develops between the establishment of an apparent intention on the part of government to do something, or to stop doing something, and the ultimate impact in the world of action. Some scholars include here both the assembly of policy actors and action, on the one hand, and the cause-effect relationship between their efforts and ultimate outcomes, on the other". (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1989, as quoted in O'Toole Jr., 2000)

And these ultimate outcomes are the ones current research wants to estimate within training policy implementation. Policy implementation, however, can not exist as a separate process. Policy formulation, implementation and assessment can be seen as separate stages in one joint policy cycle. The distinction made between stages may be helpful for analytical purposes but could be difficult to use when analysing real policy processes. In reality, the different stages may not be as separate as they are in theory; for instance, if actions are implemented before they are decided upon, and then afterwards become part of an action plan. (Peters & Pierre, 2006) It is thus worth keeping the full policy cycle in mind when considering the actual involvement of stakeholders in public policy-making and development of action plans. In addition, within the current framework, this means that the process of training needs a strong policy design, implementation and assessment stages, so that the success of the practice can be effective. In other words, policy implementation in general can

not exist separately from the policy design and assessment phases. This means that the effectiveness of the combination rely exclusively on the existence of all main policy stages for the aspect of training. That is, each one of the policy cycle stages should include training, i.e. policy design of training; policy implementation of training, policy assessment of training. More specifically, training policy cycle looks in the following way:

<i>Training Policy Cycle</i>	Policy Design	Policy Implementation	Policy Assessment
Training	Training Policy Design	Training Policy Implementation	Training Policy Assessment

Table 1 – Training Policy Cycle Framework

As being a strategy for execution, policy implementation needs to be based on specific guidelines or standards, which serve as navigators and success factors. An organizational level policy grounds its cornerstones on national level main policy guidelines. In other words, HRM training in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance should be in line with HRM training objectives of the Bulgarian government, listed in the public policy documents. National goals, however, find their roots in the policy framework of the European Union.

Therefore, I find it relevant to place the current training policy implementation model within the European context. The relevance for that has a twofold character – on one hand it is necessary, in order to get familiar with the EU standards that stand behind the effective execution of the training cycle. On the other hand, it is also relevant, since the current case suggests a problem investigation, within the EU accession process. Thus, EU standards on the way that training policy cycle should happen are significant, in order to check its consistence. This is the way for me to outline whether there is a convergence with the standards that the EU proposes for national level training policy implementation. It will also show whether the process enables high levels of effectiveness that EU standards should enhance.

2.3. EU Governance

Until lately there was a central mode that the intrusive state used to influence national political systems. (Jessop 2003, as quoted in Tömmel, 2007), The EU, however, is distinctive by modes of governance that promote softer or more roundabout means of attaining policy goals. The so-called new modes of governance depart from the traditional ‘Community method’ of regulation through legislation. They became a key issue both in the debate on reform, and in the real world of various policy areas. (Eberlein & Kerwer, 2004)

Nowadays, the hierarchy of legislation is different within the EU context. It represents an interactive course of action that involves a lot of public and private actors. The EU model thus misses the strict authority of making and imposing rules on national level. (De Búrca, 2006) It is because the European Commission perceives new forms of governance as ones that give freedom to national governments to oppose European policies. (Armstrong, 1998) In fact, member states favour that to legislation, because it allows them to have more autonomous policy implementation. This consequently results in a power of legislation that makes actors more motivated to act voluntarily. Due to the lower regulatory obligations, these new modes of governance meet less political opposition from decision-makers and implementers. (Armstrong, 1998)

In addition, this re-focused way of thinking lead to one of the most consistent observations about the new modes of governance - that they influence policy learning. (Eberlein & Kerwer, 2004) Specific mechanisms such as the Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC) enhance learning even further. The accent of OMC is not so much on applying certain type of instrument. It focuses more on the thorough formulation of a soft and complex decision-making and implementation process.

It is a strategy that delivers a substantial amount of policy independence to the member states. This normally combines the guidelines or goals at EU level with the creation of member state action plans or strategy reports for further development. National governments assign them to bring about better coordination and mutual learning in these EU policy areas. (De Búrca, 2006)

Thus, member state policymaking follows the logic of joint target-setting and peer assessment of national performances, under broad and unsanctioned European guidance. (Héritier, 2001, Eberlein and Kerwer, 2004) Instead, these pursue best practice rules. There is evidence that through evaluation by applying benchmarks and peer review, national administrations better understand how they could combat policy problems. (Trubek & Mosher, 2003).

Another major approach to EU governance argues further that the EU has a strong decision-making capacity because of its ability to influence the preferences of member states. Deliberative supranationalism, i.e. continuing discussion and the exchange of arguments, transforms Member States' preferences. This makes them more community compatible and mitigates problems of collective action. (Joerges, 1997, et al.) Thus, the notion of deliberative supranationalism excludes the possibility that the EU represents a regulatory state. It also does not rely exclusively on technocratic legitimacy. (Majone, 1996) In contrast, new governance focuses primarily on voluntary performance standards. Law does play a role, but more as a procedural framework than as a policy instrument. (Eberlein & Kerwer, 2004) Therefore new governance methods deliver great number of available soft-law instruments such as: guidelines, codes of conduct, indicators and benchmarks, recommendations, memoranda of understanding and declarations of intent. Their lack of binding obligation, however, does not automatically mean lack of legal impact. Recommendations, for example, may not be binding, but deliver a legal effect as an obligation for the member states to take them into account. (Lebessis & Paterson, 2000) This enables a situation, full of best-practice standards. It confronts local decision-makers with an attainable world of possibilities without forcing decisions upon them. (Eberlein & Kerwer, 2004) This enhances effectiveness, through a democratic environment and there is no trade-off between 'effective' and 'democratic' governance here. And European decision can only be effective as long as it is democratic. (Eberlein & Kerwer, 2004)

This EU governance literature thus I see as relevant, first of all, due to the shift of the nature of the state. EU softer methods of applying law are in line with the decentralization process of the post-communist Bulgaria. I find relevance, since the transition state needs to reform and decentralize processes and include "more roundabout" policy instruments that EU new modes of governance provide. It is due to their goal of enhancing effectiveness though democratic rule, that makes me see it as the necessary approach for Bulgaria. Therefore I expect to find application of EU governance in the Bulgarian member state as well. In order to check its existence in the Bulgarian administrative system, I will look for its methods in the state policy process. This I will do with the help of the EU promotion of stakeholder participation; EU best practice example; and non-binding policy tools that the section above explains. This means that I will look for the level of stakeholders' participation, in terms of actors involved in the policy process. I also want to see whether best practices examples are present, since as explained, they help better understand how to combat policy problems.

Non – binding policy tools will also be my focus, since I believe and as also mentioned above, they are the method of enhancing effectiveness, through democratic rule.

To sum up chapter findings, there are several main dimensions that affect performance. They include: output/productivity; employee satisfaction; service quality; and customer satisfaction. Training has an impact on all these dimensions. Through the usage of a number of literature viewpoints I prove the relationship between these performance factors. In the explication of this correlation I explicate also several limitations. They mainly address the inability to isolate external factors in measuring performance through training, as well as the lack of precise separate impact of generic and specialized trainings. In addition, a limitation in estimating performance through training results I find in the dependence of training effectiveness on the overall quality of the strategy. This is due to the fact that inadequate training may be because of weaknesses in the strategy and not the process itself.

This brings further the second theoretical point of constructing a training strategy. I do that in placing the process within the public sector context, where strategy represents a policy for execution. Here, I introduce policy implementation literature, since I would like too see the policy outcomes of delivery of training, or in other words – training policy implementation outcomes. I do that through combining training and policy implementation literature as a next step in building the theoretical model. Policy implementation is the process of carrying out policy goals. However, it can not exist separately from the policy design and policy assessment stages. Therefore I will take into account all three policy phases representing the overall policy cycle. Within the training context this cycle introduces training policy design, training policy implementation and training policy assessment stages.

In order to have a good policy process, however, it should follow certain standards. I derive these standards through the EU governance literature. I find it relevant, since it deals with the policy process and provides the manner of carrying it out. I find it necessary also due to the EU accession focus within which I put the problem investigation. Therefore, I aim to verify the convergence with EU guidelines. I derive these guidelines from EU governance literature. Thus I extract the methods that EC promotes for enabling an effective policy process. These include stakeholder participation, EU context/ best –practice application, and non – binding policy tools utilization.

In the end I come up with the theoretical model of the paper that should guide an effective training policy process. This model introduces training as a first main component. Then it unifies it with the policy implementation in building the training policy cycle. Finally it ends with the EU standards that should contribute to the effective execution of this training policy cycle. These three main literature perspectives I relate as interdependent in the current theoretical model. It results from introducing the concept of training and the way it helps increase organizational performance. Being a part of a strategy in this case, I put training within the policy implementation context, in order to come up with the public sector strategy of training policy implementation. This was relevant in order to have the framework that guides the successful provision of training. To this framework, representing a combination of training and policy implementation literatures, I add the EU standards. I assume those as relevant, since training policy implementation on organizational level should be in line with higher standards for effective execution. Within the EU context of public sector reform, those represent the EU standards I derived from the EU governance literature. I put those three main literatures together as visual cycle in Figure 1, demonstrating their interdependence for successful model execution.

Afterwards, I will apply this model in answering research sub-questions two, three and four. These are the questions that correspond to the three policy cycle phases. I have deliberately developed the model in the following way, so that the phases of the cycle match the research

sub-questions and thus help me derive findings in an adequate manner. This I will do through deriving certain indicators from the theoretical model that will address correspondingly each of the above mentioned research sub-questions. These indicators and their relation to questions two, three and four I explicate further in the next methodological chapter. There I operationalize the model in building the research approach and the specific manner of addressing each one of the research questions. I do that in a cross-check manner of applying the indicators of this effective training policy cycle to each one of the: EU and national policy design; organizational policy implementation; and organizational policy assessment. This is how I will make a consistent estimation of the top-down EU, national and organizational policy cycle with the theoretical training policy cycle.

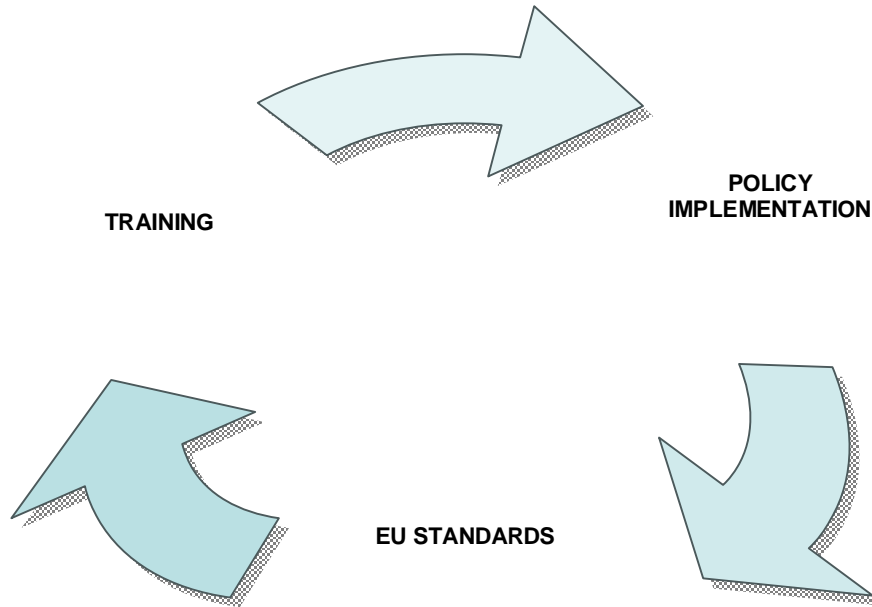


Figure 1 - Theoretical Model for an Effective Training Policy Cycle

CHAPTER III

Methodology

The theoretical model from the previous chapter I plan to use in building the methodological approach of the paper. This approach represents qualitative case study analysis on organizational level. I plan to analyze documents with secondary data for a specific time framework. Based on the EU accession reform process, I have chosen to investigate outcomes for the year of 2007. This is the first year of membership of Bulgaria in the EU and respectively the one that puts an end to the pre-accession period. I will do the estimation comparing organizational training results between 2006 and 2007. This comparison will rely on the usage of indicators I derive through the theoretical model. According to it, I will include indicators to analyze the quality of the training policy cycle, which formulate the training policy cycle indicators. Here, except for theory-based indicators, I will also support qualitative findings with statistical data about the organizational training outcomes from the years of 2006 and 2007. This will help see the numerical results from the training policy implementation input of the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance. The quantitative values I will select again from secondary sources. There will be also another set of indicators that will check also whether the training policy cycle is in line with the EU standards extracted from the EU governance literature. Their purpose is to check whether the methods for governing the policy cycle effectively are present in the policy documents I will use in the empirical analysis. All these I will apply in answering the research questions. For each one of them I provide an explanation of the way I am going to do it. Therefore, I include for each of the questions the necessary indicators, documents and application method that will help me derive findings to answer them.

3.1. Research Approach Overview

The methodological approach for investigating the problem is qualitative research analysis. It relies on methods for examining social research data, without converting them to a numerical format. More specifically, qualitative analysis refers to: "the nonnumerical examination and interpretation of observations, for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationship." (Babbie, 2007) I will also use a documentary analysis as a data collection method. It provides documentary evidences in different forms, ranging from official and private documents to personal letters and memos. (Grix, 2004) Thus the analysis includes evaluating secondary document sources, which is "interpretations of events by others". (Bell 1993:68, as quoted in Grix, 2004)

The secondary sources I will use will fit the time framework of the problem. This means that they will be the newest documents found that include qualitative information about the year of 2007. More specifically, for the actual comparison between 2006 and 2007, I will also rely on some statistical data. This means that in making this annual comparison, I will rely exclusively on numerical values, in order to estimate the level of change in outputs. This will help me support further the findings from the qualitative analysis of the documents. The qualitative findings I will derive through investigating the measures in the selected policy documents. I will elaborate the investigation with the help of research indicators I will develop from the theoretical model I built in the previous chapter.

In addition this model I will apply in answering the research sub-questions. I derived from it the training policy design, training policy implementation and training policy assessment phases of the whole training cycle. In the current methodological chapter I go on further in operationalizing these theoretical training policy cycle stages. I start by specifying more their representation in the organizational case study investigation. In other words, this means that

I translate the theoretical formulation into practical terms. I do that by setting a concrete organizational process for each of the training policy stages.

Thus, the training policy design phase now transforms into training need assessment. I have chosen it, based on the logic that policy design stage normally results from the identification of certain problems and/or necessities. Within the training perspective this will mean identifying problems and needs that provision of training will solve. Thus this initial stage of problem and necessity identification I take as policy design phase and name it further: (1) *training need assessment*.

The policy implementation stage deals with the actual conduct of events. In the training context this means the actual delivery of training. Therefore, I introduce (2) *provision of training* as a training policy implementation stage in the case study evaluation.

Afterwards I put policy assessment stage within the training organizational framework as well. The phase corresponds to the end result assessment, which here means training end results assessment. In the training context here, the policy assessment stage means (3) *training output assessment*.

I will relate certain indicators to these training stages and thus develop the methodological model of answering the research questions. I will deliver greater explication of the way I am going to apply these for each research question in the section below.

3.2. Manner of Addressing Research Sub-Questions

3.2.1. In order to deliver an answer to the first **research sub-question**, I will rely exclusively on the statistical data. I will use numerical values for the year of 2006 and compare to the same values for 2007. These values I will obtain again from secondary sources, different from the policy documents I have selected for answering the other research questions. This is necessary, since the numerical values I need are not included in those. I need quantitative outputs, in order to answer this question. I find them necessary, in order to verify the correspondence between qualitative measures and quantitative outputs of the organizational performance. In addition, I need to do that, since it was only since 2007, when the Ministry of Finance started elaborating internal HRM policy documents and annual activity plans. (I. Tzanicheva, personal communication, April 30th, 2008) This means that I can not rely on a qualitative comparison of policy documents between both years, but only on the numerical values of training results.

In terms of quantitative figures, I include here sub-dimensions for each of the three policy cycle stages. For the first one of training need assessment, I want to check how training need assessment has changed between 2006 and 2007. This will show the level of eventual improvement of the process in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance. So, the first indicators I introduce for that is:

- % change in assessment of the needs for training needs between 2006 and 2007

Afterwards I will assess values for the actual delivery of training stage. I will do it through estimation about the overall % change of training delivery between 2006 and 2007. More specifically, I would like to see the change of total output in provision of training in the organization. Out of this total value, I will also check what percentage of overall training results is enhancing generic skills and what amount - specialized ones. This I find relevant, in order to see whether there is a focus on both types of training, since I assume that both of them should be included. Therefore, the numerical values here represent the following figures:

- o % change in delivery of training between 2006 and 2007;
- o % change in generic training delivery between 2006 and 2007;
- o % change in specialized training delivery between 2006 and 2007

Final numerical values I will include deliver information about the training output assessment phase of the training policy cycle. Here I rely on the percentage change in the conduct of attestation for evaluating training outcomes and individual performance. This will help me estimate whether there is enough attention from the organization about this training process. However, I think that it is not only relevant to check whether training outcomes meet organizational goals. There should be a match between these goals and customer satisfaction. In this case it means citizen satisfaction from the delivery of public services. Therefore, I will include data for the quality level of public service delivery, and also about the percentage change in trust of citizens in public administration.

- o % change in the conduct of attestations between 2006 and 2007;
- o % change of satisfaction from public services of citizens between 2006 and 2007;
- o % change in trust of citizens in state administration between 2006 and 2007

<i>Training Policy Cycle Indicators</i>	Policy Design (Training Need Assessment)	Policy Implementation (Provision of Training)	Policy Assessment (Training Output Assessment)	Assessment Level in Total
Training – comparison of 2006 and 2007 statistical data about the result of measures (applicable for organizational data only)	% change in assessment of the needs for training needs between 2006 and 2007 (+ or –)	% change in delivery of training between 2006 and 2007; % change in generic training delivery between 2006 and 2007; % change in specialized training delivery between 2006 and 2007 (+ or –)	% change in the conduct of attestations between 2006 and 2007; % change of satisfaction from public services of citizens between 2006 and 2007; % change in trust of citizens in state administration between 2006 and 2007 (+ or –)	(– 3) – Very Poor (– 2) – Poor (– 1) – Insufficient (0) – Neutral (+1) – Good (+2) – Very Good (+3) – Excellent

Table 2 – Training Policy Cycle Statistical Indicators

For the statistical analysis of all three training policy stages I use a simple scale ranging from +3 to -3. I will estimate a total value for the whole cycle by checking all boxes with either + or -. However, for the boxes that include more than one sub-indicator, I will use an average value. For example, for training provision, I include the dimensions of “% change in delivery of training between 2006 and 2007”; “% change in generic training delivery between 2006 and 2007”; and “% change in specialized training delivery between 2006 and 2007”. Out of these three one may have a negative change, one positive and one no change. When summing them up: (-) + (+) + (0) =0, the overall result for this box and consequently process appears 0. This is the end value for the training provision stage that I will use in making the total sum for the whole training policy cycle. However, if I have +2/+3 or -2/-3 per specific stage and respectively box, I will just focus either on the positive or negative sign of the value. This is

due to the fact I am evaluating one process through several sub-indicators that represent parts of the total for the specific box. So, even if I have a value of +2, for example, I will just perceive as + as a total average value for process. This means that for the indicators/boxes with more dimensions I will perceive + and+ only for +; -and – only for -; and of course + and – for 0. This is relevant, since for each box/process I need to have the same basis for comparison. This means that I can not make an even estimation if for one box I can get most -, 0, or + and for another from -2/-3 up to +2/+3. So all boxes from this table in the end should have an end result of either -, 0 or + and nothing more. Then I will sum up the values (signs) from the three training policy stages, in order to get the total number for the whole training policy cycle. In other words, an example for the explanation can be the following, if we make an imaginary estimation for the values of the whole cycle:

<i>Training Policy Cycle Indicators</i>	Policy Design (Training Need Assessment)	Policy Implementation (Provision of Training)	Policy Assessment (Training Output Assessment)	Assessment Level in Total
Training – comparison of 2006 and 2007 statistical data about the result of measures (applicable for organizational data only)	% change in assessment of the needs for training needs between 2006 and 2007 (-) (-)	% change in delivery of training between 2006 and 2007; (+) % change in generic training delivery between 2006 and 2007; (-) % change in specialized training delivery between 2006 and 2007 (+) (+) + (-) + (+) = (+)	% change in the conduct of attestations between 2006 and 2007; (+) % change of satisfaction from public services of citizens between 2006 and 2007; (+) % change in trust of citizens in state administration between 2006 and 2007 (+) (+) + (+) + (+) = +3 – meaning in total: (+)	(-) + (+) + (+) = (+1) – Good

Table 3 – Assessment Level for Training Policy Cycle Statistical Indicators

For the next three research sub-questions, I will apply a top-down documentary analysis approach. This means that the documents I will assess will include EU reports, Bulgarian national documents and organizational documents of the Ministry of Finance. I selected all documents, in terms of the time framework of the analysis – the year of 2007. Due to this programme period, I select the newest possible documents, which match the requirement. In addition, some of the documents provide policy data in Bulgarian language that I have translated for the purpose of conducting the analysis. The complexity and the terminology of the texts did not cause difficulties for me in presenting the data in English language in the paper.

3.2.2. In answering the **second sub-question**, the documentary analysis will focus on evaluating secondary public policy documents of the European Union. Those will include reports for facilitating the accession process of Bulgaria to the European Community. The

main purpose of examining EU documents is to be able to see whether recommendations given by the European Commission are present in Bulgarian public documents. Moreover, I will evaluate their nature in terms of certain indicators as well, in order to check to what extent they match with the theory. So I will compare EU data to two sets of indicators I derived from the theoretical model. This means that I will use training policy cycle indicators and EU governance ones, in order to estimate the quality of EU policy design.

In trying to derive conclusion in this manner, I find it necessary to investigate the Complete Monitoring Report about the level of readiness of Bulgaria for European Union Membership – 2006. The report delivers feedback data, in terms of the progress in implementing EU requirements and recommendations. This means that the document itself has more reactive character. However, although being a response by nature, Bulgarian government members perceive it as further recommendations for development and thus I find it relevant to use it in the analysis. In addition, it is also necessary, due to the lack of access to original EC recommendation data.

The selected document also matches the time frame of investigation. Within the selected time period, it addresses EU conditionalities and negotiations data that is main influential factor for the Bulgarian administrative reform. These create the manner, in which structural changes should happen not only as recommended actions, but also as policy design.

That is why I will examine the information from the last pre-accession report, in order to estimate the quality and relevance of guidelines for executing the reform process in Bulgaria. However, the requirements in the document suggest more general formulation of measures. Due to that I think it is also relevant to address a particular EU policy document that discusses the issue of training. And since education and training are main subjects of the EU Lisbon Agenda, I will utilize the Draft 2006 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the “Education & Training 2010 work programme”. The document provides more concrete EU policy measures on training, which the member states should implement.

Furthermore I will apply indicators in analyzing the measures in the selected secondary documents. They will help me check the comprehension of the policy measure explication. Through investigating their formulation I would like to see the relationship between the encompassing data and the effectiveness of results. This is due to the fact that I assume that the more detailed the measure, the greater the chance for executing it effectively. First, however, following a step-step approach I am going to check whether necessary measures are there. In other words I will look for measures that introduce as objectives the stages of the training policy cycle. I expect to find explication of measures for: (1) training needs assessment; (2) provision of training; (3) training output assessment. This formulates the first indicator:

- General formulation of measures

It verifies the availability of generally formulated measures. They include mentioning the stages as goals for achievement. For example, general formulation for these three will be: “Regular assessment of training needs of civil servants”; “Conduct of training for increasing civil servants’ performance”; “Assessing performance results from provision of training”; or measures that imply similar broad meaning. These are exclusively valid for the evaluation of EU documents, since normally the policy objectives they present have broader formulation. In other words, a visual representation for evaluating these looks like this:

<i>Training Policy Cycle Indicators</i>	Policy Design (Training Need Assessment)	Policy Implementation (Provision of Training)	Policy Assessment (Training Output Assessment)	Assessment Level in Total
Training – general formulation of measures	(1) General formulation of measures for assessment of the needs for training (+ or –)	(2) General formulation of measures for delivery of training (+ or –)	(3) General formulation of measures for training output assessment (+ or –)	(– 3) – Very Poor (– 2) – Poor (– 1) – Insufficient (0) – Neutral (+1) – Good (+2) – Very Good (+3) – Excellent

Table 4 – Training Policy Cycle Indicators for EU documents

I will apply the same assessment manner as in addressing sub-question one. Here, however, there can not be more than one – or +, so making the total for the overall cycle will be easier. I will just sum up again all the signs for each of the three boxes and thus come up with the total value for the training policy cycle measure of EU documents.

In addition, besides training indicators, I will use another set of indicators, in terms of EU governance application. I will evaluate the application of EU standards, through the usage of indicators, based on the EU governance literature described in the Literature Review section. These will include: stakeholder participation; EU context / best practice application; and utilization of non-binding policy instruments; I have already emphasized as important there. In the other words, table 5 presents visually the indicators and their level of assessment I will use for the analysis section. Besides the difference of indicators formulation, the assessment manner stays the same as the one for the training policy cycle.

Indicators for EU governance application			Assessment Level in Total
Stakeholder participation – target group (civil servants), private sector, third parties; (+ or –)	EU context / best – practice application; (+ or –)	Application of non – binding policy instruments – guidelines, strategies, action plans, peer reviews, indicators and benchmarks; (+ or –)	(– 3) – Very Poor (– 2) – Poor (– 1) – Insufficient (0) – Neutral (+1) – Good (+2) – Very Good (+3) – Excellent

Table 5 – Indicators for EU governance application

Furthermore, second step in answering the second research question is to address Bulgarian public documents. This will help me see the manner in which EU objectives and recommendations for accession are translated on a national level. It will thus help examine how comprehensive was the process of grasping the essence of accession requirements. It will show whether there is clear understanding of the objectives by policy makers at the

policy formulation stage, and thus provide a solid ground for the successful implementation stage that follows.

Here the examination focuses on the relevance of national public documents with the training policy area in the public sector. Therefore, great focus I will put on: Republic of Bulgaria National Reform Programme, 2007 – 2009; and Strategy for training of civil servants, 2006 – 2009.

The first policy document was selected as relevant, due to its relation to the implementation of EU Lisbon Strategy. The document suggests measures for execution, in terms of the main areas of this strategic EU policy. Therefore, it will include significant data on the training measures that the Bulgarian government attempts to introduce on a national level for reaching the Lisbon objectives. Thus, measures should show consistence with the policy design of the “Education & Training 2010 work programme”, within the overall Lisbon Agenda.

The second public document investigation provides direct and thorough training measures that the government puts forward for implementation and further professionalization of Bulgarian public administration. This will give me the possibility to evaluate the adequacy and methodological content of the specific policy area and thus enable the basis for further transfer of objectives on organizational level. Therefore, it will address not only the relevance of government measures, but also the basis for their internal practical operationalization.

In evaluating national level documents, I will use again the approach of applying training policy cycle and EU governance indicators. This will result in analyzing policy objectives in Bulgarian public documents, in terms of consistence with these indicators. Here, however, I will go deeper in analyzing the measures. This means that I will not only check for the general formulation of measures, since going down from EU to national level, policies should start becoming more specific. This means that I expect to find not only the availability of policy measures in the Bulgarian documents. I will investigate also whether the policy documents provide explanations of the way these objectives should happen. Or in the other words, what is the method of achieving the goals. Due to the assumption mentioned above, I presume that when the manner of achieving the goal is explained more, it helps increase the effectiveness of results more. Therefore, there will be a second indicator I introduce here that aims at checking whether there are procedural details for attaining general measures. I refer to this indicator as:

- Specific formulation of measures

It will help understand the specific way to conduct training, as I see it not only as broad objectives, but also details on the way they will be carried out. This means that I expect to find specific participants, methods and targeted results. Furthermore, I also introduce here evaluation on both generic and specialized trainings. This aims to analyze whether both types of training are essential for the organization. It will help me evaluate whether there is application of measures for both types of training. I find it relevant, since relying only on generic training efforts may not be enough to increase civil servant qualification. On the other hand, conducting only specialized training may not be effective enough, without the broad-spectrum basis of the generic skills.

Consequently, I will consider measures as specific, if they include information for: the overall training stage; for generic and specialized trainings; or both. So, these are the two sub-dimensions of the second indicator. I am going to search for the overall process and both generic and specialized training details in the training need assessment and provision of training policy stages. For the policy output assessment stage, however, I will not make a distinction for generic and specialized trainings. This is due to the fact that delivery of training

should increase performance. In order to check the performance level, there should be an estimation of performance results. These are general performance outputs that I think the process of training assessment should not distinguish, in terms of general and special skills.

The visual representation of both indicators I provide again below. It shows the way I am going to estimate the general and/or broad formulation of measures in the national documents. The assessment level again stays the same.

<i>Training Policy Cycle Indicators</i>	Policy Design (Training Need Assessment)	Policy Implementation (Provision of Training)	Policy Assessment (Training Output Assessment)	Assessment Level in Total
Training – general formulation of measures	(1) General formulation of measures for assessment of the needs for training (+ or –)	(2) General formulation of measures for delivery of training (+ or –)	(3) General formulation of measures for training output assessment (+ or –)	(– 3) – Very Poor (– 2) – Poor (– 1) – Insufficient (0) – Neutral (+1) – Good (+2) – Very Good (+3) – Excellent
Training – specific formulation of measures (applicable for national and organizational data only)	(1) Specific measures for assessment of the needs for training: • about the overall process • about generic and specialized training (+ or –)	(2) Specific measures for delivery of training: • about the overall process • about generic and specialized training (+ or –)	(3) Specific formulation of measures for training output assessment: • about the overall process (+ or –)	(– 3) – Very Poor (– 2) – Poor (– 1) – Insufficient (0) – Neutral (+1) – Good (+2) – Very Good (+3) – Excellent

Table 6 – Training Policy Cycle Indicators for national documents

Furthermore, I will also check for the relevance between national policy objectives that the documents present with the EU standards. Therefore here I will apply as well the EU governance indicators. The indicators and assessment level are the same I will use for EU data assessment, so I will refer again to table 5 in developing the analysis.

3.2.3. The **third sub-question** relates to the evaluation of the policy implementation process. Thus I focus here on the practices that translate main national objectives into operational actions. I will need internal documents, in order to do that. Therefore I will assess here ministerial documents, and more specifically internal Human Resource Directorate sets of data. In doing so, I will evaluate whether the internal training implementation practices serve the purpose of achieving main EU and national goals. This will help me see further whether

internal training policy process contributes to the increase of training results and performance.

For deriving an answer to this question, I will examine the: “Strategy for Human Resource Development in the Ministry of Finance for the period of 2007 – 2011” and “Annual Plan for the activity of “Human Resource” Directorate for the year of 2007”.

The first document fits the time frame of the analysis as well, since 2007 is the first year of the programme period for implementation. In addition, I will examine the internal HRM strategy to check how its training measures translate into practice national training strategy objectives. This will provide the organizational focus, through which the ministry envisages to improve training results. I will check whether the measures in the organizational strategy encompass all the necessary training aspects, and thus creating a basis for effective implementation.

The second document matches the time period and is also an evidence of the way, in which organizational training goals are translated into specific activities for implementation. It will complete the top-down analysis section by showing the last level of objective operationalization. This will reveal whether there is a smooth prelude and correspondence of national training objectives and organizational training practices. It will help me derive conclusion about its quality and therefore effective achievement of training results. Again I will assess these, through the indicators in tables 5 and 6 and use the assessment level from table 3.

3.2.4. The **fourth sub-question** is addressing training policy assessment. Therefore, I focus on the way the Ministry of Finance applies qualified measures to verify progress. I do it again with the help of the same internal documents. It is because the question relates to the evaluation of training implementation of the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance. Here I put an emphasis on identifying measures about the manner of assessing and monitoring the implementation process. I will check for assessment practices for evaluating training results. In doing so, I will be able to see the capacity to evaluate those, in order to continue following and/or adjust the policy implementation process. I will rely on the same indicators from tables 5 and 6 in order to derive these conclusions for the internal training policy assessment stage.

To summarize, the chapter provides an approach that relies on qualitative research analysis mainly, as well as on some statistical data application. The data collection method will rely on documentary analysis of secondary sources, within the time framework of the year of 2007. I chose this time period, since it is the first year of EU membership, after the end of the pre-accession support.

The manner of addressing the research questions will start with the outcomes for the year of 2006, which is the first research question. It relies on application of statistical data and training policy cycle indicators. The second sub-question will address EU and national documents, through the usage of training policy cycle indicators and EU governance ones. These two sets of indicators I will apply in analyzing the next two research sub-questions as well. The third sub-question relates to training policy implementation and relies on organizational documents for verifying implementation quality of organizational training practices. The fourth question implies training policy assessment level, and also investigates internal documents, as a mean to trace assessment tools and techniques.

CHAPTER IV

Analysis and Discussion

Main purpose of the current chapter is to deliver empirical analysis, based on the data of the selected documents. This empirical analysis is going to include five main sections. The first section refers to the training policy design stage and will rely on the assessment of EU and national documents. They will be the basis for estimating the reliability of training measures, in terms of the training policy cycle and EU governance indicators.

The second part of the analysis will deal with policy implementation stage, for which I will evaluate organizational documents. Measures in these documents I will again compare to the two sets of research indicators.

The third section will deal with the policy assessment stage of the training policy cycle and will rely on the same evaluation manner as section two. This means again comparison of measures with research indicators.

I will assess all parts and their compliance with EU standards as well. This I will do by applying the specific indicators for EU governance application that table 5 provides.

In addition, I will also include a comparison of 2006 and 2007 statistical data, which represents the fourth section. This will show the percentage of change in numerical values of all quantitative sub-indicators included within the three policy stages of the cycle. It will result in the evaluation of consistency between both policy measures and research indicators. Also it will show the level of change in numerical terms between 2006 and 2007, as training results from the implementation of these measures.

Finally, I will complete the chapter with a discussion of empirical results. These I am going to present and interpret through the four research sub-question. I will thus analyze findings in delivering an answer to each one of them.

4.1. EU Documents

4.1.1. Complete Monitoring Report about the level of readiness of Bulgaria for European Union Membership – 2006

European Commission's Monitoring Report from 2006 delivers significant observations on the development of the key reform areas of Bulgaria's accession process. The document suggests a twofold importance for including it in the elaboration of the current section. First of all, as already explained in the previous chapter, it delivers conclusions on administrative reform progress. These government officials perceive as further objectives for improvement, and thus represent direct measures for execution as a following step. Second, the report delivers monitoring data about the last stage of the pre-accession period. This shows the general condition of the reform process at the end of the accession period on one hand, as well as the overall results from the year of 2006 on the other.

The transition state of Bulgaria and the lack of capacity in the public administration is a direct observation of the European Commission in its evaluation of the readiness of the state to join the EU. EC emphasizes the need for professionalization and modernization of Bulgaria's public administration throughout the negotiation and accession period and the focus on its improvement is also present in the current document. (COM, 2006) Strong administrative

capacity is among the main EU recommendations here, which illuminate its relation to the application of training. I conclude that, since in relation to this recommendation, there are positive observations on amendments of legislation for selection, recruitments and training principles. In addition, EC points out its approval on the updated Strategy for Civil Servant Training. However, progress is made, in terms of laws and strategies on training, but there is still a need for further improvement. This necessity for improvement makes me assume that it means the actual operationalization of laws and strategies on training.

Due to the general character of the report by nature, specific guidelines on the way to improve administrative capacity are not available. Namely, going even further, we can not expect to find here training objectives as means for enhancing this capacity. However, due to the assumption in the previous paragraph for greater progress, I can conclude that this is a generally formulated measure for further provision of training. Although having a general and reactive character, I perceive it as a recommendation, i.e. objective for further implementation, because it influences government reform decisions. The need for more detailed EU policy documents on training, however, made me include Lisbon Strategy policy document that delivers the necessary training measures.

4.1.2. Modernising education and training: a vital contribution to prosperity and social cohesion in Europe, Draft 2006 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the "Education & Training 2010 work programme"

Lisbon Strategy was adopted at the Lisbon European Council held in March 2000, when the Heads of State and Government acknowledged that *"the European Union is confronted with a quantum shift resulting from globalisation and the challenges of a new knowledge-driven economy"*. They set the Union a major strategic goal for 2010 *"to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion"*. It stressed that this would require not only a *"radical transformation of the European economy"*, but also a *"challenging programme for the modernisation of social welfare and education systems"*. This was the first time that the European Council acknowledged to this extent the role played by education and training systems. It emphasized it as main part of the economic and social strategy and the future of the Union. (COM, 2003)

In March 2001, the European Council adopted three strategic goals (and 13 associated concrete objectives) for attainment by 2010: education and training systems should be organised around quality, access, and openness to the world. A year later, it approved a detailed work programme ("Education & Training 2010") for the attainment of these goals and supported the ambition of the Ministers for Education to make education and training systems in Europe *"a worldwide quality reference by 2010"*. (COM, 2003)

The current document is an intermediate evaluation of implementation of the "Education and Training 2010" programme. This evaluation represents the first section of the document, and the second one provides training measures for further development.

According to the findings in the first section, *"efforts are being made in all the European countries to adapt the education and training systems to the knowledge-driven society and economy, but the reforms undertaken are not up to the challenges and their current pace will not enable the Union to attain the objectives set. A wake-up call is therefore essential at all levels if there is still to be a chance of making the Lisbon strategy a success."* (COM, 2003)

These observations show some concerns about the situation of the education and training systems in Europe and their structural imperfections. In order to support the efforts of the member states, the Commission proposes that future action should focus around the following four priority levers:

- concentrate reforms and investment on the key areas;
- make lifelong learning a concrete reality;
- establish at last a Europe of education and training;
- give "Education & Training 2010" its rightful place.

Ø Training Needs Assessment

This first priority lever emphasizes the reforms, in terms of key areas that need facilitation in each member state. This formulation makes me assume that the programme implies identification of these key areas first. Reflecting this assumption through the training research indicators, I conclude that this is a generally formulated measure for training need assessment stage. My assumption is based on the fact that the EU policy document stresses the necessity of concentrating on analysis of the most imperative areas for development. These should be identified first, which is why I relate it need assessment. In going further into the document, there is emphasis that supports this main assumption of training needs assessment in the following text: *"to review national policies in this area and define the most urgent areas for cooperation"* and *"in view of the situation and of the common objectives, each country should make known its national policy priorities on investment and reform in education and training, for the short and medium term, as well as the contribution to the attainment of the European objectives for 2010 it anticipates on this basis."* (COM, 2003)

This is the manner through which the Commission envisages the boost of education and training. It is consistent with the earlier claim that in order to have a comprehensive training delivery, the first stage of the strategy should include assessment of needs for training. The EU policy document includes this measure as first among the priority levers for enhancement. Thus there is not only promotion of the measure as a process, but also, it is in line with the sequence of the training policy cycle stages.

Also, the emphasis on the country-specific analysis of urgent training needs indirectly implies operationalization of the OMC mechanism. The nature of the policy area suggests non – binding character, which gives the freedom to member states to formulate their strategies for attainment of EU goals themselves. This is the moment also when the application of different tools, based on the preferences of member states, fosters combating policy problems and learning. Each member state should identify the key priority areas for interference, in accordance to the specific situation. Then, in terms of these conditions, they should define the policy tools that enable a successful match for improvement. In addition, the report points out that it *"requires structured and continuous cooperation to develop and make the best use of (human) resources and achieve maximum investment efficiency."* (COM, 2003) There should be appropriate combination of actors and techniques that enable good allocation of resources, through which there is secure and successful goal attainment. This also results in learning how to chose and operationalize modes of governance, in accordance to the EU OMC guidance. In addition, on a later stage, this also enhances the capacity to reflect on governance choices and make conclusions for policy area adjustments and/or further improvements.

Thus, I can conclude that in the current section there is an emphasis on the training need assessment process. The EC sees attaining this goal through the application of non – binding policy tools and certain actor constellation. These correspond to the stakeholder participation and non – binding policy tools utilization that the EU governance research indicators provide. Therefore I can conclude that the Commission emphasizes that the

training need assessment process should result from EU modes of governance application, which is in line with reasoning of the theoretical model as well.

Ø Training Delivery

The second priority lever of the document calls for comprehensive, coherent and concerted strategies that secure good implementation results. Based on the formulation of this strategic objective, it derives the assumption that the report steps further into the second stage of the training policy cycle – the actual delivery of training. According to the document: *“all countries should have defined a strategy ...involving all the actors concerned, as well as a coherent action plan for its implementation covering all the dimensions of the systems (be they formal or non-formal).”* The basis for the assumption of the consistence between this EU policy goal and the second training policy stage is based on the fact that it calls for the adequacy of education and training strategies. And strategies and action plans are normally the means for implementing strategic policy objectives, since they provide the measures for their actual operationalization in the achievement of goals. This means defined strategies and actions plans for the delivery of training, based on the key areas for the need of training, identified at the previous policy stage. In addition, the assumption for the implementation stage for delivery of training here applies the logic of EU OMC. According to this EU soft law application, implementation of EU objectives on national level is through national strategies and action plans utilization. The model shows flexibility in choosing the specific mix of policy tools and involvement of actors in the elaboration of measures, and thus these vary among different policy areas and member states.

Although, the member states may choose the policy mix that will make education and training foster, national strategies should rely on common European references and principles. According to the policy document, this is the precondition for effectiveness of strategies on national level and coherence at supranational level. They develop mutual trust among stakeholders and therefore increase reform progress. Some of them include: *“common principles for the validation of non-formal and informal learning; the definition of the key competences everyone must acquire and on which the successful outcome of any further learning depends; the definition of the competences and qualifications needed by teachers and trainers in order to fulfil their new roles; and the basic principles to be observed for good quality mobility.”*

Interpreted again through the EU governance indicators, the policy measure shows the application of EU standards, based on best-practice example that OMC enables. The formulation of strategies in education and training should be in line with best practices that EU introduces so that there can be consistence between national and EU objectives.

The fourth lever of the document emphasizes the way to improve this consistence, in making the programme a key element in the national training policy formulation. In this case, I assume again an application of EU standards, which I think is in line with the EU context indicator from table 3. The Commission emphasizes further this assumption through the need to rely on the OMC as a way to implement the process more effectively: *“In the future, it is essential to exploit the open method of coordination to the full in order to maximise “Education & Training 2010” effectiveness.”*

In addition, EU soft-law is present in the call for inclusion of actors from all levels, which will increase the productivity of the actions. The EU governance principle here relates to the participation of main stakeholders in the implementation process, in order to enhance effectiveness. This brings additional meaning to the analysis as the measure also implies the implementation stage of the policy process. In the current case this is the inclusion of all interested parties in the training policy implementation process, so that there can be high effectiveness of results.

Thus, measures for the implementation process develop further from having a consistent strategy, with reference to EU best-practice models, to assembly of stakeholders for boosting additionally the outcomes. All in all, the current section of the document provides the objective of training policy implementation or the actual delivery of training. As in the previous training need assessment part, EC here emphasizes that the techniques to do so rely on new modes of governance. This I conclude, since the text includes all three EU governance research indicators of: stakeholder participation; EU context and best – practice application and non – binding policy tools.

Ø Training Output Assessment

The next step of the policy process, and namely, the policy assessment stage, is also the one that follows next in the document. The report delivers information on the lack of relevant and comparable data for monitoring the progress of achieving the objectives set. This relates to the research indicator for training policy assessment. The way through which the document states that the monitoring process should improve, is through the elaboration and introduction of more qualified indicators for measuring progress. In the current case, this means that as a following step after the implementation process, there should be an estimation of the training policy developments. This should happen through adequate indicators that compare implementation results with preliminary set goals. Therefore, on a national level policy design, training policy strategies and actions plans should include assessment mechanisms. They should include relevant monitoring parameters and sufficient comparability of data, which I can classify also as non – binding policy tools.

When summing up the reflections of EU documents section, I can make several key points. In going through EU data and reflecting it through the research indicators, I find measures that promote training needs assessment. This is mainly through the identification of national key priority areas. The EC sees attaining this goal through the application of non – binding policy tools and certain actor constellation. The process then results in implementing measures for training delivery. The document illuminates it through the elaboration of strategies and action plans, which represent non-binding policy tools. It also provides implementation promotion through assembly of actors and European best-practice examples. In addition, there is emphasis on training assessment, through monitoring and qualified indicators. Assessment indicators should allow greater comparability and relevance of data, so that the monitoring process, i.e. training assessment can generate adequate evaluation outcomes. In addition, I think this also means relying on non-binding policy tools for achieving effective training policy assessment process.

In other words, this means that all indicators from the training policy cycle are present in the measures of the document. Furthermore, in the different stages that the document explains, there is an emphasis on the three main EU governance indicators too. There is a focus on them as methods for operationalizing the training policy cycle effectively. Or, putting results more clearly, the table below presents the visual summary, in terms of research indicators assessment of the EU section.

<i>Training Policy Cycle Indicators</i>	Policy Design (Training Need Assessment)	Policy Implementation (Provision of Training)	Policy Assessment (Training Output Assessment)	Assessment Level in Total
Training –	(1) General formulation of measures for	(2) General formulation of measures for	(3) General formulation of measures for	

general formulation of measures	assessment of the needs for training (+)	delivery of training (+)	output training assessment (+)	(+3) – Excellent
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Table 7 – EU data results from applying the indicators of the training policy cycle framework

The summary of included measures for EU soft law application suggests promotion of combined public-private efforts for better achievement of policy goals. In addition, the text stresses the importance of having EU reference in the national policy design, which enables the EU context and best – practices promotion. Furthermore, the coherent elaboration of strategies, application of action plans and sophistication of indicators testify for the availability of non-binding policy instruments inclusion.

Thus, according to the data, the documents demonstrate measures for stakeholder participation; measures for applying the EU context; and measures for non – binding policy instruments. Based on the EU governance indicators, this means that policy measures show excellent results, according to the assessment levels introduced. Or in other words, I present a visual summary of results below.

Indicators for EU governance application			Assessment Level in Total
Stakeholder participation – target group (civil servants), private sector, third parties; (+)	EU context / best – practice application; (+)	Application of non – binding policy instruments – guidelines, strategies, action plans, peer reviews, indicators and benchmarks; (+)	(+3) – Excellent

Table 8 – EU data result from utilizing indicators for EU governance application

4.2. National Documents

4.2.1. Republic of Bulgaria National Reform Programme, 2007 – 2009

The National Reform Programme (2007 - 2009) is main strategic document of the government of Republic of Bulgaria. Its goal is to systemize the efforts of the public administration, the non – governmental sector and the social partners of the Bulgarian economy. It aims at achieving high and stable pace of economic growth and increase of employment in the country. The programme has as a reference point the Integrated guidelines for growth and jobs, recommended by the European Council in the formulation of policies and measures for achieving the goals of the Lisbon Strategy. There are several main challenges according to the programme, in terms of the development of the national economy. As first main priority in horizontal aspect is the problem with the low administrative capacity in the public sector. Due to that the document includes specific governmental measures for its improvement. Among these main measures, the following represents means for improving performance, with regard to administrative capacity: *“improving the institutional capacity at all levels in order to efficiently formulate policies and to provide better administrative services.”*

Ø Training Needs Assessment

The document implies problem identification from assessing urgent key areas for enhancement. Due to that I find reference here with the need assessment on a policy design level. I think so, since through key problem areas identification it implies the process of training need assessment.

Ø Training Delivery

The document includes data that supports this assumption. It calls for enhancement of administrative capacity through training delivery as one of the means to improve institutional capacity. Furthermore, training is a way to upgrade the competences of civil servants, according to the document. This will help them implement better both the policies and the legal framework, as well as it will deliver qualified public services. On the basis of this formulation, it is logical that the measure implies training implementation for improving the capacity of civil servants to deliver performance. This calls for reference with the indicator that includes general measures for delivery of training. It thus enables consistence also with the second stage of the training policy cycle. The measure shows coherence with EU "Education and Training 2010" programme as well, which consequently results in reference with the European context. This testifies for the relevance with the EU governance indicator for the inclusion of EU context in national policies. Furthermore, there is EU soft-law application, expressed by the promotion of main stakeholders involvement for altering this priority area. This I assume on the basis of the conclusions which state that: "*various forms of public-private partnerships are not sufficient as common practices*" and "*the dialogue and the coordination with the socio-economic partners and the nongovernment sector are not sufficiently developed and efficient.*" (Agency for Economic Analyses and Forecasts, 2007, p. 105)

Ø Training Output Assessment

In addition, outlined as a problem is the lack of efficient system for monitoring of the implementation of strategies and legislation, in order to take timely measures for updating them. The report also suggests emphasis on the improvement of monitoring indicators for verifying the implementation process. Thus, the measure refers to the research indicator of policy assessment. This means that training delivery for improving capacity of civil servants should rely on specific monitoring comparison. This testifies also for the call of applying non – binding EU policy instruments, which is among the EU governance research indicators. Besides non-binding policy tools, the way monitoring should happen is through coordination between national, regional and local administrative levels. Thus, this should result in consultations with a wide range of interested institutions at national and regional level on the design, implementation and monitoring of implementation of policies.

According to the training policy cycle indicators, this document includes generally formulated measures for the execution of all three stages of training need assessment, training provision and training output assessment. This broad formulation, however, I can not necessarily classify as a weakness. This is due to the fact the policy document provides general data on most public reform processes and its goal is not to deliver specific formulation of measures for them. This means that within the training policy area, I should not expect to find further explication about methods for executing the training policy cycle. Therefore, I do not think that it is relevant to identify the lack of specific measures as weakness. In addition, I can also argue that in the current case, as more specific formulation about the training stages represent the inclusion of EU modes of governance methods. This is due to the fact the in the explication of training objectives I could find all three of the EU governance indicators. In that sense, it may be logical to perceive those as more specific means for conducting the training policy cycle.

4.2.2. Strategy for training of civil servants, 2006 – 2009

Ø Training Needs Assessment

When evaluating the strategy for assessing the needs for training, I find several measures promoting it in the document. First, one of the measures suggests updating the design and content of individual and annual plans for obligatory and specialized training. The improvement of these documents will provide more sophisticated data, in terms of estimating the need for training. As a result from it, there is going to be an overall improvement of training needs assessment process, as well as better planning for it. There is additional measure for a consistent process of executing the interdependent aspects of training need assessment.

In addition, another evidence for the coherent design of this policy stage is the measure that calls for the involvement of civil servants in the planning and conduct of training needs assessment. The measure is relevant, since the process relates civil servants as the main target group for training delivery. Thus their engagement in training needs assessment enable better match between the adequacy of information and the effectiveness of process execution.

Furthermore, this section also includes directly regular training needs assessment as measure. This, combined with the measures about the process that are listed above, create detailed training need assessment design. It comprises of: adequate data; planning enhancement; and decision-making; with the involvement of the main target group; within a timely manner of conduct. All these generate a basis for concluding that the process is well developed on a policy design level. It corresponds to all indicators for policy design stage of training need assessment. Thus it enables a basis for the effectiveness of the policy implementation stage of training delivery.

In addition, except for consistence with training policy cycle indicators, the measures of the process are also coherent with the EU governance framework. This I assume due to the fact the policy promotes inclusion of civil servants in the process. According to the indicators for EU governance, a main precondition for the effectiveness of the policy process is the involvement of main stakeholders in it.

Ø Training Delivery

When it comes to training delivery measures, first the document provides a general measure of elaboration of annual training plan. According to the formulation of the measure, the annual plan should include detailed explanation about the conduct of: obligatory and introductory trainings; training through supervision; self-training; specialized training; career development training; and change adaptation training.

This facilitates a first overall impression of good planning and design of the training policy implementation stage. The separate focus on the different types of training that are relevant in different situations makes it logical to assume that these distinctions should enable the effectiveness of the process. This is due to the fact that having several training categories results in a sophisticated estimation of the specific training necessities of each individual. Consequently, this categorization testifies for training delivery that relies on boosting individual performance and thus achieving greater productivity in collective terms as well. This calls for a comprehensive general formulation of the training delivery stage that is also consistent with the research indicators that address it.

- Generic Training

Except for the detailed categorization for individual training delivery, the document also includes specific measures for generic trainings. Measures for different types of generic training show correspondence both to the criteria for general and specific formulation. These include first of all an introductory training delivery for newly appointed civil servants. They aim at specialized preparation for working within the administrative structures and/or in terms of the specific positions. In addition, the document emphasizes also the delivery of generic training to civil servants, in terms of: leadership skills, management skills for organization and team work, negotiation skills, communication skills, conflict of interest avoidance and mitigation, anti – corruptive behavior. Those two represent a strong combination of initial training basis that will allow a better match between the administrative structure / position requirements. It also enables the overall professional manner of civil servants' performance. In addition, not only position – oriented and basic skill measures guarantee the effectiveness of the performance delivery. There is also a concentration on generic trainings, in terms of the EU context. It includes measures for preparation of civil servants for collaborating with EU administrations, which call for trainings, in terms of: EU funds, EU main languages, e-government, and informational technologies. Moreover, additional measure strengthens further the EU context, within which civil servants should execute their professional duties. This measure aims at the adaptation of skills and qualification in relation to the European standards for delivery of public services. Except for the greater consistence of the generic training delivery process, this also enables the application of EU soft – law approach. The assumption finds grounds on the fact that training delivery measures have relation with the European standards. This is additional precondition set for enabling the effectiveness of executing the training process.

- Specialized Training

The strategy also includes measures for the delivery of specialized training. As within the previous section, this one includes several objectives that represent a sophisticated approach for specialized training delivery. Those include first the general measure for improving professional performance through individual training and specialization. It promotes an approach for individual professional development of civil servants. It also implies that when necessary, civil servants will be able to undertake training, in order to improve their performance further. In addition, according to the document, civil servants will undertake training, in order to acquire additional knowledge and skills, as a consequence of change of the job descriptions. This suggests that there is a relation between specialized training delivery and the factors that enable its necessity. Thus, it implies that factors that enable the need for specialized training result consequently in measures for actual implementation. Therefore, the overall training delivery framework is more comprehensive and enables greater effectiveness of performance. This consistency develops further in the inclusion of the measure for delivery of training, due to introduction of new models and/or technologies. The strategy again envisages the factor of integration of new equipment and/or practices that enable the necessity of training civil servants to work with them, in order to match goals with performance. This, together with the other measures listed under this section; make me conclude that the implementation stage of specialized training delivery is also consistent with the research indicators. It provides a detailed and sophisticated training delivery design that secures the successful conduct of specialized training in the Bulgarian public administration.

Ø Training Output Assessment

Delivery of training, however, does not always guarantee correspondence between knowledge and skills and end results. In other words, it is not relevant to assume that training

should always result in higher performance. Or at least, there should be verification whether training resulted in greater effectiveness. That is why the document also provides measures for training assessment. As an initial step of the assessment process, the strategy suggests development of general standards for the necessary competencies in the administration as a good match between qualification and duties. The measure emphasizes also the necessity of those standards as a precondition for effective performance measurement. In other words, this means that comparison between standards and performance will facilitate objective attainment and effective evaluation of results. This goes further by the inclusion of measure for the introduction of clear rules for the contribution of civil servants in the training process. Those rules include pre-set targets that will help achieve greater relevance of the evaluation outcomes. The objectivity of assessment is also among the measures and calls for transparent methodology for overall training assessment. This methodology should help the objectivity of results and provide relevant data, in terms of effectiveness of outcomes.

Apart from the transparent methodology, the strategy also includes introduction of mechanism for assessing training results as part of the performance measurement. This enables further the sophistication of the assessment process – there is not only emphasis on assessment itself, but also on the methods of delivering it. And in terms of methods, the last measure of the section promotes attestations in accordance to pre-set quantitative and qualitative results. This enables the quality of comparison, in order to verify end results with preliminary set targets. In addition, this also enhances the objectivity of results evaluation and thus there is no room for manipulation of data.

All these prove that the section not only corresponds to the indicators for the third policy stage, but also provides for the sophisticated design for its execution. This is due to the fact that training output assessment provides not only general measures. It also promotes civil servants' inclusion, performance measurement and attestations techniques, assessment rules and methodology, as well as manner of comparing qualitative and quantitative results.

To sum up results from this section, national documents suggest a good overall training framework with sufficient amount and variety of measures for enhancing it. While the National Reform Programme includes more general formulation of measures, still it does not mean that it is poorly designed. The general measures for training need assessment, training delivery and assessment could be explained by the more general character of the document. It encompasses several key areas that need urgent improvement, so that is why there is more general formulation of training measures. On the overall, however, it includes all three training process stages that correspond to the training policy cycle indicators. It also promotes the application of EU modes of governance methods which correspond further to the EU governance indicators. These I also perceive as a more detailed explication on the methods of attaining main goals, due to the general character of the document.

The Strategy for Training of Civil Servants provides more detailed and consistent formulation of measures about all processes of training need assessment, training delivery and training output assessment. This not only corresponds to the general formulation of measures sections, but is also consistent with the section for specific measure formulation. It suggests both detailed measures for the overall process and for generic and specialized training delivery. In addition, it also provides sophisticated set of measures for the training assessment process. Thus, the overall conclusion calls for sophisticated overall training policy cycle process. This and the results from previous national document are outlined as a summary in table 9 below.

<i>Training <>Policy Cycle Interaction</i>	Policy Design (Training Need Assessment)	Policy Implementation (Provision of Training)	Policy Assessment (Training Output Assessment)	Assessment Level
Training – general formulation of measures	(1) General formulation of measures for assessment of the needs for training (+)	(2) General formulation of measures for delivery of training (+)	(3) General formulation of measures for training assessment – attestation for training and performance assessment (+)	(+ 3) – Excellent
Training – specific formulation of measures (applicable for national and organizational data only)	(1) Specific measures for assessment of the needs for training: • about the overall process (+) • about generic and specialized training (+)	(2) Specific measures for delivery of training: • about the overall process (+) • about generic and specialized training (+)	(3) Specific formulation of measures for training assessment – attestation for training and performance assessment: • about the overall process (+)	(+ 3) – Excellent

Table 9 – National data results from applying the indicators of the training policy cycle framework

In addition, in terms of EU soft law application, national documents have a good overall result as well. The National Programme includes in the measures the reference to the EU context, main stakeholder participation and application of indicators, which relate to non-binding policy instruments. These thus correspond to all three indicative values of the EU governance section.

The second document includes civil servants as a target group, which relates it for stakeholder participation indicator. In addition, it suggests application of indicators in the training assessment stage, so this also means relevance with the non – binding policy instruments as well.

Therefore, according to the manner of estimating results, in terms of the assessment level description, results show an excellent level of EU soft law application. This is due to the fact that all three indicative dimensions are present in the documents. In other words, the measures promote stakeholder participation; EU context application; and non – binding policy instruments utilization. In order to have a clearer picture, the summary of both documents soft law application results are presented in table 10.

Indicators for EU governance application			Assessment Level in Total
Stakeholder participation – target group (civil servants), private sector, third parties; (+)	EU context / best – practice application; (+)	Application of non – binding policy instruments – guidelines, strategies, action plans, peer reviews, indicators and benchmarks; (+)	(+3) – Excellent

Table 10 – National data result from utilizing indicators for EU governance application

4.3. Organizational Documents

4.3.1. Strategy for Human Resource Development in the Ministry of Finance for the period of 2007 – 2011

When going from national to organizational level, one can assume that training objectives should become more detailed, in terms of systematic application and environment-specific necessities. This is due to the fact that national level objectives are more general by nature, since they encompass applicability in the public administration as a whole. Different administrative structures should rely on these main objectives in the elaboration of more detailed and specific organizational ones. The HRM strategy of the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance, however, suggests very broad and vague measures, in terms of training.

Ø Training Need Assessment

According to training need assessment, the document suggests a measure to identify the necessities for development of civil servant in the ministry and to satisfy them as a priority. First of all the formulation of the measure do not include directly assessing the need for civil servant training. The interpretation do not allow for more than just assuming identification of civil servants necessities, meaning and/or including identification of training needs. Among the measures in the document, this is the only one that I can relate to assessment of training needs.

Ø Training Delivery

However, the following measure contributes to this assumption as well. The strategy suggests further the goal of organizing general and specific courses for effective training and development in accordance to the identified necessities. This corresponds to the second training policy stage for delivery of training. It aims at constant improvement of knowledge and skill for greater quality of public services and change adaptation. This is one of the main goals of the Ministry's organizational strategy, according to the document. The achievement of this goal also should rely on the creation of additional opportunities for development, self-improvement and accumulation of professional expertise and experience. It implies that the organization acknowledges the need for greater spectrum of training practice applications, so that it can enable the grounds for greater performance and organizational effectiveness.

The document does not suggest data on the way to deliver training and further specification about generic and specialized trainings is also missing. This calls for the general assumption that based on these broad measures, it is hard to imagine not only the way to deliver, but also to assess training.

Ø Training Output Assessment

And when it comes to training assessment, the document does not provide greater clarification as well. The way that the organizational strategy envisages to estimate training effectiveness is through checking whether there are: “developed competencies of the civil servants in accordance to the necessities of the overall modernization of the working processes in the conditions of Bulgaria’s membership to the EU”; and “improved level of professional skills in the Ministry of Finance.” (Ministry of Finance, 2007)

There is no data on what these competencies are and what will be the technique to measure them. There is also no information on the specific professional skills that the organization is aiming at. In addition, one can not find indicators for measuring those competencies and skills.

All these contribute to the conclusion that the training assessment design do not provide for the adequate effectiveness of results. If there is no clear assessment methodology, or rules, as well as, no indicators for measurement, then the process will most likely deliver poor results. This will not provide for either the objectivity or the effectiveness in evaluating training outcomes. In addition, it also allows manipulation of data, which can not result in opportunities for training strategy adjustment and/or improvement.

4.3.2. Annual Plan for the activity of “Human Resource” Directorate for the year of 2007

Ø Training Needs Assessment

When evaluating the measures that the annual plan of HR Directorate of Bulgarian Ministry of Finance suggest for training need assessment, I can not find more detailed information about the process again. The document includes similar general statement, as the one in HRM strategy of the ministry. The measure promotes definition of necessities for human resource management development of all departments. However, the current formulation again does not contribute to the better understanding of the way to implement it. In addition, there is no direct explication again that these HRM necessities represent or include training necessities. Therefore, I can only assume that there is a relation to training.

Ø Training Delivery

When it comes to the actual delivery of training, the annual activity plan suggests more detailed measures. There is greater amount of data, which allows evaluating the delivery of generic and specialized training for the year of 2007.

- Generic Training

Among the measures for generic training delivery, the document includes conduct of seminar on alternative methods of training. This implies that the ministry is striving for introduction of additional training techniques that will improve the training delivery and enable increase of performance and effectiveness. In addition, civil servants of the ministry can also rely on the seminar for acquiring presentation and communication skills. This means that the organization is trying to enhance some general professional skills that will help develop civil servants’ qualification.

Among the other generic training measures, I find the goal for developing programme for introductory training of newly appointed civil servants. This will enable the integration and professionalization of the new workforce members that join the ministry and thus contribute to their performance delivery. The basis for this assumption is due to the fact that

introductory training will introduce the specific standards and procedures that the ministry is following, as well as, the performance requirements that the organization promotes.

In addition, the ministry relies not only on the integration of civil servants to the organization and the organizational practices, but also on the integration among team members as well. This assumption is based on the measure that annual plan for 2007 includes conduct of teambuilding training. It implies an attempt for better collaboration between civil servants, which additionally contributes to higher performance and effectiveness of results.

- Specialized Training

In terms of specialized training delivery, the organization includes measures for two narrow seminars. These are results from the introduction of these new methods on the organization, and thus imply for adaptation to new models/change type of training. Except for these two seminars that represent a specialized training, there is no further data in the document.

Change adaptation was among the goals mentioned in the training delivery measures of the HRM strategy of the ministry and thus represents correspondence between both documents. This, however, calls for the assumption, that specialized trainings are subject to implementation only in the condition of new models introduction and adaptation to change. The assumption, though, demonstrates limited validity, since this may be the current necessity of the ministry for the year of 2007.

Ø Training Output Assessment

Training assessment measures and/or data are not available in the annual plan of the HR Directorate of the Ministry of Finance. The rather general and vague training assessment in the HRM organizational strategy results in the total absence of the process in the annual plan. There are no pre-set goals, in terms of results and no monitoring indicators. This means that training assessment will either not happen at all, or it will suggest a manipulated evaluation that will not deliver objective and effective assessment of outcomes.

4.4. Statistical Data Assessment

4.4.1. Percentage change in assessment of the needs for training needs between 2006 and 2007

The statistical values demonstrate a result of the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance for 2006 of 62% of training need assessment. The values for 2007 show a good increase with 14% that total in 76%. This means that the ministry has increased significantly the frequency of conduct of need assessment between both years. This enables more positive grounds for the adequacy of training delivery for the civil servants in the organization. (Ministry of State Administration and Administrative Reform, 2008)

4.4.2. Percentage change in delivery of training between 2006 and 2007

In terms of total delivery of training, the Ministry of Finance shows a drastic decrease of the number of trainings between 2006 and 2007. If the result for the year of 2006 is 546 trainings conducted, the ones that the organization executed in 2007 are only 20. In other words, this means the negative change of -96% of training delivery in 2007. (Ministry of State Administration and Administrative Reform, 2008)

4.4.3. Percentage change in generic training delivery between 2006 and 2007

When distributing this percentage among the delivery of generic and specialized trainings, the first category in 2006 suggest the conduct of 421 generic training. When comparing it to the 18 executed in 2007, this totals in – 95% of change between both years. (Ministry of State Administration and Administrative Reform, 2008)

4.4.4. Percentage change in specialized training delivery between 2006 and 2007

The negative trend of results follows also in the conduct of specialized training. If in 2006 they totaled in 124 trainings delivered, the ones for 2007 are only 2. In other words, this suggests a change of – 98% between both years. (Ministry of State Administration and Administrative Reform, 2008)

4.4.5. Percentage of change in the conduct of attestations between 2006 and 2007

When it comes to the change of attestation conduct, the number for 2006 results is 57%. The one for the year of 2007 shows an increase with 7%, or the total of 64%. This testifies for the positive trend of attestation conduct, which normally should enable better performance at measurement and training delivery decisions. In addition this should mean that there are more favorable conditions for training policy assessment, since attestations provide for checking the levels of training delivery effectiveness. This is due to the fact that they suggest assessing performance that has resulted from the conduct of training courses. (Ministry of State Administration and Administrative Reform, 2008)

4.4.6. Percentage change of satisfaction from public services of citizens between 2006 and 2007

Estimating the result from performance delivery, through the number of citizen satisfaction from public services, the values for 2006 suggest 61% of citizen satisfaction. When comparing it to the one in 2007, which totals 61.7%, it is obvious that there is no change between both years. This means that there is no improvement of public service delivery and that the performance of civil servants did not change significantly between both years. The component shows that citizens do not notice estimate an improvement in the performance of the organization between both years. This also creates doubts about the effectiveness of training delivery, since the goal of proving civil servants in the ministry with training courses, is to increase performance. (MBMD - Institute for Marketing and Social Research, 2008)

4.4.7. Percentage change in trust of citizens in state administration between 2006 and 2007

Evaluation of the last indicator shows generally low levels of trust of citizens in state administration. These poor results total in 42% for the year of 2006. Although, the year of 2007 promises better results, also due to joining the EU, trust levels have actually decreased significantly with 9% and total 33%. In other words, this means that state administration could not provide for the more positive attitude of citizens, but on the contrary – worsen results even more. (Alpha Research - Agency for Market and Social Research, 2008)

To summarize, organizational documents show on the overall general formulation of training need assessment, training delivery and training impact assessment processes. The HRM strategy of the ministry includes general measures, in terms of the all three training policy cycle indicators. The annual organizational plan, however, provides no data on training assessment stage. The plan, though, includes more information on the execution of generic and specialized trainings. This is the only section in the documents that has specific measures for the implementation stage of training delivery.

Furthermore, the analysis of the numerical values for the Ministry of Finance, in terms of the numerical indicators demonstrates several key points. Although the total number of training needs assessment and attestation has increased, it is not the same with training delivery. The fact finds grounds in the drastic decrease of training conduct between both years. There is also lack of change in civil servant performance in the Ministry of Finance, for which testifies the lack of change in citizens' satisfaction. In addition, most likely due to failure of the organization to provide better performance and public service delivery, the skepticism of citizens has increased, which is evident by the decline of their trust.

In other words, on the overall, the summary of results from organizational measures and statistical data assessment has the following visual representation:

<i>Training Policy Cycle Indicators</i>	Policy Design	Policy Implementation	Policy Assessment	Assessment Level
Training – general formulation of measures	(1) General formulation of measures for assessment of the needs for training (+)	(2) General formulation of measures for delivery of training (+)	(3) General formulation of measures for training assessment (+)	(+ 3) – Excellent
Training – specific formulation of measures (applicable for national and organizational data only)	(1) Specific measures for assessment of the needs for training: • about the overall process (–) • about generic and specialized training (–) (–)	(2) Specific measures for delivery of training: • about the overall process • about generic and specialized training (+) (+)	(3) Specific formulation of measures for training assessment • about the overall process (–) (–)	(– 1) – Insufficient
Training – comparison of 2006 and 2007 statistical data about the result of measures (applicable for organizational data only)	% change in assessment of the needs for training needs between 2006 and 2007 (+)	% change in delivery of training between 2006 and 2007; (–) % change in generic training delivery; (–) % change in specialized training delivery; (–)	% change in the conduct of attestations between 2006 and 2007; (+) % change of satisfaction from public services of citizens; (0) % change in trust of citizens in state administration; (–)	(0) – Neutral

	(+)	(-)	(0)	
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Table 11 – Organizational data results from applying indicators for the training policy cycle framework

In addition, the organizational data provide no application of EU modes of governance. This is due to the fact that none of the EU governance indicators were present in the formulation of measures, or in other words, the summary looks like this:

Indicators for EU governance application			Assessment Level in Total
Stakeholder participation – target group (civil servants), private sector, third parties; (+)	EU context / best – practice application; (+)	Application of non – binding policy instruments – guidelines, strategies, action plans, peer reviews, indicators and benchmarks; (+)	(- 3) – Very Poor

Table 12 – Organizational data result from utilizing indicators for EU governance application

4.5 Discussion of Results

After conducting the empirical analysis, through applying research indicators to the selected documents, I will analyze empirical findings, through the four research sub-questions. I will start with the first research sub-question, which answer relies on the numerical value analysis. This will outline the general training results for the base year of 2006. I will continue with the answer of the second sub-question, based on the EU and national document empirical findings of the analysis chapter. The application of the training policy cycle and EU governance indicators will thus reveal the EU measures for national objective attainment. Then the answer of the third sub-question will follow, again relying on the empirical findings. It will show the specific organizational operationalization of EU and national policy design. This will allow deriving conclusion on the effective integration of this policy design in organizational policy implementation. The final sub - research question will rely again on the previous findings. This will help deliver an overall answer about the conduct of training assessment, through specific measures, tools and techniques of the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance.

4.5.1. What are the training results from HRM training policy implementation within the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance for 2006?

The numerical value analysis from the previous chapter enables the conclusions about the training results for the year of 2006. It was only since 2007, when the Ministry of Finance started elaborating internal HRM policy documents and annual activity plans. (I. Tzanicheva, personal communication, April 30th, 2008). However, although not relying on strategic documents or action plans, the Ministry of Finance was able to deliver the good number of 546 trainings – 421 of those generic and 124 specialized. This shows that the organization focuses more on the delivery of generic trainings. In other words, the ministry relies on strategy for improving the professional profile of civil servants, in terms of general skills. However, about 1/3 of the total trainings are specialized, which combined with the generic ones, should enable a solid general basis with a good overall narrow specialization. The

decision-making of the current training delivery distribution is most likely based on the training need assessment process, which totals into 62%. The percentage level of training needs assessment demonstrates close numerical value with percentage of conduct of performance measurement and attestation – 57%. The numbers provide moderate results, since 60% out 100% is not too close to the top results.

When going further in evaluating the level of citizen satisfaction, numbers show that a little more than half of the citizens that relied on ministry's services were satisfied with the results. This does not show a high general quality of organizational public service delivery and the organization should invest more efforts in improving these numbers.

In addition, the level of trust of citizens in the organization is even lower, which is evident by the total of 42%. The attitude of the citizens towards the Ministry of Finance consequently has a moderate estimation about the overall organizational performance and effectiveness. This implies that there should be greater efforts for increasing the quality of service in the ministry.

4.5.2. What are the training guidelines that result from EU measures?

When applying the indicators to the policy documents in the empirical analysis, I could find what the training guidelines are. The training indicators demonstrated that the EU documents promote training policy cycle as a whole. Due to the findings from the analysis chapter, I could derive the conclusion that there is a good policy design of all stages of the policy cycle, and namely training need assessment, training delivery and training impact assessment.

The EU promotes identification of key priority areas in terms of training, as the first stage of needs assessment. Each member state should conduct this assessment, in terms of the specific country situation, and thus enable the following stage of implementation. The implementation stage should include measures that correspond to the identified needs from the previous stage. The design of policy implementation measures should be systematic as part of an overall strategy or an action plan, that integrates measures and means for achieving the goals for improving these key areas. The means to attain objectives should rely on reference to EU best – practices examples.

In addition, there is emphasis on training assessment, through monitoring and qualified indicators. Assessment indicators should allow greater comparability and relevance of data, so that the monitoring process, i.e. training assessment can generate adequate evaluation outcomes.

Indicators for EU governance application promote combined public-private efforts for better achievement of policy goals. In addition, there is an emphasis on the significance of having EU reference in the national policy design, which enables the EU context and best – practices application. Furthermore, the coherent elaboration of strategies, application of action plans and sophistication of indicators promote the usage non-binding policy instruments inclusion.

Thus EU requirements set as final targets for national training policy design promote a good policy cycle with the application of the principles of EU governance. They should result in the greater effectiveness on a national level training goals attainment. However, the EU policy design do not guarantee adequate application in the member states, and thus national training policy design was subject to assessment, in order to verify its comprehension.

National policy documents suggest a good overall training process with a variety of measures for enhancing it. The National Reform Programme includes more general formulation of measures, which however, do not mean that it is poorly design. The basis for

the broad measures formulation for training need assessment, training delivery and assessment can be due to the more general character of the document. However, it includes all three training policy stages that comply with the research indicators for this cycle. Therefore it testifies for the promotion of good training policy cycle on a national level as well.

The Strategy for Training of Civil Servants provides thorough and consistent design of measures about all processes of training need assessment, training delivery and training impact assessment. This not only corresponds to the general formulation of measures sections, but is also coherent with the section for specific measure formulation of the research indicators. It provides both detailed measures for the overall process and for generic and specialized training delivery. Furthermore, it also shows comprehensive set of measures for the training assessment process. This means that the each of the stages in the training policy cycle is explicated in a sophisticated way. This gives grounds for concluding that there will be also more sophisticated execution of each training policy phases, since guidelines explicate the manner to do it as well.

In addition, not only a good design with comprehensive measures for the training policy cycle is present. When I analyze the data from the documents, I find a good combination of EU soft law principles application as well. According to the indicators for that, the National Reform Programme includes all three EU governance indicators and the Strategy for Training of Civil Servants – two out of three. This means that the document of the government promotes stakeholder participation, EU context / best-practice application and usage of non-binding policy tools as means for effective administrative training execution.

All these result in the overall comprehensive policy design of the training policy areas, which implies positive consistence between EU and national policy design. This results in the general conclusion that final EU targets on a policy design level are met by the policy documents of the Bulgarian government. Therefore, EU and national level training policy guidelines promote good training policy cycle that relies on the application of EU governance principles. In order to check, however, the acknowledgement of the guidelines of this policy design, I deliver the results from the examination of organizational data.

4.5.3. How training guidelines transform further into organizational activities?

Although expecting more specific measures when going down from national to ministry level, organizational documents have on the overall a general formulation of measures. Training need assessment, training delivery and training impact assessment processes are highlighted through broad and vague measures definition. The annual plan suggests more specific information only on the execution of generic and specialized training. These result in a rather abstract policy implementation stage, since it does not include data how to conduct processes, in order to guarantee the effectiveness of results. This means that the organization do not include greater specification of organizational activity measures. Therefore I can assume that there is too much room for interpretation in the manner of achieving training goals. General policy implementation measures of the organization show no significant change in quantitative outcomes. The comparison of numerical values show that although the level of training need assessment has increased with 14% in 2007, it did not impact the same way the actual delivery of training. The drastic decline of conduct of training that totals in -96% support further this assumption. In addition, since the overall training rate has declined severely, this results consequently in a drastic decrease of both generic and specialized trainings. Respectively, the change in the generic training delivery results in the total of -95%, and the specialized one in -98%.

Therefore, on the overall, the organizational policy cycle provide broad training measures for 2007. Based on these I can not conclude that guidelines have transformed into more specific measures for training organizational activities. I can assume that due to that training delivery

results are lower. There may be a correlation between organizational HRM training objectives and the training outcomes for the specific year. This makes me assume that strategic policy documents do not contribute sufficiently to the HRM training process in the Ministry of Finance. It may also mean no adequate internal activities for operationalization of EU and national policy guidelines. This is due to general formulation of measures that the organizational documents include that I can not consider as more specific practices.

A reason for the lower quantitative values can also result from the lack of application of EU modes of governance. The measures of the internal documents demonstrate no EU soft law principles inclusion, as compared to the indicators set for this evaluation. Therefore, I assume that the lack of European context reference, within the European integration process, may add up further to the lack of improvement in outcomes.

4.5.4. How does the Ministry of Finance monitor the results from training activities?

Moderate specification of training organizational activities is followed further by weaknesses in the monitoring as well. When it comes to the application of tools and techniques to verify the progress of training activities, organizational documents show even less specification. There is broad formulation of training assessment, without explication on specific tools, techniques and indicators. Therefore, it is hard to guess how the Ministry of Finance conducts the process. In addition, the lack of grounds for comparability may result in misinterpretation of evaluation data. Consequently this can not result in adjustment and/or improvement of the HRM training policy cycle.

When it comes to numerical results I could find that training need assessment and conduct of attestations have increased. These measurements are basis for better training delivery. However, when referring it again to the lower results for conduct of training, it may mean unqualified data or no application of it. This makes the process of assessment show modest results. Probably as a result from that, there is no change of the quality of public service delivery. This I conclude from the lack of change in the percentage of citizen satisfaction between 2006 and 2007. The inability of the organization to improve internal performance most likely generates negative view of citizens towards the ministry. Most likely due to that the level of trust of citizens in the ministry, between the years of 2006 and 2007 lowered.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

The purpose of the current chapter is to provide a conclusion on the way the process of training has changed in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance for the year of 2007. The final conclusion I make from developing the analysis, thus, is the actual answer of the main research question. I do that through explicating further the discussion of training results I made in previous chapter. There I have analyzed findings through answering the four research sub-questions that guided the process of deriving the main conclusion. Here I provide the final remarks about the analysis results. I do that in summarizing empirical findings and interpreting them through the theoretical model that I developed in the Literature Review chapter. In addition, I also provide recommendations about further development. Due to limitations of the research approach, I include also recommendations about further research development. This I do in the final section of the chapter, along with my concluding statements.

5.1. How has the process of training within HRM policy implementation in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance changed in the year of 2007?

After discussing the results from the analysis, in terms of the four research sub-questions, it is also relevant to analyze data through the theoretical model. When comparing analysis results with the model I built in the Literature Review chapter, I can make for several assumptions. As I argued there, training should result in increase of performance. This means that if there is no change of training results between 2006 and 2007, there is no change of performance as well.

According to theory of human capital, training has an effect on organizational productivity. Or in other words, lack of increase of training results means lack of increase of productivity in the organization. This is what findings of the analysis imply, since in the literature review section, I claimed that there is a positive correlation between training and productivity levels.

This also makes me assume that due to the lack of change of training results, the satisfaction of employees in the organization did not increase too. It implies that training did not help civil servants in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance be more satisfied with their work and working environment, so that they can perform better. This may result also from the fact that if training increases qualification and career opportunities, the lack of it do not provide an influence on those. Consequently, if this is a precondition for individuals in the organization to feel more satisfied, it comes by no surprise that there is no impact on their level of satisfaction.

Furthermore, current training results do not provide for the conclusion of increased service quality. Since this is what should result from training provision, the lack of change in training means no sufficient improvement of service quality levels. This I also find valid, due to the fact that quality levels should be compared to certain standards, in order to verify its sufficiency. These standards should most of all match training efforts with strategic organizational goals. I believe that they represent the basic standards to increase service quality in the organization. However, as I could see from analyzing organizational policy documents, these standards are missing. Or if I assume that they are there, their formulation is too general to make adequate comparison with results and thus estimate quality levels.

This also means that the lack of significant change in all these dimensions can not result in customer satisfaction too. If I perceive them as factors that increase customer satisfaction,

insufficient change causes lack of improvement of it as well. It is also visible that this is so by analyzing the quantitative results for the level of citizen satisfaction and trust from the delivery of public services in the ministry.

Consequently this makes me assume that performance levels in the organization have not increased. This is what training results show, when interpreted through the theoretical perspective I have developed.

However, I have outlined also some limitations that the model suggests. Current insufficient change of training results, for example, may be due to the external factors that one can not isolate in measuring productivity levels. These external factors can influence either positively or negatively the impact of training, so this do not allow me to generate a definite conclusion that productivity levels stayed the same as a result from insufficient increase of training.

In addition, as claimed earlier, there can not be a precise estimation about the impact of generic and specialized training. In the current case investigation, I have come up with the results for execution of generic and specialized trainings in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance. This made me see that the organization relies on both of types of training, which I can consider a good precondition in executing the internal policy of the organization. However, current data do not allow me to go further in drawing conclusions about the effectiveness of the generic-specialized training combination on internal level. In other words, I can not estimate whether there is also an inadequate proportion in the delivery of generic and specialized trainings. In addition, since both types of training have at one and the same time special and generic elements in them, it is also not easy to estimate which one of both needs eventual further enhancement. This means that except for levels of change, I can not estimate whether the organization provides an adequate training mix, which I find a relevant factor too.

Furthermore, basing my arguments on theory again, I should pay attention to the fact that training can represent a strategy or part of a strategy. In the current analysis I investigate training results within the broader HRM strategy, or policy of the organization. This means that training is a part of a strategy in this case. As I claimed earlier, it may be due to some inadequacy in the overall strategy, that training results appear moderate. This means that the process itself may be effective, but placed within an overall HRM framework with weaknesses in the design and/or implementation, may obstacle its full effectiveness.

This is what I also observed when analyzing results from the policy cycle perspective. I could see weak elements in the training policy cycle of the organization, when analyzing the measures in its policy documents. What I found there is insufficient explication of training measure for all three stages, but most of all for training policy design and training policy assessment. The overall too general character of training measures I find insufficient, in order to achieve favorable results. This is due to the fact that as I claimed before, I believe that the more detailed and sophisticated the explication of measures and methods, the better the training output. In the current case I did not find sufficient description of training objectives and techniques to achieve them. This makes me think that it is due to this general character of policy goals explanation that prevented from a more significant increase of training results.

In addition to that, in the theoretical model I also include the availability of EU standards as a precondition for effectiveness of the overall cycle execution. I could not find even one out of the three indicators for the application of EU governance approach in the internal policy documents. The organizational policy suggests no stakeholder participation, no EU context / best practice example and no application of non-binding policy tools. It makes me assume that this is among the major drawbacks of the HRM training policy implementation of the organization. Since I find EU standards significant for delivering the adequate quality of

organizational training provision, lack of them is a main weakness of the overall strategy. I may go even further in concluding this is also the reason of the general formulation of training policy objectives on internal level. I assume it, since EU standards provide for methods and combinations of actors that should guide the training process. In that sense, these can represent the missing sophistication of organizational training policy cycle. Consequently it may be that it is not the training policy cycle in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance that is weak in general, but the lack of application of EU soft-law framework that creates obstacles for its effectiveness.

Therefore, in evaluating training results through theory, I generate a number of possible explanations for the lack of improvement of those in the ministry from 2006 to 2007. As main performance influential factor, training results here may mean no increase of productivity. These, however, can not eliminate external productivity factors and thus do not necessarily represent the only precondition for its level improvement. Lack of change can also result in insufficient employee satisfaction, since according to theory both are interdependent. Consequently this implies for moderate service quality and even customer satisfaction. These results may be so, due to weak training policy cycle process, for which internal policy documents testify. It is due to the general formulation of training objectives on internal level that make me think so. However, EU standards are the ones that should contribute exclusively to the process. They are missing in the policy documents of the organization, which generates assumptions that they are the actual major weakness of the internal training policy cycle.

To sum up, from the empirical analysis it turns out that on EU and national level, there is good training policy cycle, since it scores high, when compared to the indicators. The same training policy cycle, however, gets weaker when going down to organizational level. The Bulgarian Ministry of Finance does not include in the documents sophisticated training policy mechanisms that should guide effective accomplishment of results. I see that further when comparing 2006 and 2007 training results, which in total demonstrate no significant change. This can generally mean lack of effectiveness in the process that impedes generating progress. I can argue for that when comparing findings with the theoretical model of the paper.

Data on internal level suggest greater weaknesses in the policy design and policy assessment of the training policy cycle. Since I claim in the literature review that all three stages are interdependent in achieving overall effectiveness, it is natural that it impedes the policy implementation stage. This makes me suspect another problem that relate to policy acknowledgement in the organization. There is lack of recognition about the importance of the training policy implementation process, which may result from an ignorant manner of its execution. This implies also the general assumption that training policy implementation may be viewed as EU conditionality by the Ministry of Finance. There is an EU requirement to focus on the enhancement of the policy area and the organization replies to it with internal policy documents. The supranational requirements rely on strategies and action plans utilization and the Ministry of Finance starts introducing those on internal level. This is the eventual conclusion about the current acknowledgement of the organization for the HRM training implementation, according to the analysis. It is also supported by an assumption, based again on the training delivery numerical values. In the year of 2006, before joining the EU, Bulgaria was putting greater efforts to meet the EU requirements for accession. Therefore, the number of trainings in that year resulted in the total of 546. The next year, however, the country is already a member state and the results demonstrate conduct of only 20 trainings throughout the year. This may be a result from a behavior after the accession "stress" for meeting objectives has passed.

The comparison provides me with the general recommendation of relying on a more sophisticated training policy cycle. The Bulgarian Ministry of Finance should pay greater

attention on the consistency and methods of execution of each one of the training policy stages. More specifically, greater focus seems to be necessary in the training policy design and policy assessment phases. As a first step of doing that may be the inclusion of EU standards, such as stakeholder participation, best-practices examples and non-binding policy tools. These can make operational effectiveness of training improve and consequently lead to better performance. I base this recommendation on the conclusion that maybe EU standards are the major weakness of the overall strategy execution. This is due to the identification of their absence in the organizational documents. I call for this as a drawback, however, keeping in mind some research approach limitations. The current paper relied exclusively on qualitative research analysis. This research method included secondary sources as means for delivering empirical findings. The availability of these sources, however, was generally low, which made me operate with two main organizational documents. These provided significant information on the training input in the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance. However, availability of more internal data on the execution of training in the organization would have brought greater insight on the way this internal process actually took place. It could have brought more details on the specific organizational methods and techniques of training need assessment, training delivery and training output assessment. This makes me also find the application of other sources of information as more beneficial. There is lack of primary and more quantitative data that could bring greater validity to the conclusions for insufficient performance, due to moderate training results. I also acknowledge constraints in the fact that I also do not have data about the general trend of increase in different performance dimensions. In other words, I do not know what the average level of increase of performance indicators per year is and whether there is a constant annual enhancement of those. In addition, not only the lack of more sophisticated data collection is relevant to final judgments. Also, the lack of information on the internal training plan, in terms of time and frequency, constrain the conclusions too. This is due to the fact that the lower annual results for the year of 2007 may be result from extensive training provision efforts in 2006. Greater part of the training goals may have been accomplished in 2006, leaving a lot less objectives to achieve in 2007. Therefore, I can not definitely state, whether this means poor implementation of the organization.

Further research is needed in order to be able to confirm or reject this statement. Due to the usage of limited number of secondary data, the research shows constraints. Also, lack of field research utilization and primary data gathering is a limitation too. It prevents from making more precise estimation about the training input in the organization. It thus do not provide for drawing clearer picture on the specific pitfalls that need further improvement.

In addition, not only the lack of primary data generates constraints. Also, the lack of greater application of quantitative values is a weakness of the research as well. Though using some statistical data, it do not provide for more sophisticated quantitative analysis, which can enrich qualitative conclusions and make arguments more specific and explanatory.

Therefore, a future research on the matter should rely on including mainly primary and quantitative data, in order to increase the quality of the analysis and the validity of findings. This will further provide for drawing better conclusions on the level of organizational HRM training policy implementation, and potential means for improving it.

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