The American University in Cairo

School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP)

The Making of a Diplomat: the Selection and Recruitment Process in the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

A Thesis Submitted to

The Public Policy and Administration Department

In partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Public Policy and Administration (MPPA/GAPP)

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May 2012
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ABSTRACT

To what extent the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs utilizes effective recruitment and selection processes? And what can be done to improve on these processes?

One can recognize many issues standing in the way of promoting for diplomatic work such as the clear definition of the role of Egyptian foreign policy and the exact missions of the diplomatic body in light of the changes in Egyptian, Arab, African and Islamic political scenes. Another important issue is the Human Resource Management in the ministry. This research provides a guide on how to promote the Egyptian diplomatic body to be more able to handle the challenges of the New World order through a better selection and recruitment process

This Research intends to provide a guide for the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Post the January 25th Revolution) based on:

- Evaluating the Current recruitment and selection process.
- Deriving lessons learnt from the Turkish Experience
- Recommending ways for improving on the current system of recruitment and selection
The research started by analyzing current literature related to the topic. Specific arguments and ideas related to the reform of ministries of foreign affairs were highlighted. Preliminary investigation of the literature related to the management of ministries of foreign affairs revealed relative scarcity. The research adopted a case study approach where information was collected about the acquisition process within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs using various methods such as in-depth qualitative interviews with various stakeholders, investigation of published literature, reports, plus participant observation. The research, stressed on in-depth investigation with various stakeholders and purposive sampling instead of random sampling was used.

The study concluded that in the perfect sense, if the ministry functions properly, and decision making is made in a proper way, the quality of diplomats is of vital importance to rise up with Egypt in the international arena, but since the foreign policy was controlled by the presidential center, and the Supreme Council of Armed forces after the revolution, the ministry’s role is marginalized. Yet this study’s main objective is to provide a framework that could benefit Egypt post-revolution. Even if the ministry wont perform all its functions, a strong, creative, dynamic, and intellectual corps will surely improve the performance of one of the oldest diplomatic bodies in the world.
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I. INTRODUCTION, SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A. Introduction:

What qualities make a successful diplomat? Says Machiavelli: he must have "little regard for good faith and be able, by astuteness, to confuse men's brains and ultimately overcome those who have made loyalty their foundation."

A Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or a foreign ministry, is an entity which exists to help form the foreign policy of a sovereign state. The foreign minister is usually seen as the most senior ministerial position below that of the head of government or president, this of course depends on the political nature of the state. The role the ministry plays in shaping the foreign policy of a state depends firstly on the political system of the state. The term Foreign Ministry may change from state to state, for example the foreign ministry in India and Brazil is referred to as the Ministry for External Affairs or, in the United States of America it’s referred to as the State Department. (Hussein, 2011)

The power of the Foreign Ministry varies from government to government.. One can note that in classic parliamentary systems, the foreign minister by leading the ministry can potentially exert significant influence in shaping the foreign policy; on the other hand other governments with strong prime ministers may limit the impact of the foreign Ministry. Similarly Presidential governments with strong executive powers may limit the power of the foreign ministry but when the government is dominated by a strong prime minister the foreign minister may be limited to playing a more marginal or
subsidiary role in determining policy, yet this practice has decreased in most developed countries. (Blong, 1979)

Although an organization, or in this research the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is a legal entity, it ceases to exist if it has no people; a Minister, diplomats, and administrative staff whom all are required to maintain the entity’s existence. The ministry of Foreign Affairs should be the public entity in charge of directing the country’s Foreign Policy. Since this research is interested in the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it is important to understand its main role therefore differentiating and explaining Foreign policy making, Foreign Policy decision making, and foreign policy execution is should be highlighted. Figure below illustrates different foreign policy levels:
The first and broad level of a country’s Foreign policy is **Foreign Policy making**, it is the general framework of foreign relations, this include the general state’s goals, vision, and principles. The process of foreign policy making involves many stakeholders, such as public entities, power groups, and private networks. (Tohamy, 2010)

On the other hand foreign policy decision making is the identification of possible action alternatives to resolve a certain issue or situation. The core of the decision making process is based on the information collected by political entities in charge. The accuracy and efficiency of this process depends on the efficiency of the competent
entities involved in the process and the quality of the information these entities provide. (Tohamy, 2010)

Lastly, the foreign policy execution is the realization of policies and decision into the forms of applicable, programs, activities and mechanisms. (Tohamy, 2010)

Foreign policy decision making is a complex process that is controlled by many factors, which include:

a. Presidential group (Main notch)
b. Organizational and institutional factors
c. Domestic factors
d. International and regional factors

This is supposedly the ideal decision making process yet in Egypt the foreign policy could be described as the “leader staff” or the “presidential center”, where decision making in the hand of a sole person, that could take a decision without any interference or advice of any specialized institute, this type of system results that a country’s diplomacy to change into a person’s diplomacy, where foreign policy is vague, directly related to the leader and lacks institutionalization. (Tohamy, 2010).

After explaining different Foreign policy levels, all of which are important in shaping a country’s future, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs must be a strong apparatus inorder to carry those responsibilities, and as stated before all entities cease to exist without human resources, and this is the core if this study, the acquisition of entry level diplomats capable of serving a country’s foreign policy.
The Egyptian public sector may have lost some, not all, of its appeal in terms of employment, yet the Ministry of Foreign Affairs still attracts youth to apply for. This is obvious in the numbers of applicants to its entrance exam, which ranges according to previous Deputy Minister Hisham Badr between 500 and 1000 applicants for every entrance exam, which is usually held twice a year. This research is based on the assumption that the recognition of the human capital, and the acquisition of skilled, and reliable people who are skilled and motivated can make a significant difference to the country’s diplomatic apparatus. (Badr, 2008).

After the January 25th revolution, the calls for reform are rising all over public institutions, giving academics the chance to explore current deficiencies in public institutions and introduce solutions. A country’s foreign policy is a reflection of the country’s domestic policies. It was quite evident that over the past 30 years, Egypt has been losing its role in the region and the world. Several questions were raised on the reasons behind that regressive role, was it only the political will and the regime itself, or have the human capital also had an effect? A main assumption of the current research is that the quality of Human Capital within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was one of the many reasons behind the regressive role of Egypt over the past thirty years. Therefore, Human Capital will be the focus of this research. The research will examine the acquisition process, going through the whole process, to understand how acquisition of diplomats is performed. It is important in this research to examine the fairness of the process, after many incidents of rejecting applicants because of their social background, such as the case of the man who committed suicide after rejecting him because of his
father’s job and the other an Anas Islam who sued the ministry for rejecting him because of his leftist views. (Nafaa, 2011)

The rapid developments over the past years in the international arena compel foreign Ministries to confront a multitude of complex challenges. The Egyptian Foreign ministry must adapt to current changes Egypt are going through and to the significant changes in the Middle East, these changes highlight the importance of human resources as a key factor to meet the challenges of the future, necessitating a serious investment in Human Resources acquisition and Development.

This research is an analysis of the current recruitment and selection process in the Egyptian Ministry of foreign affairs, since Foreign Service is crucial especially in this rough patch Egypt is going through, a strong apparatus is required. The human capital is any organization’s main asset, therefore this thesis intends to provide a guide for the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Post the January 25th Revolution) based on:

- Evaluating the Current recruitment and selection process.
- Deriving lessons learnt from the International Experience
- Recommending ways for improving on the current acquisition system.

This thesis aims at designing a feasible framework for the selection and recruitment process in the ministry.
B. Significance of Research:

The Importance and Significance of the intended research is derived from the following:

1. Historically the existence of an independent governmental body that handles foreign affairs took place long before there was an Egyptian foreign policy and even before the establishment of a comprehensive Egyptian diplomatic body. It goes back to the age of Mohamed Ali, where the importance of building a Modern State demanded the existence of such body. Today in order to meet the goals of the Revolution a strong, efficient and effective Ministry of Foreign Affairs is highly needed; this will be among the first academic researchers conducted after the 25 January Revolution that provides guidance to enhancing the performance of the Ministry through focusing on the acquisition and selection process of its human capital.

2. The setback of Egyptian diplomacy goes back to many factors, including: flaws in the decision making process, an inefficient organizational structure, a vague definition of role and responsibilities of the Ministry and its connections with other governmental bodies, and most importantly the somewhat incapability and inefficiency of the Egyptian diplomats in many situations; a matter that can be rectified if we re-think the whole function of recruitment and selection adopted and implemented with the Ministry. Many believe that the setback in Egyptian diplomacy and counselor services goes back to the corruption in the recruitment and selection process, previous Foreign Minister Esmat Abd El Megeed, stated
that Egyptian diplomacy is not failing, but nepotism in the acquisition process, caused inefficient diplomats to join the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and therefore affected its performance. (Tharwat, 2009).

Also Diplomats have been criticized severely for their role with Egyptians abroad. Magdy Helmy recently wrote in Al Wafd that although Egypt has experienced a ground breaking revolution, the diplomats mentality remains the same, and the performance is still weak especially when dealing with Egyptians abroad, and that many issues related to Egyptians are still unresolved, such as the Egyptian prisoners abroad, and that unfortunately not all Egyptians are treated equally abroad. (Helmy, 2012). El Sheekh, also agreed and stated that the Foreign Ministry like most public institutions was not immune from the ground rooted corruption that prevails in the country, and that diplomats are not appointed according to merit but nepotism plays a major role in the acquisition process, therefore affecting its performance, since unqualified diplomats who lack the required skills are appointed. (El Sheekh, 2011).

3. The Turkish experience studied will highlight one of the most dynamic diplomacies in the world which will help analyze and come up with efficient recruitment and selection processes used in the Turkish diplomatic corps and benefit from this successful experience.

4. Foreign policy is an essential component of any state’s policy together with its traditional diplomatic and political functions, given that development policy is considered a key objective, A Ministry of Foreign Affairs participates in the country’s development by attracting foreign investment, economic assistance,
technology facilitation. That’s besides seeking to maintain strong bilateral and multilateral relationships by strengthening existing traditional relations, and seeking to build new relationships that could help a state influence and pursue its national interest all over the globe, therefore research in this governmental body in particular is very important and rare.

5. Although the diplomatic mission, who covers the participation in the country's foreign policy formulation and implementation, remains unchanged, diplomatic functions have become more diverse. In addition to the usual job functions (for example, compiling and evaluating available information, communication, negotiations and disputes resolutions, participation in multilateral institutions, and concern for economic development), currently a diplomat must also be an entrepreneur, manager and coordinator. That means that a different type of diplomat is needed. In this research, international experiences will be explored, and the current Egyptian acquisition system will be studied to try to figure out how best to acquire the needed new caliber of diplomats to be mandated with new roles and responsibilities.

6. After the revolution, Egyptians all over the globe expect more out of the Egyptian missions abroad. The masses in Egypt also interacts with Egyptians abroad and support them. Dynamic diplomats are essential to provide support to Egyptians abroad, and to adhere to the ambitions and demands of the Egyptians, who have changed after the revolution.
C. **Major Research Question:**

To what extent the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs utilizes effective recruitment and selection processes? And what can be done to improve on these processes?

D. **Investigative Research Questions:**

1. What is the link between recruitment and selection of human resources and organizational performance?
2. What are possible lessons learnt from other countries experiences in the recruitment and selection of human capital within their ministries of foreign affairs?
3. How is the recruitment and selection process practiced in the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign affairs?
4. What are the opinions, needs and expectations of different internal and external stakeholders groups regarding the recruitment and selection process at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs? Why is the entry exam of the ministry of foreign affairs criticized?
5. What lessons and recommendations could Egypt benefit from?
II. LITERATURE REVIEW

On reviewing the literature on recruitment and selection within foreign ministries, there is an evident limitation in academic articles, books and reports. The focus of research related to the foreign ministries is usually directed to the analysis of the political performance, neglecting the administrative side. Some of the literature was not directly related to the study, but to overcome such an obstacle, the literature on recruitment and selection, and studies of foreign ministries were revised, in order to grasp what and how other scholars studied the ministries of foreign affairs.

This chapter will only focus on literature related to recruitment and selection; it will discuss the meaning of recruitment and selection, the methods used and the selection of these methods. Literature on recruitment and selection methods used in foreign ministries won’t be part of the literature review, since they are not directly related to the case. The literature on foreign ministries would be treated as international experiences on which this study would use as a comparative base.

It is important through this chapter to build a solid understanding of the subject on hand; the study is about recruitment and selection of diplomats in the Egyptian foreign Ministry, and their effect on Foreign policy, therefore a clear understanding of the meaning of recruitment and selection and the methods and techniques used is inevitable.
A. Recruitment and Selection Process: Definition and Practices

- Recruitment

Cole (2002) states that the principal purpose of recruitment activities is to attract sufficient and suitable potential employees to apply for vacancies in the organization. The principal purpose of selection activities, by comparison, is to identify the most suitable applicants and persuade them to accept a position in the organization. The importance of having efficient and effective procedures for recruitment and selection can hardly be exaggerated. After reading many sources such as Cunningham-Snell (2005), Richardson, and Tixier (1996) on the definition of recruitment, it is now understood that recruitment is a continuous process whereby the organization attempts to develop a pool of qualified applicants for the human resources. The recruitment process starts when a there is a requisition for a specific vacancy, or an anticipated vacancy, and ends by creating the pool of applicants.

Recruitment is a different function than selection of candidates, where the recruitment function precedes the selection function; the recruitment function helps create a pool of prospective employees for the organization so that the management can select the right candidate for the right job from this pool. The main objective of the recruitment process is to expedite the selection process.

Torrington, Hall, and Taylor (2005), summarized recruitment into three types of needs: planned recruitment needs which arise from changes in organization and retirement policy; anticipated needs that cause movements in personnel, that an organization can predict by studying trends in internal and external environment, and unexpected needs
that are caused due to resignation, deaths, accidents, illness give rise to unexpected needs.

Tony Ward, a Professor in HR in the University of York demonstrated the main function of recruitment and selection and the relationship between both in Figure 1 below, this diagram shows how the acquisition process should be based on analysis of an organization needs.

![Figure 2: The Person and the Organization](image)

Source: (Ward, 2007)

- **Recruitment Methods**

The choice of methods of recruitment most frequently and most popularly vary between different organizations, some organizations use only one method, other uses a combination of methods. In a survey done by The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development in the UK on 557 UK based organization, the most frequent recruitment
methods were summed up, including, specialists journals, organizations website, recruitment agencies, national newspapers advertisements most of which are feasible in Egypt.

The most frequently used method according to the U.K. survey is advertising in local newspaper. The case is different in Egypt, Egypt doesn’t have any prominent local newspapers, and therefore national newspapers cover this method. In other words relating to the Egyptian case, only national newspapers would be used as a recruitment method. All of these methods are used in Egypt, and most of them are used by the Egyptian Foreign Ministry.
Selection

After generating a pool of applicants which is known as recruitment, comes the selection process. The section process can be described as either choosing the fit candidates, or rejecting the unfit candidates. This means that the recruitment process generates more candidates than those selected throughout the selection process. (Prasad, 2005, p.242).

According to Gupta (2006), selection is the process of choosing the most suitable persons out of all participants. Graham (1998) elaborated that throughout the selection process relevant information and knowledge of characteristics needed in the vacancy should be collected through various means.

In Anderson, N. & Cunningham-Snell, N. (2000), various methods of selection were described some all of which was found informative, and will help set a benchmark for comparison in this research, the most relevant to this study are:

Selection Methods

- Application forms and CVs are the most traditional method for selection in the public sector, where a fairly lengthy application form is filled. Application forms could facilitate short listing, therefore application forms used should address the really important areas to allow short listing, and for an efficient short listing to occur the application should reflect the characteristics needed in the vacancy, on the other hand CV’s are not commonly used in public sector, although more beneficial for applicant, its harder for the organization in short
Interviews and especially structured interviews are the most effective type of interview. The interview process is formed through identification of the key requirements of the job and a list of questions is drawn up. A panel of interviewers works through each set of questions with each candidate and scores them on their answers. At the end of the interview process the overall scores are considered and the best candidate chosen. If additional selection methods are chosen this is fed into the overall process at the end and again the best-fit candidate is offered the appointment. Members involved in the interview process should be trained in interviewing skills and the sorts of questions they should or should not ask. Interviews are used in the Foreign Ministry selection process, and applicants with the highest combined scored are selected for the vacancy. (Fahmy, 2012)

Psychometric testing is when a range of attributes are best tested through psychometric testing. This term is often confusing but in essence, means that a 'mental measure' is used. Therefore, psychometric testing covers ability testing, aptitude testing and personality profiling.

Presentations are frequently used as a selection tool, particularly in senior jobs. The applicant is provided with a topic and given a timeframe to deliver a presentation on that topic. This is actually a very effective form of selecting a suitable candidate, and through this research it will be asked if presentations are
used to test the ability of the candidate in elaborating their point of view in an efficient matter.

- **References** are also used as a selection method. Occasionally, unsatisfactory references may affect decisions to appoint individuals. In the case of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, each applicant must submit with his/her application form 2 references that mention that the applicant has good ethics. (Egyptian MFA website)

**Choosing Selection Method:**

After describing selection, and most common selection methods, literature on how to choose a method of selection was investigated. When determining which selection method is most appropriate, Chmiel, N. Ed(2000) explained that it is necessary to consider the requirements of the job, through analysis of the job/role description and person specification, and what skills, experience and aptitudes are being sought. Of course, more than one selection method may be appropriate for a particular job. Chmiel, N. Ed(2000) also emphasized the importance to evaluate the success of the selection method to ensure that it is effective. This can be done through seeking the views of candidates who have undertaken the selection process and/or analyzing recruitment statistics and turnover rates. It is also helpful to review the selection methods that were used the last time that the job was vacant and check that they are still relevant and useful to the current selection process, particularly if there have been changes to the job or a requirement for new skills.
**B. Conclusion:**

It is important to note during this study literature on recruitment and selection within ministries of foreign affairs were extremely limited, and literature on the recruitment and selection process within the Egyptian Foreign Ministry was not found. As stated before most scholars and academics study Foreign Ministries by evaluating their political impact, not the administrative side. It would have been beneficial to the study to learn from other scholars techniques when studying this subject, but unfortunately this wasn’t available, but on the other hand this gives this study an added value, where it is one of a few that goes into the acquisition process of a foreign ministry, and may be the first in Egypt to study this subject in particular.
III. INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

The need to recruit and select staff is universal but while this need may be universal the way in which it is done, the particular methods favored and their number may well be culture specific (Tayeb, 1995; Child, 1981; Hsu and Leat, 2000; Ryan et al., 1999). Far-reaching reforms in the public sector are widely spread across the world. Ministries of Foreign Affairs are within the organizations that are being reformed as it affirms the ministry’s central role in the process of renewing the whole public sector.

This chapter will cover a diverse number of experiences, both literatures discussing the ministries of foreign affairs will be highlighted and brief interviews conducted with Turkish diplomats will be highlighted. Countries discussed will be The United States of America, France, Italy, The Czech Republic, Ukraine and Turkey. The reason the study will discuss international experiences is to understand acquisition methods used worldwide, the choice of the countries though is based firstly on availability of literature and ability to conduct interviews and secondly on the significance these cases have on the research. The United States of America, is a leading developed country, understanding the acquisition process of a large diplomacy such as the U.S would surely benefit the study, the other developed countries such as France and Italy helps the researcher understand acquisition methods used in developed countries. Since Egypt is a developing country, developing countries must also be included, Ukraine and the Czech republic represent very interesting cases where both have been through dramatic political changes, and are both relatively new diplomacies, these are particularly interesting since Egypt is going through political change and knowing the acquisition methods used in countries in transition would surely enrich the study. Lastly Turkey a
rising diplomacy, with traditional and historical ties with Egypt, the similarities between the two countries compel the researcher to elaborate more on the Turkish model.

This chapter will depend on literature found which as stated before in extremely limited, limiting the researcher with certain countries, also the researcher was able to interview Turkish diplomats. The different international cases discussed in this chapter provide a rich foundation for the research to explore understand different acquisition methods used, which provides a comparative base for the research

A. United States of America: In 2007 the United States changed its entrance exam from an 8 hour exam to a 3 hour exam, it also starting conducting in different states, helping more applicants who weren’t able to take the exam in Washington D.C to take it, the United states have adopted in 2007 a “total candidate approach, which is a process which aims to recruit efficient and competitive smart and skilled Americans. The new hiring approach is faster Instead of taking an average of 14 months to hire for the Foreign Service, it aimed at cutting hiring times by half, to within seven months. The written exam is much shorter yet the new process retains the day-long oral examination aimed at checking out how well applicants can think on their feet, offer speedy solutions and know when to assert their leadership skills and when to blend in as team players. Admittance to the American Foreign Service starts with an online application form, with questions designed to cover personal characteristics and allows the candidate to elaborate on his/her experience, and a personal narrative is required to be written, and the screening process starts here, where not all applicants are invited to the written exam that precedes the oral examination. If an applicant passes the written test,
their scores, application and narrative are reviewed by a "qualifications evaluation panel." The panels, usually three Foreign Service officers, will determine which applicants are invited for the day-long, oral exam. (Palmero, 2007)

B. **Italy:** For example the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is implementing an ambitious reform process that will allow it to successfully meet the challenges facing the country. The reform process covers modernizing the structure of the ministry, getting rid of unnecessary red tape, providing better training for its staff, and becoming more customers oriented in its actions. In Italy it is believed that Italian diplomacy has lagged behind and the reform program focuses on a “New Italian Diplomat” where the reform program emphasized the need of the diplomats to become “both political analysts and economic/financial analysts, as well as human and material resource managers, organizers of cultural events, fund-raisers, crisis managers and skilled negotiators, persuasive speakers and effective communicators”. The reform program suggested acquiring this type of diplomat where the combination of quality, culture and technical know-how can be obtained not only through general education, but also through new selection criteria and better initial and in-service training. (Vattani, 2000):

C. **France:** According Lequesnea & Heilbronnb, (2012) an article that highlights the specificity of the recruitment of senior diplomats (Advisers) in France since 1970, this article studies different recruitment methods in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which unlike most diplomacy’s, diplomats may be exempt from the entrance exam, In France the idiosyncratic character of the French situation resides in the lack of a single examination. The diversity of ways by which a
senior diplomat can enter the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (FMFEA) leads to the coexistence within the ministry of two main groups — the ENA diplomats (that is, from the National School of Administration, the *Ecole Nationale d’Administration*) and the so-called “Orient diplomats” — each defending specific interests and roles within the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The name of Orient’s Adviser comes from their complete mastery of at least one specific language and are asked to sit for an extremely co The kind of entrance exam that you take still determines careers in the French MFA. Other diplomats are directly recruited to the FMFEA through a specific and highly competitive examination to become Foreign Affairs Orient’s Adviser. The name of Orient’s Adviser comes from their complete mastery of at least one oriental language, such as Hindi, Arabic, and Farsi, yet surprisingly German and Dutch are also characterized as oriental language. The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs like other French public entities is characterized by a duality, where the domination of one’s status does not guarantee exactly the same career track to people who are supposed to do the same work globally. The pillarization of the career has nevertheless decreased since the 1990s, because the necessity to cope with common external challenges (such as budgetary cuts) has reinforced a shared identity among French senior diplomats, yet there is a differentiation between the two groups of diplomats. Those who come from the ENA are more privileged, and are promoted faster than those who enter through the competitive entrance exam set by FMFEA.
D. **Ukraine:** The literature included Ukraine as it is a very interesting case, Biberman (2011) studied the recruitment policies after the collapse of the Soviet Union. It elaborates on the divergence away from the communist’s government and the rise of pro-western or anti-Russian ideologies, and their impact on recruitment policies. In Ukraine the recruitment methods were completely different than most cases, since it’s a new diplomacy that grew at an unprecedented pace in the 1990s necessitated an approach to hiring that was both creative and pragmatic. The ministry first turned to its existing diplomats and to nationals living abroad, especially in Russia, who had diplomatic experience. In the early 1990s, about 20 percent of the recruits of the Foreign Ministry came from the former Soviet government. The ministry then turned to the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, recruiting accomplished scholars in various disciplines from history to chemistry who had foreign language skills. These individuals were attracted to diplomatic service by the prospects of traveling abroad and career advancement. About 30 percent of Ukraine’s diplomats in the 1990s were recruited from the Academy of Sciences. For its lower- and entry-level positions, the ministry hired massive numbers of young people. (Biberman, 2011). What the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry was looking for was Diplomats that possess the knowledge of foreign languages and an ability to communicate fluently in Ukrainian. The candidates were only tested to gauge their Ukrainian language proficiency, since it was very hard to find applicants with a strong command in the Ukrainian language, where the Russian language was most dominant. Of course applicants must have a good educational background, yet mainly the main criterion of selection was the proficiency of the
Ukrainian language, this was especially done in entry level vacancies, whereas top officials were selected as described previously.

E. **Czech Republic:** Another case that literature went through was the Czech Case after the collapse of communism through its entry into the European Union. In Murphy (2008) the author goes through the administrative change in the Foreign ministry, and especially the most immediate issue facing the MFA dealt with the personnel of the department. This case was interesting since in Egypt, after January 25th revolution calls for eliminating all officials who served under the former regime were raised, many believe that diplomats that served before the revolution, are corrupt and their loyalty is to the former regime, quite similar to the Czech case, where communists were eliminated, of course they had to maintain some of them yet many of them were let go. Once the immediate personnel shortages had been overcome, the Czech MFA organized annual competitions to develop a career diplomatic staff. This was initially developed by an external company and involved linguistic, analytical, and mental exercises. Since 1997, the newly opened Diplomatic Academy (DA) has organized a three-stage competitive examination for entrance into the ministry. In its annual report, the MFA claims that a strict standardized selection procedure has become an institutional priority. Over 2,000 people participated in the examinations in 2000, 650 in 2001, and over 900 in 2002. On average, thirty-five to fifty people are selected by the ministry. The report noted that “the first and crucial requirement is to raise the standard of language proficiency,” and the minimum requirement is knowledge of two foreign languages, one of which must be English.
F. Turkey: The understanding of the Turkish diplomacy, and the entry level acquisition process was important to the researcher to understand the case of an emerging diplomacy, learn from it and analyze recommendations that could be applied in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry. Admittance to the Public service in Turkey is done through an exam. Each ministry requires a certain score, Foreign Service is the highest requiring above 90 to apply, and the Ministry of foreign trade comes next. All ministries hold examinations, yet the ministry of foreign affairs is the most vigorous. The Nationwide exam is a multiple choice exam for the admittance to Turkish public sector, and is designed to examine the applicant’s knowledge in different fields. Each Turkish ministry requires a certain score to allow applicants to sit for their exam; all Turkish ministries require exams for admittance. After the Nationwide exam comes the Foreign Ministries multiple choice exam, this is a new exam designed in 2007, since before that date only graduates of Economics, Political sciences and law were allowed to apply, but since in 2007 it was opened to all majors this exam was added. It is a multiple choice exam designed to evaluate basic knowledge of important economic, political and law issues.

After the Multiple choice exams, those who pass this exam are required to take the written exams, the first one is a three hour exam in Turkish, the applicant is asked to analyze a certain emerging issue in the international political scene, and this exam is designed to evaluate the analytical skills of the applicant. An applicant doesn’t sit for a Turkish exam, where the first analytical exam is enough to evaluate the applicants Turkish language skills, yet it has been emphasized by interviewees the importance of the diplomats having a strong Turkish language. The first written exam is followed by two exams on two different languages, one
of which must be English. This is also a new addition to the diplomatic admittance, previously a diplomat was allowed with only one foreign language, today English is a must and fluency in a third language is required, of course certain languages which are scarce are given priority. Applicants who have taken language exams could provide their scores and be exempt from the ministry’s exam which is said to be extremely hard. The oral exam main reason is to check the applicants appearance, presentation skills, and social skills, the applicant is not tested on knowledge where he/she was already tested on in previous exams, instead an applicant chooses questions from a certain category and is asked to present his/her answer. The exam is held by a panel including highest ranking ambassadors, it is headed by the under secretary, but also outsiders are in the panel as well, professionals in different fields are there to evaluate the applicant.

The last stage of screening applicants is the diplomatic academy, applicants who make it to this stage, join the academy for 6 months where they are trained in different aspects of Foreign Service, the selection process continues to this stage, applicants who don’t perform well enough are eliminated and are not admitted to the service.

The Turkish foreign ministry sets a criteria of selection, and evaluates its needs, for example if it needs more law students, it will design recruitment methods to attract those students, such as going to law colleges and attracting these students to apply.
Concluding this chapter on international experiences, one can recognize that most cases reviewed include examinations in their acquisition process. A point of interest in the American case was the descriptive application, where the screening process starts in the application, not all applicants are asked to sit for the exam. This is an interesting screening process, usually used in the private sector; this would also ensure that the applicants are actually serious about the job, hence minimizing cost and time by avoiding screening unfit candidates.

The French case highlights a different acquisition process, some diplomats are admitted to the service by attending ENA previous to their foreign service, and others are admitted through a competitive examination. The idea of having schools specialized in creating public servants is very interesting.

The Italian case like other diplomacies realized the importance of the quality of diplomats in affecting a country’s foreign policy; it has emphasized reform in this aspect to create a better, efficient ministry.

The Ukrainian and Czech cases are very interesting, they are both developing countries, both countries have been through political upsets and dramatic political changes, what was interesting were the revolutionary actions taken. Where diplomats with communist views who were unwilling to change where let go, of course they had to maintain some diplomats in order for the corps to survive, but with time the acquisition process was modified to better match the new political environment.

Lastly the Turkish case is considered beneficial to this research given the similarities between the two countries, Turkey has embarked on reform with the rise of AKP to power, and so is expected from Egypt after January 25th revolution. The new diplomatic
law enforced in Turkey and the vigorous yet flexible acquisition process has improved the quality of diplomats and hence its foreign policy. (Falk, 2011).
IV. **THE CASE OF EGYPT: THE EGYPTIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Since this research is an analysis of the current recruitment and selection process in the Egyptian Ministry of foreign affairs, and Foreign Service is crucial especially in this rough patch Egypt is going through, a strong apparatus is required. This thesis aims at designing a feasible framework for the selection and recruitment process in the ministry, so in order to design the framework a deeper understanding of the ministry so required. This chapter will go over the history of the ministry building knowledge on the foundations of the entity, later development in the organizational structure will be discussed, the chapter will then discuss the major reform attempts within the ministry, clarifying the role expected from the ministry, lastly foreign policy in Egypt would be explained, in attempt to understand the role of the ministry in designing foreign policy. This would help the researcher understand the weight that falls on diplomats, and their impact on foreign policy by understanding the role the Egyptian Foreign Ministry has in shaping foreign policy.

A. **Background Information:**

Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was established earlier than other state ministries, the establishment of this entity goes back to the early nineteenth century with the beginnings of the rule of Mohamed Ali and his attempts to build a modern state influenced by foreign- administrative divisions and influenced especially by Napoleon. The ministry back then was not an integrated enterprise in the modern sense of the word, but was just one of the divans (Arabic word used to refer at that time to a government organization), founded by Muhammad Ali to regulate governments
relationships internally and externally, and was primarily concerned with affairs relating to the trade and sales. (Maarefa, 2012)

From 1822 up till 1895, during Khedive Saeed and Khedive Ismail’s era the ministry continued to operate without major modifications where its main functions were trade relations, preventing slavery and following up on international treaties. The large European presence affected the ministry organization, and till the late nineteenth century Armenians were in control of the ministry in Egypt. (Maarefa, 2012)

The Egyptian state governance changed in 1878 due to European pressure and the ministry’s power was reduced. Boutrous-Ghali Pasha was appointed minister, and up till this day he is considered the minister with the longest period of stay in power (1894-1910). (Maarefa, 2012)

With the First World War, and the abolition of Ottoman sovereignty over Egypt and the imposition of British protection in late 1914, The ministry was cancelled since it was a sign of Egyptian sovereignty, and was not re-established in the modern form until March 15, 1922, with Reconstruction and the establishment of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry after simple being an "Office of Trade and foreign affairs" which was established to serve a few purposes. (Maarefa, 2012)

With Ahmed Heshmat Pasha in 1925 heading the ministry, Egypt started sending diplomatic envoys abroad, at the Ministry took Al Bustan Palace in Bab al-Louk Cairo, as the headquarters of the ministry and this was the first official premises of the ministry. Heshmat Pasha managed to establish the ministry in its modern sense by creating four major departments which were the Office of the Minister, Department for
Political Affairs and Trade, Department for Consular Affairs in addition to the management of administrative affairs, and the first decree managing the consular and political functions was established in 1925. Also issued the first decree of a special system Consular in 1925 as well as the Decree on the system of political functions. (Maarefa, 2012)

The British colonialism approved at that time the creation of the ministry, but has put some reservations regarding the level of diplomatic representation of Egypt, where the level of representation was limited to the level of "Minister Plenipotentiary" or "Certified political title of minister." It was also difficult for Egypt to join the League of Nations at the time of colonialism. Yet after the 1936 Treaty, Egypt was able to raise diplomatic representation to the same degree of representation of an Egyptian diplomat in London, Britain also recognized in this treaty the right of Egypt join the League of Nations, which widened Egyptian diplomacy and introduced it to multilateral relationships. (Maarefa, 2012)

The July 1952 Revolution caused radical transformations in the organizational structure of the Ministry in order to keep pace with major changes in the international arena in this period. It also had the greatest impact in the development of the foundation stone for the organization of work of Egyptian diplomat so far: In September 21, 1955, Act 453 on the duties of the ministry in implementing the foreign policy of Egypt and all matters relating to the relations of Egypt with foreign governments and international organizations was issued, including information you want from a competent and studies international relations of Egypt. (Maarefa, 2012).
B. Development in The Organizational Structure:

In 1979, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs decided to organize the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in order to adapt to the requirements of the post-peace process. The following year, Foreign Minister Kamal Hassan Ali, implemented the reorganization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to improve the efficiency within the ministry and the reorganization focused on enhancing the performance of the diplomatic institute in order to create better diplomats. (Maarefa, 2012)

Following the period when President Hosni Mubarak came to power in 1981; the ministry has been through major restructuring. The law of diplomatic and consular corps was issued for the first time in nearly 30 years, Act No. 45 of 1982 is the diplomatic corps and consular corps and was designed in order to adapt to the wide range of diplomatic and consular relations of Egypt, and the Vienna Conventions on diplomatic and consular relations, which Egypt had joined in the early sixties. (Maarefa, 2012)

With the early nineties, there has been a restructuring of the work of an Egyptian diplomat. it was affected by the new international climate, such as the end of Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, which called attention to the development of an entity able to keep up with changes in the international and regional arena, the technological and information revolution, the growing phenomenon of international
blocs, emergence of the role of organizations non-governmental organizations in international relations as well as the rise of the phenomenon of economic globalization. the regulatory process, focused on update the decision-making process of foreign policy and strengthen the capacity of diplomats in the various areas of diplomatic work.
(Maarefa, 2012)

This is reflected in the structure of organizational development work in the ministry on the following:

1 - The establishment of departments to deal with priority issues on the international scene. Such as departments dealing with new emerging issues such as the arms race, development and human rights, the environment and non-alignment in addition to the departments for dealing with the United Nations, both through its various organs or branches and affiliated organizations.

2 - Cooperation with other state agencies in the framework of a new form of collective action to mix the practice applied to diplomats and academic knowledge from outside the ministry.

3 - Development of the Institute of Diplomatic Studies in order to train and prepare diplomats and the diplomatic work of rehabilitation.

4 - To achieve greater specialization in the department based on the geographical division, and each division to be headed by an Assistant Secretary of degree.

(Maarefa, 2012)
The Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been through a series of reforms starting from 1955, after the revolution of 1952, and is still ongoing. The human resource factor was always a center of these reform programs but only in 1972, after Sadat coming to power profound reform has occurred in Egyptian foreign policy, starting in the ministerial bodies, the working procedures, and for the first time reform of the rules and regulations affecting human resources. The new then rules and regulations covered recruitment, promotion and transferring of diplomats. This reform also included training of employees, and by giving these bodies larger authority such as the Diplomatic Institute. (Awda, 2002).

Most of reform attempts were in the organizational structure of the Ministry, creating new departments, merging them, enlarging them, and creating departments whenever there is a need. The idea behind these reform attempts and lastly the one in 1992 was to allow specialization within the ministry, to enhance its performance and make it more reactive to the dynamic and changing environment. Awda believes that reform attempts are all efficient, yet there are many shortcomings the ministry must address, such as the vague job descriptions of some positions, the interrelation between departments causin the duplication and miscommunication of work, and the low recruitment levels which is reflected on the small diplomatic body within the ministry, where alike most ministries
in Egypt, its overstaffed with administrative employees, where as diplomats are not enough. (Awda, 2002)

Reform in public sector grew, in 1982 the Human Resource department in the ministry was given more authorities, not only recruitment, selection, promotion and transfer or posting to diplomatic missions it has become responsible of promoting all levels of diplomats, secondment of other employees, the human resource department could also edit, change and cancel bylaws. (Awda, 2002).

Awda (2002) goes through the organizational structure and its development throughout the years, Awda believes that the organizational structure is a key factor in decision making, and communication between departments within the ministry has a direct effect on the performance of the ministry. Awda also emphasized that the human resource factor in all levels of the ministry is important for the body to work effectively and efficiently.

Most of literature on the Egyptian Foreign Ministry is usually related to special cases such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, Nile basin, American-Egyptian relation, therefore the focus of most scholars when evaluating the ministry is the political aspect of the ministry.

Other scholars such as Ahmed Ibrahim Mahmoud when studying the ministry, he went through its structure and its development throughout the years, although the focus of his study was on the administration of the Ministry, it was more on the decision making process in Egypt and the role of the ministry in shaping the foreign policy, and like
most scholars and readers, he believes that the ministry’s role is limited to implementing policy not initiating the foreign policy making. (Mahmoud, 2003)

Abd El Mageed Farag an Egyptian scholar conducted a lot of research related to the Foreign Ministry, most of the research he conducted was critique of the Ministry’s performance, and comparison between Egyptian and foreign diplomats, yet after combining the articles where he critiqued the ministry in a book he offers solutions, and one of many solutions he came up to enhance the performance of the ministry was better recruitment and selection techniques, he stated that in order to improve (Mahmoud, 2003) the performance of the ministry and for it to become proactive it must “Set a stable, reliable criterion of selection, able to select the most suitable candidates to represent Egypt, the criteria must be used through a diplomats service to evaluate his/her performance. The criteria of selection must include good language skills, patriotic sense and diplomatic talent” (Farrag).

D. Foreign Policy Decision Making In Egypt

The decision making process in Egypt although is mainly the responsibility of the presidential Institution, other stakeholders may influence it slightly, the Ministry of foreign affairs is one of them along with the National Security council, the Ministry of trade, the Ministry of international cooperation and trade, and Egyptian intelligence Agency, the weight of each of these entities in the decision making process varies, yet in the last years of Mubarak’s era it was in the hands of the presidential centre along with Egyptian intelligence, and the Ministry of foreign affairs responsibility was mainly the implementation of the decisions made. (Mahmoud, 2003).
Figure 4 below summarized what have been explained above.

**Figure 4 : Egyptian Foreign Policy Decision Making Process**

According to the constitution and Ministry’s bylaws, the Egyptian foreign ministry has six main functions and they are:

1. Provide Advice to the President on Foreign affairs
2. Involvement in the foreign decision making process
3. Daily monitoring of international relations with the international arena
4. Implementation of foreign policy decisions
5. Collecting and classification of vital information and presenting it to authorities in charge
6. Representation of the state internationally

(Mahmoud, 2003)

E. Conclusion

Concluding this chapter, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry is one of the oldest Foreign Ministries in the world. It has been through restructuring many times, and many reform attempts, yet none of these attempts were groundbreaking, where the ministry up till this day is considered obsolete.

In the perfect sense or if the ministry was functioning according to the constitution and bylaws, one cannot ignore the importance of the ministry and the vital role it plays in shaping foreign policy. Given the fact that the presidential Institution is the sole decision maker and the ministry plays only a minor role during the previous system, and it hasn’t changed after the revolution yet, and is only limited to certain functions such as representation, implementation, analysis, classification and collection of information. These functions are still important in shaping the foreign policy of a nation, for example, An efficient information system can change diplomacy from a reactive diplomacy to a more dynamic, proactive diplomacy. This will bring us to the starting point of the study, which is the human resources, where the burden falls on the human resources, who are capable of representing, collecting, analyzing, issues, and the decision makers who don’t neglect this information, but uses it and benefit from it.

In other words, if foreign policy is left only to the presidential institution or executive authority and if the Ministry plays a major role, in both cases a strong ministry with efficient calibers would surely benefit the executive authority decision making.
V. METHODOLOGY

A. Methodological Approach and justification

The research started by analyzing current literature related to the topic, specific arguments and ideas related to the reform of ministries of foreign affairs were highlighted. Preliminary investigation of the literature related to the management of ministries of foreign affairs revealed relative scarcity. Yet this limitation shows there are gaps needing further study and this research could be one of the first post-January 25th revolution that tackles public administration reform issues in this ministry.

The research adopted a case study approach where information about the acquisition process within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was collected using various methods such as in-depth qualitative interviews with various stakeholders, investigation of published literature, reports, plus participant observation, . The research, stressed on in-depth investigation with various stakeholders, where purposive sampling was used instead of random sampling, because the emphasis is on quality rather than quantity, the objective of this research is not to maximize numbers but to become saturated and well rounded with information on the topic.

Since a qualitative research is adopted it required a strong commitment to the study and demanded time and resources, a commitment to extensive time in the field to collect extensive data was done in order to gain access, rapport, and an "insider" perspective on the study. Since secondary data and studies are extremely limited the main source of information in this research would be primary, information will have to be obtained
directly through interviews and documents obtained from different stakeholders, that’s why the interview process in this research was given a lot of time, and planned carefully.

**B. Data Collection Methods and Plan**

The qualitative analysis is based on a series of interviews conducted with different stakeholders. The interview is a most commonly used approach of data collection in a qualitative research. When people talk to each other, they interact, get to know each other and understand each other’s experiences, feelings and expectations, giving the researcher an insight into the interviewee’s perspectives and experiences. The interview will constitute a major part of data collection in this research. The interviews conducted in this study are designed as semi-structured interviews, meaning that the researcher asked predefined questions but also gave freedom for the interviewee to talk and not limit his/her answers, in order to give the researcher an insider perspective of the acquisition process. (See Structured Interviews in annex 1)

Primary data was collected through a series of interviews with different stakeholders who influence or are influenced by the recruitment and selection process. Three sets of interviews are planned. The first set of targeted interviews are to occur with diplomats in the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; interviews with more than 20 diplomats from the Egyptian Foreign Ministry were conducted covering all levels of the service starting from attaches to ambassadors for the first set of interview set for the diplomats.

The Second set of interviews was done with the HR department in the ministry in order to get insight on the human resource planning within the ministry.
Lastly a couple of interviews with Turkish diplomats were conducted to help provide insights on international experiences and learn more about the Turkish experience. The plan was to continue with the interviews in each category, until no further insights are gained.

As for secondary data, investigation of the Ministry’s conditions, processes and reviews of documents related to the Ministry and especially those related to the study (such as past examinations, statistics on passing candidates, methods of selection, etc.) were all used. Archival research included both electronic (i.e., Internet-based documents) although very limited, and hard-copy documents.

C. Description of Data Collected

30 interviews were conducted, 21 with different diplomats from the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 3 of them where with diplomats directly involved with the human resource process, Three additional interviews were conducted with Turkish diplomats to gain insight on the Turkish experience. One interview was conducted with an owner of a specialized center which provide course to those interested in pursuing a diplomatic career, lastily 5 interviews were conducted with applicants who sat for the last Ministry of Foreign Affairs exam held on the 15 of May 2012. 3 different sets of questions were designed, the first one was for general diplomats, the second for HR officials and the last for Turkish diplomats ( see annex), interviews were semi structured allowing interviews to elaborate on answers and provide examples and personal experiences. Interviews with the Head of Specialized Center and applicants were un-structured brief interviews.
1. Purpose of Interviews with Egyptian diplomats (General, and HR officials)

The researcher stressed on interviewing diplomats with different social and political backgrounds, as well as stressing on female diplomats to cover their experience as well. Interviewees were informed before the interview that interviews will remain anonymous to allow them to speak freely, since government employees remain uneasy of speaking freely about their working conditions and environment.

The interviews done were composed of an average of 12 questions. Questions regarding interviewees years of service and background were seen as necessary to attempt to collect data within a specific hierarchical and supervisory level within the Ministry to ensure as much homogeneity as possible.

The interviews done aim to help the researcher:

1. Identify what type of candidate the Ministry attracts
2. Understand the Diplomatic Job

3. Explore how efficient are the recruitment methods

4. Find out about the fairness and efficiency of selection procedures

5. How did the revolution affect the Ministry’s environment

6. Find out how does the Human resource department work within the ministry

7. Understand the acquisition process within the ministry.

8. Collect ideas on ways to improve the acquisition process from Egyptians diplomats who may have innovative ideas

Restricting the interviewing process to only one level was not possible, moreover it covered diplomats based in Egypt and abroad and through these broad interviews, the research managed to cover the acquisition process from diplomats hired in 1977 up till the last batch admitted February 2012.

The total number of Egyptian diplomats serving in the Ministry in 2012 according to the ministry’s spokesman Minister Plenipotentiary Amr Roshdy is 980. The total number of missions Egypt has abroad is 162, divided between Embassies, Consulates, Interest sections and missions in International organizations. Diplomats ranging from attaches to ambassadors serving abroad are 531, while 449 diplomats are serving in the Ministry’s headquarters.

2. Purpose of Interviews with Turkish Diplomats

The researcher focused on interviewing Turkish diplomats to better explore the Turkish experience, Interviews with Turkish diplomats were done, the example of Turkey is very important to Egypt because of the similar backgrounds, closely tied relationship,
and the role expected of both major countries to play regionally and internationally. Turkey has proven to be one of the most encouraging dimensions of the global setting in this second decade of the 21st century. The architect behind this leap in Turkish diplomacy is Ahmet Davoutoglu, a brilliant politician with astounding energy. Although he comes from an academic background he has proved to have the skills of a seasoned diplomat. Besides the personal capabilities of the foreign minister, he is backed up by dynamic, well trained and efficient diplomats allowing him to apply diplomatic orientations that is daring and extraordinarily attuned in times. (Falk, 2011). Therefore studying the Turkish case is very important to this research, in order to draw out the best possible experiences, and try to apply these insights to the Egyptian case.

3. Purpose of Interview with Head of Specialized Center

In order to gain an unbiased relevant understanding of the case on hand, external stakeholders had to be included in the research. This specialized center is the most efficient, and oldest center’s specialized in providing course for those interested in a diplomatic career. The purpose of this interview was to understand their opinion on the entrance exams and does it truly relate to the diplomatic work, and if truly the best applicants are chosen for the job. Also this interview gave the researcher access to past examinations, in order to evaluate the examination process. The interviewee is a Law PhD holder, and he himself teaches Law for those interested in pursue a diplomatic career, it is important to mention that the law exam is one of the most criticized written exams in all the written exams.
4. Purpose of Interview with Applicants to the exam

5 interviews were done with 5 different applicants to the ministry of foreign affairs exam. All of which come from different educational backgrounds, the purpose of these interviews was to understand how applicants perceive them, how they prepared for them, how they found out about it and the reason they prefer to pursue a diplomatic career.

D. Limitation of The Study

The case study chosen for the research was feasible. However, it was faced by limitations which are:

- Firstly and far most important was that research had a major time limitation, where the whole research had to be completed within the planned academic semester (spring, 2012). The lengthy interviews of different diplomats might have been another limitation to the study, since interviewees were left to elaborate some interviews which were intended to be conducted in 20 minutes took more than 90 minutes. This time lag caused great uncertainty as to whether doing the study within the Ministry would be feasible or not. Conducting interviews within the Egyptian public administration were a very challenging task, one would believe that diplomats being exposed to different cultures would be more open to research, yet resistance was found. Even with the cooperation of senior diplomats within the ministry, the 21 interviews were the greatest number we were able to collect. Extending the time allocated for data collection
might have increased the total number, but the difference would have been minimal, besides the interviewing process reached an optimal level, after most responses became very close.

- The resources available to the research were limited to the individual/researcher financial ability, no grants or funds were acquired, this besides the time limitation made it hard for the researcher to acquire more information on international experiences or elaborate more on the Turkish case.

- The quality of the results depended on the quality of the information acquired from the interviewees; thus, it depended on their level of participation and the degree of honesty and sincerity while answering the questions. Also since most interviewees were diplomats, therefore diplomatic answers might have been given. The lack of a surveying culture in Egypt also posed a great challenge, where people are not accustomed to filling out surveys, giving interviews and cooperating in data collection processes. The lack of transparency and the existence of rules regulating access to information create a culture of silence regarding giving out any kind of information within the public bureaucracy (Taliawi, 2010). Another limitation of great importance was the limited literature on this area of research, where not many researchers have dealt with the topic of recruitment and selection processes in the ministry of foreign affairs and especially in Egypt this area of research has not been

- It would have been preferable to obtain a random sample rather than a sample based on convenience, but due to the limitations provided above, this was not feasible. The interviews were conducted through snowballing where an
interviewee referred another and so on, For the context of this study the sampling might not necessarily have affected the results since it was not biased; respondents were not targeted specifically.

VI. EMPRICAL STUDY MAIN FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The interviewing process unveiled many unexpected results, opposing what the researcher initially believed. Although the recruitment and selection process is very lengthy and outdated results showed that many diplomats are satisfied with the current system or at least the main structure, and only some minor modifications are needed. In this chapter, the main findings will be discussed. The interviews will be summarized according to the main points the interviews intended to reveal.

A. Main Findings

1. The Candidate the Ministry attracts

Diplomats in the Egyptian foreign ministry come from different social and educational backgrounds, the age group is limited where unlike other diplomacies, admittance to the ministry is limited to Egyptians with any bachelor degree in any specialization between 21 and 27 years old, those admitted must be pure Egyptians meaning both parents have to be Egyptian citizens, the candidate must not be married to a non-Egyptian. The educational background of diplomats in service can be broken up as follows (figure 3), specific details on the educational background of applicants couldn’t be found, yet it is
believed that it wouldn’t differ than the current formation of diplomats within the ministry.

Graduates of the Faculty of Political Science and Economics in Cairo University are the largest group within the ministry. Surprisingly Law graduates are only 6%, according to the HR department in the ministry; they sometimes make exceptions and accept law graduates even if not that efficient, since it is necessary for the ministry to have law graduates. Also it has been noticed that graduates of scientific majors, such as engineering, Medicine, and Sciences are a large group within the Ministry. According to the Ministry’s HR department, most of the applicants and actual diplomats as seen

Source: Human Resource Department, Egyptian Foreign Ministry 2010
from the formation of the educational background come from public universities. Many graduates of private universities believe that working for the state is unfulfilling and compensation is not worthy. The setback in the admittance of private university students is believed to be due to the free market system, where many multi-nationals are operating in Egypt attracting more graduates, and since the Ministry still operates in a bureaucratic sense, and compensation is still low, like most state entities, many graduates believe it is not worth it.

The ministry although a state entity still has the most appeal out of most public entities, where applicants could reach a 1500 sitting for the exam also the ministry starting 2007 holds the exam twice a year, and it could be seen from the graduates applying, where even doctors, engineers, artists, and linguistic professionals apply. The number of female to male applicants are nearly the same, where in recent years the batches that have been admitted to the ministry have included a larger number of females. For example female ambassadors are only 13% of the Ambassadors in the ministry, whereas in the diplomatic attache’s level it exceeds 37% of the diplomatic attaches in the ministry. (The Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010) It has been stated that more female applicants apply and therefore more females are admitted.

3- The Diplomat Job description

The research had to understand what is expected of a diplomat in order understand the relation between the acquisition process and what is expected out of it.
According to the Human Resources department and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Diplomats represent their country in Egyptian embassies, consulates and other diplomatic missions, the diplomats are required to facilitate between nations, advance Egyptian interests abroad, inform the Egyptian government about political and economic activities in the host country, act on behalf of the Egyptian government during times of crisis, represent their country in any diplomatic form such as negotiations, and assist Egyptians living and traveling abroad.

The responsibilities as diplomats proceed in their career, a diplomatic attaches role would be minor in comparisons with an ambassador, but team work is very important since each member of the diplomatic corps has an input.

Daily tasks of a diplomat include analyzing data, writing reports, meeting with local authorities and other diplomats hence networking is very important, counselor services such as issuing visas, communicating the Egyptian position on various political issues, communicating with the Egyptian government on activities in the host country and implementing policies and programs.

3- Efficiency of recruitment methods

The recruitment is based on planned needs, where every year diplomats who reach the age of 60 retire, and diplomatic attached are promoted to thirds secretary’s leaving a gap in the Diplomatic attaches level, and for the Ministry to maintain its existence for those who leave the ministry others should join. As evident in the number of applicants the recruitment methods are successful in creating a large pool of candidates, yet
recruitment is not selective enough, it does generate large numbers, but most of which are not the candidate the ministry is looking for, hence from 1500 applicants the largest batch admitted in a year was 50, according to a couple of interviewees one year the applicants performance was so poor that no one passed the first set of written exams. In the last written exam held in November 2011, 106 passed the written exam which is nearly 12%. Diplomats in the planning department suggested that other selective recruitment methods must be used to raise awareness and attract those who the ministry actually needs. According to interviews conducted with diplomats in the human resources department the ministry announces for the vacant positions in the Official Newspaper Al Ahram, other recruitment methods are not used.

The researcher has been through the written exams, through observation and brief discussions with applicants, an observation has been made that many applicants didn’t understand the nature of the diplomatic work, but only applied because of the announcement in the official newspaper, so minimizing the applicant numbers to actually those interested would surely be effective. One applicant interviewed actually mentioned that she is applying because of her parent’s preference; she stated that she doesn’t understand the nature of the job, and that she believes that it’s a good career because of the security it provides and its flexibility.

4-Fairness and efficiency of selection procedures

Interviews with the HR department in the Egyptian foreign Ministry revealed the criterion of selection of Egyptian diplomats and the importance of each factor and they are:
The first criteria of selection are applicants with knowledge in different fields, mainly international law, current political issues, history, these characteristics are tested in different stages of the selection process, where it is tested in the written exam then again in the oral exam, where random questions are asked in the oral exam to test general knowledge. Languages is very important, where the Ministry seeks applicants who are fluent in another language besides Arabic, and are able to understand and communicate briefly in a third. Applicants with better language skills, and those with are proficient in unusual languages such as Japanese and Chinese are given an advantage. Also the Ministry welcomes applicants with post graduate studies, and is also given an
advantage. Of course this criterion of selection is mainly used in the oral examination, since all applicants are treated equally during the written exams.

The second most important criterion of selection, is the presentation skills of the applicant, this is tested in the oral exam, where the panel tests how the applicants presents different issues, how does he/she react under pressure, their body language is also observed. Self confident, friendly and calm applicants are usually selected.

Lastly according to the Human resources department appearance is taken into consideration, where applicants are selected on how they carry themselves and how they pay attention to their appearance. The selection process starts with usually nearly a thousand applicants sitting for the written exam and ends with an average of 30 passing the oral exam. The selection process an applicant undergoes can be summarized as
The written exam is said to be fair, as stated by many officials, and recently Foreign Minister Mohamed Kamel Amr, many ambassadors and ministers relatives who applied for the exam failed more than once before being admitted to the service, (Amr, 2011). According to the majority of Egyptian diplomats interviewed, nepotism in the written exam is minimal, yet 2 of Egyptian diplomats interviewed believe that although nepotism cases are few, cases of corruption are evident, meaning instead of passing a failed applicant, some applicants exam papers were switched so an applicant, who passed, is failed and a failed student passes. These cases are a few but it has been said that it has happened. The written exam has been criticized for its memorization nature where it is not about analytical skills, but the ability to memorize.
According to the HR department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the exam is designed by well-known academics in their specialized field. For example, the late Dr. Salah Amer, the prominent Law professor, used to design the Law exam, after he passed away, other academics and diplomats with a PhD in Law would design the exam. The same goes for all written exams, either academics or ambassadors with PhD’s. The written exams are designed to test the knowledge of the applicants and their analytical skills. According to the HR department, lately there has been an emphasis on the analytical skills, where more questions are designed to test analytical skills, rather than the amount of information.

While interviewing applicants to the exam and confirmed by the owner of the specialized Center, an observation has been made that applicants who are graduates of the faculty of Economics and Political Sciences, Cairo University, are the most prepared, since the written examination is similar to exams they’ve been through during their colleague studies, and they usually find it easier to prepare for the exam. Other applicants from different educational backgrounds find it harder, since it requires absorbing and memorizing a large amount of diverse information. Also, all 5 interviewees have expressed that holding 5 written exams in 5 days without any break is very demanding and tiring, hence affecting their performance on the exam.

According to the specialized center, the examination process hasn’t changed much over the years, where some questions are repetitive, and usually, the political exams come from one source which is a quarterly magazine named El Seyasa Al Dawliya, where the questions usually come from articles in the most recent issue. The exams are not hard as
stated by the owner a PhD holder who teaches Law for those entering the exam, the exams are somehow predicted and if the applicants studies hard and plans his/her answer carefully they usually pass. He also believes that the entrance exam is efficient, and usually the best applicants pass the exam, he also stated that according to his observation over the years, the main obstacle hindering applicants from joining the service is the languages, where many applicants fail because their lack of languages.

After the applicants passing the written exam starts the reference check, those who passed the written exam fill out 3 identical forms, stating information on their families which extend to the larger family, they also are required to give information on places they’ve worked at and the nature of their job. One form goes to the Egyptians Intelligence Agency another goes to the National Security Agency and the third stays in the ministry, Specific information on the exact information these background checks are required to reveal was unattainable. Reports and recommendations on each applicant is given back to the ministry in order to screen applicants.

IT exams are basic, it is not designed to reveal special skills, it’s only to test basic computer skills such as typing and browsing, nothing sophisticated, and there haven’t been any cases of failure in these tests. It has been stated by Egyptian diplomats that the IT exam is only for procedure, it doesn’t affect the status of applicants. Only one of the interviewees emphasized the importance of developing the IT exam, stating that it is required of an Egyptian diplomat in 2012 to have better computer skills.

Aptitude tests are 8 hours long test, Egyptian intelligence agency is responsible of conducting this test. It is a very lengthy and tiring test, unusual questions are asked, and
it’s designed to test the applicant’s tolerance and endurance. This type of test has been introduced to the ministry in 1983, to reveal other sides of the applicant. The most evident comment on these tests are that they are male oriented, where questions are designed to fit male applicants neglecting the fact that many females are present in the exam. 2 female interviewees have elaborated on this point, stating that in their aptitude test they were asked “How would you react if you had to engage in sexual intercourse in order to obtain information” another was “How would you react if you saw your mother in an offensive situation”. The interviewees believe that these questions are male oriented, since Egypt is a conservative society and these questions are irrelevant to the upbringing of Egyptian females.

Lastly is the oral exam which is the most criticized selection stage. According to interviews with the Human Resource department, the panel holding the exam is limited to Assistant ministers and former ambassadors, rarely outsiders are present in the oral exam. It is 10 minute interview, where each ambassador asks a random question usually from the applicant’s application. For example an applicant born in Kuwait would probably be asked a question on Kuwait; if the applicant stated that his/her hobby was tennis a question on tennis would be asked, etc. Yet this exam is said to be corrupt according to applicants, the owner of the specialized center and most diplomats interviewed, where nepotism takes place, and appearance is the main reason of the exam. Many girls have failed because of being veiled, other have failed because of a bad relationship between them and one of the panel members, reported cases of political views of an applicant clashing with a panel member, etc. It is very personal, unstructured, and corruption in this stage is very easy.
5- The revolution and the Ministry’s environment

Many believe that minimal difference has occurred in the ministry after the revolutions, shy attempts have been made to replace the old networks of power with new ones. Yet since the outbreak of the revolution the media has been focusing on the ministry so more changes has occurred on consular issues to adapt to the public pressure. Changes are artificial not solving any of the rooted problems, more of masquerading current problems.

During the study, interviewees, especially diplomats below forty conveyed how they feel about their work, and how they thought before entering the service they would be involved in shaping the foreign policy of Egypt, yet after entering the service they realized they are only involved in implementing the decisions already made, and that their analysis and work is usually neglected. They added that this de-motivation is surely a reason behind the lagging of Egyptian diplomacy and that they expected change after the revolution but after more than a year minimal changes have occurred.

The Egyptian Foreign Ministry has proved discipline, while most public entities are performing poorly, one of the few ministries which is performing normally and is not being setback by strikes, lack of efficient leadership and vision. Also although cases of corruptions are available and power networks, corruption in the ministry is not that evident and is not paralyzing the ministry like other public entities.

Many are frustrated that the revolution didn’t come with ground breaking changes in the ministries environment, still evaluation of diplomats is unclear, development of
diplomats to rise to the standards expected from a diplomacy representing the revolution was not made, transparency is decision making is still unclear, yet it is still soon, to evaluate the effect of the revolution.

B. Interviewee Recommendations for improved performance

The need of reform was suggested by most interviewees, most Egyptian diplomats interviewed suggested at least one change in a certain stage of the acquisition process must be made. The breakdown of the diplomats pro-reform in the acquisition process, against those whom refute the idea or believe is unnecessary is illustrated in figure 6.

![Figure 9: The Need For Reform](image)

Source: Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2012

Not all diplomats interviewed have agreed on the need of reform in the acquisition process, 2 of those who disagreed on the need of reform are below forty years old, the rest are high ranking diplomats, above forty years old. This could be explained by either
older diplomats are resistant to change or that back when they were admitted to the service the acquisition process was efficient and therefore change is unnecessary.

Many interviewees have come up with many ideas that could improve the entry acquisition process these recommendations could be summed up as follows:

1. A high ranking official in the planning department in the ministry suggested that to enhance the quality of the pool of candidates generated, the ministry must not stop at only advertising for the vacancies available through newspapers and the ministry’s website; the ministry must reach out to those needed to join, through workshops, seminars, in colleagues and events that are of interest to the ministry. The ministry must also design information packages where description of the job is elaborated. For example as stated by the interviewee, students from private international university must be recruited, since their language skills,
educational and cultural background can positively affect the Ministry. Another diplomat, whom is a graduate of the American University in Cairo, also suggested that the Ministry should recruit students engaged in Model international organizations, such as Model United Nations and Model Arab League, since students that engage in these activities experience diplomacy beforehand and perform better within the ministry.

2. The Written test should be more analytical. For example the law exam should focus more on application rather that testing memorization. The example of the law exam could be confirmed by the researcher, and applicants interviewed they all realized that the exam is not testing the understanding of the law but the pure memorization of the material, and when material is memorized one can pass the exam. Again most of the interviewees suggested a more analytical written exam, since they believe many applicants are well educated and good candidates, yet the exam fails to test the actual required skills. When revising past examinations the Law and Economics exams both lacked analytical skills, for example in April 2011 the law exam included a question “Write about the General principles of interpreting International treaties.” This question requires a very long time to solve since its very broad, and is not searching for analytical skills but memorization. The Law exam like the languages exam is a 4 hour exam, where four questions must be answered, giving an average of an hour to each question, and as stated by the head of specialized center a minimum of four pages is required, therefore what is intended here is memorization and not
analysis and understanding. (See annex 2 for exam samples). The exam is also written no typing is done, which is very time consuming and obsolete.

It has been noticed though that most of those suggesting a change in the written exam, have failed it at least once. Yet it is a valid recommendation, the written exam which failed an applicant once or twice, admitted the same applicant later on, so therefore it does not test analytical skills, but it tests the ability to memorize a large amount of information.

Figure 11: Suggested Changes in Written Exams

![Pie chart showing 45% change in written exams is unnecessary and 55% more analytical written exams.]

Source: Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2012
3. A couple of interviewees suggested the outsourcing of some exams that could be done outside the ministry, such as the computer tests, and language exams. For example, a candidate could be asked to take the Test of English as a foreign language (TOEFL) or the International English Language testing system (IELTS) exam and give in his/her score, making it less costly to the ministry and evaluating the language skills of the applicant more efficiently.

4. More than 50% of diplomatic interviewees and the specialized center owner suggested that the panel interviews should include specialists in different fields, professionals who would be unbiased. For example, a psychiatrist, an economist, a media specialist, a human resource specialist, a language professor, it shouldn’t be limited to ambassadors. Outsiders will focus more on the substance of the applicant rather than appearance or social background, where many applicants are refused because of their social standards. The Rest of the interviewees either have not mention the need of change in the oral exam, or
believe that the oral exam must be conducted by a diplomat since they are most aware of the skills, characteristics’ and appearance required for a diplomat.

5. 5 of the Egyptian young diplomats and applicants to the exams interviewed have brought up the length of the acquisition period and suggested it should be shortened; the time frame between the written exam and admittance to the service could stretch up to 18 months, which are both a psychological burden and a setback to the applicant’s career. Therefore speeding up the process was seen as a necessary step in the professional and humanitarian sense,

6. Transparency of the criterion of selection should be established. Nepotism, corruption and elitism should all be abolished through an enforced system. This was a remark most diplomatic interviewees have mentioned, it was emphasized more by younger diplomats who believe that the Ministry must operate in complete transparency in all aspects of the ministerial work, especially after the January 25th revolution. The specialized center owner has also established clearly identifying a criterion of selection and laying rules when conducting the oral exam, since he believes that many strong candidates are refused and reasons for their refusal are not clear.
7. A very interesting suggestion by one diplomat was that the selection processes that should extend to the period of the diplomatic institute, where those who are not up to the standards are eliminated during the period diplomats serve in the diplomatic academy.

8. Many applicants referred to the unchanged nature of the exam. Most of the applicants have been through the same process, therefore 5 interviewees suggested Periodical changes in the exams, applicants in 1977 go through nearly the same process that applicants go through today, some questions are identical, and an example is a question on the importance of the river Nile to Egypt. Also the center for specialized studies emphasized on the stagnated nature of the exam.
9. Younger diplomats have suggested that Professionals must put the written exam, and it must not be left to different ambassadors to put whatever question that comes on their mind, also a systematic grading system should be done, where grading is done also by professionals and in a speedy manner. It was found out during the study that the ministry actually sees the help of academics when designing the exam, and many exams are also graded by academics.

10. 2 young diplomats have suggested that Applicants with deficiency in the Arabic language should be given a chance, one stated that its unreasonable that Harvard graduates are not allowed admittance because of their language skills, the ministry should hold exams in other languages, yet because of the highly importance of the Arabic language, applicants who apply through this system and admitted, are only admitted on a temporary base until they strengthen their Arabic language, and are later on given an Arabic exam they are required to pass.
VII. CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION AND PROPOSED MODEL

A. Conclusion

The reason the study went into explaining the decision making process is to relate between the performance and the acquisition process in the ministry of foreign affairs. After explaining the decision making structure, how it should be, how it actually is in Egypt, and the actual functions required from the ministry, the study concluded that in the perfect sense, if the ministry functions properly, and decision making is made in a proper way, the quality of diplomats is of vital importance to rise up with Egypt in the international arena, but since the foreign policy was controlled by the presidential center, and the Supreme Council of Armed forces after the revolution, the ministry’s role is marginalized. Yet this study’s main objective is to provide a framework that could benefit Egypt post-revolution. Even if the ministry won’t perform all its functions, a strong, creative, dynamic, and intellectual corps will surely improve the performance of one of the oldest diplomatic bodies in the world.

During the study although many participants revealed their approval of the current system, many modifications were brought up, the system although contains the most used and idealistic structure, it contains many flaws, that could be easily resolved, and when modified a more fair, efficient, and relevant system will emerge that will surely affect the quality of diplomats, and elevate to ambitions of the Egyptian revolution and its status post-revolution and will better serve Egyptians abroad that as stated previously have been suffering from the mistreatment and negligence of diplomats abroad.
The Egyptian revolution came with calls for reform throughout all governmental institutions, the ministry of foreign affairs is not far from these calls, some believe that monitoring and fighting corruption is needed, others believe that a more structured role definition of the ministry is needed, and some fiercer critics such as Mr. Hamdeen Sabahy the presidential candidate called for the purging and the rehabilitation of the ministry. Other presidential candidates such as Mr. Amr Moussa whom himself is a previous diplomat and Egyptian Foreign Minister stating during his presidential campaigning the importance of Egyptian Foreign Policy to regain its former glory, yet he clarified that the reason behind the lagging economy was the former regime, not mentioning anything about the diplomatic body and its human resources. Yet Egyptian diplomats are constantly critiqued, every time a case of an Egyptian abroad is discussed by the media, such as Gizawy the detained Egyptian in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the first to blame was the Egyptian Embassy in Riyadh, therefore a reformed acquisition system, that will ensure effectiveness, efficiency and fairness, and that will lay the foundations for building a better generation of diplomats that will help Egypt in pursuing the role it traditionally assumes is vitally important.

B. Recommendations

The interviews with diplomats have raised a lot of issues that could help modify the current acquisition system. An insisting issue raised is that the acquisition process
should not neglect all stages of recruitment and that needs assessment should be done, before advertising for the vacancies, in order to generate a higher quality pool of candidates.

The length of the acquisition process time frame should be addressed, also when designing the acquisition process, the cost should be put into consideration, according to the study conducted the current acquisition process costs according to the HR department in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry more than 800000 Egyptian pounds for each cycle, of course the process generates money since applying for the written exam costs 200 Egyptian pounds, yet the costs exceed the income, so a more efficient acquisition system is required.

The selection process should be more directed towards matching the needs of the ministry, repetitiveness and redundancy of the process should be eliminated, for instance knowledge tested in the written exam should be avoided in the oral exam, where certain characteristics should be focused on instead, also the aptitude test should be according to international tested standards and computer skills exams should be more sophisticated since Egypt should be pursuing the technological culture in its state administrative body, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs be a pioneer in this field. The Turkish ministry of Foreign Affairs according to the Turkish Foreign Under-Secretary was a pioneer in adapting E-governance, and most of the ministry’s work is done electronically in a sophisticated form, unlike the Egyptian Foreign Ministry where computer usage is very basic, and still bureaucratic and traditional.

C. Proposed Model
Stage 1: **Needs assessment.** There is a department within the Ministry in charge of planning, yet according to officials in this department the coordination between this department and the Human resource department is very limited. The planning department should assist the HR department with forecasting the needs of the ministry, and planning accordingly. This stage should is part of the recruitment stage, yet it is neglected, the recruitment plan should not be routine based, where what used to be done should be done, with time, the environment changes, and if a certain candidate, then the ministry should seek them. Therefore a study of the needs of the ministry should be carried, and an assessment of the criterion of selection should be designed beforehand.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry has an effective planning department according to Turkish Foreign Ministry undersecretary, part of this departments job is to assess the human resources needs of the ministry, and therefore address those needs in the recruitment methods needed.

Stage 2: **New Recruitment Methods** Based on the planning process, and the needs assessment, the recruitment methods should be matched. For example if more law students are needed, then recruitment methods should reach out to law graduates, through for instance seminars and workshop conducted in these colleges. If students with Model United Nations or Model Arab League show better performance when joining the service then recruitment should seek them, a way could be sponsoring these events and raising awareness through their presence in these events. Recruitment methods should be different, and vary in level of interaction, of course the main recruitment method of the ministry which is the official newspaper is a must, since most applicants find out about the exam through the newspaper, but other methods should be
used. Employment fairs, seminars, workshops, sponsoring, media advertising, are all recruitment tools, the ministry should mix and match between different recruitment tools according to their needs. Participants have suggested that the ministry should design informative packages that raise awareness on the ministry, the benefits from joining, try to create something attractive, that could help the ministry compete with private sector entities that attract calibers the ministry needs.

Stage 3: **Designing Application forms**: Deriving from lessons learned from the international experience, one could benefit from the American experience where applicants are screened before examinations through a descriptive, analytical application form. The researcher has filled in the application form admitted to the ministry, where while applying the applicant will get his /her seat number for the ministry’s examination, whereas the American system eliminates applicants who seem unfit for the job. The application form is lengthy and descriptive in order to ensure main characteristics needed for are highlighted. Although may be hard to evaluate, may be unfair, and is time consuming it would eliminate applicants who are completely unfit, therefore eliminating the applicants numbers, reducing costs and saving time.

Stage 4: **Modification of Examination technique**: The examination process could be modified, to save cost and time. First of all language exams could be done privately like the Turkish case, where applicants could be asked to provide a certain score on language exams, and provide the ministry with the results achieved, this will limit the numbers who will sit for the written exam therefore saving time and money and the quality of these exams will be more consistent and would really evaluate the applicants language skills, a disadvantage of this idea would be that it would eliminate poor
candidates whom are unable to sit for those exams therefore depriving them from having a chance of admittance. The computer exam could also be held separately, simultaneously, it should be in the first set of exams, since computer skills are very important and should not be a routine exam, but a truly evaluating, challenging exam. Many participants have conveyed their feeling for the exam, that it tests memorization skills rather than analytical skills, especially in international law and economics exams, where theory is tested rather than application, and theory wouldn’t be needed in the job, rather application is more important, therefore the mindset of the Ambassadors or academics putting the exam should be changed, where the results needed should be different. Lastly the two political exams could be shortened like those of the American case, and done in one day where a general question could be asked to test the analytical skills, the ability to debate and to defend a point of view, this would make it harder since the weight of a question would be larger, yet it would be better assessment.

Reducing the examination period from 5 days till 3 days would be a cheaper process, more efficient and more to the point and according to applicants, if there is a short period between each exam, the performance of the applicants would surely improve, since they would be less stressed and would have more time to prepare for the exams.

Those who pass the first set of exams should be admitted for an oral exams, where specialist are included in the panel, psychiatrists, media representatives, academics, and diplomats are all part of the panel. The applicant should be tested on presentation skills, social skills and representation. The Turkish ministry makes the applicant choose the topics he/she would like to be asked on, of course in a panel member feels the urge to ask a question out of the structured set of questions to understand the applicant more it
could be done, but it is still controlled by a number of questions designed beforehand. The American case tests team-building characteristics, where more than one applicant are tested together, they are also asked to give presentations on a certain topic, the oral exam unlike the Egyptian case is a whole day examination, where the applicant undergoes a series of activities to test different characteristics. The different background of panel members will ensure the fairness and reliability of the results, diplomats may be more aware of the characteristics needed of a diplomat therefore to avoid unfit candidates a panel including different views, but with the majority being diplomats would be efficient.

The aptitude tests are already conducted by Egyptian Intelligence agency, also after the written exams applicants go through background checkup, where applicants could be eliminated because of their social or political background. Aptitude tests are a very important tool in selection, yet it must be done according to standards, questions must be tailored to fit both male and female applicants, as recommended by participants

Stage 5: Diplomatic Institute: Once the applicant passes all levels of the process, he/she should be admitted to the diplomatic institute, where students should be trained intensively, and those who don’t rise up to the expected level of performance should be eliminated. Therefore the selection process won’t stop at the last level of examination, but like the Turkish experience should extend to the diplomatic institute, since applicants would be truly evaluated over a sufficient period of time, and on application of what they’ve learned, revealing diplomats that would actually benefit the ministry. Once an applicant passed the diplomatic institute he/she is admitted permanently to the ministry. Human resource development shouldn’t stop with the diplomatic institute
phase, but investment in diplomats is required, and education, training, and self actualization should be encouraged and appreciated.

The figure below illustrates what have been discussed:

![Figure 14: Proposed Acquisition Model]

The propose model provide the general guidelines that the ministry could adopt to improve the acquisition process. It starts by planning the needs phase and adds more filtration channels to the process, it would make it more vigorous but it would ensure the quality of diplomats, and the fairness of the acquisition process. The recommended model is based on the recommendations by different interviewees and insights from international cases studied. The model is a generic framework where the Egyptian Foreign Ministry could implement tailoring it to better match its needs.
Annex (1)

3 sets of interviews were performed:

1. Diplomats from all levels of the ministry starting from Diplomatic Attaches to Ambassadors

2. The second set of questions will be asked to the officials in the HR department in Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

3. The Third and last set of interviews will be asked to international diplomats, to help the researcher derive lessons and compare with the Egyptian case.

For all three sets of interviews the informed consent form below was used:
Documentation of Informed Consent for Participation in Research Study

Project Title: The Making of a Diplomat: The Selection and Recruitment Process in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry

Principal Investigator: Ghada Soliman (ghadasoliman@aucegypt.edu)

*You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of the research is to examine the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry and the findings may be published, presented, or both. The expected duration of your participation is 20 min.

The procedures of the research will be as follows, it will be conducted in the form of an interview, with different officials from all levels within the ministry.

*There will not be certain risks or discomforts associated with this research.

*There will not be benefits to you from this research.

*The information you provide for purposes of this research is anonymous, the interview results will be used for academic purposes only and all precautions will be made to maintain the anonymity of your responses.

*For more information or inquires about the research, please contact Ghada Soliman, Telephone number: 01007440057, e-mail: ghadasoliman@aucegypt.edu

*Participation in this study is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or the loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Signature

________________________________________

Printed Name

______________________________________
Interview set 1 (Egyptian Diplomats):

- **Question 1:** Would you please identify your name, educational background, position and number of years spent in Ministry of Foreign Affairs service? (optional)

- **Question 2:** What difference has occurred in the Ministry’s environment after the January 25th Revolution?

- **Question 3:** What compelled you to become a diplomat?

- **Question 4:** How did you know about the entrance exam?

- **Question 5:** How did you prepare for the entrance exam?

- **Question 6:** Does the entrance exam truly relate to the job?

- **Question 7:** After passing the entrance exam, what is the selection process?

- **Question 8:** How long does the process from the exam to admittance to the service take? How do you perceive this period?

- **Question 9:** Did you pass from the first time? If not what were your weaknesses?

- **Question 10:** Can you think of ways to improve the recruitment and selection process? Meaning the entrance exam, other exams, panel interviews?

- **Question 11:** Do you think it is a good idea to hire ambassadors from outside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs? How often and when should external
recruitment of ambassadors be resorted to? What are the advantages and disadvantages of such recruitment and selection processes in your opinion?

**Interview set 2 (HR department)**

- **Question 1:** What are the main functions of the HR department?
- **Question 2:** Can you tell me what methods of recruitment the ministry uses?
- **Question 3:** How is the entrance exam designed?
- **Question 4:** Who designs the entrance exam? And who corrects them? How long does this process take?
- **Question 5:** How does the entrance exam change from time to time? And has January 25th revolution affected it?
- **Question 6:** What methods of selection are used?
- **Question 7:** What is the criterion of selection?
- **Question 8:** Does the ministry seek any help from calibers not in the ministry when screening candidates through the selection process?
- **Question 9:** Can you tell me the job description of a diplomat?
- **Question 10:** What are the needs that the acquisition process is based on?
- **Question 11:** Can the ministry of foreign affairs have diplomats from outside the ministry? If yes what is the criterion of selection? When is that done? And why?
- **Question 12:** Can you explain any weakness you find in the current acquisition system?
- **Question 13:** How structured is the interviewing process, how it can be improved on. Is it always fair or there are other unwritten issues/factors that may affect the final selection decision, such as social and family background.

- **Question 14:** What are the three main competencies or skills do you look for in the newly hired diplomat?

- **Question 15:** How do you test for the availability of the needed competencies in the applicants?

- **Question 16:** What are the strengths/weaknesses/problems/challenges/opportunities and do you have any ideas for improving the system?
Interview set 3 Turkish diplomats:

- **Question 1**: What are the main functions of the HR department?

- **Question 2**: Can you tell me what methods of recruitment your ministry uses?

- **Question 3**: How is the entrance exam designed?

- **Question 4**: Who designs the entrance exam? And who corrects them? How long does this process take?

- **Question 5**: Does the entrance exam change from time to time?

- **Question 6**: What methods of selection are used?

- **Question 7**: What is the criterion of selection?

- **Question 8**: Does the ministry seek any help from calibers not in the ministry when screening candidates through the selection process?

- **Question 9**: Can you tell me the job description of a diplomat?

- **Question 10**: What are the needs that the acquisition process is based on?

- **Question 11**: Can the ministry of foreign affairs have diplomats from outside the ministry? If yes what is the criterion of selection? When is that done? And why?
- **Question 12:** Can you explain any weakness you find in the current acquisition system?

- **Question 13:** How structured is the interviewing process, how it can be improved on. Is it always fair or there are other unwritten issues/factors that may affect the final selection decision, such as social and family background.

- **Question 14:** What are the three main competencies or skills do you look for in the newly hired diplomat?

**Annex (2)**

Translated Exam sample 1:

International Law and International Organizations Exam

April 10th 2011

**Firstly: International Law:**

Elaborate on 2 of the following subjects:

1-Write about the General Principles in Interpreting International treaties

2-Describe what is meant by safe passing of Foreign Ships in regional waters, then mention the authorities of the coastal state on its regional waters.

3-Write about International Succession of regional treaties

4-Describe the responsibilities of diplomatic missions, elaborating on the benefits and immunities these missions receive in the host country.
Secondly: International Organizations:

Answer only two questions from the following four;

1-Describe what is meant by collective security, and define the aim principles it exists upon

2-Define the goals, principles, membership conditions about two of the following organizations: WIPO, UNESCO and COMESA

3-Define the goals and principles if the Organization Islamic Conference and how it issues resolutions

4-According to your following on the League of Arab states interactions with Arab issues please explain the negative and positive you see bout these interactions, and how can the league of Arab states improve its performance.

Translated Exam sample 2:

Political Economy and International Economic relations

Answer 3 of the following 5 questions:

1-Define the following:

- Floating
- Balance of Payment
- Public Budget
2-Privatization is considered a major component of the Egyptian Reform Policy. In light of the previous statement explain the important rules that must be adhered to when applying privatization.

3- In terms of the International Economic Relations, West Europe has reached complete financial integration, while South East Africa is only in the level of common market, so is the Arab region only starting a free trade area. Discuss either the COMESA or GAFTA by relating to the previous statement.

4-Free trade doesn’t mean the elimination of the role of the government, describe this statement by elaborating on the new players emerging in the regional and international economies.

5-Uruguay Round on trade agreements came up with major commitments on the international community, to connect international trade treaties and harmonize them with the domestic law. Please describe the evolution of international trade under the umbrella of the World Trade Organization.
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