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ABSTRACT

Organizations of all types are faced with the imperative to perform in a manner that is satisfactory to their stakeholders. Drawing from the resource based view of the firm, human resource is a crucial strategic resource necessary for achievement of this performance objectives hence the need for organizations to effectively recruit staff who, when employed, will contribute to the realization of organizational goals. This notwithstanding, there is scarce empirical literature on the relationship between recruitment and performance of organization. The main purpose of this study was to establish the relationship between staff recruitment (internal and external) and performance of county governments in Kenya from the perspective of the citizen who sought service from the governments. A cross sectional survey of 141 human resource staff drawn from each of the 47 county service boards (three from each board) and 235 customers (citizens), five from each county, was conducted using structured questionnaires to collect primary data. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were done and the results reported in tables. This study found that recruitment practices have no significant ($p>0.1$) relationship with performance. These findings contributed to the understanding of the relationship between recruitment and performance of counties which can aid in formulation of appropriate policies to ensure supply of appropriate staff for the counties.

Keywords: Internal Recruitment, External Recruitment, Performance of County Governments in Kenya

INTRODUCTION

In this era globalization and competition among companies, there is need for organizations to hire highly qualified staff to drive their success agenda and to achieve their goals. Organizations must ensure that they put in place effective recruitment selection practices in order to obtain the skills and competencies they need. The success of organizations is directly connected to the employee performance that is those who are working for the organization. It has been found that organizations that does not recruit effective workforce do experience poor performance in the quality of the goods and services they produce. Like any other organization, Governments have the responsibility to improve services to its citizens. They must ensure that they offer competitive and quality services to citizens of the public. It is important that organizations recruit caliber of employees who can enable them to achieve their success and to compete in a global economy. This level of performance can be achieved by implanting recruitment which are sound and can ensure qualified employees are hired in the organization.

It has been established by previous studies that when an organization is involved in effective recruitment practices, this translates into achievement of its objectives and superior performance. In view of this, recruitment practices contribute to a vital role in helping organizations achieve effective performance. It has been noted that employee recruitment not only happen when the organization tries to replace those who have been separated or acquire additional workforce due to expansion but also the need to operate with the best talent who can demonstrate high level of performance and commitment to their jobs (Ballantyne, 2009).

According to Bratton and Gold (2007), recruitment is the process of identifying and generating a pool of

qualified employees who have the requisite qualifications to improve organizational performance.

According to Osemeke (2012), the firm performance of the public sector is enhanced through achieving competitive advantage, where the HR is always central to these organizations. Thus the human resource have taken a leading role in improving public sector firm performance, meaning that public sector's success in achieving its objectives is now highly dependent on the skills and qualifications of its employees. More precisely, the public service would be in a position to meet it performance objectives and challenges through acquisition and utilization of highly qualified (Kamau, 2014).

Recruitment is concerned with identifying and stimulating job candidates to apply for vacant positions in in the organizations (Gold, 2007). In addition, Eze (2002) defines recruitment as an attempt by an organization to find people who are suitable with necessary qualifications to fill the vacant positions in the organization. Job candidates needs to be encouraged to by suitable conditions in the organizations to apply for available vacancies. Costello (2006) asserted that effective recruitment covers those activities that helps an organization to hire people who are qualified in terms of skills needed by the organization and who are brought in for the right jobs and at the right time. This task is undertaken to ensure that an organization is able to compete more effectively in the job market when they have the right people on various positions.

The views expressed in these definitions suggest that job candidates who meet the organization's requirements for various positions will be selected for the job. It becomes a major concern to organizations if their hiring cost is high and they fail to attract the right candidates. According to Armstrong (2006), a good recruitment practice should aim to obtain qualified applicants at the least

cost possible and who can meet the needs of the organization.

In Kenya, the public sector has been experiencing numerous changes with regard to human resource practices intended to improve efficiency, service delivery and general performance of the government and other public sector organizations (Obudo & Wario, 2015). Most prominently, the coming into force of the new Constitution of Kenya in 2010 paved way for realization of the devolved Government system, a change from the traditional centralized government system (Mwikali & Wafula, 2015). Specifically, this provides for the setting up of the County Governments (Lubale, 2012).

Statement of the problem

Human resource of an organization is the driving force to organizations performance. The growth and development of county's economy is a major concern to many county governments in Kenya. To improve performance of county government, qualified human resources need to be hired. This translates into improvement in the level of productivity of employees and subsequently to high quality of services offered. However, there is little evidence in the counties in Kenya to show that recruitment is based on best practices. Employing highly qualified personnel is a matter of concern to many organizations and recruitment and selection should take a center stage in the staffing process (Burack et al., 1980). It was observed that since County Government did not have effective recruitment practices, this affected their performance. There was need for the county governments in Kenya to put in place practices that will help to recruit the best employees in order to improve their performance. There was scarce literature that attempted to link recruitment with performance of organizations, particularly the public sector organizations such as the County governments in Kenya.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study was to establish the relationship between recruitment and performance of County Governments in Kenya. The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- To establish the relationship between internal recruitment of staff and performance of county governments in Kenya
- To assess the relationship between external recruitment of staff and performance of County governments in Kenya

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical review

Universalistic theory

The Universalistic theory helps to explain best practice model. It is based on the assumptions that when organizations adopts best HR practices in their operations, they will achieve superior performance (Luthans & Summer, 2005). The theory proposes that an organization that adopts best HR practices will improve employee performance and that of the organization. The organization is expected to experience improvement in performances, reduced, absenteeism, lower turnover rate, enhancement of job performance and improvement in the level of profits to the organization (Michington & Wilkinson, 2008). In this view, when organizations put in place measures which leads to implementation of best practices in human resources, they will enhance their performance and achieve their goals. Thus, the best practice model if implemented by organizations results in better performance (Pfeffer, 2001).

According to Becker et al (2001), high performance work systems of an organization should be linked to every organization's situation in order to achieve effective performance. These high performance work practices can only contribute to effective impact on performance if they are properly linked and

integrated with every HR system that supports the business strategy.

Human Capital theory

Human Capital theory, first proposed by Schultz (1961) was extensively developed by Becker (1964) after the realization that the growth of physical capital was only small part of growth in the growth of income. Gary Stanley Becker developed the human capital theory based on Schultz's research on return-on-investment. Becker also introduced the concept of general- purpose human capital and firm-specific human capital that is widely used by human resource development practitioners worldwide.

It is often used to explain occupational wage differentials and can be viewed in terms of the organization's ability to acquire a given skills required to achieve better performance. Therefore by investing in human capital the organization is able to have talented workforce who will feel motivated and be part of the firm (retention of employees) hence leading to organizational performance. A highly skilled employee could as well look for a much more paying job.

Empirical Review

Internal Recruitment

This refers to hiring employees from within the organization itself. When a company wants to fill vacancies, it is important to ensure that employees who are already working for an organization are given key consideration, particularly if they have the requisite skills to undertake the job. Internal people in organization include peoples who are currently on the company's payroll. This method of filling internal vacancies are important to organizations as they are able to make better use of employees who are qualifies for the existing vacancies. This source of recruitment enables the organization to make use of its qualified personnel. In addition, internal staffs

are able to progress with the organization in their careers. This provides motivation to them. According Armstrong, (2000), whenever there is a vacancy in the organization, it is important for the organization to give priority to its internal employees as these employees are well known to the management in terms of their abilities and skills. However some organizations have a practices when all positions are advertised and internal candidates are expected to compete equally with the external candidates. These practices ensure that internal candidates improve on their performance as they know that they will be subjected to completion with outside candidates.

Promotion is a practice which involves movement of employees from positions which are low in ranks in the organization to higher level ranks. It involves movement of employees to positions which have more responsibilities and which would attract higher pay and status. Many organizations have a practice of moving employees to higher position which fit their skills and abilities. By doing this, organizations are able to improve satisfaction and motivation of their employees and thus retain their services over and extended period of time. In addition, promotional opportunities to employees translate into better performance of employees as they acquire higher level skills (Sherman, Bohlander, & Snell, 1998).

A transfer is not necessarily a promotion. It involves a movement of employees horizontally or positions which do not necessarily result into status or higher pay to an individual. According to Langseth (1995), a transfer can be effected by the management when a need has risen in the department due to expansion of the department or when the department is contracting its services and there is need to move some employees to some other departments. Some transfers basically involve interchanging jobs and which also involves change in job assignments. By use of transfers, organizations are able to move

employees from departments which are overstaffed to other departments which are understaffed (Keshav, 2013).

Job posting is a practice by an organization whereby whenever there is a vacancy, the organization will put an advertisement for the positions for all the employees to apply. Employees who meet the requirements will be shortlisted and called for the interview. When job posting is used, it gives employees equal opportunity to apply for the advertised job without discriminating anybody. It is a practice which is used worldwide by organization to fill vacancies. Vacancies are announced through bulletins or company's notice boards. By using job posting method, an organization is able to save significantly the cost of commercial adverts for vacant positions. (Keshav, 2013).

When Job bidding method is used by the organization to communicate vacancies existing within the organization, the HR manager communicate to all employees in the organization through common literature which is available to employees the information pertaining to career progression an development., the kind training required for various positions and the skills they need to move up the job ladder. This information is important to employees as they are able to get the opportunity to progress in their careers and also work for the organizations in the vacant positions, hence their retention.

External Recruitment

Organizations use various source of recruitment to fill vacancies. When external recruitment is used as a way of attracting candidates, an organization will consider the use of job advertisement in newspaper, e-recruiting, headhunting which usually used to fill top management positions, recruiting agencies, educational and training institutions, employment agencies, labour office and professional recruiting firms. The external sources are used to attract

qualified candidates for a given position as they have the capacity to reach many job candidates (Beardwell, 2007; Cober & Brown, 2006). Details of these sources are discussed in this section.

Advertisement method of external recruitment has become the most common way of giving information to job candidates on existing vacancies within the organization. Organizations can either used electronic or print media to advertise their vacancies. According to Nel et al. (2009:226), Job advertisement message should be prepared in such a manner that they communicate effectively to the job candidates their ability to appeal to the job candidates elicit the need to apply for the job and hence many application are received for the advertised positions. One way to measure the effectiveness of any given advertisement is its ability to generate many applications as possible and this possible only when the message is effective enough. According to Armstrong (2006), a good job advertisement should aim to attract as many job applicant as possible, create interest in the job, and stimulate action that one should made decision to apply for the job. E-Recruitment is one of the most recent methods introduced by organizations to reach job candidates. It is also known as online recruitment whereby an organization posts its job vacancies in the company's web page and the respondents are expected to send their applications on-line. When access the companies webpage, they fill the online job application form and attach all the necessary documentation required for the job. The e organization uses a system which is able to track all the incoming applications and come up with a shortlist of the candidates. One merit of using e-recruiting is that it reaches a wider target audience and the information about the vacancy is conveyed very fast Cappelli (2001)

Employee Referrals is a method of filling job vacancies in which existing employees of the

organization are used by the management to contact people who are qualified for the job. The organizations first identify vacancies and share the information with the job candidates. This method is suitable only for hiring low cadre positions. Middle and top management positions should be advertised in order to obtain highly qualified candidates. It is increasingly becoming common for many organizations to use this method of filling vacancies since it is cheaper and does not involve advertisement cost (Rajarao, 2010).

The use of employment agencies is now becoming one of the methods highly considered by manatee organizations. Employment agents receive information from organizations about the vacancies. They then put adverts on behalf of the organization for a fee or commission they charge. One advantage for using employment agencies is that they have expertise in recruiting in a wide range of areas and can hire the best candidates. They also lock out job candidates who may try to compete for jobs as they may not have prior information about the organization. They are very professionals in their work and they also tend to be very objective when undertaking recruitment process for the organization. These agencies are known by several names such as employment brokers, private employment agents or job placement agents (Sims, 2002). When Educational and Training Establishments method is used, an organization, they maintain contacts with certain institutions which provide them with qualified personnel whenever they want to hire candidates. Organizations mostly maintain contacts with Universities and training institutions to provide them with the qualified personnel they need. It is cheaper for organizations to use this method as it does not involve costly adverts. The institutions will also provide qualified personnel for them to remain preferred choices by organizations. Fresh College graduated or

management trainees are mostly hired using this method (Nel et al., 2009:227).

Performance

In this part we review empirical literature on the relationship between recruitment and selection practice on performance. The opening up of societies including the liberalization of country politics places pressure on governments in power to deliver on their promises to the citizens in a bid to be given more mandate to govern. Consequently, individual performance which ultimately translates into organizational performance is a topical issue in today's business environment, to the extent that organizations go to great lengths to appraise and manage it (Armstrong & Barron, 1998). Performance as defined by Hellriegel et al. (1999), is the level of an individual's work achievement after having exerted effort while organizational performance can be viewed as the achievement of set goals and attendant objectives by meeting the expectations of all stakeholders least of which being the customers.

Other researchers Terpstra and Rozell (1993) found a strong relationship between the recruitment processes, tools used for selection and the use of formal selection procedures and profit performance of a firm. Other studies have shown that implementing an effective staffing process is positively related to organizational performance (Syed & Jama, 2012). Koch and McGrath (1996), also found a positive relationship between recruitment and selection procedures with improvement in labour productivity as cited in Asiedu-Appiah et al. (2013). Studies by (Foot and Hook, 1996) established that the main purpose to undertake recruitment and selection in an organization enable the job applicants to be hired in the positions they qualify for. This shows that recruitment and selection activities help to predict future performance of those who are hired and their period of stay in the

organization. On this basis, employees of an organization should be partners in strategic planning to determine the types of skills and competencies that are required to achieve organizational objectives (Cascio, 1991). Bones (1996), remarked that “performance does not need to be managed, rather, it needs to be encouraged, developed, supported and sustained. In this study, performance of county governments in Kenya is measured from the perspective of client (customer) experience. Specifically, the client/ customer in this study is the citizen who seeks public services from the county government.

The framework which is commonly used to measure performance is balanced scorecard (BSC) (Kaplan, 2010). The framework has four perspectives: financial, internal processes, learning and growth and customer perspectives. In view of the focus of this study – customer experience of performance – the descriptors of performance from the perspective of the customer (in our case the citizen seeking public service) is adopted.

Conceptual framework

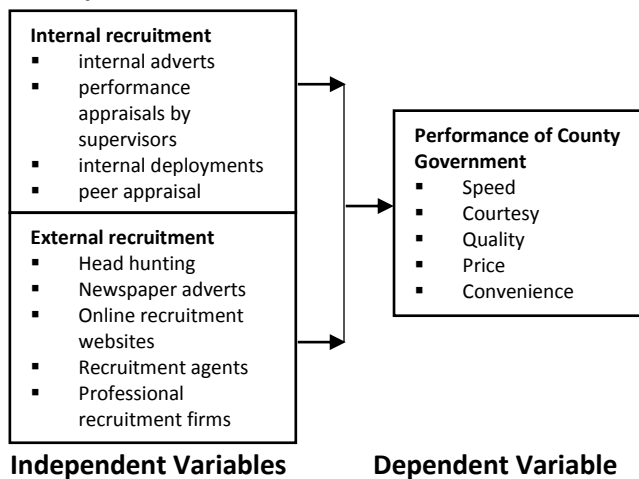


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher’s conceptualizations

Performance of the county government was measured from the customer perspective based on customer experience regard service attributes namely, speed, courtesy by the county official providing the service, quality, price, and convenience to the customer visiting the county service delivery point.

Internal recruitment practices employed by the county government in recruiting staff from within the county was examined. The extent of use of internal adverts, use of performance appraisals by supervisors, filling of positions by internal deployments, and use of peer appraisal of candidates will be measured under this variable. Other practices of filling positions in organizations are promotions, and transfers, while methods of recruiting include job posting, and job bidding

The external recruitment practice at the counties was measured through the frequency of use of head hunting, newspaper adverts, online recruitment websites, use of recruitment agents, and use of professional recruitment firms

METHODOLOGY

According to Senaji (2012), research design comprises the approach taken and methods used to answer a research question. Descriptive design was used though correlation analysis in this study. The study was a census of all the 47 counties in Kenya targeting three human resource officials in each county and randomly selected customers (citizens) from those who sought and received services at the time of data collection in each of those counties. Structured questionnaires with statements on recruitment and performance anchored on a five-point Likert scale was used for data collection.

RESULTS

Distribution of responses regarding the methods of staff recruitment was represented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Method of staff recruitment

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	External recruitment (ER)	2	10.5	10.5	10.5
	Internal recruitment (IR)	1	5.3	5.3	15.8
	Both internal and External recruitment (I&E)	15	78.9	78.9	94.7
	I&E and Promotions	1	5.3	5.3	100
	Total	19	100	100	

The Counties practice both internal and external recruitment, but with minimal recruitment through promotions. Majority, (78.9%) practice both internal and external recruitment.

Recruitment practices in County Governments

The extent of the recruitment practices namely Internal Recruitment and External Recruitment was established using descriptive statistics. Summary statistics and individual item statistics were presented below.

Table 2: Summary of the extent of Recruitment Practices

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness	Kurtosis
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Internal recruitment (IRAV)	19	1.9	4.0	2.946	0.159	0.6929	-0.36
External recruitment (ERAV)	19	1.8	3.4	2.611	0.0943	0.4112	0.012
Experience of service provided (EXSPAV)	15	1	5.0	3.480	0.3029	1.173	-1.104
Valid N (listwise)	15						

Table 2 showed that internal recruitment was practiced more than external recruitment. On the whole, there were low levels of implementation of

the structured recruitment practices. The practice of individual recruitment practices were presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Description of Individual recruitment practices and performance

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Std. Error	Kurtosis	Std. Error
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
<i>IR_1</i>	19	3.53	1.124	-1.254	0.524	1.15	1.014
<i>IR_2</i>	19	2.95	1.268	0.474	0.524	-1.179	1.014
<i>IR_3</i>	19	3.63	0.597	-1.443	0.524	1.38	1.014
<i>IR_4</i>	18	1.61	0.608	0.408	0.536	-0.513	1.038
<i>IR_5</i>	19	3.53	1.264	-0.066	0.524	-1.707	1.014
<i>IR_6</i>	19	3.32	1.493	-0.16	0.524	-1.624	1.014
<i>IR_7</i>	19	3.47	1.349	-0.545	0.524	-0.833	1.014
<i>IR_8</i>	18	1.44	0.616	1.085	0.536	0.387	1.038
Internal recruitment Average	19	2.946	0.6929	-0.36	0.524	-1.169	1.014
<i>ER_1</i>	19	1.58	1.071	2.2	0.524	5.092	1.014
<i>ER_2</i>	19	4.37	0.496	0.593	0.524	-1.856	1.014
<i>ER_3</i>	18	3.39	1.335	-0.317	0.536	-1.424	1.038
<i>ER_4</i>	18	2.00	0.686	1.23	0.536	3.958	1.038
<i>ER_5</i>	19	1.63	0.955	1.717	0.524	2.469	1.014
External recruitment Average	19	2.6	0.4031	0.051	0.524	0.066	1.014
<i>EXSP1</i>	15	3.40	1.183	-1.218	0.58	0.602	1.121
<i>EXSP2</i>	15	3.47	1.187	-1.091	0.58	0.979	1.121
<i>EXSP3</i>	15	3.67	1.291	-1.115	0.58	0.758	1.121
<i>EXSP4</i>	14	3.64	1.447	-0.865	0.597	-0.428	1.154
<i>EXSP5</i>	15	3.13	1.125	-0.643	0.58	0.206	1.121
Quality service delivered	15	3.48	1.173	-1.104	0.58	0.578	1.121
Valid N (listwise)	9						

Table 3 showed the descriptive statistics which indicated that the recruitment practices were not quite being implemented particularly the internal recruitment (IR) and the external recruitment (ER) practices since their means were less than 3 (IRAV: M=2.95, SD=0.69; ERAV: M=2.60, SD=0.40) on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 = strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree (3 = somewhat agree). Lastly, the satisfaction of the clients with the services delivered was at M= 3.45 and SD=1.17 which implied that there was wide variation in the responses regarding the experienced quality of service delivered to the citizens at the county governments in Kenya.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relationship between recruitment and performance in Kenyan County governments was examined. While descriptive statistics comprising of means and standard deviation were used to determine the extent of implementation of these practices. Chi-square and correlation analysis were used to examine the association and strength of the relationship between the study variables. It was found that there was significant association between the HR practices (internal recruitment, external recruitment) and performance of County

governments as measured using the quality of service experienced in terms of speed.

It was concluded that Internal recruitment was strongly and significantly correlated with price of services provided at the county governments. Both internal and external recruitment had no significant relationship with perceived quality of service at the counties.

Recommendations

Counties should adopt best HR practices with regard to recruitment since there is a strong association and relationship between these practices and quality of services performed by counties.

Since both internal and external recruitment were not found to be either significantly related with quality of service or to significantly influence quality of service (performance), further studies should be conducted on a larger sample and in other settings to ascertain why this is the case.

Suggestions for further studies

Further studies should be conducted covering more counties with a view to among other things determining the reasons for low adoption of best practice and recruitment practices. Due to the small sample in the study, a larger sample should be used in future studies to enable generalization of findings.

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