



RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PRACTICES AND THE PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANISATIONS: THE CASE OF THE OFFICE NATIONAL DES TELECOMMUNICATIONS, BURUNDI

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this study was to assess the recruitment and selection practices and the service performance of Public Sector organizations with the case study of ONATEL (a public communication operator, Burundi). It was about knowing recruitment and selection policies and practices, the influence of recruitment and selection process, the challenges associated with it and ways to help improve human resource planning and development in ONATEL. Thus, the aim of this research was to examine and to understand the efficiency, effectiveness and the consequences of the implementation of recruitment processes. 150 respondents was the target population drawn from employees of ONATEL Main Branch in Bujumbura regardless of gender, age, education level and positions. The study adopted the universal sampling technique based on both probability and non-probability sampling while the sample size was 150 employees. Also the study used questionnaires to collect data while the Content Validity Index was used to test the validity and reliability of the instruments. The result was drawn on the basis of data collected; data was coded and recorded using Microsoft Excel and SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) analysis. This is a quantitative and qualitative research therefore the finding was presented in simple descriptive statistic tables, chart and percentages to emphasize the respondent's views. Multiple regression analysis was used and conclusion was given. The findings of this study indicate that the use of appropriate recruitment process and selection methods enable organization to recruit committed and talented employees which improve the performance of organization. Also the study found that employers are challenged by a big number of candidates during recruitment process, lack of professional recruiter and other factors. The study concluded that recruitment and selection process significantly affects the performance of public sector organizations in Burundi and recommended that the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Employment should re-establish and give power to the National Commission of Recruitment to ensure that policies and laws governing recruitment are respected and implemented by all public institutions; should also adopt the use of information technology in human resource management by establishing the Online Human Resource Software to promote transparency in recruitment process; the study also recommended that*

the management of ONATEL should use professional recruiter and should regularly organize employee education, training and refresher courses to motivate and increase the performance of employees.

Key Words: Recruitment, Selection and Organizational Performance

I. INTRODUCTION

Human resource management has become an integral part in today's competitive world. The efficiency and effectiveness of human resource management leads to the growth of the company, without a good human resource planning, the progress of an organization is very difficult. Considering the progress made up to the 21st Century, Global workforce is the basis of competition which has the importance of managing personnel at a different level, because no matter where you work, it is not possible for an organisation to thrive without a proper human resource management. The growth and success of any business or organization is directly connected to the performance of its employees said Junaid, 2017.

A successful recruitment and selection process can ensure that an institution hires the right candidate for a specific job. According to Catano *et al.* 2010, organizational performance can be improved by an appropriate work environment. It can also be the product of an effective recruitment and selection process. Although, researchers have always indicated that human resources practitioners do not follow appropriate recruitment and selection process said Aswathappa, (2007).

The selection process indicates that there are a great number of applicants than the number of vacancies available. Therefore, selection can be hypothesised either by selecting fit candidates or rejecting unsuitable candidates; the basic impression in the selection process is to request information about the candidates to unsure their suitability for the job. The wrong type of recruitment and selection process may not have the effectiveness of the institution in producing great talents. In addition, certain problems exist in the recruitment and selection processes such as nebulous job descriptions, unqualified staff conducting the interviews, and many others. These problems affect the productivity and the performance of the organization. Therefore, Vijay (2011) concluded that to escape these types of problems, the Unit of human resources management must know the job position and find the best recruitment tools to attract and employ the best applicant available on the market. Also, Richardson (2011) certifies that as the labor market becomes more competitive and the skills available become more diverse, recruiters should be more careful in their choices. In fact, poor recruitment decisions can have negative long-term results.

Recruitment and selection are major human resources practices within organizations both public and private for effective management and performance of institution. Despite this, Kaplan & Norton, (2004) concluded that it is a mandatory for public institutions to have effective recruitment and selection processes for better accountability and transparency in public institutions management. Public institutions provide public goods to its people because it is the responsibility of the public institutions to ensure the well-being and justice of all; it is for this reason that the public institutions should have an efficient and effective human capital to provide those services effectively. Government agencies need qualified staff to provide services so, it is very important to find the right candidate for the right position. Hence the importance of recruitment and selection is indeed great with reference to government organizations; for effective and efficient delivery of services, it is essential that they engage a balance number of skilled human resource strength. Furthermore, the most important phase in recruiting and selecting employees is job analysis (Davidson & Newman, 2007).

As Opatha (2010) explains, recruitment is the way to find and attract people who are qualified enough to apply for work opportunities in an organization. It is an array of effort that an organization uses to attract competitors who have the required skills and personalities. The general objective of recruitment, as Gamage (2014)

indicates, is to provide the organization a variety of possibly skilled candidates. The nature of human resources in an organisation excessively relies on the nature of the candidates selected taking into account that the organization will select employees from those who have been recruited. The success of the various recruitments and employee selection criteria has been the subject of research for more than 60 years (Sinha & Thaly, 2013). The competence has been mainly assessed by examining turnover, job endurance and job efficiency rates as well as organizational matters such as recommendation of current staff, internal job postings and rehiring of former employees (Zottoli & Wanous, 2000).

According to Kaplan and Norton (2004), techniques was established to help organisation in the process of recruitment, using effectively and efficiently those techniques allow the organisation to find qualified and skilled staff selected in a huge pool of talents. Based on the objectives of human resource planning there is no small goal, each step requires special attention because they are all complementary and the negligence or misuse of one makes the next one less efficient

Today Burundi has four telecommunications companies which comprise of U-com-Econet Ltd, Smart Ltd, ONATEL/ONAMOB Ltd and Lumitel Ltd. This study only focused on the Office National de Telecommunications "ONATEL" which is a Public Industrial and Commercial Company in Burundi. The Human Resource Management is in charge of attracting talent, selecting them in order to find the best perfect fit on the position, providing trainings to boost their capabilities, evaluate performance and rewarding them based on their performance. For a period of 41 years, ONATEL had 14 General Managers, only 4 Managers were able to complete their term, Also ONATEL has recorded an increase in staff numbers due to the various recruitments of new employees to replace retirements, deaths, resignations, dismissals, layoffs, etc.

Statement of the Problem

In Burundi, the manual of human resource in public institutions specify the proper ways through which recruitment process is organized. This was considered an important attribute of performance since effective recruitment and selection system is much likely to come up with the best skilled, trained and qualified employees. There is a link between human resource practices, competitive strategy and performance. The success of an organization is directly affected by the performance of those who work for this company said Soebbing et al, 2015.

Soliman and Spooner, (2000) argued that recruitment is crucial to any management process and its failure can rise complications to any organisation as well as a negative effect on its productivity and unsuitable level of worker or talents. Also, Garnett, Nganou and Brow cited in the World Bank report (2013), argued that staff management is not strategic in Burundi; Institutional arrangements limit the application of effective human resource management; this responsibility belongs to a directorate of the Ministry of the Civil Service, Labor and Social Security, which previously had the status of ministry before its merger with the Ministry of Labor and Social Security by presidential decree. By giving the public service less authority and stature, the decree weakened the government's human resources management function

Mastrangelo et al., (2014) argued that the effectiveness of an organization lies in the competence of each of its employees, and it can be explained by the nature of the company leadership. Thus employee performance and leadership skills are factors that contribute to the performance of organisation.

In the current system, recruitment is done by an ad hoc basis. Although there is a national recruitment commission, there are no established personnel levels set for ministries; recruitment is therefore not carried out in accordance with an official organic framework. Most people doubt the effectiveness in recruitment and

selection process because many appointments to the public service continue to be based on political and ethnic criteria rather than on merit.

As result the rate of corporate bankruptcy has increased and organizational performance has been poor due to low employee productivity and performance. Despite the conflict between stakeholders and employees, employees have an essential role to play in ensuring organizations to have a competitive advantage over competitors in achieving goals and objectives. Therefore, this study sought to establish the effect of recruitment and selection practices and the service performance in public institution with reference to ONATEL-Burundi.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Recruitment is the process of generating a pool of competent individuals to apply for employment within an organization. It is a set of activities an organization uses to attract job candidates who have the needed abilities and attitudes. Evidence has shown that larger corporations are more likely than smaller organizations in implementing sophisticated recruitment processes (Newman & Lyon, 2009). Kaplan & Norton (2004) in their research on measuring the strategies readiness of intangible assets in United States of America, explained that organizational culture refers to a concept that gives a description of experiences, values, beliefs and attitudes of an institution and showed that the quality of human resource in an organization highly depends on the quality of applicants attracted because organization is going to select employees from those who were attracted. Davidson and Newman (2007) in their research on recruiting and staffing in the public sector directed by Equa Terra from United States of America mentioned that HRM as an organizational function focuses on effective and efficient utilization of the human resources through recruitment, management and providing direction to the employees to achieve organizational objectives.

According to Costello cited by Hiew Hon Hoi (2013) who conducted a research on the Effectiveness of Recruitment in Selecting Qualified Talents in Service Organization in Malaysia, argued that recruitment is explained as a process used to obtain skilled people who want to provide service to an organization at the right time and in the right place thus it benefits both people and organization. Knowing what factors influence productivity is a prerequisite to improving performance. According to Rapa and Kauffman (2005) the commitment of the top management is a prerequisite in performance contracting implementation this commitment becomes a positive significant to employees and other organizational members. Many researchers have been conducted in the field of recruitment and selection process and concluded that the effectiveness of recruitment and selection processes has a positive correlation with organizational performance; however, there is insufficient empirically derived information in Burundi regarding recruitment and selection practices and the service performance. It is in this context that this study seeks to examine the influence of recruitment and selection practices on the service performance in public institutions with reference to ONATEL Burundi.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design and target population

According to Flick (2012), the nature of the research design indicates the nature of the research and gives research structure. The design of this research was based on both qualitative and quantitative data and adopted descriptive and analytical research design to assess the influence of recruitment and selection practices on the service performance in public institutions. The researcher used both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were obtained through questionnaire and interview while secondary data were gathered from different sources like magazines, Newspapers, text books, journals, reports and internet and publications. The target population of this research was all employees of ONATEL Main Branch. The total Population comprised

150 employees regardless of gender and age. The techniques selected for this research was the universal sampling technique based on both probability and non-probability sampling.

Sample Size

The sample size of this research was 150 employees.

Data Collection Instruments

The researcher used questionnaires and interviews for primary data while documentary review was used as secondary data. The researcher designed a set of questions and interview guide concerning recruitment, selection and performance of public institutions. The questionnaires included both open and closed questions. The researcher also reviewed literature from journals, textbooks and reports and looked at different documents and reports from ONATEL. The questionnaires were checked for both validity and reliability.

Data Processing and Analysis

The data got from respondents were coded; the Microsoft excel program was used to organize, enter and process data and, for easy analysis and interpretation Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used. The collected data was presented using tables while for analysis and interpretation the researcher used percentages and frequencies ascertained from the views given by respondents. Also multiple regression analysis was used to predict relationship between independent and dependent variables.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter covers the results of the research and analysis of the data collected from respondents and interviewees. Data was analyzed and evaluated according to the research objectives. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to analyze data and generate descriptive statistics like means, standard deviation, percentage and tables. The research targeted all employees of ONATEL Main Branch. 143 questionnaires were distributed and 7 Managers depending on their availability answered all questions through interviews, but 114 questionnaires were completed and returned which represent a response rate of 84,6%. The Findings showed that among 121 respondents, 57.03% were females whereas 42.97% were males. The findings obtained showed that 77,7% respondents were in the age bracket of active population and 67,8% had obtained university level while 32,2% had reached secondary level also the majority of respondents 85% have been working with the organization for a period between two and plus eight years.

Recruitment and Selection Practices and Process in ONATEL

The first objective was to found out the recruitment and selection practices in ONATEL. The study sought to verify the awareness of recruitment policy, know the means used to publish a job vacancy and the measures taken by managers to follow the recruitment process. The findings showed that ONATEL uses some of the best practices to advertise job position yet the job applications are still done in the traditional way in public institution, 79.3% of respondents are aware of the policy for recruitment in public institution but more than half of respondents (63,6%) revealed that some institutions do not respect the existing regulations especially the respect of deadlines during recruitment process.

The analysis found that there are common challenges in recruitment and selection practices in Public Sector Organizations in Burundi as shown in the table below, there is a general disregard for the policies and procedures governing recruitment and selection of public servants, Inability to select the best candidates due to the large number of job applicant, lack of good candidate (there is a gap between the current skills of graduates and the skills required on the labour market), difficult to get professional recruiter, external pressure, lack of training and salary structure.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neutral
The Influence of Politics and Ethnicity	76%	17,40%	5,80%	0,80%
A big number of candidates for available position	59,30%	34,50%	2,50%	4,10%
Lack of training and salary structure	28,60%	47,20%	14,60%	9,50%
Difficult to get professional recruiter	44,40%	28,10%	22,30%	5,50%
Lack of good candidates on the job market	23,30%	29,50%	46%	1,50%

Ways to Improve Recruitment and Selection Process

Respondents were asked to suggest ways to improve recruitment and selection process, a big number of respondents 75.2% suggested the use of ICT in recruitment especially use of online application while 24.8% suggested to impose some fines for recruiting institutions who bypass the regulations. The use of online application could provide many advantages as compared with the traditional techniques; it is very important to consider the use of this technology to reorganize the traditional recruitment and selection process through appropriate decision-making techniques. With that both the effectiveness and the efficiency of the processes could be increased and the quality of the recruitment and selection decisions will be improved.

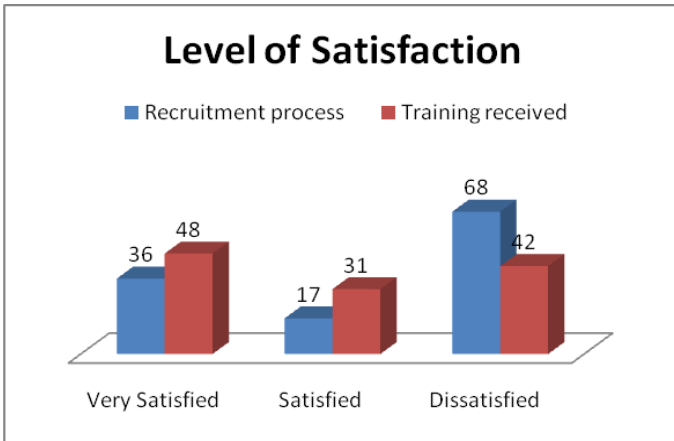
Perception of staff on recruitment and selection process in ONATEL

The research has shown that employee/applicant's impression of the recruiter exerts a significant influence on their perceptions. The findings show that employed people are satisfied with the quality of recruitment and selection practices and processes while those seeking employment strongly believe that favoritism exists and have suspicions about the transparency and integrity of the recruitment process. The majority of respondents 52,7% disagreed with the effectiveness of recruitment and selection in public institutions, 8,8% strongly agreed, 38,5% were neutral with the statement.

Public institutions in Burundi and in ONATEL particularly rely on their ad-hoc commission to carry out recruitment whenever there are job vacancies to fill; this commission is formed when the need of recruitment arises, but they need to be more accountable and have adequate information on which to base their decisions because some critics opine that politicians and top managers can influence members of the ad hoc commission. It is very important that all candidates are given a fair chance during the process, the majority of respondents 79,2% were not satisfied with the recruitment process in Public Institutions and 15,6% were satisfied with this fact while 5.2% were neutral with the statement.

Employee's Satisfaction on the Recruitment Process and Training in Public Institutions

Satisfaction on recruitment and selection process was analysed in terms of applicant's expectation and perception of the quality of services at all phases of recruitment and selection process while the satisfaction on training received was analysed in terms of employee development. The respondents' opinion and their percentage are shown below in figure.



Applicants may already have a perception of your organization, whether by reputation or by name recognition. In both cases, it's during the recruiting process that people develop their perception of your organization, regarding the level of satisfaction of employees, 56,2% of respondents said that they were not satisfied with the recruitment and selection process in public institutions, 29,8% were very satisfied with the statement while 14% respondents were satisfied.

Some respondents expressed concern that nepotism and corruption are common in the process of recruitment while others noticed that the process is not simplified some document need to be multiplied several times and is expensive to travel for submitting applications when you are not living in Bujumbura. According to the training received, 34,7% of employees were not satisfied 39,7% of respondents were very satisfied while 25,6% were satisfied.

Effect of Recruitment and Selection Process on the Performance of ONATEL

85,1% of respondents confirmed that recruitment and selection process affect positively or negatively the performance of ONATEL. 9,9% of them disagreed with the fact while 5% strongly disagreed with the statement. The results of the study showed that recruitment and selection criteria have significant effect on the organization’s performance. Attracting and getting a suitable candidate is an important goal to any organization, and no organisation can succeed without qualified and committed employees; Therefore, organisation needs to attract and hire the most talented and committed employee as the job market becomes more competitive, recruiter need to be more selective in their choices since poor recruitment can generate a long term negative effect like a higher cost of training, poor performance and a higher rate of turnover.

Ways to improve Organisational Performance

The organisation that succeed are the ones who are focused on the customer. Besides, organizational performance comes with job satisfaction. The following are the suggestion of respondents to improve organizational performance

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Customer Satisfaction	56	46,3
	Improve the quality of Products and services	28	23,1
	Use new technology	37	30,6
	Total	121	100,0

Among respondents, 46,3% suggested that ONATEL should focused on customer satisfaction in order to give them what they want, 23,1% of respondents suggested to improve the quality of products and services; ONATEL should find success by creating new product or services and increasing product usage within current and new customer markets and 30,6% suggested that ONATEL could create new technology to give customer a more flexible and cost-effective way to control automated environment.

Regression Analysis

Table showing the relationship between recruitment and selection process and performance of public institutions in ONATEL

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,852 ^a	,726	,710	,277

a. Predictors: (Constant), Factors that affect performance of public institutions, Effectiveness of recruitment and selection in Public Institutions, Neglect of recruitment and selection process

From the regression model above the value of adjusted R^2 is 0,710 this indicates that performance of public institutions explains 71% of the recruitment and selection process. The remaining 29% would be explained by other variable which are not included in this study.

ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10,797	3	3,599	46,751	,000 ^b
	Residual	4,080	53	,077		
	Total	14,877	56			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of public institutions

b. Predictors: (Constant), Factors that affect performance of Public Sector Organizations, Effectiveness of recruitment and selection in Public Sector organizations, Neglect of recruitment and selection process

The findings of this study confirm that there is a statistically positive significant relationship between recruitment and selection process and the performance of Public Sector Organisations in Burundi and that the model is a good fit for the data. This result is in line with the findings of Gamage (2014) and Sang (2005) who showed a positive and significant relationship between recruitment and selection and performance of an organization and Syed & Jama (2012) who have shown that the implementation of an effective recruitment and selection process is positively linked to organizational performance.

V. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Findings

The study revealed the following results in terms of research objectives set:

The study outlined the general principles applicable to recruitment and selection, the findings showed that ONATEL applied some of the best practices to advertise job position, some respondents appreciated the recruitment and selection process but there is a general disregard for the policies and procedures governing recruitment and selection of public servants, inability to select the best candidates due to the large number of job applicant, difficult to get professional recruiter, external pressure and lack of training.

The study aims to capture employees/applicants perception in the process of recruitment and selection. The findings show that employed people are satisfied with the quality of recruitment and selection practices and processes while those seeking employment strongly believe that favouritism exists and have suspicions about the transparency and integrity of the recruitment process.

The study showed that recruitment and selection criteria have significant effect on the organization's performance. The main findings of the effect of recruitment and selection process on the performance of ONATEL are the following:

Inexperienced and unqualified people are appointed to positions due to non-compliance with recruitment and selection policies;

Recruitment and selection in public institutions can be easily manipulated; hence interference from politicians and top manager, ethnic, nepotism are among the practices cited as different forms of manipulation;

Lack of adequate technological equipment and limited user experience affect service delivery and employee performance.

Conclusion

Recruitment and selection is a serious issue because the success of any organization depends on the quality of its employees that have been recruited into the organization through recruitment and selection processes. The following conclusions were made based on the study findings after assessing the influence of recruitment and selection process on the performance of public institution in Burundi. The study concluded that recruitment and selection practices and processes in public institutions in Burundi are not effective. A good recruitment and selections practices and process enable the organization to find suitable and qualified employees which can improve the performance of organization. Relying on recommendation and the influence of political and ethnicity as the predominant mode of selection could lead to favoritism. Again with this mode, the public institutions might not be able to attract the best candidates.

The manual of human resource in public institutions specify the proper ways through which recruitment process is organized in Burundi (Burundi Gov.). However, there can be no effective if employers do not follow policies and practices, thus it is important that managers understand the objectives, policies and practices used for recruitment and selection.

In a constantly changing and evolving world, the online recruitment has proven to be very effective for recruiting. The use of Online Human Resource Software can offer unlimited access for job applicants regardless of their physical location; it can also save time and money for both sides (employer and jobseeker). The findings of this research revealed that 75.2% of respondents suggested the use of ICT in recruitment and 24.8% of respondents suggested to impose some fines for recruiting institutions who bypass the regulations. This technology will allow applicants to subscribe and receive notifications when new positions become available in public institutions, to apply online and track the progress of their applications. Also, it will improve the efficiency and reduce cases of corruption in the public service because applicants do not have to take their documents physically to the recruiting institutions.

Based on the findings, 79.2% of respondents insist that all candidates are not given equal opportunities during the process of recruitment in ONATEL; The constitution of an ad-hoc commission in organization during recruitment and selection allows task to be done but provides little in the way of accountability because candidates could have doubt on their performance and seriousness. However, this internal recruitment committee is not sufficient there is a need of a private consultancy firm or an independent public institution which can provide support to the ad hoc commission to ensure quality in the process of recruitment

Although there is a commission in the Ministry Public Service, Labour and Employment responsible for monitoring the implementation of policies, principles and laws governing recruitments and management of public servants, most people doubt his effectiveness because it cannot achieve its goals as long as it is not an independent body. In their work, Garnett, Nganou and Brown (2012) suggested the reestablishment of the National Recruitment Commission in Burundi as the central agency responsible for executing government recruitment. This institution could continuously monitor and ensures that appropriate recruitment systems are in place in the public service and undertakes the necessary reforms, as needed, to ensure a fair and impartial recruitment process based on the principles of equity, transparency and good governance.

The study concluded that recruitment and selection process significantly affect the performance of public institutions in Burundi

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made on the basis of the findings of the study:

To build a high quality public administration capable of supporting the implementation of an economic development program, the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Employment should:

Re-establish and give power to the National Commission of Recruitment as an independent agency for recruitment to ensure that policies, principles and laws governing recruitment and administration of public service are respected and implemented by all public institutions; to verify whether the public institutions recruit employees based on the official organic framework and using a transparent and equitable selection approach to give equal opportunity to all citizens and establish a strict system for punishing those who bypass laws, regulations governing the recruitment process.

Adopt the use of information technology in human resource management by establishing the Online Human Resource Software to promote transparency in the process of recruiting and selecting public servants

As we move into the 21st century, it is becoming absolutely clear that the effective management of an organization, human resource is a major source of competitive advantage and may even be the most important determinant of an organization performance over the long term, ONATEL should be based on the candidates' ability to fulfill their professional responsibilities rather than taking into account the influence of political issues which may lead to the organizational inefficiency, also the human resource department in ONATEL should regularly organize training, seminar, and refresher courses so that employees are constantly informed of the growing market trends and develop their career.

The study recommends that future researchers should conduct studies in any other institutions (public or private) to determine the influence of recruitment and selection on organizational performance in order to understand more the impact of this issue as well as conducting a research on the impact of technology in recruitment and selection process.

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