ASSESSMENT OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES AND JOB SATISFACTION IN THE LAKE REGION ECONOMIC BLOC COUNTY GOVERNMENTS, KENYA

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Abstract: The contemporary business environment is becoming dynamic and complex. Organizations focus on improving efficiency and effectiveness by deploying well-structured recruitment strategies to attract and retain qualified people. Competitive human resources are a critical component for the success of any organization. Suitable recruitment strategies might aid in getting quality and productive individuals and alleviate problems such as performance, absenteeism and attrition. This study assessed the relationship between recruitment strategies and employees' job satisfaction in the Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB) County Governments in Kenya. The study was anchored on the equity theory and affective event theory. The study employed both descriptive and correlational research designs. The target population for the study was 14,361 employees working in three county governments: Kisumu, Kakamega and Bomet. Krejcie and Morgan's formula was used to get a sample size of 374 employees who participated in the study. Primary data was collected using structured questionnaires, analyzed using percentages and regression models, and presented in tables. The study findings indicate that there was a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between recruitment strategies and job satisfaction in the Lake Region Economic Bloc County Governments (B=0.821, p=.000). The study recommends that County governments should embrace recruitment strategies based on integrity, transparency, and inclusivity to increase job satisfaction. Further, more studies should be undertaken in the private sector to assess the relationship between recruitment strategies and job satisfaction in Kenya.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Lake Region Economic Bloc County Governments, Kenya, Recruitment Strategies.

I. INTRODUCTION

Recruitment strategies, a pivotal factor in any organization's success, are currently in the spotlight (Sarikaya, 2021). The recognition that exceptional employees are the backbone of organizational success and longevity has spurred organizations to go above and beyond to meet employee needs and ensure their contentment. These strategies act as a portal for potential

employees to enter organizations, raising awareness of job openings (Slavkovic, Pavlovic & Simic 2018) and outlining the unique requirements for these roles.

The foundation of recruitment strategies is articulating organizational objectives on the prerequisites for effective job performance (Barratt, 2019). These objectives serve as the blueprint for the recruitment process, directing it towards attracting suitably qualified individuals genuinely interested in the available positions. Miheso, Manyasi, and Wanjere (2019) stress that the execution of recruitment with a focus on prospective candidates' knowledge, skills, and abilities leads to a significant reduction in employee attrition rates and a substantial increase in organizational citizenship.

In the contemporary era, organizations typically employ two distinct recruitment strategies: internal and external (Sutanto, 2016). Internal recruitment involves leveraging existing staff to fill vacant positions. External recruitment, on the other hand, concentrates on attracting talent from outside the organization. In internal recruitment, vacancies are usually advertised through company notice boards, internal mail, and company memos. External recruitment strategies, however, encompass organizations sourcing potential candidates through partnerships with educational institutions, internships, employment agencies, employee referrals, job fairs, and networking at trade shows or conferences (Mbugua, Waiganjo & Njeru, 2015). The aim of recruitment is to attract suitably qualified individuals to express interest in the vacancies (Azmi, 2019). The efficacy of recruitment is gauged by the extent to which it efficiently and effectively attracts qualified candidates (Bhoganadam & Rao, 2014).

According to Azmi (2019), the strategy employed in recruitment to a greater extent depends on the position the organization wants to fill; for base-level/entry-level positions, recent graduates with limited experience are sourced from outside the organization (Azmi, 2019). On the other hand, internal recruitment is suitable for middle-level, technical, junior executive, and senior administrative positions. For senior executive positions, external recruitment-headhunting is preferable because of the desire to acquire scarce and highly talented individuals. Successful organizations use blended methods to acquire suitable candidates; they use both internal and external recruitment methods (Greene, 2020).

Job satisfaction, a crucial factor in organizational success, represents the level of contentment employees have with job aspects (Huang, 2020). Fisher (2010) asserts that job satisfaction is the extent to which employees express happiness with various aspects of their place of work. Research has shown that organizational happenings are not independent; they influence employees' feelings and attitudes (Cherry, 2019). Therefore, organizations must ensure that workplace occurrences are acceptable to employees to elicit positive attitudes and promote job satisfaction, a pressing issue that can significantly impact the organization's overall success.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The repercussions of recruitment strategies organizations apply determine the social and moral obligations of organizations-ethical recruitment. Ethical recruitment goes beyond legal compliance and aims to appreciate all candidates who express interest in the job. As a result, organizations are keen on deploying recruitment strategies that are positive and objective to meet moral and social obligations. Sarikaya (2021) notes that fair recruitment attracts suitable candidates and improves the organizational brand. Success in recruitment has a ripple effect on selection by ensuring that the best-qualified candidates from the pool generated in recruitment get job offers. Good recruitment strategies enhance human resource capacity and propagate staff stability (Sarikaya, 2021).

Alrhaimi and Alhumshry (2015) conducted a study on the influence of internal recruitment on job satisfaction in Mobile enterprises in Jordan. The research findings unequivocally demonstrated that internal recruitment positively and significantly impact on job satisfaction. Similarly, Anwar and Shukur (2015) examined the effect of recruitment on employee satisfaction at Ihsan Dogramci Bilkent Erbil College. Their study findings strongly indicated that the recruitment process was a robust predictor of job satisfaction.

Owino (2017) notes that flawed recruitment strategies are disruptive, costly, and counter-productive in Kenyan county governments. In Kenyan counties, the recruitment process faces widespread favouritism, nepotism, corruption, and inadequacy of qualified human resources (Chebet, 2015; Plimo, 2016; Ndegwa, 2019). Consequently, the challenges counties face are skills mismatch, low morale, high turnover rates, and legal suits, which hamper the realization of organizational outcomes (Chebet, 2015; Kibet, 2016; Mwikali & Gichinga, 2016). This study sought to assess the relationship between recruitment strategies and job satisfaction in the Lake region economic bloc county governments and recommend the best recruitment strategies to enhance job satisfaction.

III. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

To assess the relationship between recruitment strategies and job satisfaction in Lake Region Economic Bloc County Governments

IV. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

 H_{01} : Recruitment strategies do not have a statistically significant relationship with job satisfaction in the Lake Region Economic Bloc County Governments in Kenya.

V. THEORETICAL REVIEW

The study was founded on the equity theory and affective event theory.

Equity Theory

Stacy Adams (1965) established the equity theory that stresses on the employee's perception of how they are treated in their organizations and comparing it to treatment other workers receive within or in comparable organizations (Armstrong, 2003). The equity theory asserts that the perception of lack of fairness in organizational processes causes distress in employees. As a result, employees may consider taking action to restore fairness. According to the equity theory, expectations of fairness in recruitment strategies lead to varied behavioural outcomes (Adams, 1965). In essence, a perception of fairness in the recruitment strategies leads to satisfaction; unfairness leads to dissatisfaction.

The theory suited the study in exploring the strategies for recruitment and satisfaction of workers. The study demonstrated this perspective by exploring the recruitment process whereby companies remain transparent and objective in the whole recruitment process (Bright, 2022). Here, equity theory explains the significance of companies maintaining fairness in their recruitment processes to eliminate any discrepancies that workers might perceive in comparing the ideal and reality, impacting their satisfaction at work (Bright, 2022). Accordingly, companies with satisfied workers embrace recruitment approaches or strategies that acknowledge efforts, promote fairness and avail opportunities for developing skills that translate to a positive workplace setting and enhance job satisfaction.

Affective Event Theory

Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) explained the affective event theory by describing how emotional states and moods impact job satisfaction. Thompson and Phua (2001) assert that theory describes the relationships between the internal states of employees; perceptions, emotions, mental states, and responses to work-related incidents impact their performance, organizational citizenship behaviours, and job satisfaction. Ramadhani (2017) argues that the theory accentuates that factors that positively and negatively induce emotions at work significantly impact workers' job satisfaction. Therefore, the theory focuses on how job events and processes affect job satisfaction.

The theory is relevant to the study because it offers the basis for explaining the relationship between recruitment strategies and worker satisfaction. The theory postulated that the recruitment process - selecting candidates, onboarding, and integrating into the organization's culture improves workers' emotional situations and job satisfaction (Study Smarter, 2024). Accordingly, companies that focus on inclusive and transparent recruitment approaches offer clear job expectations and support workers during onboarding, cultivating positive emotions among workers, which improves their satisfaction at work.

VI. EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Recruitment Strategies and Job Satisfaction

Azmy (2018) investigated how recruitment strategies fulfil human resource needs. The study employed the descriptive qualitative method in five phases. The phases were: analysis of theory studies on the research topic, analysis of research results on the effect of recruitment strategy on company business, assessment of the implication of recruitment strategy, comparison of reality versus results of research, and synthesis of the results to find out whether recruitment strategies fulfil human needs. The study findings indicated that when recruitment strategies are applied efficiently and effectively, they fulfil human resource needs for organizations and result in job satisfaction.

Agoi, Namusonge and Iravo (2018) studied the effects of recruitment and selection practices on employee satisfaction in publicly owned sugar manufacturing firms in western Kenya. The study findings indicated that workers value transparent selection and recruitment processes, especially the interview processes. Accordingly, the potential workers are keen on whether the company provided full information on the required qualifications to perform a given task and thoroughly checked the required items during the interview. Besides, the workers are keen to note whether suitable candidates fill the vacant positions based on their skills, experience, and qualifications with no irregularities in the selection process (Agoi et al., 2018). However, the study found out that the sugar companies in Western Kenya do not focus on the above factors, as revealed in the results. Thus, an indication of lack of satisfaction by workers as the results of recruitment and selection practices negatively correlated with satisfaction of workers (Agoi et al., 2018). This happened because the organizations had many irregularities in the selection and recruitment processes, and there was need for a proper appraisal system.

Alrhaimi and Alhumshry (2015) studied internal recruitment's impact on job satisfaction in Mobile enterprises in Jordan. The study intended to determine the primary sources for recruiting workers at mobile premises in the country and how such impacts workers' satisfaction at their respective places of work. A sample of 300 workers was obtained from three mobile enterprises, Zain, Orange, and Umniah, for analysis. Structured questionnaires were used in data collection. The data collected was analyzed by regression and t-tests. The study results indicated that internal recruitment sources positively impacted job satisfaction in the Jordan Mobile Companies. Nevertheless, the study was limited to mobile telecommunication companies in India and cannot be generalized to county governments in Kenya.

Kabeja (2016) investigated whether the process of recruiting workers influenced their retention in secondary schools under the private sector in Uganda. The study examined the association between sourcing from external enterprises and internal sourcing, including headhunting and worker retention in such schools within the Nakawa area. The study used quantitative and qualitative approaches to apply a survey approach based on the cross-sectional design. The study sampled 122 participants, and questionnaires and interviews were scheduled to collect data. Moreover, the study used descriptive statistics to analyze data coupled with inferential statistics. The findings indicated that sourcing internal and external approaches, especially headhunting, positively influenced the retention of teachers, which was underpinned by their satisfaction. Nevertheless, the study is limited to public and private schools in Uganda.

Anwar and Shukur (2015) studied the impacts of recruitment on employee satisfaction at work. The study happened at Ihsan Dogramci Bilkent Erbil College, where the researcher distributed 149 questionnaires to the participants and gathered them for data analysis. The study embraced a quantitative approach for analysis, focusing on an analysis process to test the research hypothesis. The recruitment process highly predicted job satisfaction. Thus, it directly impacted the job satisfaction of workers. Secondly, the results also indicated that the selection process highly predicted workers' job satisfaction, which directly impacted their satisfaction at work.

VII. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Independent Variable Recruitment Strategies Internal Recruitment Dependent Variable Job Satisfaction Affective Satisfaction

Fig 1: Conceptual Framework

VIII. METHODOLOGY

Research Philosophy

External Recruitment

The study was anchored on the positivist philosophy. According to the philosophy, knowledge holds when drawn from ideals of rational thinking and facts. The positivist philosophy was relevant to the study because quantitative data was collected using questionnaires and analyzed using quantitative methods.

Cognitive

Satisfaction

Research Design

The research adopted both descriptive and correlational research designs. Using the descriptive research design for the present study was imperative because it enabled the researcher to assess recruitment strategies and how they relate to job satisfaction in the Lake Region Economic Block County Governments. The descriptive statistics also helped the researcher to summarize descriptive information of respondents, especially the mean, percentage and frequency of demographic information.

The correlational research design assessed the relationship between recruitment strategies and job satisfaction. The researcher used the design to link the two variables statistically with no intervention. Thus, it offered a structured approach, especially linear regression analysis, to interpret the relationship.

Study Location

The study was conducted in the Lake Region Economic Bloc County Governments. The study considered three in the economic bloc counties: Kisumu, Kakamega and Bomet. The choice of the three counties aimed at enhancing diversity in opinions on how the recruitment strategies related with job satisfaction in the LREB County Governments because of diversity in geopositioning in the defunct Nyanza, Western and Rift Valley provinces, respectively.

Target Population

The study targeted 14,316 employees working in the three counties-Kisumu, Kakamega and Bomet

Sample Size

In getting the sample size, Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) formula was adopted as follows:

 $X^{2}NP(1 - P)$

$$S =$$
 + $X^2P(1-P)$

 $d^{2}(N-1)$

Where:

S = sample size

 X^2 = table values of chi-square for 1 degree at the wanted confidence level (3.841)

N =Size of the target population

P = the proportion of population (assumed to be .50 because it will provide the maximum sample size)

d =the accuracy degree expressed as a proportion (.50)

(Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970)

Sample size = $3.841 *14361 *.50(1-.50) / \{(.05^2 (14361-1) + 3.841 *.50(1-.50))\} = 374$

Further, proportionate random sampling was used to sample respondents from the sampling frame comprising of top managers, middle managers and lower-level employees.

Data Collection Instrument

The study relied on primary data, which was collected using a questionnaire with structured questions. This method was convenient for quickly and conveniently collecting data from large samples.

Data Collection Procedure

The letter of introduction from Murang'a University of Technology enabled getting the approval letter from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to proceed with data collection. Thereafter, the questionnaires were randomly allocated to the sample population. Drop-and-pick technique was used to administer the research instrument. The filled questionnaires were collected a week after administration.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) analyzed data. Descriptive measures employed were mean, standard deviations, percentages, and frequency. A simple regression model was deployed to ascertain the relationship between the study variables. The study results presented in tables.

IX. RESEARCH RESULTS

The study assessed the relationship between recruitment strategies and job satisfaction in the Lake Region Economic Bloc County Governments. The study sought to find out whether recruitment strategies influenced job satisfaction. The response rate was 226 questionnaires out of the 374 distributed. The response rate was 60.4%, adequate for data analysis and presentation. Below are the study findings.

Inferential Statistics

The study assessed the statistical relationship between recruitment strategies and job satisfaction in the LREB County Governments in Kenya. The study tested the hypothesis that;

 H_{01} : Recruitment strategies do not have a statistically significant relationship with job satisfaction in the Lake Region Economic Bloc County Governments in Kenya.

The simple regression equation below was used to test the hypothesis;

$$Y = \beta o + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon . \tag{i}$$

The model summary is illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Model Summary for Recruitment Strategies and Job Satisfaction

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.868ª	.753	.751	.43340		

a. Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment Strategies

The model summary presented in Table 1 indicate a coefficient of determination (R^2 =0.753) that implies that 75.3% of the changes in job satisfaction in the LREB County Governments can be attributed to recruitment strategies and the remaining 24.7% are attributed to other factors other than recruitment strategies.

The ANOVA results are presented in table 2.

Table 2: ANOVA^a for Recruitment Strategies and Job Satisfaction

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	127.991	1	127.991	681.400	.000 ^b
	Residual	42.075	224	.188		
	Total	170.066	225			
a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction						

b. Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment Strategies

The ANOVA results in Table 2 shows a significance of 0.000 that is less than 0.05 and the model on recruitment strategies and job satisfaction is fit in making predictions. Consequently, the null hypothesis that recruitment strategies do not have a statistically significant relationship with job satisfaction in the LREB County Governments in Kenya was rejected. Thus, it is concluded that recruitment strategies have a significant influence on job satisfaction in the LREB Governments in Kenya.

The regression Coefficients are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Coefficients^a for Recruitment Strategies and Job Satisfaction

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.415	.123		3.378	.001
	Recruitment Strategies	.821	.031	.868	26.104	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

The regression coefficient in Table 3 indicates a beta value of 0.821 at a significance level of .000, less than the standard probability of 0.05. The results reveal a positive and significant relationship between recruitment strategies and job satisfaction. Thus, it implies that a change in recruitment strategies by a single unit increases job satisfaction by 0.821 units. The t-test value is at 26.104, which means that recruitment strategies significantly predict job satisfaction since their effect is 26 times relative to the standard error. The coefficient results lead to the following specific model illustrated below;

$$Y = 0.415 + 0.821X_2 + \epsilon$$

These results agree with those of Anwar and Shukur (2015), who studied the impact of recruitment on employee satisfaction at work at Ihsan Dogramci Bilkent Erbil College. The study employed quantitative approaches to test hypothesis and found that recruitment significantly impacted job satisfaction. The findings are also in tandem with those of Alrhaimi and Alhumshry (2015), who studied internal recruitment impact on job satisfaction in Mobile enterprises in Jordan. In the study, the sample frame was three mobile companies-Zain, Orange, and Umniah from which data was collected using questionnaires and analyzed using regression and t-tests. The results revealed that that internal recruitment positively and significantly affected job satisfaction.

X. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

The study found a significant statistical relationship between recruitment strategies and job satisfaction. It concluded that using suitable methods to create awareness of the available vacancies in the county governments, emphasizing internal advertisements when vacancies arise, and clarifying the requirements of vacant jobs can enhance recruitment strategies. Azmy (2018) supports these findings and concludes that efficient and effective recruitment strategies can fulfil human resource needs and increase job satisfaction.

Recommendation

County Governments should embrace recruitment strategies based on integrity, transparency, and inclusivity to enhance employee satisfaction. The study recommends that a similar study be conducted in the private sector in Kenya to find out whether recruitment strategies have a relationship with job satisfaction.

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