
**INFLUENCE OF APPLICANT COMPETENCIES ON
EMPLOYEE JOB PERFORMANCE :A CASE OF
UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA:**

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Introduction

- There has been an increasing call for use of competency modeling in order to capture the changing nature of work in organizations (Sackett & Laczko, 2003) .
- ❖ Competency modeling relates to the practice of identifying the characteristics or attributes that are needed for effective performance on the job—specifically, those characteristics held by exceptional performers.
- ❖ Proper selection practices lead to increased employee productivity, reduced training costs, and reduced staff turnover.

Introduction

- ❖ There is also a growing belief that if universities are to survive and thrive in global economy, they require world-class Human Resource (HR) competencies and the processes for managing them (Khandekar & Sharma, 2005)
- ❖ competency modeling has a high degree of face validity to the organization and can be written in terms that managers in the organization understand . It attempts to identify variables related to overall organizational fit and to identify personality characteristics consistent with the organization's vision (Sackett & Laczko, 2003).)
- ❖ To identify those characteristics that differentiate superior from average performers (Sackett & Laczko, 2003) the organization need to emphasize the set of features broader than simply excellence in the performance of prescribed job tasks that are currently valued and rewarded.

Introduction

- Generally, competition between higher education institutions is becoming increasingly aggressive as the market for their services covers a wider geographical area, and as private financing comes to represent an increasing share of their income (Green & Johnes, 2009).
- Beginning late 1960s and early 1970s in the United States of America, there were student protests against poor teaching and irrelevant courses which led to attempts to foster human development in higher education through faculty, instructional and organizational development (Macdonald, 2009). These attempts put emphasis on Human Resources (HR) in higher education to shift to a more strategic and value-added paradigm of service delivery (Arslan, Akdemir, & Karsli, 2013).

Introduction

- ❖ Therefore, there is need to select individuals who can take up various roles in the HIE setting in the face of complex and changing environment. This means that task-oriented recruitment and selection process such as job analysis may prove inadequate to take into account the various skill requirements that are needed due to externally exerted changes.
- The market orientation of universities imply that the Higher Educational Institutions operate in environment that has been characterized as ambiguous, uncertain, stressful, volatile, intense, and frustrating as well as the need for hard work (Morris, Webb, Fu, & Singbal, 2013).
- Work in a range of disciplines has demonstrated that proficiency is associated with higher levels of performance or productivity.

Introduction

- Boyatzis (1982) noted that competencies are not determined by individual characteristics alone but characterized by job demands and organizational environment as well.
- The situation is further aggravated by the emergence of global ranking of higher education. Increasingly, national higher education systems and HEIs are judged by where they stand in global terms (Marginson & van der Wende, 2007).
- According to Dargai (2010), the difference between traditional and competency based recruitment and selection is that the second one concentrates more on formal, measurable competencies.

- The change in tact has been necessitated by the fact that there are substantial costs associated with bad hiring, or alternatively, with the engaging, training, and firing of poor or disappointing employees with costs increasing the longer it takes to realize that an employee is inadequate (Golec & Kahya, 2007). Hence there is need for a university to hire only the best available academics (Dilger, 2009).

Statement of the problem

- ❖ The rise of the number of private and public universities in Kenya in the recent years has made the higher education sector has become highly competitive with established universities competing against new ones as well as against other international players.
- ❖ .In most cases, the talent pool in the universities was dissatisfied leading series of labor unrest among academic and the non-academic staff. Consequently, some employees have been demoralized leading to adverse effects on performance such as through increased turnovers, absenteeism, and poor attendance to the technical core.
- ❖ selection process has not received adequate attention on how the procedures can help improve the performance of the institutions.

Statement of the problem

- ❖ This study will therefore attempt to establish the linkage between applicant competencies on Employee job performance among the workforce in the institutions of Higher Learning organizations.

Objective.

This study will seek to address the following objective:

- To assess the influence of applicant competencies on job performance
- ❖ **Significance of the study:** The research can provide identification of the skills, knowledge, behaviors and capabilities needed to meet current and future personnel selection needs, in alignment with the differentiations in strategies and organizational priorities.
- ❖ The insights gained from these objectives should contribute to the quality management, performance measurement, and education literature in general and specifically point to the direction of more effective selection process in relation to employee & organizational performance.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- ❖ By investigating influence applicant competence on employee and university performance, it leaves out other HR factors that influence performance.
- ❖ Further, a refined selection practices need to be complemented by equally refined practices in other HR areas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- ❖ History of the competency approach to human resources management is not new. The early Romans practiced a form of competency profiling in attempts to detail the attributes of a “good Roman soldier” (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006).
- ❖ Work in a range of discipline has demonstrated that proficiency in particular competencies is associated with higher levels of performance or productivity (Morris, Webb, Fu, & Singbal, 2013).
- ❖ Distinguished Harvard’s psychologist, David McClelland introduced the idea of “competency” into the human resource literature; in his efforts to assist the United States Information Agency improve its selection procedures.
- McClelland (1973) proposed competencies as a critical differentiator of performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- ❖ Competencies can be organizational, job-specific or personal (Byham, 1996).
- ❖ They involve the possession of the particular knowledge, traits, motives, and skills essential to performing a specific job to a specified standard in a particular setting (Boyatzis, 1982)..
- ❖ competencies critical for obtaining goals and objectives are identified- sometimes the competencies are direct translations of the organizational goals.
- ❖ Include: Competency foundations, Job Family Competency Models i.e Technical Competencies & Leadership Competencies,- Technical Behaviours-(Technical Knowledge, Technical Experience, Technical Skills) Leadership Behaviours (Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, Personal Characteristics

LITERATURE REVIEW

- ❖ Task-based approaches are unable to capture the changing nature of work thus strengthened the call for competency-based systems in organizations (Sackett & Laczko, 2003)
- ❖ Traditional intelligence tests, as well as proxies such as scholastic grades, **failed** to predict job performance.
- ❖ McClelland's counter argument to the growing dissatisfaction with intelligence testing and the traditional job analytic approaches to personnel selection led to the proposal to test for competency (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006).
- ❖ competency modeling is an important innovation in that it is a way to get organizations to pay attention to job-related information and employee skills in the management of employees (Campion, Fink, Ruggeberg, Carr, Phillips, and Odman (2011)

LITERATURE REVIEW

- ❖ Competencies are also often intended to distinguish top performers from average performers. The fact that the model often attempt to distinguish the characteristics of top performing employees from average employees makes them especially useful for selection.
- ❖ The key strength of competency framework is that in contrast to traditional job analysis, competency modeling ties the derivation of job specifications to the organization's strategy, which, together with non-strategic job requirements, are used to generate a "common language "in the form of a set of human attributes or individual competencies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- ❖ The set of competencies usually serves as a platform for various HR practices such as performance evaluation, compensation, selection, and training (Lievens, Sanchez, & DeCorte, 2004)
- Competency based management represents a cultural change towards greater employee self-direction and responsibility, and the search for excellence rather than standard performance (Bhardwaj & Punia, 2013).
- The competency life cycle is the aggregation of four macro-phases which aim at the continuous enhancement and development of individual and organizational competencies. The four macro-phases are as follows: competency mapping; competency diagnosis; competency development and competency monitoring.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

- Competency mapping aims to provide the organization with an overview of all the necessary competencies in order to fulfill its targets, which are defined by the organizational business plan, the projects requirements, the group needs and the job role requirements. The required proficiency level for each job profile is defined in this phase as well.
- The second phase is competency diagnosis, meaning an instance of the current situation of the competencies and equivalent proficiency level that each individual employee possesses. A skill gap analysis is also essential in this phase, in order to define the gap between the number and level of competencies that the employees possess, in comparison with the number and level of competencies required by the organization, according to their job role.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- Competency development is the third phase and it deals with the scheduling of activities so as to increase the number and proficiency level of competencies that the employees should have, according to the previous two phases and the skill gap analysis. The last phase is the monitoring of competencies, i.e. a continuous examination of the results achieved by the competency development phase (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006).
- A competency model is a list of competencies which are derived from observing satisfactory or exceptional employee performance for a specific occupation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- ❖ The model can also be useful in a skill gap analysis, the comparison between available and needed competencies of individuals or organizations.
- ❖ Individual development plan could be developed in order to eliminate the gap. Important variables to be considered during the development of a competency model are the use of skill dictionaries, or the creation of customized ones and the competency identification and verification methods – surveys, interviews, focus groups, among others. Competencies are the building blocks of competency models (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006).
- performance management is a strategy for improving employee performance, productivity and effectiveness. It emphasizes the integration of organizational objectives with individual goals, the ongoing monitoring of performance, and training and development. Chan (2006)

Conceptual Framework

Independent variable

Selection process

- Competency mapping
- Selection techniques
- Validity and adverse selection

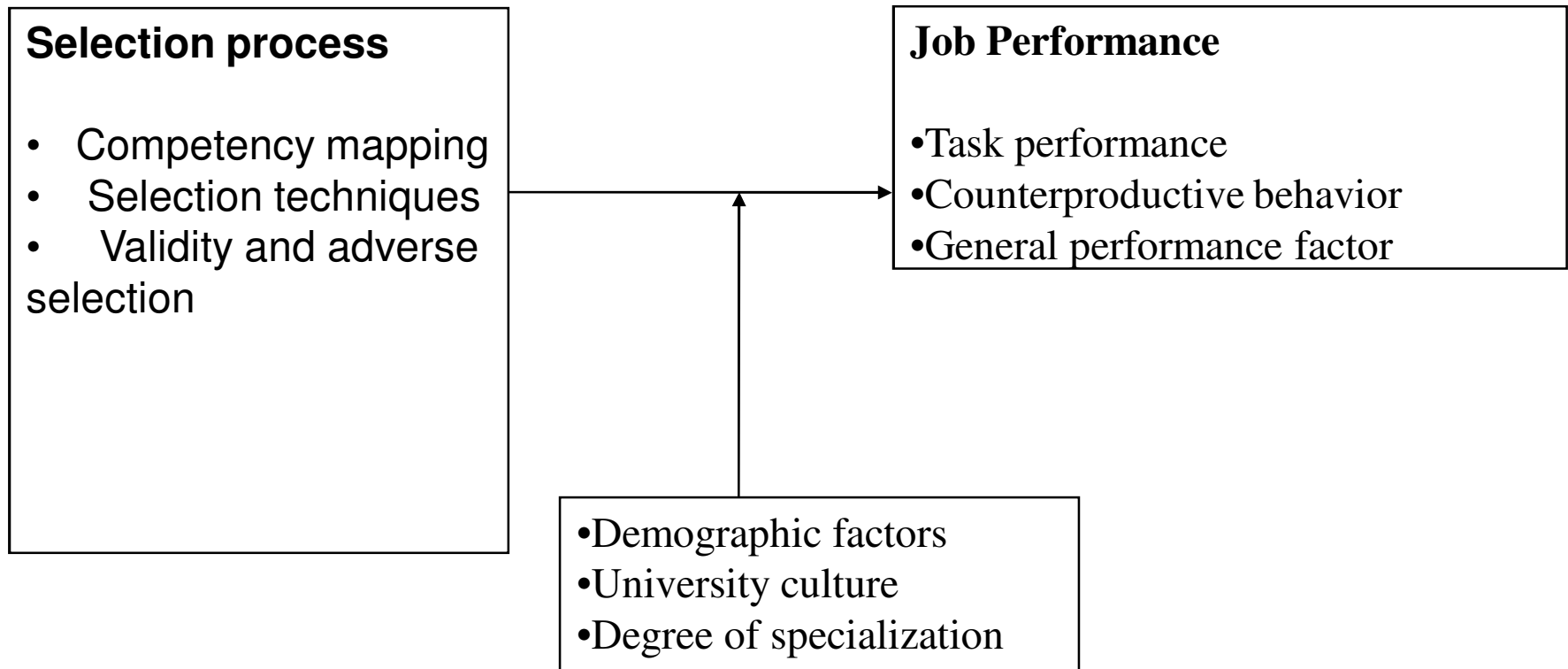
Dependent variable

Job Performance

- Task performance
- Counterproductive behavior
- General performance factor

- Demographic factors
- University culture
- Degree of specialization

Moderating variables



Research Design

- ❖ A descriptive survey design will be used to help fulfill the aims of the study.
- ❖ Descriptive designs, according to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009), are used to portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations.
- ❖ The survey strategy, for its part, will allow the collection of a large amount of data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way, using data obtained via questionnaire administered to a sample thus enabling easy comparison.

Study Population

- ❖ The target population will be all newly hired employees in the private and public universities in Kenya.
- ❖ The study will limit itself to respondents who had been in the job not more than 6 months.
- ❖ Consistent with the outline, the population to be studied will encompass a wide range of job types including operational staff (gardeners, security officers, clerks, janitors), middle level staff (administrative, marketing, finance, human resource), and senior staff (executives and academics).

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

- ❖ The sampling technique used for the study will involve the use of multistage sampling method.
- ❖ A two stage process will be used where the first stage will involve randomly selecting the Universities to participate in the study.
- ❖ The second stage involve the determination of the number of individual participants. Given that there are 65 universities according to Commission on Higher Education 2013 handbook, 19 universities will be selected randomly to participate in the study

Sample Sizes

	Number of respondents	Public university	Private university	Percentage
Senior staff	28	18	10	8%
Management/professional staff	169	110	59	48%
Operational staff	155	101	54	44%
Total	352	229	123	100%

Data Analysis

- To make meaning out of the data, an analysis will be carried out with the help of STATA Version 13 computer program.
- The data will be analyzed using the descriptive statistics such as the mean, median, mode, standard deviations and percentages.
- Inferential statistics will involve the use of both the correlation analysis and hierarchical regression analysis.
- While correlation analysis will provide the nature, direction and strength of the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable, the regression analysis will be useful in testing the statistical significance of such relationships and the variation in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variables.
- Hierarchical regression analysis will be used instead of the standard multiple regression since it is capable of controlling certain factors.

Data Analysis

- Additive scores of the sub-scales used in the study will be subjected to hierarchical regression analysis.
- Key assumptions such as normality, linearity, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity of the model will be assessed using tools such as examining the normal probability plot of constant variance of the error terms, examining the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) to ensure greater than ten to indicate lack of multicollinearity, and by calculating the studentized residual and Cook's distance to check if extreme and influential observations were present.
- Upon verifying that no such problems exist, the hierarchical regression analysis will be carried to establish the predictive nature of recruitment and selection practices on work performance.