

## **EFFECTS OF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CRITERIA ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE AT KISII UNIVERSITY, KENYA**

<sup>1\*</sup> **Elizabeth Anyango**  
[elizabethanyangoh@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethanyangoh@gmail.com)

<sup>2\*\*</sup> **Dr. Okibo Bichanga Walter**  
[walter.okibo@gmail.com](mailto:walter.okibo@gmail.com)

<sup>3\*\*\*</sup> **Dr. James Muya**  
[muyajn@gmail.com](mailto:muyajn@gmail.com)

<sup>1,2</sup> *Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya*

<sup>3</sup> *Kisii University, Kenya*

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### **Abstract**

*It has been argued that recruitment and selection criteria adopted by various organizations as positively influences organizational performance. Among the perceived benefits is the generation of a pool of experts who are motivated to drive the performance of the organization. However, there is a dearth of empirical evidence on the effects of recruitment and selection criteria on the performance of a firm especially in the case of Universities. This study therefore sought to determine the effect of recruitment and selection on organizational performance at Kisii University main campus. It targeted 226 teaching staff and 7 members of management. The sample size for teaching staff was 144 determined through the use of Slovin's formula for sample size determination. All the 7 members of management were sample. Stratified random sampling was used to select teaching staff to participate in the study from different schools and faculties while purposive sampling was used to select members of management. Questionnaires were used to gather data from teaching staff while interviews were used to gather data from members of management. Data was analysed qualitatively and quantitatively and presented using tables, figures, and narratives. The study established that there was a positive relationship between recruitment and selection criteria and organizational performance. The study also revealed that recruitment and selection criteria were not fair. Therefore the study recommends that the University should adopt a fair and transparent recruitment and selection policy.*

**Keywords:** *Recruitment, selection, organizational performance, effects, Succession Planning*

### **Introduction**

Organizational plans may change as a result of a number of reasons including retirements, promotions, illness, death, summary dismissal, or any voluntary exit of staff from the organization. Therefore, organizations need to have carefully crafted employee replacement procedures. One of the strategies to replace employees and ensure continuity is the adoption of an effective recruitment and selection criteria. Benuka and Banu (2014) has defined recruitment as the process of identifying and employing the most qualified personnel in the event that there is a vacancy in an organization. This should be done in a suitable and efficient manner. This ensures the organizations acquire skilled and competent individuals who can drive its strategic objectives. Bruce and Gates (n.d) remarked that organizations can fill these key positions either internally or through external recruitment process where a candidate who is currently filling an identified role in another organization is hired to bring in his experience. This reduces training costs and transition period. On the other hand, candidates may be sought internally, contrary to external recruitment; internal candidates do possess direct experience. He further observes that for successful organizations, there is a carefully developed strategy that ensures that

talented employees working within the organization are selected to take up higher positions; this is usually known as succession planning.

Over the years, many organizations including Universities are experiencing a demand for quality services and increased accountability (Danson & Omwenga, 2017). Universities' management are therefore seeking to provide results-driven, client-centred, and market-based services to ensure that they improve and drive their institutions towards becoming efficient and effective in the provision of higher education. To perform better, it is required that, universities invest in their personnel in order to achieve this objective. This is because staffs are the key asset for any organization to achieve its core objectives. Therefore universities must invest in an effective recruitment and selection criteria that ensures acquisition of personnel to support the realization of the strategic objectives.

### **Effect of Recruitment and Selection on Organizational Performance**

Recruitment and selection greatly affect organizations succession plan. To illustrate this, a study conducted on the best practices in the management of success in the education sector in the United States of America confirmed that academic institutions practice a retroactive hiring method, where candidates for vacant positions are considered concurrently as the current office holders leave office. This practice leads to expedited or abbreviated induction and training which in effect leads to the new employees with very little knowledge about the new job. This practice is commonly referred to as replacement planning. Replacement planning is seen to be one of the reasons for high employee turnover in most organizations (Hanover Research, 2014).

Zepeda *et al.* (2012) noted that public education institutions such as universities do not have the freedom of private enterprises regarding the recruiting and hiring of key leaders and senior administrators. Specifically, their study on succession in universities outlines challenges faced by universities in succession. For instance, a majority of teaching staff get into the profession to work as lecturers and university professors teaching various courses. They have minimal skills and formal training that can support them to meet the current needs of educational institutions. This is despite the common perception that university leaders must be knowledgeable and are a crucial component in the effort to solve the challenges currently bedeviling higher education institutions across the globe. This has led to a rise in the need to reform and restructure the higher education sector from multiple fronts.

Sharmin (2015) conducted a comparative study on the recruitment and selection process in public and private universities in Dhaka city, Bangladesh. The study sought to determine the importance of recruitment and selection process and determine the current recruitment and selection practices among the selected universities. Findings revealed a general desire to adopt fair recruitment and selection process in both public and private universities. Additionally, the management in universities has a desire to recruit and select staff based on qualifications. However, the existing political environment did not allow the university managers to be fair in the recruitment and selection of staff. Therefore, implying that private and public universities in Dhaka city did not adopt fair recruitment and selection process and did not recruit staff based on their qualifications. As Djabatey (2012) posits that universities should adopt a fair and objective recruitment process if they are going to have the right staff that will support it to gain a competitive edge in the market and ensure enhanced organizational performance.

Organizations rely on different media especially online media to advertise available vacancies (Sharmin, 2015). For instance, she posited that most companies favour on-line job boards and company websites. This is similar to Kisii University that heavily relies on the university website, facebook, and WhatsApp to announce the availability of vacancies. This may result from the following reasons. Firstly, the use of company websites is

cheaper and can reach all the people visiting the company website who may then spread word about the available vacancy. Secondly, this might be because, platforms such as WhatsApp are real time, and members are likely to receive announcements on time and disseminate them quite easily. Lastly, many youth who are prime for employment utilise the internet on a large scale beginning with visiting websites, using Facebook and WhatsApp for social purposes. Thus this media can reach a huge pool of potential recruits. Djabatey (2012) in a study of Recruitment and selection practices in HFC bank in Nigerian revealed that advertisement was carried out in the recruitment process. The bank used various means to advertise available vacancies such as staff referrals, job postings on notices and electronic bulletins boards, in company newsletters, and sometimes through office memoranda.

Numerous studies have been conducted on current recruitment and selection practices and process. For instance, Sharmin (2015) revealed that succession planning meetings between the human resource department and staffs were frequently held in public and private universities in Dhaka city. Staff indicated that through the meetings, they were able to know the skills they needed to possess if they needed to assume some positions in the future. Another study by Sinha and Thaly (2013) revealed that organizations adopted diverse recruitment and selection practices. They further revealed that none of the practices were universally accepted. Therefore, to derive maximum benefits, organizations adopted a combination of two or three practices. Some of the practices that were prevalent in the study include employee referral, campus recruitment, advertisement, recruitment agents, company websites and social media such as WhatsApp. Ekwoaba, Ikeje, and Ufoma (2015) conducted a study to determine the current recruitment and selection practices at Fidelity Bank, Nigeria. The study revealed that the bank had a policy that governs and guides the recruitment process. However, respondents revealed that they were not aware of available vacancies. This, therefore, implies that the bank may not be using staff to advertise available vacancies. The study also sought to determine the impact of recruitment and selection on organizational performance at fidelity bank plc, Lagos. It was revealed that the recruitment and selection criteria have a significant effect on organizational performance ( $X^2= 35.723$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). The study further revealed that the more the recruitment and selection is objective and focused, the higher the organizational performance ( $X^2= 20.007$ ;  $df = 4$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Therefore, it can be concluded that the ability of an organization to objectively recruit and select staff determines how well it can perform in the job market. Djabatey (2012) also argues that for an organization to gain a competitive edge in the market, it must have the right staff. The right staff can only be recruited through a fair and objective recruitment and selection process.

Similarly, a study by Mustapha, Ilesanmi & Aremu (2013) on Nigerian banks revealed that there was a strong and significant relationship between recruitment and selection that is based on merit and organizational performance. This study concluded that a poor recruitment and selection strategy led to the selection of inappropriate staff, therefore leading to poor organizational performance. Further, Naveen & Raju (2014) conducted a study on recruitment and selection in India. The study revealed that successful recruitment and selection practices contributed significantly to improved organizational outcomes. A study by Omolo, Onginda & Oso (2012) also found out that suitable recruitment and selection strategies among Kenya Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) help increase organizational performance.

Other studies have also revealed a positive relationship between an objective, fair and reliable recruitment and selection process and organizational performance. For instance, a study by Gamage (2014) revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between recruitment and selection and the performance of organizations. Similarly, a study by Sang (2005) revealed that the association between recruitment and selection and business performance was positive. On the same note, Syed and Jama (2012) in their study

confirmed that the adoption of an objective recruitment and selection process positively contributed to enhanced organizational performance.

**Research Methodology**

This study adopted a case study design. Rowley (2002) argues that case study design has numerous benefits that include: Providing rich and detailed information about specific phenomena, it is a versatile research approach that can employ diverse data collection approaches from testing, questionnaires to interviewing, and can be used to strengthen existing knowledge or to enhance experience. However, the researcher is conscious of the following shortcomings of case study approach; difficulty to generalise the findings because of the small number of cases that are investigated and biasness of research results resulting from the overexposure of the study area. To overcome these shortcomings, there was careful planning to ensure minimal bias of the research findings.

To realise the objective of the study, 233 staff at Kisii University were targeted as enumerated in table 1.

**Table 1: Target Population**

<b>Department / Faculty</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Number of staff</b>
Members of management	Vice chancellor	1
	Deputy Vice chancellors	2
	Registrars and Finance Officer	4
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>7</b>
Faculties/ Schools	Agriculture and Natural Resource Management	24
	Education and Human Resource Development	30
	Information Sciences and Technology	22
	Arts and Social Sciences	24
	Business and Economics	50
	Law	20
	Pure and Applied Sciences	21
	Health Sciences	35
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	
<b>Total</b>		<b>233</b>

Source: Kisii University Records (2017)

As reflected in table 1, the study utilised two sample frames to select research participants. The first sampling frame consisted of members of management while the second sample frame consisted of the teaching staff. Purposive sampling was used to selected members of management where all the seven members of management at Kisii University were selected because they were deemed knowledgeable on recruitment and selection criteria adopted and its influence on organizational performance. Stratified random sampling was utilised to select teaching staff because the teaching staff population is not homogenous. They were first stratified according to various schools and faculties. This allowed the researcher to get more precise estimates (Kothari, 1990). The sample size was determined by using the Slovin 2000 formula (Ellen, 2018). The sampled population was further apportioned according to the weight of the respective faculties. Respondents were identified using simple random sampling method. The Slovin’s formula (Ellen, 2018) at 95 percent confidence level was used to calculate the final sample size from the teaching staff as shown from below:

$$n = \frac{N}{(1+Ne^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{226}{1+226(0.05^2)}$$

n=144

Where:

n- Refers to the sample size of the target population

N- The target population

e- Margin of error

The final sample size for teaching staff is presented in table 2:

**Table 2: Teaching staff Sample Size**

Department / Faculty	Description	Head/Dean	CODs Deans	Teaching Staff (without resp.)	Total Staff	Sample size
Faculties	Agriculture and Natural Resource Management	1	4	19	24	15
	Education and Human Resource Development	1	5	22	30	19
	Information Sciences and Technology	1	4	17	22	14
	Arts and Social Sciences	1	3	20	24	15
	Business and Economics	1	4	45	50	32
	Law	1	4	15	20	13
	Pure and Applied Sciences	1	4	16	21	14
	Health Sciences	1	3	31	35	22
<b>Total</b>					<b>226</b>	<b>144</b>

Source: Kisii University Records (2017)

Questionnaire and interview schedules were utilised to gather data. Members of management were subjected to interviews whereas teaching staff were requested to fill questionnaires. The data were analysed qualitatively using content analysis and quantitatively using means, frequencies, percentages and multiple correlations.

**Results and Discussion**

**1. Level of Education**

Participants were requested to indicate their level of education and the results are presented in table 3 for questionnaire respondents. The data was grouped into four levels: doctor of Philosophy, Masters, Bachelors and Diploma holders and below.

**a. Questionnaire Respondents’ Level of Education**

**Table 3: Respondents’ Level of Education**

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
PhD	7	5.4
Masters	105	81.4
Bachelors	17	13.2
Diploma holders and below	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Data (2018)

Results as demonstrated in table 3 reveal that majority of the teaching staff at Kisii University are masters’ degree holders at 81.4 % representing 105 staff with a minority of them possessing doctorate degrees at 5.4% (7). The majority were followed at a distant second by Bachelor degree holders at 13.2% representing 17 members of staff. While there were no diploma holders and below who participated in this study. This is because the entry level for teaching staff in a university is a bachelor’s degree.

**b. Interview Participants’ Level of Education**

Three members of management were interviewed. Findings revealed that all the interview participants were PhD holders. It was further revealed that they were Professors in different disciplines.

**2. Recruitment and Selection process is fair and Reliable**

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that recruitment and selection process at Kisii University was fair and reliable. Findings are presented in table 4.

**Table 4: Recruitment and Selection process is fair and reliable**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagreed	38	29.5
Disagreed	40	31.0
Not sure	22	17.0
Agreed	17	13.2
Strongly Agreed	12	9.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data (2018)

Most (60.5%) employees disagreed that the recruitment and selection is fair and reliable, 17.1% were not sure while 22.5% agreed that it was fair and reliable. Therefore, it can be concluded that the recruitment and selection process at Kisii University is unfair and not reliable. The findings indicate that most employees are not happy with the selection and recruitment process. This finding concurs with findings by Haji (2013) that

revealed that academic staffs were not happy with the recruitment process at the University of KwaZulu Natal. These findings further concur with findings by Sharmin (2015) that revealed that university managers had a strong desire to adopt a fair recruitment and selection process, however, the political environment determined who the university managers recruited therefore implying that both private and public universities adopted unfair recruitment and selection practices. A fair recruitment and selection process should judge people on their qualifications, skills, competencies and attitudes. It should not be based on age, religion, gender, and other unnecessary characteristics that have no importance of the performance of an individual. A fair recruitment and selection process enhances the credibility of an organization therefore improving its image and competitive advantage. As Djabatay (2012) argues, universities should adopt a fair and objective recruitment process if they are going to have the right staff that will support it to gain a competitive edge in the market and ensure enhanced organizational performance.

### 3. Advertisement are Carried out during Recruitment Process

Respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which they agreed that advertisement at Kisii University was carried out during the recruitment process. Table 5 presents the findings.

**Table 5: Advertisement are Carried out during Recruitment Process**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagreed	24	18.6
Disagreed	20	15.5
Not sure	35	27.1
Agreed	32	24.8
Strongly Agreed	18	14.0
Total	129	100

Source: Field Data (2018)

Majority of the employees at 38.8% agreed that advertisements are carried out during recruitment process, 27.1% were not sure while 34.1 % disagreed. Therefore, it can be concluded that the University advertised vacant positions during the recruitment process. These findings concurred with interview findings that revealed that the university advertises vacant positions using different media such as staff, university website, university notice board and newspapers. The Sentiments expressed include;

*“.....Most of the vacancies are advertised internally through memos and the university website, we believe our members of staff are able to view these vacancies, that’s why probably we have many applicants.....”*

These findings agree with findings by Sharmin (2015) that revealed that organizations rely on different media to advertise for available vacancies. Such media include on-line job boards and company websites. The choice of these media may emanate from the need to spend less on advertisement since university websites; facebook and whatsapp are cheap media and can reach a wide audience. Additionally, these findings concur with findings by Djabatay (2012) that revealed that advertisement was carried out in the recruitment process in HFC bank in Nigeria. The bank used various approaches to advertise available vacancies such as staff referrals, job postings on notices and electronic bulletins boards, in company newsletters, and sometimes through office memoranda.

El-Kot & Leat (2008) posit that advertisement is the first process in the recruitment process because its’ through advertisement that people apply for job thus creating a reason for short-listing and selection for employment. It should be noted that an advertisement for job opportunities takes several forms ranging from social media

advertises like in Whatsapp, Facebook and LinkedIn, memos, newspaper adverts and through university website. Internal advertisement normally takes the form of internal memo and website. This finding that most job opportunities are advertised was supported by Miyake (2002) who revealed that sometimes employees can be employed through word of mouth when other employees are requested to pass word that an organization is recruiting. Bruce and Gates (n.d) asserts that organizations can easily fill vacancies through internal recruitment. If no qualified personnel are identified internally, then an organization can externally source for qualified staff.

**4. Recruitment and Selection is based on an Individual’s Qualification**

Respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the statement that recruitment and selection at Kisii University was based on an individual’s qualification. Findings are presented in table 6.

**Table 6: Recruitment and Selection is based on an Individuals’ Qualification**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagreed	33	25.6
Disagreed	38	29.5
Not sure	24	18.5
Agreed	20	15.5
Strongly Agreed	14	10.9
Total	129	100

Source: Field Data (2018)

Table 6 indicates that majority (55.1%) of employees disagreed with the statement that recruitment and selection is done based on one’s qualification, 18.6% were not sure while 26.4% agreed with the statement. Therefore, it can be concluded that recruitment and selection at Kisii University is not based on an individual’s qualifications. These findings concurred with findings by Sharmin (2015) that revealed that University managers in public and private universities had a strong desire to recruit and select staff based on their qualifications. However, the political environment in Dhaka city determined who was recruited. This implied therefore, that the University managers did not recruit and select staff based on their qualifications. Djabatey (2012) argues that qualifications enhance competency thus leading to enhanced organizational performance when an organization recruits personnel who are qualified to assume specific positions. Therefore, identifying the right candidates for recruitment in an organization are crucial for current and future sustained growth of the organization (Walker, 2009). This may further imply that with effective recruitment and selection, there is increased probability for better performance and poor performance when there is poor recruitment and selection.

**5. Current Recruitment and Selection Process Improves Organizational Performance**

Respondents were requested to indicate the extent with which they agreed with the statement that the current recruitment and selection methods at Kisii University improve organizational performance. Findings are presented in table 7.

**Table 7: Current Recruitment and Selection Improves Organizational Performance**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagreed	32	24.8
Disagreed	38	29.5
Not sure	26	20.2



Agreed	22	17.0
Strongly Agreed	11	8.5
Total	129	100

Source: Field Data (2018)

Table 7 shows that 54.3% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that recruitment and selection improves organizational performance, 20.2% were not sure while 25.5% agreed with the statement. Therefore, it can be concluded that current recruitment and selection practices do not improve organizational performance. Employing unqualified staff leads to low organizational performance because the employed staffs are not able to perform their tasks. Numerous studies have reported a positive association between employee qualification and performance, and this ultimately influences organizational performance. For instance, a study by Ekwoaba, Ikeje & Ufoma (2015) revealed that when organizations adopt an objective recruitment process, they experience a better performance. This is most likely because the bank has a policy that guides the recruitment process and ensures they recruit qualified personnel who are able to undertake their specific duties diligently. If the process was shoddy, the organization will have staffs that are not able to diligently carry out their duties thus poor organizational performance. However, if the recruitment and selection process was effective, the organization will have staff capable of supporting it to realize its objectives thus enhanced organizational performance. Ezeali & Eziagu, (2010) noted that the quality of staff that an organization has determines whether its service delivery is effective or not. Studies by Huseild (1995) and Gamage (2014) disagree with the findings that recruitment and selection do not enhance organizational performance and agree with findings by Huseild (1995) and Gamage (2014) that recruitment and selection have a significant influence on organizational performance because they determine the personnel who are recruited to work in the organization.

Another study by Sharmin (2015) revealed that senior managers in private and public universities in Dhaka city held frequent succession planning meetings with staff. These meetings helped staff to know the skills they needed to acquire if they were to assume future vacant positions. This significantly contributed to enhanced staff performance since they worked hard to acquire those skills and ensure they applied them in their day today activities.

Another study by Sinha and Thaly (2013) agreed with findings of this study by revealing that organizations adopted diverse recruitment and selection practices. They further revealed that none of the practices were universally accepted. Therefore, to derive maximum benefits, organizations adopted a combination of two or three practices. Some of the practices that were prevalent in the study include employee referral, campus recruitment, advertisement, recruitment agents, company websites and social media such as whatsapp. When organizations recruit personnel with high level skills, competencies and attitudes, they are able to realize organizational objectives very easily thus enhancing organizational performance. A well designed recruitment and selection exercise brings to the organization a pool of talented and competent staff that can propel and steer the objective of an organization thus increased productivity.

### 6. Effects of Recruitment and Selection Criteria on Organizational Performance

To determine the effect of recruitment and selection criteria on organizational performance at Kisii University, correlation analysis was conducted on the data that was collected. Table 8 presents the findings of the correlation analysis.

**Table 8: Correlations table showing relationship between Recruitment and Selection Criteria and Organizational Performance**

		Recruitment and Selection	Performance
Recruitment and Selection	Pearson Correlation	1	.410*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.042
	N	129	129
Performance	Pearson Correlation	.410*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.042	
	N	129	129

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Data (2018)

From table 8 correlation statistics indicated that there is a positive relationship between Recruitment and Selection and Organizational Performance,  $r(129) = 0.410, p < 0.05$ . This implies that a 41% improvement in recruitment and selection criteria causes a unit change in organizational performance. Analysis of interviews data revealed the following effects of recruitment and selection; improved efficiency and effectiveness, improved competitive advantage, enhanced knowledge retention, and improved quality of services delivered. All these effects contributed to improved organizational performance. These findings concur with findings by Ekwoaba, Ikeije and Ufoma (2015) that revealed that the recruitment and selection criteria have significant effect on organizational performance ( $X^2 = 35.723; df = 3; p < 0.05$ ). The study further revealed that the more the recruitment and selection is objective and focused, the higher the organizational performance ( $X^2 = 20.007; df = 4; p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, it can be concluded that the ability of an organization to objectively recruit and select staff determines how well it can perform in the job market.

Similarly, findings in this study agree with findings by Mustapha, Ilesanmi & Aremu (2013) that reported a strong and significant relationship between recruitment and selection that is based on merit and organizational performance. This study concluded that a poor recruitment and selection strategy led to the selection of inappropriate staff, therefore leading to poor organizational performance because it helps in shaping employees behaviour and attitudes and thus influence organizational commitment which ultimately enhances organizational performance. Findings from this study are further in agreement with findings from a study that was conducted in India by Naveen & Raju (2014). This study revealed that successful recruitment and selection practices contributed significantly to improved organizational outcomes. Additionally, findings in this study concur with findings from a study carried out by Omolo, Onginda & Oso (2012) that found out that suitable recruitment and selection strategies among Kenya Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) help increase organizational performance.

This study's findings concur with other studies that have reported a positive relationship between an objective and fair recruitment and selection process on organizational performance. For instance, a study by Gamage (2014) revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between recruitment and selection and the performance of organizations. Additionally, a study by Sang (2005) revealed that the association between recruitment and selection and business performance was positive. On the same note, Syed and Jama (2012) in their study confirmed that the adoption of an objective recruitment and selection process positively contributed

to enhanced organizational performance. Therefore, organizations should adopt objective, fair and reliable recruitment and selection strategies that can ensure they gain a competitive edge in the market by recruiting the right staff (Djabatey, 2012). The right staff can only be recruited through a fair and objective recruitment and selection process.

## Conclusion

Recruitment and selection criteria play a fundamental role in ensuring that an organization acquires the right personnel that will drive its agenda and ensure the organization realises its strategic objectives. Findings have revealed that recruitment and selection criteria have a positive influence on organizational performance. Further, discussions have suggested that when an organization adopts a fair recruitment and selection process, there is an increased probability of recruiting the best staff therefore culminating in improved organizational performance. Therefore, it has been concluded that Kisii University should adopt an objective, fair and transparent recruitment and selection criteria if it's going to derive a competitive advantage from its staff. There is also need for the University to advertise all available vacancies to increase the pool of talented individuals.

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