

INFLUENCE OF E-RECRUITMENT ON PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN TANA RIVER COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract: *The study sought to investigate the influence of E-recruitment on public service delivery in Tana River County. The theoretical orientations of the study are Resource Based View. A descriptive research design was applied. The target population comprised of 126 staff in the Public Service Management, Administration and ICT department of the County government of Tana River. The study adopted a census survey since the population of the study, 126 staff in the Public Service Management, Administration and ICT department of the County government of Tana River was small. Primary data was collected by use of a semi-structured questionnaire. Analysis of data relied on SPSS version 26. Mean, frequency in addition to standard deviation are the main descriptive statistics employed. Multiple linear regression was used to analyze data. The findings of the study indicated that the e-recruitment, positively and significantly influence public service delivery in Tana Rive County. This study concludes that electronic recruitment is one of the factors that influence public service delivery as 37.3 percent of the variation in the latter is accounted by electronic human resource. The study concludes that electronic recruitment of county staff positively and significantly influences public service delivery. This study recommends the County Government of Tana River to streamline and manage electronic recruitment of staff well to improve public service delivery. The county of Tana River should comprehensively inform applicants online about the credentials required to perform the job before hiring them, use online platforms to attract applications for various positions, and fully assess and interview applicants online in order to improve public service delivery.*

Keywords: *E- Human Resource, Management, E-Recruitment, Public Service Delivery*

Introduction

In the contemporary world, different governments globally have significantly altered the manner in which they render services to their citizens. With the growing influence of technology, most governments have sought to leverage on technological advancements for better delivery of services. Initially perceived as institutions that are slow and bureaucratic, most public institution have been elevated into inventive platforms to implement and consistently develop information technology in managing human resources for betterment of public service (Carter, Weerakkody, Phillips & Dwivedi, 2016). As governments across the globe try and increase their aggressiveness within the international economy, they attempt to bring nearer services that facilitate the ease with which business is done. Several governments have, therefore, endowed themselves heavily with ICT infrastructure and services that enhance potency in publicly service delivery.

E-HRM can be considered as one of the key elements in driving globalization of the industry. Managing and growing E-HRM systems globally, leads to the development of employees who are able to comprehend, be taught and guided and operate globally. Those who possess such wide based global skills may have an

advanced global view point mentality in the context of web networks (Hamidi & Sarfarazi, 2010). So, in order to put in place and develop the E-HRM system globally, first there is a need for proper expert professional managers in the field of web design with significant expertise in the role of the E-HRM systems having the knowledge on how to put in place these system's tools internationally, regionally, and nationally. Electronic human resource management therefore the following functions among others: E-Recruitment, E-Performance Management system E-Selection, E-Learning, E-Employee Profile, E-Training, and E-Compensation.

E-recruitment refers to the posting of vacancies on a corporate web site or on a recruitment vendor's website online, allowing applicants to send their resumes electronically via e-mail.

The extant institutional functioning models are thus altered with a routinised regime reoriented towards innovation, entrepreneurship, dynamism as well as flexible option development. According to Witschel, Döhla, Kaiser, Voigt and Pfletschinger (2019), internet technology has enabled IT systems and electronic communications to support business processes in Indonesia. This has become effective especially in the public sector where there is an influential additional pathway for organisational change (Pyszka, 2018).

In the UK, digitisation processes within public institutions have results to more sensitive key issues of transparency, shared services as well as social media inclusion. The key elements of transparency, accessibility and responsiveness have resulted to the building of an open governance mechanism as opposed to closed government which has allowed citizens to participate and monitor service delivery thus actively managing tax account to greater self-administration (Lennon, Bouamrane, Devlin, O'connor, O'donnell, Chetty & Mair, 2017).

Technological applications have improved human resource by introducing self-service, call centres, productivity improvements, and outsourcing in Ghana. Through use of e- media (electronic media) and participation of employees in the system process, there has been improved service management in the public sector in Ghana (Ukandu, 2015). These components have empowered public organisations to have the option to bring down organization costs, improve the satisfaction derived by workers, give continuous access to data and decrease the time required for information processing. There has likewise been speed of data handling for the purpose of producing significant information, unwavering quality and precision inverse to human potential for blunder, storage and recovery (Case & Hoell, 2009).

In the Kenyan public sector, skills, advanced knowledge, and competences as well as change in underlying perceptions and motivations are necessary for E-human resource uptake. Advanced trainings in computer systems are conducted at all organizational levels. This allows employees to use new applications, facilitating their reorientation to new ways of working and new methodologies (Njeri, 2017).

One of the biggest changes introduced in Kenya to the national governance framework under the new constitution is 47 new county governments taking up significant responsibilities in health, agriculture, trade, county planning, roads, and other functions being devolved to the county level. Tana River County is among one of the 47 counties in Kenya and is found in the Coastal region of Kenya. Occupying an area of approximately 38,437 km², the county has an estimated population of 293,261 people (Kenya Population and Housing Census, 2019). It is heavily dependent on four livelihood zones namely; marginal mixed farming, mixed farming, pastoral and national park. According to the county's second County Integrated Development plan 2018-2022 which is in line with the country's development blueprint (Vision 2030), the county statistics show that it has an average of about 3.2 per cent of people under employment in the agricultural sector, in government and non-governmental organisations. The county government has 8 departments that are responsible with overseeing delivery of various services to the residents.

Public Service Delivery

Public servants are charged with the responsibility of carrying out managerial activities of public entities. Practically, public service delivery is intended to improve the quality and productivity of administrations conveyed by open public institutions (Broucker, De Wit & Leisyte, 2015). They decipher the public arrangement to carry out transparent service delivery in manners that are required to accomplish the best results for the interests they serve for various stakeholders. Public supervisors work in two specific unique ways: within and outside management of public institutions. Within the institution, they oversee risk management and change inside their individual public institutions. This means that they stay updated and educated regarding conditions that may affect their public institution's' capacity to work ideally culturally (Cregård & Corin, 2019).

Problem Statement

Service Delivery and y a quality public service is seen as the key milestone to reducing the population falling under the poverty bracket by 2030 (Kenya Vision 2030). However, public service delivery still remains wanting despite investment of huge sums of money to automate various processes in public institutions in Kenya (Wanyanga, 2019). According to Onchari, Iravo and Elijah (2014), effective public service delivery originates from recruitment and selection, training, compensations and the management of performance. However the counties little empirical studies of the role electronic recruitment plays in achievement of effective public service management of the devolved government units has been done. To this end, this study sought to fill this gap by investigating the influence of E- recruitment on public service delivery in Tana River County, Kenya. The current study answered the research question: "What is the influence of E-human resource on public service delivery in Tana River County?"

Objective of the Study

To determine the influence of E-recruitment on public service delivery in Tana River County, Kenya.

Value of the Research

The results of this study are significant to a number of stakeholders such as county government administrations, county staff, Investors, Researchers and scholars. The study provides county governments with information which can be used in establishing proper policy guidelines concerning human resource practices for an efficient and effective management of devolved government institutions. The study also provides county governments with adequate information for the formulation of ideal recruitment policies.

Literature Review

Theoretical Foundation of the research

Resource Based View

This theory proposed by Penrose (1959) argues that each organisation has a finite number of resources of which some are tangible while others are intangible. As Boxall and Purcell (2008) argues, organizations consider it cheaper to recruitment the right person directly from the process than train and develop them. Following previous use of the RBV in HRM the current study considers it a suitable lens from which to analyze the link between e-recruiting and public service management in County Governments. The current study considers RBV a suitable framework as it emphasizes e-recruitment as a key tool to achieve public service delivery objectives.

Empirical Literature Review

E-recruitment and Public Service Delivery

Electronic recruitment also construed as online recruitment refers to the process of advertising for vacancies through the web or internet and posting of information about jobs online. It is the practice where online technology is utilized most especially websites as a means of doing an assessment, interviewing, and eventually hiring personnel (Wesolowski,2016). Organisations opt to advertise their vacancies on corporate websites. Apart from using corporate sites there are also on-line job boards. People looking for jobs post their resumes in on-line job boards to find a match for their qualifications with available job vacancies. E-recruitment is a great potential to any organization because it provides up to date recruiting methods and also provides current information; this opens up geographical borders in the search for talents and saves time and cost. (Waghmare, 2013).

A study that was carried out by Mwashu (2013) overviewed online Recruitment by taking a case of private and public sectors in Tanzania. By analysing the general situation of the current online recruitment methods, the problems associated with operations on online recruitment, the quantitative steps taken by government to ensure that there is a favourable environment in the ICT sector and the possible recommendations for future research. According to several different surveys, the study also used data about recruitment in general from the study done by Egbert et al, (2009), the available information on corporate websites and other researches related to the internet usage in Tanzania. The results showed that online recruitment is currently being used by different companies in Tanzania but on a low rate compared to other different sources of recruitment to enhance the service delivery effectiveness.

Vyzirgiannakis (2016) assessed public sector electronic-recruitment procedures in Greece he focused on the Civil Personnel Selection for the Supreme Council. The author revealed that success of online recruiting, especially in terms of creating reductions in hiring costs and time, also makes the practice attractive as part of most e-government initiatives. Greece is characterized by a decades-old approach to public sector employment and e-recruiting for the state is a mission that raises the stakes clearly higher than that of a measured cost reduction. The study therefore reviewed the various benefits of e-recruitment practices in the private sector, examined the significant differences that apply to the recruitment practices of the Greek state and in conclusion assessed different websites used to promote trust between citizens and the State. The results of the study showed that when properly used, e-recruitment reduces time and hiring costs and makes most public service positions attractive.

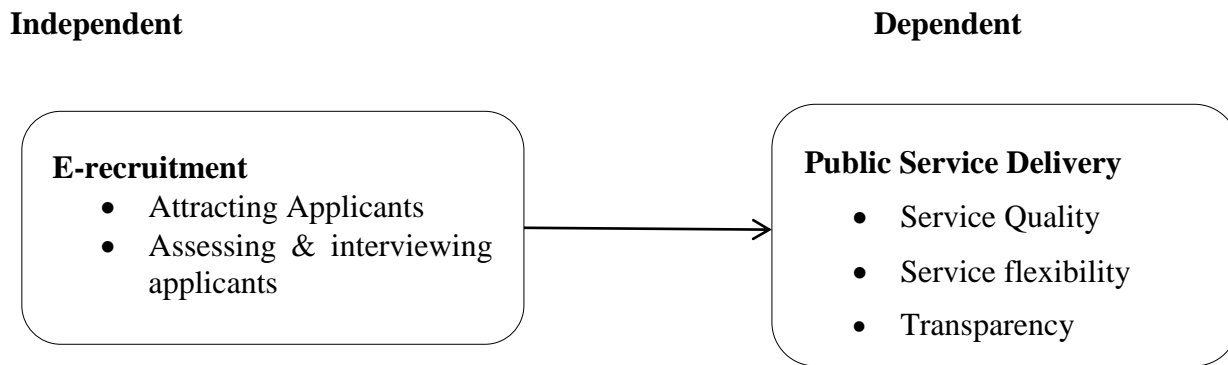
A study by Tsuma (2017) examined the relationship between Electronic recruitment procedures and employee satisfaction and retention among multinationals organizations in Nairobi County. The purpose and objective that guided the study was to identify E recruitment practices adopted by multinational, to ascertain the levels of employee retention among multinational corporations and to do an analysis of the influence of E recruitment practices on staff retention in multinational corporations. Data was collected using questionnaires given to the human resource managers of the organizations under study. The population targeted was 217 multinational organizations based in Nairobi County. The information was collected and analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation and multiple regression analysis. Commercial websites, corporate websites, and social network sites were used to analyze their influence on each employee retention variable which were; early work adjustment, self-selection, and employee turnover. Results collected show that corporate websites had a significant effect in explaining all the staff retention variables. Social network sites were important in explaining self-selection but it was noted commercial websites were not significant in any case.

A survey undertaken by the International Association of Employment Websites (IAEW) in the year 2014 revealed that the use of commercial websites is the leading practice, at 24%, through which job seekers find work. This has increased the levels through which employers opt to acquire employees through the use of commercial websites, including firms which already have their own career portals on their websites. According to Baum and Kabst (2014), the use of attributes such as referrals within commercial websites such as Jobvite is what has increased the rate at which both employers and employees prefer the use of commercial websites since the use of screening tools combined with a referral presents intelligent capital with the necessary skills required by an employer.

Conceptual Frame Work

Figure 1 below shows the visual depiction of the theorized relation of variables

Fig 1. A Conceptual Model showing E-recruitment and Public Service Delivery



Source Researchers (2022)

A conceptual framework provides a link between the predictor and outcome variables in a study presented in a figure format. Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework for this study. The summary of variables are; E-recruitment, attracting applicants, assessing & interviewing applicants and Public Service Delivery: service quality, Service flexibility and Transparency.

Methodology

Research Design

Descriptive research design was utilised in this study as it is deemed the most suitable when it comes to making enquiries based primary data examinations. Most fundamentally, the justification for such a design is its ability to explain the problem in question and helps to collect information meant to address the question.

Population of the study.

In this study, this was 126 staff in the Public Service, Administration and ICT department of the County government of Tana River. These were relied upon to provide accurate information regarding the state of Public Service delivery and use of ICT to facilitate various HR processes.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The study adopted a census survey since the population of the study was small hence will rule out sampling. This is justified as it falls within the 200 or less that was suggested by Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2014).

Data Collection

This study collected primary data which was obtained from respondents. This information was utilised in investigating the influence of E-recruitment on public service delivery in Tana River County, Kenya. A semi-structured questionnaire was used. A questionnaire requires participants of a study to respond to a set of itemized questions (Phellas, Bloch & Seale, 2011).

Reliability Analysis

A pilot study was conducted involving 12 respondents to determine the questionnaires' reliability. Cronbach's Alpha, which assesses internal consistency by determining if certain items on a scale measure the same construct, was used to conduct the reliability analysis.

Table 1: Reliability Test Results

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	Comment
Electronic Recruitment	0.703	8	Reliable Scale
Public service delivery	0.935	8	Reliable Scale

Source: Pilot Data, 2022

Table 1 above shows that electronic recruitment had Cronbach's Alpha, $\alpha=0.703$, and public service delivery $\alpha=0.935$. This illustrates that the reliability values of the scales above the stipulated threshold of 0.7, indicating that they were all reliable. As a result, the research equipment proved reliable and did not require any modifications.

Response Rate

The sample population consisted of 126 staff in the Public Service, Administration and ICT departments of the County government of Tana River. Thus, a total of 126 questionnaires were distributed, and data was successfully collected from 94 respondents representing a response rate of 74.6% as shown. Rahi, Alnaser and Abd-Ghani (2019) recommend 55% or above as a rule of the thumb for minimum responses.

Descriptive statistics

Electronic Recruitment

The study required respondents to express their opinion in terms of degree of agreement or disagreement with some aspects of Electronic Recruitment in the county government of Tana River based on a Likert- scale. The results are presented on Table 2. Analysis of data was based on mean and standard deviations.

Table 2: Descriptive Results on Electronic Recruitment

Statement	N	Mean	Std Dev.
Applicants are fully informed online about the qualifications required to perform the job before being hired	94	4.33	0.52
Online platforms are used to attract applicants for different jobs	94	4.33	0.52
Job applicants are assessed and interviewed electronically	94	2.07	0.34
Hiring of personnel is done online	94	1.16	0.42

Human resource planning is done electronically	94	1.14	0.40
Advertising of jobs is done through internet	94	4.02	0.57
Sources of information about jobs are available for applicants online	94	3.93	0.78
There are online job boards where applicants can post their resume	94	1.56	0.84

Source: Research Data (2022)

As indicated in *Table 2* above, respondents agreed that applicants are fully informed online about the qualifications required to perform the job before being hired at a mean of 4.33 and standard deviation of 0.52. Similarly, respondents agreed that Online platforms are used to attract applicants for different jobs with a mean of 4.33 and standard deviation of 0.52. However, respondents disagreed at a mean of 2.07 and standard deviation of 0.34 that job applicants are assessed and interviewed online. On the same note, majority of respondents strongly disagreed that hiring of personnel is done online with a mean of 1.16 and a SD of 0.42. With regard to whether human resource planning is done online, respondents strongly disagreed, mean is 1.14 and SD of 0.4. On whether advertising of jobs is done through internet, respondents agreed with a mean of 4.02 and SD of 0.57. Another statement sought to establish whether sources of information about jobs are available for applicants online whereby a mean of 3.93 and SD of 0.78 indicates that participants agreed. Finally, respondents disagreed that there are online job boards where applicants can post their resume with a mean of 1.56 and SD of 0.84.

Public Service Delivery

The study's dependent variable was public service delivery in Tana River County. On a Likert Scale, respondents were asked to express their agreement or disagreement with several facets of public service delivery. *Table 3* displays the results.

Table 3: Descriptive Results on Public Service Delivery

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev
Peak efficiency in delivery of services	94	1.84	0.85
There is effectiveness in the manner in which services are delivered	94	1.84	0.99
Improved flexibility in delivery of services	94	1.66	0.78
Improved quality of services delivered	94	1.77	0.87
Standardization of service procurement criterion	94	1.96	0.79
Automation of services provided	94	2.54	0.95
Improved transparency	94	1.46	0.60
Improved efficiency in services delivery	94	1.72	0.78

Source: Research Data (2022)

The findings in *Table 3* show that the respondents disagreed that delivery of public service was done at peak efficiency (mean=1.84; standard deviation=0.85), there is effectiveness in the manner in which services are delivered (mean=1.84; standard deviation=0.99), improved flexibility in delivery of services (mean=1.66; standard deviation=0.78), there is improved quality of services delivered (mean=1.77; standard

deviation=0.87) and that standardization of service procurement is improved (mean=1.96; standard deviation=0.79). Respondents also disagreed that there is automation of services provided (mean=2.54; standard deviation=0.95), improved transparency (mean=1.46; standard deviation=0.6), and improved efficiency in all services delivered (mean=1.72; standard deviation=0.78). The results in this section reveal poor state of public service delivery in the county government of Tana River.

Inferential Statistics

Table 4: Influence of E- Recruitment on Public Service Delivery

Model summary					
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square		Std. Error of the Estimate	
.610	0.373	0.344		0.14211	
ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1.068	4	0.267	13.219	.000
Residual	1.797	89	0.02		
Total	2.865	93			
Coefficients ^a					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.464	0.223		6.579	0.000
Electronic recruitment	0.212	0.052	0.356	4.083	0.000

a Dependent Variable: Public service Delivery

- a. Predictors: (Constant), E- Recruitment
- b. Dependent Variable: Public service Delivery

Source: Field Data (2022)

The model summary results indicates that with the four research independent variables, there is a 37.3 statistical probability of correctly predicting public service delivery in Tana River County ($R^2=0.373$)

The significance of the regression model was confirmed by the F-value of 13.219 has a p value of 0.000 at 5% indicating that the overall regression model is significant, hence, the joint contribution of the independent variables was significant in predicting public service delivery in Tana River County. This result indicates that the variation in the regression can be explained by electronic recruitment.

The results of multiple regressions, as presented in *Table 4* revealed that electronic recruitment has a positive and significant influence on public service delivery with a beta value of 0.212 and p-value of 0.000 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$. This implies that for each unit increase in electronic recruitment practices, there is an improvement in public service delivery in Tana River County. According to Mwashu (2013), online recruitment is currently being used by different establishments to enhance the service delivery effectiveness. Similarly, Vyzirgiannakis (2016) argues that properly used, e-recruitment reduces time and hiring costs and makes most public service positions attractive.

Conclusion

The study concludes that electronic recruitment of county staff positively and significantly influences public service delivery. Fully informing applicants online about the qualifications required to perform the job before being hired, using online platforms to attract applicants for different jobs, fully assessing and interviewing applicants online would improve public service delivery.

Recommendation

This study recommends electronic recruitment of staff should be streamlined and managed well as it positively enhances service delivery. The county of Tana River should comprehensively inform applicants online about the credentials required to perform the job before hiring them, use online platforms to attract applications for various positions, and fully assess and interview applicants online in order to improve public service delivery.

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