Influence of Recruitment Practices on Employees' Productivity in Isiolo County Government, Kenya

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Abstract

The study sought to assess the influence of recruitment practices on employee productivity in the Isiolo County government. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the impact of recruitment practices on employee productivity within the Isiolo County government. The target population consisted of 1,600 employees, with a sample size of 320 respondents calculated using Slovin's formula. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the data, while inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and multiple regression, were applied to examine the relationships between recruitment practices and employee productivity. A strong positive correlation (r = .917**, n = 287, p = .000) was observed between recruitment practices and productivity, indicating that improved recruitment techniques substantially enhance staff productivity. The relationship was statistically significant at the 0.05 level. The analysis of variance results confirmed the model's goodness-of-fit in explaining variation in the dependent variable (F = 502.241; df1 = 4; df2 = 282; Sig. = .000). The findings underscored the importance of effective recruitment practices in boosting employee productivity, providing actionable insights for improving hiring processes and organizational performance. The study recommends that Isiolo County government should define role qualifications, implement rigorous screening to hire qualified candidates, and conduct regular workforce planning to align staffing with workload and goals, avoiding understaffing or overstaffing. The study supports human capital theory, emphasizing that quality recruitment boosts productivity. It advocates for clear job descriptions, enhanced recruitment policies, and data-driven hiring improvements.

Keywords: *Recruitment Practices, Employees' Productivity, Workforce Planning, Isiolo County Government in Kenya*

1. Introduction

Employee productivity encompasses both the actions and outcomes of employees. They are the tangible outcomes achieved by an employee in relation to their intended objectives (Ali & Anwar, 2021). According to Rivaldo and Nabella (2023), employee productivity is evaluated based on the performance criteria established by the organization. However, human resources remain the most valuable asset and a key factor for success in any global organization. A successful human resource management (HRM) system should be rooted in established HRM practices that efficiently organize and direct an organization's human capital toward achieving its objectives. When managed effectively, employees have a positive impact on workload,

service efficiency, and overall productivity (Chowdhury et al., 2022). For government agencies to thrive, employees must follow the principle of placing the "right person in the right position" (Chowdhury et al., 2022). The first step in improving employee performance is to attract, identify, and hire individuals whose skills, knowledge, and perspectives align with the job's requirements (Susano et al., 2023). A well-designed recruitment process ensures the selection of individuals who are not only culturally compatible but also equipped with the necessary skills to contribute to the organization's long-term objectives.

Institutions within the Asian government have prioritized the hiring process. According to Gao and Liu (2020), the first step in the Chinese recruitment process is advertising available openings and then having qualified individuals submit their applications. The Mexican government begins the hiring process by tallying all the open positions and estimating the number of new employees the agency will need (MacLeod & Urquiola, 2021). Second, in addition to a thorough evaluation of the role, you could get a job alert. Next, finding people who are qualified for the task. The fourth step is to think about what the job entails.

Recruitment, a key aspect of human resource management in Nigeria, aims to attract, select, and onboard top talent. By hiring skilled individuals through a thorough and efficient recruitment process, institutions successfully meet their goals in a timely and predictable manner (Adaoma & Onuoha, 2022). Omotunde and Alegbeleye (2021) used a descriptive survey research technique to examine the effects of hiring practices on productivity in Nigerian colleges. Attracting and selecting exceptional personnel at all levels is critical to an organization's success, according to the report. The failure of most South African institutions' personnel to establish and sustain a competitive advantage is attributed to inadequate recruitment and selection processes (Zizzamia, 2020). The requirement to quickly, adequately, and credibly attract individuals has made recruitment and selection procedures essential for modern institutions (Mahapatro, 2021).

The county governments in Kenya have realized the impact that employee recruitment has on job productivity (Karim et al., 2019). When not carried out correctly, may have a detrimental impact on staff productivity. Muyela and Kamaara (2021) established that the service delivery objectives for the people of Kenya were hindered by poor personnel productivity in the public service. Further, failure in recruitment in institutions in Machakos County contributed to poor service delivery (Nason, 2021). Nguti and Mose (2021) further argued that the low quality of work produced by employees at the Higher Education and Loan Board in Kenya can be attributed to the lack of merit-based and professionally-managed recruitment and selection procedures. Employee productivity must be addressed by the county to sustain excellence in service delivery and solve the strategic concerns that have been highlighted as critical in Isiolo County administration. As a result, the administration of Isiolo County is interested in management strategies that encourage workers to give their all.

1.1 Problem Statement

To achieve optimal productivity and high service delivery standards, effective human resource management practices must focus on recruiting competent employees who can contribute to these goals. Counties, like Isiolo, would have motivated staff, timely completion of assignments, minimal absenteeism, and high levels of citizen satisfaction with public services. Recruitment strategies aligned with workforce needs foster innovation, job satisfaction, and organizational growth. With that, the Isiolo County Government has implemented several measures to enhance employee performance. These include boosting communication, implementing digital processes and services to reduce workloads, ensuring

staff members are punctual and attend work without missing days, conducting audits of risk management practices, prioritizing workplace health and safety, preparing for succession, and conducting proper performance evaluations.

In reality, employee productivity in the Isiolo County Government remains poor and substandard despite measures to enhance performance. Assignments frequently accumulate, service delivery targets are unmet, and only 50% of employees satisfactorily implement tasks, as highlighted in the Isiolo County Integrated Development Plan (2023–2027). Citizen satisfaction with service delivery is low (40%), with rising complaints about service quality and timeliness. High absenteeism, turnover, lack of enthusiasm, and minimal innovation among staff further underscore persistent underperformance. The gap in understanding the relationship between recruitment practices and employee productivity in Isiolo County is evident. Although efforts have been made to address performance issues, there is a lack of empirical evidence explaining why these strategies have not produced the expected results. This highlights the need for research to assess whether current recruitment practices are in alignment with the workforce's needs and to identify the challenges affecting productivity. The study aimed to bridge this knowledge gap by investigating the impact of recruitment practices on employee productivity within the Isiolo County Government.

1.2 Research Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant relationship between recruitment and employees' productivity in Isiolo County government, Kenya.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Recruitment strategies and employee productivity

Recruitment, an essential Human Resource Management function, entails identifying, attracting, selecting, and hiring suitable candidates to fill organizational vacancies. A well-structured recruitment process ensures the selection of competent individuals who align with the organizational objectives and culture, directly influencing its success and sustainability (Chimakati & Kelemba, 2023). Clear job descriptions, strategic talent acquisition methods, and transparent evaluation criteria are critical in attracting qualified candidates who enhance productivity and performance. Recruitment processes are also pivotal in shaping organizational competitiveness, as they ensure that firms hire individuals with the skills and qualities necessary for achieving long-term goals.

Recruitment strategies significantly impact organizational productivity. AlHamad et al. (2022) revealed comprehensive recruitment strategies, including thorough candidate assessment methods, lead to enhanced workforce performance and productivity. Similarly in Japan, Toyota and Samsung adopt innovative practices; preferential hiring of family members to ensure cultural alignment and stability. European organizations emphasize selecting candidates with the right mix of education, experience, and training to maximize employee output (Bilan et al., 2020).

In African countries, effective recruitment practices ensure the selection of competent and motivated individuals who drive organizational success. In Nigeria, the recruitment process remains critical to addressing workforce challenges such as nepotism, corruption, and brain drain (Ighoshemu & Ogidiagba, 2022). Transparent and merit-based recruitment practices significantly improve employee productivity and reduce turnover. However, several African government institutions struggle with systemic inefficiencies, including the recruitment of unqualified staff and poor workforce planning (Ighoshemu & Ogidiagba, 2022). Addressing

these challenges requires adopting transparent, merit-based, and structured recruitment strategies tailored to organizational needs and contexts (Mkongo & Macha, 2023).

In Kenya, recruitment practices have also shown a significant influence on employee productivity. Research in the telecommunications industry highlighted the adoption of modern recruitment techniques, such as online job portals and psychometric testing, which help in identifying skilled candidates who align with company values (Nguti & Mose, 2021). However, challenges persist within government agencies and parastatals. For instance, weak succession planning and rushed recruitment processes in agencies like the immigration department have led to ill-prepared employees and low productivity (Ongera, 2023). Despite these issues, implementing structured recruitment practices remains a critical factor in enhancing productivity within Kenyan organizations.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a positivist philosophy, emphasizing objective, observable, and verifiable knowledge through empirical evidence and the scientific method. A descriptive cross-sectional research design was chosen to collect data at a single point in time, allowing for the exploration of relationships between variables. The target population included 1,600 employees from Isiolo County Government's headquarters, specifically from the Lands (385), Health (592), Human Resource (78), Administration (286), and Livestock (259) departments. A sample of 320 respondents was determined using Sloven's formula with a 5% margin of error. Stratified random sampling ensured proportional representation, followed by simple random sampling to select individuals. Data was collected using structured questionnaires with closed and open-ended questions. The tools were pretested with 10 participants to enhance reliability and validity. SPSS version 28 was used for descriptive (frequencies, means, standard deviations) and inferential statistics (correlation and multiple regression) to test hypotheses and assess relationships. Ethical considerations included confidentiality, secure data storage, and informed consent. Approval was obtained from Kenya Methodist University's Institutional Scientific Ethical Review Committee, and a research permit was issued by NACOSTI.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Response rate

A total of 320 structured questionnaires were distributed to respondents in Isiolo County, but 287 were completed, resulting in a 90.0% response rate. This rate was considered representative of the target population. Notwithstanding, a response rate exceeding 70% is indicative of population representativeness (Sürücü & Maslakci, 2020).

4.2 Reliability Test

Reliability test was undertaken by use of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to measure the internal consistency of the constructs making up the scale.

Table 1: Reliability results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of constructs	Comment
Recruitment	0.722	11	Reliable
Employee productivity	0.700	11	Reliable

The reliability analysis indicated that the items assessing recruitment strategy (r = 0.722) and the dependent variable (r = 0.700) were internally consistent and dependable, ensuring confidence in the study's findings. As noted by Amirrudin et al. (2021), a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.7 or higher is regarded as reliable and trustworthy.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2: Respondents' opinions on recruitment and employees' productivity in the Isiolo County government

Statements	SD	D	M	A	SA	M	SD
The County Government of Isiolo has Qualified personnel	12 (4.2%)	23 (8.0%)	84(29.3%)	129(44.9%)	39(13.6%)	3.56	.966
The county government of Isiolo has right number of staff that allows for balanced workloads.	38(13.2%)	149(51.9%)	81(28.2%)	19(6.6%)	0 (0.0%)	2.28	.776
The county government of Isiolo has ALWAYS sufficient staff	94(32.8%)	167(58.2%)	24 (8.4%)	2 (0.7%)	0(0.0%)	1.77	.622
The county staff handles complex tasks with less training time	76(26.5%)	185(64.5%)	22 (7.7%)	4 (1.4%)	0(0.0%)	1.84	.611
The county staff ALWAYS professionals	55(19.2%)	118(41.1%)	109(38.0%)	3 (1.0%)	2(0.7%)	2.23	.791
There is ALWAYS adequate staff mix	73(25.4%)	151(52.6%)	47(16.4%)	13(4.5%)	3(1.0%)	2.03	.834
ALL staff are provided with specific job roles to effectively perform their duties	46(16.0%)	143(49.8%)	95(33.1%)	0 (0.0%)	3(1.0%)	2.20	.739
The county employees have ALL requisite skills and expertise needed for higher productivity M=2.92; SD=1.070	32(11.1%)	65 (22.6%)	99(34.5%)	76(26.5%)	15(5.2%)	2.92	1.070
Staff are ALWAYS equally distributed to departments in the county	40(13.9%)	130(45.3%)	77 (26.8%)	38(13.2%)	2 (0.7%)	2.41	.912
The county always hires new staff regularly	38(13.2%)	149(51.9%)	81 (28.2%)	19(6.6%)	0 (0.0%)	2.28	.776
The facility has ALWAYS sufficient staff	74(25.8%)	141(49.1%)	66 (23.0%)	2 (0.7%)	4 (1.4%)	2.03	.802
Aggregate						2.32	0.422

The findings indicated significant challenges in staffing adequacy and workforce management within the Isiolo County Government. Respondents strongly disagreed with statements about sufficient staffing, balanced workloads, regular hiring, and equitable staff distribution, as reflected by low mean scores such as 1.77 (SD = 0.622) for sufficiency of staff and 2.41 (SD = 0.912) for equitable distribution. Perceptions of staff qualifications were moderately positive (M = 3.56, SD = 0.966), but concerns about skill gaps and insufficient training persist, with a mean of 2.92 (SD = 1.070) for employees possessing requisite skills. These results align with studies by Rosenberg et al. (2020) and Badran et al. (2021), which identified inadequate staffing and imbalanced workloads as key contributors to reduced productivity and burnout in public service institutions. Similarly, Morris and Reddy (2022) emphasized the detrimental impact of limited training on employee performance. In contrast, Blake et al. (2020) and Ahmed and Khalid (2023) found that counties with effective human resource planning and strategic staff development initiatives reported fewer challenges, suggesting the potential for Isiolo County to address these issues through improved recruitment, equitable staff allocation, and enhanced capacity-building programs.

Employees productivity in Isiolo county

Employee productivity was the study's dependent variable. Ten constructs were rated on a Likert Scale.

Table 3: Respondents' opinion on the level of employees' productivity in Isiolo County government

Statements	SD	D	M	A	SA	M	SD
I hardly dedicate reasonable working hours every day.	5(1.7%)	2(0.7%)	76(26.5%)	143(49.8%)	61 (21.3%)	3.88	.806
I rarely have flexible work arrangements	0(0.0%)	4(1.4%)	22(7.7%)	185(64.5%)	76(26.5%)	4.16	.611
I always complete my work late	2(0.7%)	3(1.0%)	109(38.0%)	118(41.1%)	55(19.2%)	3.77	.791
I always value my responsibility over my work responsibilities	3(1.0%)	13(4.5%)	47(16.4%)	151(52.6%)	73(25.4%)	3.97	.834
I rarely have a sense of stability and confidence in my workplace	3(1.0%)	0(0.0%)	95(33.1%)	143(49.8%)	46(16.0%)	3.80	.739
I always set realistic task goals that I meet on time	15(5.2%)	76(26.5%)	99(34.5%)	65(22.6%)	32(11.1%)	3.08	1.070
I always prioritize tasks for completion	2(0.7%)	38(13.2%)	77(26.8%)	130(45.3%)	40(13.9%)	3.59	.912
I always allocate sufficient time for each task	0(0.0%)	19(6.6%)	81(28.2%)	149(51.9%)	38(13.2%)	3.72	.776
I hardly feel motivated to work in the County	0(0.0%)	2(0.7%)	24(8.4%)	167(58.2%)	94(32.8%)	4.23	.622
I hardly concentrate on my work	4(1.4%)	2(0.7%)	66(23.0%)	141(49.1%)	74(25.8%)	3.97	.802
I always feel unsatisfied with my work	49(17.1%)	80(27.9%)	77(26.8%)	67(23.3%)	14(4.9%)	2.71	1.145
Aggregate						3.715	0.421

The study assessed employee productivity in the Isiolo County Government using a Likert scale on ten constructs. The aggregate mean score of 3.72 (SD = 0.42) indicates a moderate to high level of agreement among respondents regarding the statements on employee productivity. Notably, the highest-rated item was *"I hardly feel motivated to work in the County"* (M = 4.23, SD = 0.62), suggesting that a significant majority of respondents felt a lack of motivation in their roles. Similarly, the statement *"I rarely have flexible work arrangements"* received a high mean score (M = 4.16, SD = 0.61), highlighting a perceived inflexibility in work structures.

On the other hand, statements like *"I always set realistic task goals that I meet on time"* (M = 3.08, SD = 1.07) and *"I always feel unsatisfied with my work"* (M = 2.71, SD = 1.15) received comparatively lower scores, indicating variability in opinions and suggesting that not all employees feel productive or satisfied with their performance. Overall, while the findings reveal areas of strength, such as prioritizing tasks (M = 3.59, SD = 0.91), they also expose concerns related to motivation and flexibility, which could impact overall productivity. These insights underline the need for targeted interventions to enhance work arrangements and employee engagement. The findings agreed with those of Deci and Ryan (2020) who emphasized that motivation such as personal growth and job satisfaction, is a critical factor influencing employee productivity, particularly in public sector organizations. They found that intrinsic motivation significantly enhances productivity levels. Gupta et al. (2022) reported that flexible work arrangements contribute positively to productivity, as they reduce burnout and increase job satisfaction. The absence of flexibility in Isiolo County correlates with the high score on the lack of motivation and challenges with productivity. Nonetheless, Nwankwo and Ugochi (2021) found that employees who effectively prioritize tasks are more likely to achieve higher productivity. However, Isiolo County's findings suggest room for improvement in task prioritization and time allocation.

4.4 Correlation analysis

Bivariate Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was used to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between recruitment strategies and employee productivity in Isiolo County, Kenya.

Table 2: Correlations

Variable		Employee productivity	Recruitment
Employee productivity	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	287	
Recruitment practice	Pearson Correlation	.917**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	287	287

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

The study found a strong positive correlation between recruitment tactics and employee productivity (r = .917**, n = 287, p = 0.000), indicating that improvements in recruitment practices are strongly linked to higher levels of employee productivity. This positive association suggests that when recruitment practices are enhanced, such as through effective hiring, thorough selection, and the placement of qualified candidates, employee productivity tends to improve. The statistically significant result ($p < 0.05$) further confirms that this relationship is not attributable to random chance. The findings agreed with those of Schneider

et al. (2020) who found that recruitment practices, particularly structured interviews and job-specific assessments, were critical in identifying candidates whose skills and motivations aligned with organizational goals, thereby enhancing productivity. Singh and Kumar (2021) observed that companies that prioritize recruitment strategies focusing on competency-based hiring see significant improvements in employee output and overall organizational performance.

4.5 Regression analysis

A regression analysis was carried out to examine the model's predictive power on the dependent variable.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.936[a]	.877	.875	1.638	1.660

a. Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment, employee relations, Performance Training Compensations,
b. Dependent Variable: Employees Productivity

The results indicated an R Square of .877, meaning recruitment practice explained 87.7% of the variance in employee productivity, suggesting a strong predictive effect. The Adjusted R Square of .875 confirmed this robustness, slightly lowering the explained variance to 87.5% but still supporting the model's strength.

A regression model's overall significance was tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Table 6: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5390.777	4	1347.694	502.241	.000[b]
	Residual	756.708	282	2.683		
	Total	6147.484	286			

a. Dependent Variable: Employees Productivity

b. Predictor: (Constant), Recruitment

The model demonstrated a strong fit to the data, effectively explaining the variability in the dependent variable. The F-statistic for F (4,282), with degrees of freedom df1 = 4 and df2 = 282, was 502.241, with a significance level of 5% and a confidence level of 95%. This result confirmed that the model accounted for the variation in the dependent variable, with the findings being statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

5. Conclusion

The study concluded that recruitment practices have a statistically significant impact on staff productivity within the Isiolo County Government.

6. Recommendations

The study recommends that the Isiolo County Government clearly define the qualifications required for each role to ensure that candidates possess the necessary skills and knowledge. The county should also implement rigorous screening processes to ensure that only candidates with the appropriate qualifications are shortlisted and hired. Further, the county government of Isiolo should conduct regular workforce planning to ensure that staffing levels are aligned with the workload and organizational goals to prevent both understaffing and overstaffing, which can negatively impact productivity.

Therefore, the study supports the human capital theory, which posits that investment in quality recruitment leads to higher employee productivity. It suggests that selecting candidates with the right qualifications and experience enhances the overall productivity of the organization. Enhanced Recruitment Policies: Develop and implement policies that focus on attracting and selecting candidates with the right qualifications, skills, and experience. The findings are practical in the development of comprehensive Job Descriptions that are clear and detailed, outlining the necessary qualifications and skills for each role; Data-Driven Recruitment rack recruitment effectiveness, and making data-informed decisions to improve the hiring process.

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