
Recruitment Process and Quality Service Delivery in Kajiado County, Kenya

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Abstract:

Purpose: The primary objective of the study was to evaluate the impact of the recruitment process on the quality of service delivery within Kajiado County.

Material/methods: The study was underpinned by the Human Capital Theory and the Resource-Based View. An explanatory research design was employed, targeting a population of 862 employees, with a sample size of 356 respondents, including both employees and customers. The sample was stratified across 11 departments of the county government. Data was gathered using structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Simple random sampling techniques were applied to select respondents from each stratum. Hypothesis testing was conducted using multiple regression analysis and a hierarchical stepwise regression approach.

Findings: The results of the analysis revealed a significant effect of the recruitment process on the quality of service delivery in Kajiado County. The findings underscore the critical influence of recruitment practices on service delivery outcomes.

Conclusion: The study concludes that transparent and effective recruitment processes are essential for improving service delivery in Kajiado County. Recruitment practices directly contribute to the ability of the county to achieve high-quality service standards.

Value: This study emphasizes the importance of merit-based recruitment processes, advocating for fairness, diversity, and compliance with regulatory frameworks. It provides actionable recommendations, including training for selection panel members and adherence to meritocracy in hiring, which can help county management enhance service delivery. The findings contribute to the broader discourse on public service administration and human resource management.

Keywords: Recruitment Process, Quality, Service Delivery, County government

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1. Introduction

Delivering high-quality public services should be done with honesty, prioritizing the needs of the public, especially the most vulnerable, while fostering openness and enabling citizens to voice their preferences and evaluate service quality (Engdaw et al., 2019). This involves balancing expected and perceived services to meet customer expectations and focusing on initiatives that satisfy public needs (Astuti & Lanin, 2020). High-quality services enhance customer satisfaction, loyalty, and organizational performance, making it crucial to assess factors influencing service provision (Alauddin et al., 2019). Recruitment and selection (RS) are pivotal HRM activities, significantly impacting service quality by ensuring the hiring of qualified personnel and fostering innovation and efficiency, thus enhancing overall service delivery and organizational performance (Fathmath et al., 2021).

For human resource managers and entire organizations, recruitment and selection are crucial strategies for finding and keeping the proper candidates (O'Brien, 2012). Murage (2018) made the argument that unethical discrimination in the workplace might lead to the denial of appropriate job opportunities to eligible workers. He also stressed how important it is for the recruitment and selection process to work well since it directly affects the organization's ability to provide high-quality services. According to Rahmany (2018), recruiting procedures are essential for providing high-quality services in the public sector because they guarantee that the proper personnel joins the company, assisting it in achieving its short- and long-term goals.

Studies have shown a connection between recruiting employees and providing high-quality services both locally and globally. For instance, Lockwood and Ansari (2011) noted that in the United States, advertising to promote recruiting and retention techniques for IT specialists results in high-quality service delivery. Stewart and Brown (2019) found that induction training is linked to excellent service delivery in the UK public sector. Similarly, in Nigeria, Ekwoaba, Ugochukwu, and Ndubuisi (2015) showed that selection criteria significantly impact the provision of high-quality services. Apollo (2014) found that low-quality service delivery in Nigeria is due to inadequate human resource planning and high recruitment and selection costs. Orientation programs, which expose new hires to organizational culture, improve service quality in the Nigerian public sector (Marijani, Nchimbi, & Omary, 2018). Heynes (2015) found a positive correlation between the recruitment process and high-quality service delivery in South Africa's public sector, while Mufu (2015) established a connection between service quality and applicant selection based on fit and competencies in Cameroon.

Despite the importance of recruitment processes for high-quality service delivery, there is a lack of empirical data linking these processes to service outcomes, particularly in Kenyan county governments. The government audit report for 2014–2015 highlighted overstaffing in Kajiado County, with a rate of 7% compared to the 4% national average, which negatively impacts service delivery. Quality service delivery is crucial for customer satisfaction and the growth of various sectors, yet service delivery remains inadequate in Kenyan counties despite devolution efforts (Kerubo & Muturi, 2019). Challenges such as a shortage of knowledgeable and

competent workers have led to declining county performance, as evidenced by the drop in growth rate from 7% in 2009 to 5.8% in 2016 (Auditor General, 2019). The auditor general's reports have pointed out irregularities in the hiring process, such as the engagement of casuals and contradictions between the county management and the County Public Service Board (CPSB), further emphasizing the need to evaluate the roles of CPSB and human resource departments in recruitment, selection, induction, and placement of employees on service delivery.

Given these circumstances, it is evident that effective and strategic hiring processes are critical for ensuring qualified and competent individuals are selected for key roles in county governments. Poor recruitment practices lead to inefficiencies and ineffective service delivery, impacting socio-economic development and community well-being. This study aims to assess the hiring process in Kajiado County and its impact on service quality, highlighting how poor governance policies stemming from inadequate hiring processes result in weak county performance and strained citizen-government relations (Chukwu & Igwe, 2012). Despite the establishment of County Public Service Boards in 2013, there has been little empirical evaluation of their recruitment process. This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the recruitment process as a predictor of service quality in Kajiado County.

2. Theoretical and Literature Review

The study framed within the theoretical perspectives of Human Capital Theory and the Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory provides a robust understanding of the connection between recruitment processes and quality service delivery. Human Capital Theory, proposed by Becker (1964), emphasizes the intrinsic value of individuals' skills, knowledge, and abilities, which collectively constitute an organization's human capital. HRM practices are designed to attract, retain, and develop this human capital, thereby enhancing organizational performance and service delivery (Armstrong, 2001). The theory posits that investing in employees' development yields significant returns, particularly relevant in public service sectors where the quality of service delivery hinges on the competencies of public servants. By ensuring that recruited individuals possess the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities, organizations can effectively meet their service delivery goals, thereby improving customer satisfaction and organizational success (Armstrong & Baron, 2002).

The Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory, introduced by Penrose in 1959, complements this by focusing on the strategic utilization of an organization's internal resources to achieve competitive advantage. According to RBV, organizations must continuously assess and refine their recruitment processes to ensure they attract and retain individuals who possess unique skills and capabilities that are valuable, rare, and difficult to imitate (Barney, 2001). Effective recruitment, selection, and placement practices are essential for leveraging human capital to its fullest potential, enabling organizations to build a robust workforce capable of delivering high-quality services. Despite criticisms of its static nature, RBV remains pertinent by underscoring the importance of aligning HR practices with organizational goals to optimize resource utilization (Wright, Dunford, & Snell, 2001). This theory advocates for proactive and strategic recruitment processes that not only fulfill immediate staffing needs but also foster long-term organizational growth and service excellence. By integrating these

theoretical perspectives, the study provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how strategic recruitment processes can enhance service delivery quality in county governments.

2.1. Empirical Review

According to Armstrong (2010), recruitment is the process of looking for job prospects and encouraging them to submit applications to positions within the company. The company is continuously developing a pool of competent candidates for potential future needs in human resources, even in the absence of open positions. Armstrong (2010) asserts that recruiting is the foundation of all HR systems within the company and is essential to efficient Human Resource Management (HRM). Given that hiring practices are a company's major investment, their efficacy and plan are crucial to strategic decision-making (Sangeetha, 2010).

According to Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright (2010), recruitment is the organizational activity that seeks to find and draw in new hires who fit the needs of the company. The procedure is intended to entice prospective workers to apply for jobs, and then choose applicants based on the particular requirements of the business in order to fill open positions with qualified candidates. The company needs to specify the precise requirements needed to fill the open position, and it also needs to keep a careful eye on potential hires during the hiring and selection processes (Kepha, Mukulu, and Waititu, 2014).

Furthermore, the goal of recruitment is to maintain a stable human resource composition inside a business. An effective recruitment strategy can make use of a number of techniques, including as job postings, referrals from current staff members, graduate recruitment programs, agency or expert engagement, job boards, business websites, and social media platforms (Sinha & Thaly, 2013). Increased returns and economies of scale are the results of an efficient hiring process, which also gives businesses a competitive edge in the market (Palaniappan & Arasu, 2017). Additionally, this kind of procedure aids in accomplishing the goals of the organization, which include maintaining human resources, guaranteeing a sufficient number of suitably qualified candidates for open jobs, and improving the efficacy of the hiring process (Azzam & Jaradat, 2014).

A recruiting policy creates a framework for carrying out the recruitment process and describes the goals of recruitment. A recruitment policy serves as an organizational code of behavior in this area, according to Cole (2011). Recruitment techniques differ; formal techniques include posting job ads in newspapers and using employment agencies; informal techniques include word-of-mouth and referrals (Armstrong, 2010). Studies have revealed a positive relationship between an organization's size and its inclination to hire recent graduates. Furthermore, different recruitment strategies are typically used based on the kind of post that has to be filled.

The crucial influence that recruitment and selection have on the functioning of organizations has been repeatedly shown by research. For example, Aziz (2017) discovered that recruitment affects selection, selection affects performance, and recruitment directly affects performance in a study that used structural equation modeling (SEM). In a similar vein, Sarinah, Gultom, and Thabah (2016) shown using

route analysis that hiring and selection have a major influence on employee placement, which has a major impact on employee performance. In order to investigate the relationship between recruitment, selection, and performance, Kanu (2015) used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, such as Pearson's correlation coefficient. The results showed a substantial association between these variables.

Companies in Tanzania use a variety of hiring techniques based on the experience and credentials of applicants. According to Egbert, Fischer, and Bredl (2013), hiring highly qualified applicants primarily involves the use of formal channels like newspaper adverts. Conversely, walk-ins are more frequently utilized in the hiring process for entry-level jobs. In Mwanza, specifically, only about 4 percent of hiring happens online; the remaining 84.6 percent happens through newspaper and magazine ads. Karia et al. (2016) looked at how Tanzanian public water utilities performed in relation to their hiring procedures. Their research showed that ineffective hiring and selection procedures resulted in large organizational losses, highlighting the significance of strong and successful hiring practices for improving organizational effectiveness and performance.

A study conducted in Kenya by Jonathan, Moses, and Willis (2014) looked into how hiring and selection procedures affected workers' performance in SMEs in the Kisumu municipality. According to the report, SMEs in Kisumu perform on average 60.71%. Crucial components like recruiting, vetting, and sourcing were found to be important in determining how well these SMEs performed. The study found that efficient hiring and selection procedures significantly boost the performance of SMEs in Kisumu; in fact, good hiring and selection procedures have the potential to increase performance by 72.40%. In the context of Kisumu's SMEs, this finding emphasizes a substantial positive association between hiring, selection, and job performance.

Consequently, Onchari, Iravo, and Munene (2014) conducted a study on the effect of recruitment strategies on service delivery using a sample of 85 employees in Nyamira County. The study revealed that poor service delivery to residents was largely due to the recruitment strategies employed. While various studies agree on the positive relationship between employee hiring processes and quality service delivery aspects in organizations, they also highlight the diversity of employee hiring variables, scope, and nature of institutions. These factors are contingent on quality service delivery measures, including institutional trust, proposal performance, professionalism, and employee productivity.

However, the studies provide inconsistent, insufficient, and inconclusive information regarding the relationship between employee hiring and quality service delivery in counties due to their revealed limitations. For instance, different studies focus on various aspects of hiring processes and their impact on service delivery, making it challenging to draw a comprehensive conclusion. Additionally, variations in institutional contexts and measurement criteria further complicate the ability to generalize findings across different settings.

Given these limitations, the current study aims to clearly elaborate on the underexplored knowledge regarding the influence of recruitment on the quality of service delivery in county governments, specifically focusing on Kajiado County. By addressing gaps in

previous research and providing a more focused analysis, this study seeks to offer a clearer understanding of how effective recruitment practices can enhance service delivery in county governments.

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of recruitment process on quality service delivery in Kajiado County.

3. Material and methods

3.1 Target Population and sampling

The study's target population comprised 862 administrative workers from various departments in Kajiado County, including Water, Public Works, Administration, Finance, Health, Education, Sports Youth and Culture, Trade and Industry, Agriculture, County Assembly, and the County Public Service Board. Additionally, three clients from each department were included, focusing on a comprehensive understanding of service delivery. The sample size of 178 was determined using the Nassiuma (2000) formula and allocated proportionately across each stratum following Kothari and Garg (2014) proportionate approach. This approach ensures equal representation by dividing the population of each stratum by the overall population and multiplying by the sample size, thereby maintaining data integrity. To achieve a balanced representation, a total of 356 respondents were sampled, including both staff and clients from each department in an equal ratio. A simple random sampling method was employed within each stratum, ensuring every respondent had an equal chance of selection. This methodology facilitated fair participation from all departments, ensuring the study's findings accurately reflected the diverse perspectives within the county's administrative framework.

3.2 Data Collection instruments and Procedure

A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data, capturing various study-relevant variables. The items in the questionnaire were adapted from previous research and utilized Likert scales for responses. A preliminary investigation evaluated the validity and reliability of the research tools, followed by a pilot test to ensure these measures before the main study. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α) through SPSS V26 software. To ensure construct validity, input was gathered from employees at all organizational levels, aligning with the study's objectives and framework. HR experts from County governments evaluated the questionnaire for content validity. Additionally, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was employed to derive high-level insights from the data.

3.3 Data Analysis and Model specification

Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for quantitative data analysis. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, standard deviations, and mean scores, were computed to summarize the data. Inferential analysis, specifically correlation analysis, was utilized to determine the nature and strength of relationships between independent and dependent variables. linear analyses were conducted to ascertain the strength of association between the set of predictor variables (recruitment process) and service delivery. Correlation analyses were also performed to determine

the direction and strength of relations between the variables, providing valuable insights into their interrelationships.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon_i$$

Where Y is Quality of Service Delivery, X_1 is recruitment, β_1 are regression coefficients μ is the error term, α is a constant or the y- intercept

4. Findings and Discussion

In this chapter, the study unveils findings derived from collected data. Out of the total 178 questionnaires that were administered to the respondents, 152 questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of 85.4%. This means that 85.4% of the determined sample size participated in the survey by returning their completed questionnaires. Furthermore, out of the returned questionnaires, 146 were considered valid and usable for data analysis, which accounts for 82.02% of the administered questionnaires. These usable questionnaires are crucial for obtaining reliable and accurate data. The higher response rate obtained in this study (82.0%) surpasses the minimum response rate of 50% suggested by Lindner and Wingenbach (2002) to mitigate non-response bias.

4.1. Preliminary analysis

Table 1 provides insights from the factor analysis of variables related to quality service delivery and the employee recruitment process in Kajiado County. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measures of 0.886 for quality service delivery and 0.741 for the recruitment process confirm that the data is suitable for factor analysis, aligning with the acceptable thresholds set by Leech et al. (2014) and Morgan and Gerber (2016). These KMO values indicate that the sample size is adequate for conducting the analysis and that the data is well-suited for identifying underlying factors. The component factor analysis, employing varimax rotation, reveals that for quality service delivery, items with factor loadings above 0.50 were retained, ensuring strong correlations with the component. Significant factors include the dependability and promptness of county employees (loadings of 0.758 and 0.700, respectively), which underscore their importance in evaluating service quality. Similarly, for the recruitment process, items with loadings above 0.50 were retained, including factors such as the appeal of recruitment information and transparency in shortlisting (loadings of 0.789 and 0.712, respectively). The Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.816 for both components exceed the 0.70 threshold recommended by Hair et al. (2010), confirming the reliability of the measures used in the study. This ensures that the data is both valid and reliable for assessing the impact of recruitment practices on service delivery.

Table 1: Preliminary Analysis

	Loadings	Cumulative %
Quality service delivery (KMO = 0.886, Cronbach's Alpha = 0.816)		63.543
The county has up to date equipment	0.678	
The county's physical facilities are visually appealing	0.754	
This county is dependable	0.758	
When this county employees promises to do something by a certain time, they do so	0.670	
When you have a problem, county employees are sympathetic and reassuring	0.825	
The county employees provide services at the time they promise to do so	0.700	
You receive prompt services from the employees of this county	0.630	
Employees of this county are always willing to help customers.	0.793	
Employees of this county are not too busy to respond to customer requests promptly	0.702	
You can trust the employees of this county	0.795	
Employees of this county are polite	0.745	
Employees of this county gives you personal attention	0.581	
Employees recruitment process (KMO = 0.741, Cronbach's Alpha = 0.816)		55.153
There is recruitment message/advert for all County positions.	0.712	
Information for recruitment position in counties are appealing for quality candidates.	0.789	
There is no discrimination in recruitment process	0.665	
There is identification of hiring needs	0.681	
There is recruitment planning in the county	0.764	
There is publication of job description and policy	0.737	
The is transparent shortlisting of applicants	0.712	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

4.2. Univariate analysis

Table 2 presents the descriptive and correlation results for service quality and recruitment process variables in Kajiado County. The overall mean for service quality is 3.83 (SD = 0.52), reflecting a generally positive perception among respondents. The low standard deviation indicates a high consensus regarding the quality of services, highlighting the importance of employee behavior, infrastructure, and responsiveness in shaping these perceptions. Similarly, the recruitment process has an overall mean of 3.78 (SD = 0.59), suggesting general agreement among county staff about the structured nature of the recruitment process. The low standard deviation further supports a cohesive perception among staff. The skewness and kurtosis values for all items range from -1.11 to -0.48 and -0.05 to 2.60, respectively, indicating that the responses are approximately normally distributed. This normality in responses enhances the reliability of the findings. The correlation analysis reveals a strong positive and significant relationship between the recruitment process and service quality ($\rho = 0.596$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that improvements in the recruitment process are associated

with enhanced service quality, emphasizing the crucial role of effective hiring practices in achieving high service standards.

Table 2: Univariate analysis

n=146	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness	Kurtosis	Service Quality	Recruitment Process
Service Quality	3.83	0.52	0.24	-0.43	1	
Recruitment Process	3.78	0.59	-0.96	1.74	.596**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.3 Regression analysis

The model summary, as depicted in Table 3, provides a comprehensive assessment of the regression model's effectiveness in predicting service quality based on multiple predictors, including Recruitment Process. R-squared value of 0.515 suggests that approximately 51.5% of the variability in service quality can be attributed recruitment process. The ANOVA model, as depicted in Table 3, substantiates the statistical significance of the joint prediction made by the independent variables—Recruitment Process, and in relation to Quality Service Delivery. The results unveil a highly significant F-statistic of 283.644 ($p = .000$), affirming the goodness of fit of the model in explaining the variance observed in service quality.

Results from the regression analysis were conducted to examine the impact of HR processes on service quality delivery in Kajiado County. Hypothesis 1, which posited that there is no significant effect of the recruitment process on quality service delivery, was rejected based on the significant coefficients of estimate ($\beta_1 = 0.323$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, HR processes positively service quality delivery in Kajiado County. This implies that for each unit increase in the recruitment process, there was a substantial 0.323 unit increase in quality service delivery, indicating a positive influence. The findings align with existing literature and contribute to the broader understanding of HR processes. Aziz (2017) highlighted the interconnectedness of HR processes, where recruitment not only directly influences service quality but also affects subsequent processes like selection, which, in turn, impacts overall performance.

Table 3: Regression Analysis

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.12	0.279		4.01	0.000
Recruitment Process	0.308	0.071	0.323	4.359	0.000
Model Summary					
R	0.718				
R Square	0.515				
Adjusted R Square	0.513				
Std. Error of the Estimate					
	0.446				
ANOVA (goodness of fit)					
F	283.644				
Sig.	0.000				

a Dependent Variable: Service Quality

5.0 Conclusion

Based on the comprehensive assessment of the county's recruitment process, it is evident that the practices play a central role in shaping the delivery of service quality. The positive aspects revealed, such as effective communication, appeal to potential candidates, and a perceived absence of discrimination, collectively establish the credibility and efficacy of the recruitment process. The high level of consensus among county staff further reinforces the conclusion that the recruitment practices are well-regarded and contribute positively to the overall service quality. This finding suggests that the county's commitment to maintaining a fair and structured recruitment approach aligns with the positive perceptions of its workforce, highlighting the integral role of recruitment in fostering a conducive environment for delivering quality services.

6.0 Recommendations

Building on the effective recruitment practices identified, it is recommended that the county continues its proactive communication strategies and maintains transparency in the recruitment process. Regular evaluations and updates to recruitment policies can ensure ongoing effectiveness. Additionally, exploring ways to further enhance the appeal of recruitment messages may attract an even higher quality of candidates. The results indicated significant effects of recruitment on service delivery, as per Human Capital Theory and Resource-Based View Theory, suggesting that investing in human capital and aligning employee skills with job requirements positively impacts service quality. However, the selection process did not show a significant influence, underscoring areas for improvement in the recruitment process. Policy implications suggest the need for sustained investment in HR practices, emphasizing the critical role of recruitment in shaping the overall service quality within county operations. Policymakers should consider aligning recruitment policies with best practices to ensure continued positive outcomes. The positive evaluation of the recruitment process underscores the importance of policies that maintain and enhance fairness,

professionalism, and diversity within the county's hiring practices.

7.0 Further Studies

While this study on the impact of recruitment processes on service delivery in Kajiado County offers valuable insights, it is subject to certain limitations. Firstly, the research focuses exclusively on recruitment, potentially neglecting other crucial stages of the hiring process that could also affect service delivery outcomes. Additionally, the study's scope is confined to Kajiado County, which may limit the applicability of its findings to other regions or contexts. To address these limitations, future research should consider examining additional elements of the hiring process, such as selection, training, and induction, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their combined effects on service delivery. Expanding the geographical scope of the study to include a variety of regions would also enhance the generalizability of the findings and enable valuable cross-contextual comparisons.

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