AN APPRAISAL OF RECRUITMENT PROCESS OF INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN KEBBI STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract
This study was designed to appraise the recruitment process of information professionals in academic libraries in Kebbi State. The study's objectives were to identify the types of recruitment processes information professionals undergo during recruitment and the factors affecting the recruitment process of information professionals in academic libraries in Kebbi State. Quantitative research methodology was adopted and cross-sectional survey research design was used. The population for the study was sixty (60) management staff of academic libraries in Kebbi State. The questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument, out of the sixty (60) questionnaires administered; fifty-two (52) were duly completed and returned. This signified 86.67% response rate. Data was analyzed descriptively using a frequency table, mean and standard deviation. From the findings, it was discovered that: oral interviews inform competency-based, behavioral-based, task-oriented and small group interviews were the examination types employed by academic libraries for recruitment; godfatherism, indegenship, statism, religion, nepotism, ffavoritismand political interference were factors affecting the use of recruitment process of information professional in Kebbi State academic libraries. From the findings, it was recommended that: Practical and written exams should be a prerequisite in the recruitment process of information professionals in academic libraries; Academic library management should play down those factors during recruitment.

Keywords: Academic Libraries, Recruitment, Recruitment processes, Recruitment Factors, Information Professionals.

Introduction

Recruitment is the focal point of efficiency and effectiveness in any organization, academic libraries are no exception. To achieve the objective of academic libraries, the recruitment process for the employment of information professionals must be carried out in the best way. The recruitment process according to Ahmad (2020) comprises of series of activities beginning with identifying vacancies in the advertising media selected to induce commitment from the prospective workforce. Mahbub (2020) opined that it is through an advertisement that candidates with the requisite skills, qualifications and overall competencies are encouraged to apply for vacant positions.

Despite the significance of the recruitment process in academic libraries, the process is negatively influenced by salient factors which are capable of demeaning and stilling its potency. Considering the challenges facing academic libraries recruitment, Okereke (2015) observed that, the system is bedevilled by factors capable of stilling the climate of meritocracy through the non-use of recruitment process examination outcome in the selection process. Factors affecting the non-use of recruitment examination in the selection process include but are not limited to indigeneship, statism, godfatherism, nepotism, favouritism and political interference (Onwe, et al.., 2015; Iwuagwu, 2015 & Edosa, 2014).

One very significant activity in the recruitment process is examination. Kotazi (2011) asserted that a recruitment examination is a tool for measuring the skills, abilities, behaviours and overall competencies of applicants using definite criteria or standards. For employers of labour to ascertain the suitability of applicants for the job in academic libraries, recruitment examinations are necessary steps to unveil the skills and competencies of prospective information professionals.

Recruitment examinations in academic libraries can be written, oral and practical. A combination of the three types of examination will be an efficient way to measure the ability of prospective information professionals. According to the British Institute of Technology (2010); Shweyer (2010) averred that examination is geared toward revealing the skills and competencies of applicants required to succeed on the job. This study focuses on the recruitment process examination and factors affecting the non-use of recruitment examination in academic libraries.

Statement of the Problem

Academic libraries formed the backbone of higher institutions' academic activities. They provide scholarly resources and services to support teaching, learning and research. Such objectives could only be attainable through effective and efficient recruitment processes to generate skilled and competent information professionals. To buttress the above standpoint, Singh (2014) posited that the success of academic libraries in achieving their goals is determined largely by the competencies of its information professionals.

However, preliminary investigation through literature, observations and testimonies of information professionals in academic libraries in Kebbi State revealed that academic libraries are not at the forefront of meeting their objectives in the area of teaching, learning and research. This could be a result of the non-use of recruitment process examination in the selection process and the influence of salient variables in the recruitment process. In conformity with the above standpoint, Ekere (2011) and Abubakar (2016) averred that library customers complain of the decline in prompt services delivered by some information professionals in academic libraries who appear tactless and hardly cope with their job-related problems.

What could be the possible reasons for the decline in prompt service provision by information professionals in academic libraries? Has the recruitment process examination not been implemented, has the recruitment process examination been sidelined by salient factors? There is limited empirical evidence on the recruitment process examination in Nigerian academic libraries, considering its relevance toward academic libraries' efficiency and effectiveness, the researcher deems it appropriate to delve into this area of study to investigate the recruitment examination and factors affecting the non-use of recruitment process examination in academic libraries in Kebbi State, Nigeria. This forms the crux of this study. This study addressed the geographical gap. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this study has not been conducted in Kebbi State Academic Libraries.

Research Objectives
The objectives of this study are to identify the:
1. Type of recruitment processes information professionals undergo in academic libraries in Kebbi State.
2. Factors affecting the use of the recruitment process of information professionals in academic libraries in Kebbi State.

Literature Review
Recruitment is the process of obtaining applicants with the required skills and overall competencies through advertisement to apply for vacancies in academic libraries. It begins with identifying vacant positions and ends with the submission of an application, after which the selection process set in. Yassen (2015) described recruitment as the process of obtaining applicants with the required experience, knowledge, skills, qualifications and attitude for a job vacancy. Having received candidates' resumes through the application, the selection process commences using a recruitment examination.

A recruitment examination is an activity to inspect progress or test qualifications, knowledge, skills and competencies of applicants using an established assessment standard (Kotazi, 2011). Examinations in the recruitment process are of varying types including written examination, oral examination and practical examination (British Institute of Technology, 2010). An interview is of a different type including stress interview, Task-oriented interview, small group or committee interview and individual interview.

A study conducted by Eruvwe and Omekwu (2020) to investigate the screening, interview and selection process and its effect on job performance of Librarians in Federal Universities and Libraries in South-South Nigeria. The objective was to examine the screening, interview and selection criteria used for recruitment process of Librarians in Federal Universities Libraries in South-South Nigeria. The study adopted quantitative research methodology and the descriptive survey design. The population

for the study consists of 108 recruited Librarians in all the Federal Universities Libraries in South-South Nigeria. All the 108 Librarians were captured for the study. A questionnaire was adopted as a data collection instrument. Descriptive inferential statistics was used for data analysis. Findings revealed that: the screening criteria was used moderately high; the interview criteria adopted was moderately high; and Librarians possess good job indices of Librarian. From the result it was recommended that: screening of suitable Librarians should be carried out diligently; the interview method should not be bias; selection of qualified librarians should be done according to laid down procedure. The above study does not consider written and practical examination as well as factors affecting the non-use of recruitment process examination result, which this current study has addressed. After applicants passes through varieties of recruitment examination, it is appropriate to find out if the examination result were used in the selection process or their exist influence of some factors.

There exist various factors that affect the use of recruitment process examination in the selection process of prospective information professionals. Recruitment process examination and its use in the selection process have within itself the potency to increase productivity. The objective of academic libraries is to achieve at the highest level to foster teaching, learning and research (Adenugba, Fadoju & Ahuetie, 2017).

Unfortunately, there exists an interplay of factors that affect the non-use of recruitment examinations in the selection process in academic libraries. To buttress the above standpoint, Okereke (2015) posited that the recruitment and selection process examination in academic libraries is bedevilled by factors that are hindering and stilling the climate of meritocracy that is critical in actualizing the objectives of academic libraries in engineering administrative efficiency, library effectiveness and socio-economic development. The consequences of this practice against merit philosophy are upholding mediocrity as standard performance. Factors affecting the non-use of recruitment process examination in the selection process as identified by Okereke include indigeneship, statism, godfatherism, politics, religion, nepotism and favouritism. Those factors are the major causes of inefficiency in public institutions such as academic libraries.

In a study conducted by Okon, Ugwulebo and Akwang (2018) to investigate Work Recruitment Factors as Indices for Staff Employment in Federal Universities Libraries in South-West Nigeria. The objective of the study was to determine the influence of interpersonal relationships and indigeneship on staff employment in Federal university libraries in South-West Nigeria. The study adopted a quantitative research methodology and the expo-factor research design. The population comprises 143 professionals and paraprofessionals Librarians in Hezekiah Oluwaumi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University Library and Keneth Dike Library University of Ibadan. A census sampling technique was used. Data collected were analysed with mean (X), standard deviation and simple linear regression to answer the research questions, while

t-test analysis of variance (ANOVA) and regression analysis were used to test the null hypothesis at.05 level of significance. From the result, it was observed that: there is a significant influence of factors for interpersonal relationships on Staff employment in Federal University libraries in South-West Nigeria. It was concluded that work recruitment factors influence the full implementation of recruitment examination results in the selection process. It was recommended that prospective employees should endeavour to play down those factors during employment to enable the right prospect to be employed in Federal university libraries.

In another study conducted by Shimawua (2020) on the Influence of Religion Factor on the use of recruitment process examination results in the selection process, and its Impact on Public Service Delivery in Nigeria. The objective of the study was to investigate the way religious sentiment influences the recruitment process examination results in the selection process. Quantitative research methodology was used and descriptive survey research design was adopted. The study population was 25,117. A sample size of 394 was drawn using Yamane Taro (1967) method of sample size determination. The questionnaire was used for data collection. Data was analyzed using a frequency table and simple percentages. Findings revealed that: religion was considered as a factor in public service recruitment in Nigeria. It was concluded that there is an interplay of religious factors in the recruitment process. It was recommended that prospective employees should play down the influence of religion factor in the recruitment process. The above study only captured only one factor affecting the recruitment process. This current study has explored more.

Research Methodology
The quantitative research methodology was adopted and a cross-sectional research design was used. The population of this study is sixty (60) management staff consisting of librarians, Deputy librarians, heads of divisions and heads of human resources of academic libraries in Kebbi State namely: Kebbi State University of Science and Technology Aleiro, Federal University Birnin Kebbi, Waziri Umaru Federal Polytechnic Birnin Kebbi, Kebbi State Polytechnic Dakingari, Adamu Augie College of Education Argungu, Kebbi State College of Nursing and Midwifery, Kebbi State College of Health Science and Technology Jega and College of Basic and Advance Study Yelwa Yauri. A self-develop questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument. The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validity. The researcher went through the questionnaire again and again to ensure the instrument measures the research questions raised in the study, while experts in statistics and research determined the content validity. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted in Kashim Ibrahim Library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and a reliability of 0.85 was obtained. Data was analyzed descriptively using a frequency table, mean and standard deviation.

Result and Discussion

A total of Sixty (60) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the eight (8) institutions' academic libraries, out of which 52 (86.67) were duly completed, returned and used for this study.

Table 1 Type of Examinations Information Professionals Undergo during Recruitment Process in Academic Libraries in Kebbi State

s/n	Types of Examination	Academic Libraries									Average	
		KSUSTA	FUBK	KESPO DAK	WUF POLY	AAC OE	CNS	CHST	CO BAS	TOTAL	M	SD
1	Written exams	6	4	5	5	0	0	0	0	20(38.5%)	2.50	2.72
2	Practical exams	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0(0%)	0	0
3	Oral interview	8	9	7	7	5	5	6	5	52(100%)	6.50	1.51
4	Competency-based interview	7	8	6	6	4	4	5	5	45(86.5)	5.62	1.40
5	Behavioural-based interview	8	9	7	7	5	5	6	5	52(100%)	6.50	1.51
6	Stress interview	5	4	2	4	2	2	2	2	23(44.2%)	2.90	1.24
7	Task-oriented interview	8	9	7	7	5	5	6	5	52(100%)	6.50	1.51
8	Small group/committee interview	8	9	7	7	5	5	6	5	52(100%)	6.50	1.51

Table 1 reveals the type of examination conducted by the academic libraries. Findings show that oral interviews, behavioural-based interviews, task-oriented interviews and small group or committee interviews (M= 6.50, SD=1.51), competency-based interviews (M=5.62, SD=1.40), stress interviews (M=2.90, SD=1.24), the written examination (M=2.50, SD=2.72), practical examination (M=0, SD=0). From the findings above, it can be deduced that oral interviews, behavioural-based interview, task-oriented interviews small group or committee interviews and competency-based interviews were mostly used with a mean score above 3.25 while written and practical

examinations were rarely used with a mean score below 3.25. This implies that the examination is a single staged type which is not written in nature. This might be a result of the policy of the libraries' recruitment process.

This research outcome agreed with the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM, 2016) which averred that competency in job interviews correlates with job description and that, a strong relationship exists between the competency of information professionals and their performance in academic libraries. Information professionals

behaviours under certain conditions are proof of their pool of experience to succeed in the new roles.

Table 2: Factors Affecting the Use of Recruitment Process Examinations.

s/n	Factors Affecting the Recruitment Process	Academic libraries								Average		
		KSUSTA	FUBK	KESP ODAK	WUFP OLY	AACO E	CNS	CHST	COBAS	TOTAL	M	SD
1	Godfatherism	8	9	7	7	6	5	5	5	52 (100%)	6.50	1.51
2	Indigeneship	8	9	6	5	6	5	4	5	48 (92.3%)	6.0	1.69
3	State of origin	8	8	7	6	5	5	4	5	48 (92.3%)	6.0	1.69
4	Religion	8	7	6	6	5	5	5	5	47 (90.4%)	5.88	1.13
5	Nepotism /favoritism	8	9	7	7	6	5	5	5	52 (100%)	6.50	1.51
6	Political interference	8	9	7	7	6	5	5	5	52 (100%)	6.50	1.51

Table 2 revealed the factors affecting the use of recruitment process Examinations of information professionals in academic libraries. Result shows that godfatherism, nepotism/favoritism and political interference (M=6.50, SD=1.51), Indigeneship and State of origin (M= 6.0, SD=1.69), and finally Religion (M=5.88, SD=1.69), were factors that mostly affected the use of recruitment process examination of information professionals in academic libraries.

Arising from the findings, it can be deduced that godfatherism, nepotism/favoritism, political interference, indigeneship, State of origin and religion has affected the use of recruitment process examination of applicants in Kebbi State academic libraries with a mean score above 3.25. This implies that recruitment process in Kebbi State academic Libraries is influenced by multifarious factors. This might be as a result of external stakeholder's influence in the recruitment process of academic libraries in general. To buttress the findings Onwe, et al. (2015) posited that recruitment process in academic library is bedeviled by factors that are hindering and stilling the climate of meritocracy.

Summary of the Findings
1. Oral interview in form of competency based, behavioral based, task oriented and small group interview were the examinations type employed by academic libraries for recruitment of information professionals in Kebbi State.
2. Godfatherism, indigene ship, state of origin, religion, nepotism/favoritism and political interference were factors affecting the use of recruitment process examination of information professionals in academic libraries in Kebbi State.

Conclusion and Recommendations
Premised on the study result, it was concluded that interview was the only examination conducted for recruitment process in academic libraries, thereby neglecting the written and practical examinations which can increase efficiency and effectiveness in academic libraries workplace. However, godtherism, statism, religion, nepotism/favoritism and political interference were the major factors negatively influencing best practices in recruitment process in academic libraries. The study recommednded that practical and written examinations should be a prerequisite in the recruitment process of information professionals in academic libraries. Also, academic library management should play down on the factors affecting the use of recruitment process examination in the selection process.

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