# Academic Staff Perception on the Effectiveness of Recruitment Process in Kyambogo University-Uganda

<sup>1</sup>Rwothumio Joseph, Prof. JCS Musaazi<sup>2</sup> and Prof. John A. Orodho<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1&2</sup>Department of Educational Planning and Management, faculty of Education- Kyambogo University (Uganda) <sup>3</sup>Department of Educational Management, Policy and Curriculum Studies, School of Education, Kenyatta University, Kenya

Abstract: The study examined the perception of academic staff regarding employment system and its effecton academic staff performance at Kyambogo University, Uganda. The objective of the study was to examine the recruitment process of academic staff in Kyambogo University. A cross sectional survey design was used in the study. A random sample of150academicstaffwas selected from the three faculties of education, arts and social sciences, and special needs education. The data were collect educing question naire, analysed, and presented in texts, tables and percentages. The major finding of the study revealed that the university employs both internal and external modes of recruitment of academic staff. Its recruitment and selection procedure are guided by the standards set by the Ugandan National Council for Higher Education. However, according to most academic staff, it was evident the recruitment process was not satisfactorily done and hence not objective at all. The study concluded that the current employment system at Kyambogo University has a negative influence on the performance of members of academic staff. Hence, the study recommended that the University should encourage and promote the use of equal opportunity policy in recruiting academic staff based on merit as this will help to restore staff confidence in the system [206 words].

**Keywords:** Effectiveness, Recruitment, Selection, Academic Staff, Performance, Kyambogo University, Uganda.

# I. Introduction

# 1.1. Background to the study

This study was conceived against the background of apparent persistent accusations and unrest in Kyambogo University since its inceptionasa result of merging the former Institute of Teacher Education Kyambogo (ITEK),Uganda Polytechnic Kyambogo(UPK),and Uganda National Institute of Special Needs Education (UNISE), in 2002(Kyambogo University, 2006). These have been attributed to weak and poor appointment procedures and processes meanttointe grate staff into the university service. These have brought immense unrest in form of strikes, court litigations, and all egations which have greatly undermined productivity and effective performance among staff.

It is well known that the effectiveness of a university depends on the quality and efficiency of its academic staff (Stoner, Freeman & Gilbert, 2005). It is important that all academic staff use their expertise in contributing to research, consultancy, professional practice development, professional excellenceintea ching, and c o m m u n i t y service. The academic staff in Kyambogo University, however, seemsto be falling short of these vital qualities (Atimango, 2005).

Although universities are expected to be staffed with competent academic staff whose key result areas include: effective teaching, research, publications, and community service. Kyambogo university students and the public have expressed their dissatisfaction with poor academic staff performance in deteriorating work standards, delays in marking, and returning scripts, poor time management, and rising incidents of staff absenteeism (Kyambogo University, 2006). If this state of affair continues unchecked then the university will fail to achieve its vision and the students might become more rowdy and hostile. This can cause the public to lose more trust and confidence in the university. This poor academic staff performance however seems to be linked to the employment system at Kyambogo University.

Accordingly, some studies have been carried out on the performance of academic staff in Ugandan universities. For example, Atimango (2005)carried out aresearchon employment system and its impact on non-academic staff performance at Kyambogo University. The study found that the employees perceived the employment system in Kyambogo University to be ineffective. As a result, this has negatively affected their performance. However, there hasnot been any study carried out on the academic staff performance at Kyambogo University. Yet the level of academic staff performance seemtobegenerallyunsat is factory as reflected in poor time management, delaysin marking, returning marked scripts, and lack of publications.

Likewise, several theories have been advanced about employment system and human resource management. One of the first major classical organization theory about human resource management was

propounded by Fombrun, Tichy, and Devana (1984). They identified the following elements of human resource management process: selection, appraisal, and development of personnel policy. They asserted that these elements have the potential to direct human behaviour towards specific performance goals if they were properly aligned with one another. In addition, the systems theory(Stoner, Freeman & Gilbert, 2005) views an organization asaunified, purposeful system composed of interrelated parts. Itasserts that the activity of any segment of an organization a r i o u s l y affects the activity of every other segments. In this case every organization has a sub-system that makes up the whole system. One of the sesub-systems is the human resource department which deals with employment issues. It also handles other the humanre source activities in order to achieve the organisational setgoals and objectives.

One of the re-known scholars has stated that an employment system relies on how the following four aspects of employment process are managed: job classification and job definition, deployment, security, and wage rules(Osterman,1987). Likewise, an employment system also examine show an organization undertakes its human resource activities in a congruent manner. These activities include: recruitment, selection, hiring or appointment, assignment, deployment, and transfer, training and development, promotion, retention, termination of employment, and reasonable accommodation of the special needs of persons in the designated groups(Lynn,1996). In this study, employment system means carrying out recruitment and selection, induction, facilitation given and appraisal of academic staff performance.

In this study, academic staff performance was measured by meeting deadlines in marking and returning of scripts, number of publications in recognized journals, number of researches carried out, time management during lectures, and number of consultancies. At the same time there has been a lot of complaints about academic staff performance in Kyambogo University by students and the public. These views, for instance, were voiced by the guild representative in the faculty of education board meeting who complained about delaysin marking and returning course work scripts to students and high rate of absenteeism(Faculty of Education Minutes, 2006) and students' petition to Parliament (2006).Furthermore, the academic staff performance has been generally poor and this has been manifested in the form of staff absenteeism, low morale, and poor delivery of lectures among others(Students Guild, 2006). This study was premised against this background of lack of understanding of the perception of academic staffs regarding the effectiveness of recruitment process in Kyambogo University-Uganda

# 1.2 The State of the Art Review

Literature is prolific which addresses the concept genesis, rationale and challenges related to recruitment of personnel (Aswathapa, 2001; Cole, 1999; Eurriclyce, 2008; Maicibi, 2003, UNESCO, 1994, Watson, 1994). In terms of conceptualization, Aswathapa (2001) defines recruitment as the process of finding and attracting capable applicants for employment. The process begins when new recruits are sought and ends when their applications are submitted. Normally the result is a pool of applicants from which new employees are selected. Melbourne University (2006) states that it is their policy to recruit academic staff of the highest calibre through an open and fair processes. Whereas according to the University of Queensland (2004), the recruitment process for academic staff is simplified without necessarily compromising the University's principles of non- discrimination and appointment on the basis of merit.

However, Watson (1994) argues that if recruitment process generates insufficient applicants or too many unsui table ones, it will prove expensive to make appointment decisions. In Kyambogo, there is some effort to attract to high calibre academic staff as reflected in the university vision of being the centre of academic and professional excellence. Watson (1994) further asserted that recruitment is the first stage in the process of filling up a vacancy in an organization. The process involves examining the requirements for filling the existing vacancy, job and person specification; consideration of the sources of suitable candidates, drafting job advertisements and selecting the media suitable to carry them; assessing appropriate salary levels for new employees and arranging for interviews. Corbridge and Pilbeam (1998) believe that good recruitment and selection is vital because well thought out, agreed and communicated procedure sand practice scan significantly contribute to high employee performance. This process of carefully designing and advertising the job vacancies tend to be lacking in the university as in most cases job descriptions and person specifications do not come out clearly to state the requirements of the jobs.

UNESCO (1994) documents that in most African Universities the process of recruitment is not rational and ends up frustrating many candidates. It is vital to note that the line manage rsplayakeyrolein the decisions since they know their departmental requirements and once recruitment has been made the management of academic staff is usually devolved to deans and heads of academic department (Eurydice 2008). However, according to the Adhoc Committee on staff integration into Kyambogo University all UPK, ITEK and UNISE staff who were deemed to have been transferred or engaged to Kyambogo University under section 74 of the Universities and other Tertiary Institutions Act 2001 and Section 5(2e) and 6(2) of the Universities and other

Tertiary Institutions Act as amended 2003, should be absorbed into the University. This in turn has affected the quality of output in the University. Since all the staff was absorbed as they were without thorough screening.

Eurydice (2008) further stated that recruitment of academic staff is based first and foremost on public advertisement in all European countries. In Belgium, Sweden and German, public advert is ementsareposted at national level. Howeverin Finlandproceduresvarynotonlyaccording to categories of staff but also according to the type of institution. The recruitment of a professor is therefore subject to more extensive regulations.

Queensland University (2007), details that the stages of recruitment and selection processes mustconform totheprovisionsofvariousActsofParliament:-sex discrimination, racial discrimination, equal opportunity for women in the work place, disability discrimination, age discrimination, Australian work place relations and anti-discrimination. WhereasintheUniversityofMelbourne(2008) the principles underpinning the recruitment process are: -fairness,credibility, equalopportunity,meritandoptimizingcareerprospectsforcurrentlyemployed staff.

KyambogoUniversityCouncilatitsspecialmeetingon17<sup>th</sup>March 2005 agreed that the first priority in the appointments in the new University structure should be given to staff on the ground and positions which will not have been filledbystaffonthegroundwillbeadvertisedinthenationaland international media.Council minutes of Melbourne (2004) and University of Queensland (2004)documents that good human resources management and equal opportunityconsiderations demand that vacant positions are advertised both internally and externally. Externaladvertisementsareputinnewspapers, publications and placement determined by concerned department in consultation with human resource department whereas internal advertisements are put on the Universities webaddresses and weeklye-mail staff news.

Aswathapa(2001),describesselectionastheprocessofdifferentiatingbetweenapplicants to identify and hire those with a greater likelihood of success in a job. Maicibi (2003) stated that selection is a selling operation as the initial recruitment. This view was also shared by Robbins (1990) who described selection as the process of choosing the best out of the many qualified job applicants.

MUKCouncilMinutes(2006)approvednewappointmentpolicywhichentails that academic staff be appointed and promoted based on performance that demonstrates merit in teaching and related activities which include student supervision, research, scholarship and creative activity, administration, service andleadershipintheUniversityandprofessionalpracticeincludingserviceto the community.

Cole (1999) outlined the key stages in the selection process which include:- getting through application forms or curriculum vitae. drawing short up а list of candidates, inviting the candidates for interview, conducting interviews, making a decision about choice of candidates, making the offer and confirming it, writingto successful and unsuccessful candidates. Maicibi (2003) commented that there aremanymethodsofselectionwhichinclude:-interview, in-basketexercises, questionnaire, collecting information about the applicant supplied by referees and certification authorities. However according to Melbourne University (2006),selectionitemsinclude:applications, writtenreferences, positiondescription and selection criteria, policies on equal opportunity, departmental workforce plan, matrix-grids for short-listing applicants and interview forms.

According to Kyambogo university academic staff association (KYUASA)memorandum to the Adhoc Committee of Council 2006; realisticandfairguidelinesforintegration of academic staff into the University should consider among others; qualification, experience of serving staff, responsibility, service to the community, publications/exhibitions and level of skills. Theyalsoarguedthatnewandseparatetermsandconditionsofservice for academic staff highlighting promotional structures and staff development where all stakeholders are actively involved in drafting should be worked out taking into account the reality of Kyambogo University inorder to have a productive academic staff force.

# **1.3 Purpose and Objective of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceived effect of employment system on the academic staff performance at Kyambogo University. The main study objective was to examine the recruitment process and selection procedure of academic staff at Kyambogo University.

# 2.1 Research Design

# II. Research Methodology

A survey based on case study was used since only Kyambogo University was involved in the study. Case study helps researchers to understand complex issues and provides detailed perspective analysis of a limited number of events (Amin, 2004; Orodho, Khatete & Mugiraneza,2016 Orodho, Ampofo, Bizimana &Ndayambaje, 2016). The survey was used because samples were selected from various faculties at the university.

# 2.2.Study Population and sample selection

The population included all the350 academic staff of Kyambogo University all of whom are involved in the teaching and research related activities which are components of academic staff performance assummarized in Table1.

<b>Table 1.</b> Topulation of respondents by faculty			
Faculty	Number of lecturers		
Education	68		
Science	66		
Arts and Social Sciences	71		
Engineering	64		
Special Needs Education and Rehabilitation	36		
Vocational Studies	45		
Total	350		

**Table 1:** Population of respondents by faculty

#### Source: Kyambogo University Prospectus, 2005.

The stratified random sampling procedures was used to draw a s a m ple from the facultiesofeducation, artsand social sciences, special needs and rehabilitation. Therespondentswererandomlyselectedsincealltheacademicstaffs areinvolvedinthe teaching-learningprocess. The universitySecretarywas also interviewed in the study. The sample was determined in accordance to the table designed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) as cited by Amin (2005). It is used in determining sample sizes for research activities from a given population. The sample was composed of one university secretary, 59 members of academic staff from the faculty of education, 59 academic members from the faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and 32 members of staff from the faculty of Special Needs Education, yielding a total sample size of 151 participants. This sample represented 42.8% of the academic staff in Kyambogo University. This was far above the 10% which according to Amin (2005) and Orodho (2012) is acceptable for a survey study.

#### 2.3 Research instruments, Data Collection and Analysis

A Questionnaire was the main instrument used for data collection. A closed-ended questionnaire based on Likert-scalestrongly agree, Agree, Not sure, Disagree, Strongly disagree was constructed by the researcher was used to collect data from the academic staff. The questionnaires were pretested to determine their validity and reliability prior to data collection process. Adjustmentswerethenmadeto improve on the clarity and comprehensivenessfor collecting the relevant information until the supervisor approved the instrument. This was above the 70% which according to Amin Orodho, Khatete and Mugiraneza (2016) isadequatein research.

At the end of data collection, all the completed questionnaires were dited, organized, and processed. They were then coded according to the Likert-scale ranging from 1-5:1. Strongly agree, 2. Agree, 3. Not sure, 4. Disagree and 5. Strongly disagree. Theresearcher used the statistical package for social scientist (SPSS) to analyse the data. The data from the questionnaire were presented infrequencies, tables, and percentages.

# **III. Results And Discussions**

The mainobjectivethatguidedthestudysoughttoexaminetherecruitmentprocesses and selection procedures of academic staff in Kyambogo University. The objective had three components: modes of recruitment, selection procedures and guidelines, academic staff perception about recruitment and selectionsystems. The findings about the modes of recruitment at the university indicated that the university basically employs two modes of recruitment, namely: internal recruitment and external recruitments.

#### **3.1 Internal recruitment**

Internal recruitment is primarily directed to those who are already within the university especially the students and to some extent those in other departments or units who would like to transfer to other units or departments. The advertisementis usuallybynoticeboardmemos. Insomecases, the appointments board empowers a unit/department or management to identify potential candidates and recommend for consideration. The finding notes that this method is characterized by sectarian tendencies and leaves out the most probable candidates.

#### **3.2 External recruitment**

External recruitment is performed by the central unit (university secretary). Various forms or channels of media are used which include both local and nationalnewspapers, electronic as well as public notice boards, the radio and television. This model tends to capture a wide range of applicants with highly required skills and experience. The study also noted that quite an unber of

possibleupcountrycandidateshavelimitedaccesstoinformationopportunities, if external mode is used, therefore

many miss the opportunity.

### 3.3 Selection procedure

Results indicate that in the selection of applicants, a rigorous procedure is used. Accordingly, each applicant must submit 15 copies of applications and testimonials so that each member of the Appointments Board is given a set of the candidate's papers.

Initially a sub-committee of the Appointments Board short lists the applicants into three categories: Category A: comprises of those applicants who have fulfilled the requirements of the advertisement such as age, qualification and experience.

Category B:comprises of those applicants who have the qualification but with inadequate experience and Category C: comprises of those applicants who do not possess the requirements and are usually ignored.

A summary sheet for theapplicants in category AandBissenttotheprospectiveheadsofdepartmentfort h e i r i n p u t advice. Thosewhoaredeemedsuitablebythedepartmentaretheninvitedfororal interviewbytheappointmentsboard. Theinterviewpanelhasatechnical persontoguidetheboardintheproperconduct of its business direction. Successfulapplicantsare decided from asummary of scores submitted by all the members of the panel.Theuniversitythereforeisguidedbythose regulations as reflected in Table 2.

Position	Entry qualification	Condition for promotion
Tutorial Fellow/TeachingAssistant	1 <sup>st</sup> degree honours, firstor upper second division.	Master'sdegree with a B+ Performance or above academically good.
Assistant Lecturer	Master's degree and above	Master's degree published
Lecturer	Masters B+ and above	PhD and minimum three Years' experience since last promotion. Three published papersand one good book with ISSBN number.
Senior Lecturer	PhD degree	Three years since last Promotion. Atleast six published papers some in referred journals, originality of research findings.
Associate Professor	PhD degree	Three years since last Promotion.Published 10 papers since last promotion some in referred journal, originality of findings, administrative ability, competence and experienceto supervise postgraduate students and other members of staff.
Professor	PhD degree Ability to shoulderadministrative duties and guidemembers of staff.	Competence to supervise Postgraduate students.

**Table2 :** Qualifications for academic staff in universities

# Lecturers' perceptionofvariousissuesofrecruitmentprocessand selection system

The perception of the lecturers on the various issues of recruitment and selection process is in table 3.

	Items	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Total
1.	Academicstaffjobvacancyisadvertised	46.6	9.0	44.4	100%
2.	Advertisementisdesignedattractively	24.3	8.1	67.6	100%
3.	Appropriatemediaisused.	35.1	8.1	56.8	100%
4.	Jobdescriptionisclearlyspeltout	34.2	6.3	59.5	100%
5.	Jobspecificationis thoroughlyprepared	32.4	9.9	57.7	100%
6.	Numberofstaffpercourseisdirectlyrelatedto theirlevelofperformance	27.9	5.4	66.7	100
7.	Recruitment of academic staff is satisfactorily Done	16.2	8.1	75.7	100
8.	Academic staff are interviewed before joining service.	35.1	6.3	58.6	100
9.	Only staff who meet selection criteria are Appointed	38.7	14.4	46.9	100
10.	Selectionis objectivelydone	35.1	12.6	52.3	100
11.	Selectionprocessdescribesskills, qualifications	45	11.7	43.3	100

Table3: Percentagesofresponsesbylecturersonrecruitmentprocesses

Results in table 3 that generally, most academic staff have tended to indicate that recruitment and selection practices at Kyambogo University are not satisfactory.A largepercentageofthem(75.7%)feelthatrecruitmentexerciseis not satisfactorily done while 67.6% feel that the advertisement design is not attractive and 66.7% feel that recruitment of the academic staff per course is not directlyrelatedtotheirevelofperformance.Inaddition,manystaffmembers feel that job description is not clearly spelt out (59.5%), academicstaff are not interviewed before joining the service (58.6%) and job specification is not thoroughlyprepared(57.7%).Lessthanhalfofthestaffreportedthatacademic staff vacancy is not advertised (44.4%) only staff who meet selection criteria are appointed (46.9%), andthat selection process does not describe skills, qualifications a n d personal abilities (43.3%).

The respondents were requested to indicate other factors that were perceived to affect staff performance at the institution. They indicated a number of issues as depicted in Table 4.

Demense	Manakan	Demandana		
Table 4. Showing responses on other fac	tors affecting a	academic staff	performar	nce

Response	Number	Percentage		
Inadequate facilities	6	9.2		
Demotivated staff	9	13.7		
Poor remuneration	10	7.6		
Poorrapport	8	6.1		
Lack of refresher courses	6	4.6		
Ineffective management	4	3.1		
Lack of staff development	5	3.8		
Welfare is poor	8	6.1		
Unstable work environment	5	3.8		
Lack of induction	8	6.1		
Low morale	10	7.6		
High enrolment	5	3.8		
Lack of regular promotion	3	2.3		
Poor employment terms	4	3.1		
Poverty	10	7.6		
Inappropriate reward system	8	6.1		
Too much teaching load.	7	5.3		
Total	131	100%		
le 4 the respo	ndents identi	fied demotivated	staff	(13.7

As in table 4 the respondents identified demotivated staff (13.7%), inadequatefacilities(9.2%),lownbrale,poorremuneration,povertyat(7.6%),

lackofinduction, poorrapport, and in appropriate reward system (6.1%), too

mucht each ingload (5.3%), lack of refresher courses and the least factor was lack and the lea

of regular promotion (2.3%). This finding was echoed by the vice-chancellor in

his communication on the d h g r a d u a t i o n ceremony about having demotivated, demoralized staff and lack of a dequate f a cilities in the cherished Kyambogo University.

TheUniversitySecretarywasaskedtostatethefactorsimpacting on academic staff performance. It was reported that good performance was exhibited by young staff while mature and old staff are static, they take too long to enrol for further studies, they do not conduct research andoverload themselves due to greed for money. However the University Secretary noted that in general, the factors impacting on academicstaffare: - highlevelofaspirationsharbouredbystaffwhenjoining service, establishment of new courses and programmes in order to cope with marketdemands. Besidesstaff lack strong academic backgrounds to teach such courses, there are lack of facilities such as e-learning, internet, computers, office space, lack of adequate research knowledge and practice, low income for academic staff due to low salary and incentives. Other factors are: heavy loads

which do not allow them to do other constructive thinking and innovations, lack of formal induction programmes and institutional policy for new academic staff.

When the University Secretary was asked to give recommendations for improving the employment systems othat a cademic staff performance can be enhanced, the following were listed:

staffshouldaspiretoreadhigherandbeabletoenrolforadvancedcourses,morefundingforstaffdevelopmentprogramme sbeinitiated, timelypaymentofsalaries, allowancestoacademicstaffbeeffected promptly,andpublications by academic staff should be one of the motivating factors for the academic staff at the university.

The study established that the university is guided by standards set by the national council for higher education, section 119 of the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act 2003, states that "No university or tertiary institution shall employ any person for the purpose of teaching students, whose qualification do not conform to the standards set by national council for higher education (NCHE) regulations." The university therefore is guided by those regulations as reflected in table 4 in the results section.

The findings on recruitment processes and selection procedures reveal that they are indeed quite rigorously done. However as presentedearlier, it is evident that most of the academic staff disagreed that recruitment of academic staff is satisfactorily done and quite a good number perceived selection procedure as not being objectively done. This finding agrees with Watson (1994) who argued that if recruitment process generated insufficient applicants or too many unsuitable ones, it will prove expensive to make appointment decisions which in turn affects the employee level of performance. This contrasts with UNESCO (1994) which argued that in most African Universities the process of recruitment is not rational and ends up frustrating many potential candidates. The finding also confirmsAswathapa (2001) who articulated that well-planned recruitment efforts results in high quality applicants whereas haphazard and piece-meal efforts result in mediocre candidates who will not be able to perform to the expected standard of the organization.

In addition to the poor recruitment process this generates inadequate number of qualified applicants which can prove costly in several ways namely; it complicates the selection process and might even result in lowering of selection standards which automatically lowers the quality of staff performance in organizations. The finding also concurs with Corbridge and Pilbeam (1998) who observed that good recruitment and selection is vital because well thought out, agreed upon, effective communicated procedures, and merit based practices can significantly contribute to high employee performance in the university.

# **IV. Conclusion and Recommendation**

From the results presented above the university recruitment and selection procedure is guided by the standards set by the national council for higher education. Academic staff perception about the recruitment process at Kyambogo University was that it did not have an effective influence on academic staff performance. It can be concluded that recruitment of academic staff is unsatisfactorily done and selection system is less effective. Based on the above conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- 1. The University should encourage and promote equal opportunity to joining academic staff by advertising in the national and international media namely: newspapers, web pages and journals which reach beyond the university.
- 2. In addition to this the university management in promoting good academic staff performance should consider establishing a transparent and accountable recruitment process to avoid the negative perception among the academic staff. At the same time the University should develop a comprehensive policy on induction for both serving and new staff to help enhance their performance.
- 3. This task should be entrusted more to academic departments. It should tackle key issues on: pedagogy, terms and conditions of service and the expectations of an academic staff. Furthermore the University should offer adequate facilitation to academic staff through provision of office space, connectivity to internet, funding for research in order to stimulate and enhance their performance as they work to fulfil the university's vision.
- 4. The university management should initiate lecture room policy which addresses overloads, communication gaps, and provision of more welfare services for academic staff in the university. It should include: optimum number of students per lecture room, minimum and maximum number of lecture hours per week for both full time members of academic staff and part-timers, provision for refreshments and transport loan schemes.

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