Innovations

Recruitment Process and Reward System in the Zambian Higher Education Sector, A Business-Re-Engineering Approach

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Abstract: *The purpose of the study was to establish how faculty recruitment process and reward system is structured in the Zambian higher education sector, using Business Process Reengineering (BPR) as a framework for improvement. Grounded in a pragmatic philosophical foundation that combines relativist ontology with both positivist and interpretivist epistemologies, the study employed a mixed-methods explanatory sequential design. Stratified, convenience, purposive, and criterion sampling techniques were used to ensure inclusive and relevant representation across 33 institutions, where 21 had formal recruitment policies and 11 relied on informal alternatives. Quantitative data including salary schedules, workload documents, and survey questionnaires was analyzed using SPSS version 30, revealing a high mean score (M = 4.3367) for recruitment clarity and a low mean (M = 2.8878) for workload acceptance, with Pearson's correlation analysis showing no statistically significant relationships among terminal benefits, academic qualifications, reward attractiveness, and perceived fairness. Factor analysis was validated by a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$), a marginally acceptable KMO value (0.515), and a highly reliable overall scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.962$). Qualitative data derived from interviews, focus groups, and policy documents were analyzed through reflective thematic, content, and document analysis, revealing structured systems and defined salary scales in public institutions, in contrast to inconsistent practices and limited recognition in private ones. The findings were interpreted using Equity Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Vroom's Expectancy Theory, highlighting the centrality of fairness, recognition, and alignment between effort and reward. Based on these insights, the study recommends the formalization of recruitment processes in private institutions, structured staff development and reward systems, and the implementation of transparent, equitable reward systems to enhance faculty motivation, retention, and overall institutional performance.*

Keywords: *Recruitment Process, Reward System, Zambian Higher Education Sector & Business Re-Engineering Approach*

Introduction

In Zambia's higher education sector, recruitment and reward systems are central to building and sustaining a motivated academic workforce. Recruitment serves to attract qualified faculty aligned with institutional goals, yet inefficiencies in Zambia's recruitment practices undermine competitiveness and faculty satisfaction (Sutherland & Lafferty, 2016; Brown & Mitchell, 1993). Streamlining recruitment processes is essential to improving morale and retention. Equally vital is the reward system, which influences motivation, satisfaction, and faculty retention. A well-structured system should recognize contributions across teaching, research, and service, while offering competitive compensation and development opportunities (Kallenberg & Grawe, 2013). However, in Zambia, low salaries and limited recognition have caused high turnover and dissatisfaction, underscoring the need for rewards that include career advancement, institutional recognition, and professional growth (Meyer, 1998). The link between recruitment and reward systems is crucial; misaligned recruitment may result in poor institutional fit, while performance-based rewards risk issues like salary compression and inversion, particularly for senior staff (Brown & Mitchell, 1993; Bratton, 2001). As monetary rewards alone are no longer sufficient, non-financial incentives such as academic autonomy, institutional support, and professional development are increasingly vital for enhancing morale (Kallenberg & Grawe, 2013). Aligning both systems with institutional goals is key to faculty engagement and long-term institutional success in a globally competitive academic environment (Sutherland & Lafferty, 2016; Meyer, 1998)

Problem Statement

In Zambia's higher education sector, the recruitment and reward systems are crucial for faculty satisfaction, retention, and overall institutional success. Recruitment processes face challenges such as financial constraints, political instability, and misalignment between institutional needs and recruitment strategies, particularly in specialized fields like STEM, which hinders the attraction of top talent (Mafa, 2016; Sutherland & Lafferty, 2016). To improve recruitment, institutions must refine their strategies to align better with long-term goals (Mansaray, 2019). Similarly, reward systems are a source of dissatisfaction among faculty due to low salaries, salary compression, and delays in promotions (Harrison, 2017; Ololube et al., 2017). Additionally, the absence of performance-based rewards and intrinsic rewards like professional development and academic autonomy leads to low morale and increased turnover (Sharma & Rhoads, 2016). A more balanced reward system that includes both financial and non-financial incentives is necessary to enhance faculty satisfaction (Hamimah Ujir et al., 2020). The relationship between recruitment and reward systems further complicates faculty challenges. Poor recruitment practices lead to mismatched appointments, which increase workloads and cause dissatisfaction (Akinleye & Ijaiya, 2019). At the same time, inadequate reward systems contribute to higher turnover rates, leading to cycles of instability. A holistic approach is needed that aligns recruitment practices with institutional goals, ensures fair workload distribution, and develops

comprehensive reward systems (Kariuki & Mutua, 2018). By addressing these interconnected issues, Zambian higher education institutions can improve faculty satisfaction, retention, and productivity, contributing to the overall improvement of educational quality (Remigius C. Nnadozie, 2015).

Research Objectives

1. To establish how universities recruit faculty in Zambian Higher Education Sector.
2. To ascertain what rewards systems motivates and retain faculty members in the Zambian Higher Education Sector.

Literature Review

This literature review examines the role of recruitment processes and reward systems in influencing faculty satisfaction, retention, and institutional performance in Zambia's higher education sector. It explores challenges such as financial constraints, political interference, and bureaucratic inefficiencies that hinder the recruitment and retention of qualified faculty, especially in specialized fields like STEM (Mufune, 2019; Mushaukwa, 2020). The review stresses the importance of transparent and efficient recruitment processes, along with competitive salaries and investments in research infrastructure to attract and retain skilled faculty in Zambia (Banda, 2021). It also emphasizes the need for reward systems that offer both financial and non-financial incentives, such as professional recognition and career development opportunities, to improve faculty motivation and satisfaction (Carter & Green, 2023). The review integrates three motivational frameworks Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964), Equity Theory (Adams, 1964), and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) to guide the study of faculty motivation and satisfaction. These theories are used alongside a Business Re-engineering Approach (BPR) to propose structural changes in recruitment, workload, and reward systems within Zambia's higher education sector. BPR is applied to improve efficiency, streamline processes, and align faculty efforts with institutional goals, enhancing faculty performance and retention (Bennett & Reimer, 2017). Additionally, the review highlights the diversity and adaptability of recruitment models in African universities, shaped by institutional types, resource availability, and academic demands, with the goal of fostering academic excellence and institutional growth (Altbach, 2013; Hornsby & Osman, 2014)

Recruitment Models

The following are an exploration of the various faculty recruitment models used in African universities, highlighting their strengths, challenges, and relevance to the higher education landscape. These models play a significant role in shaping the recruitment process, ensuring fairness, transparency, and alignment with institutional goals. The Centralized Recruitment Model, common in large public universities like the University of Nairobi and the University of Cape Town, aims for equity and transparency but lacks flexibility for specialized fields. The Decentralized Recruitment Model, used by institutions

like Makerere University and the University of Dares Salaam, allows individual departments to manage recruitment, offering more flexibility but possibly leading to inconsistencies. The Hybrid Recruitment Model, adopted by universities such as the University of Ghana and the University of the Witwatersrand, combines centralized oversight with decentralized decision-making, balancing consistency and flexibility. The Merit-Based Recruitment Model, seen at institutions like the University of Cape Town, focuses on academic qualifications and achievements, promoting high standards but potentially excluding underrepresented groups. The Collaborative and Partnership-Based Recruitment Model fosters international collaboration by partnering with external academic and research organizations but requires significant resources. The Targeted or Specialized Recruitment Model focuses on recruiting faculty for emerging fields, offering incentives to address shortages in disciplines like data science and medicine. The Online and Digital Recruitment Model allows universities to reach global talent through digital platforms, although technological access remains a challenge. The Affirmative Action and Diversity-Based Recruitment Model promotes diversity and inclusion, focusing on underrepresented groups, though balancing this with academic excellence remains difficult.In Zambia, both public and private universities face similar challenges with recruitment models, such as bureaucratic delays, resource constraints, and global competition for talent. Public universities, like University X and University Y, follow a government-regulated, centralized recruitment process that ensures fairness but is hindered by inefficiencies. These challenges shape faculty recruitment practices in Zambia, offering both opportunities and obstacles for institutional development (Kimaro, L. L.; 2024& Nkgapele, S. M., & Mofokeng, S.2024)

Faculty recruitment

Reward systems in higher education are integral to motivating and retaining faculty, influencing both academic performance and institutional success (Saks, 2006; Trower & Chait, 2002). These systems combine extrinsic rewards, such as salaries and bonuses, with intrinsic rewards like professional development and job satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Sander et al., 2000). In Zambia, reward systems vary significantly between public and private institutions. Private universities tend to offer more competitive financial rewards, using performance-based bonuses and higher salaries to attract and retain top talent (Matakala & Siwila, 2021). In contrast, public universities, which rely on government funding, provide lower salaries but emphasize long-term benefits, including job security, tenure, and pensions (Carman, 2019; Wu & Roberts, 2021). Public institutions also offer more career stability and opportunities for community engagement, while private institutions focus on individualized professional growth, though they often lack long-term benefits (Gauthier & Russell, 2019; Mumba, 2020).Performance-based rewards are more common in private institutions, where faculty are incentivized to excel in research and teaching (Carter & Harris, 2021). Public universities generally provide more holistic rewards that align with national development goals and teaching excellence (Brown &

Davies, 2017). Faculty retention remains a concern in both sectors; while public institutions rely on job security and long-term benefits to retain staff, private universities face challenges due to higher demands and fewer career development opportunities (Mumba, 2020; Wu & Roberts, 2021). Equity in reward distribution is another challenge, with public universities offering standardized benefits that may overlook individual achievements, while private universities may create disparities by rewarding high performers disproportionately (Singh & Verma, 2023). Therefore, balancing financial incentives, professional development, and fairness is critical for optimizing faculty motivation and retention in Zambia's higher education sector.

Methods

This study utilized a mixed-methods research design, specifically explanatory sequential design to integrate both quantitative and qualitative data. The approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the research topic by using quantitative data to establish patterns, followed by qualitative insights to deepen the findings. Grounded in a pragmatic philosophical framework with a combination relativist ontology with both positivist and interpretivist epistemologies, the study focused on practical, context-specific solutions to improve recruitment processes and reward systems within Zambian higher education. The study involved data collection from 33 registered universities in Zambia out of a total of 59, with Stratified, convenience, purposive, and criterion sampling method ensuring the selection of cases that met predefined criteria related to recruitment process and reward systems. Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS software version 30, while qualitative data were processed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis, Content Analysis, and Document Analysis. These methods enabled the identification of themes and patterns across interviews, focus groups, and policy documents, providing a multi-faceted understanding of the challenges and perceptions regarding BPR implementation. The study applied theoretical frameworks such as Equity Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Vroom's Expectancy Theory, utilizing both inductive and deductive reasoning to interpret how faculty motivation, fairness, and expectations influence recruitment and reward systems in Zambian higher education institutions.

The study received 676 completed questionnaires from a targeted population of 800, yielding an 84.5% response rate. Respondents were predominantly male (60.8%), with most aged over 41 years (59.9%). A large proportion (59.8%) worked in private institutions, and 82.5% were employed full-time. The majority held a Master's degree (66.4%), and 47.3% held the rank of "Lecturer One." Regarding work tenure, 53.4% had 0 to 5 years of experience at their institution. These demographics provide valuable context for understanding the faculty composition in Zambian higher education. Data collection was carried out through both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data included salary schedules, survey questionnaires, and workload schedules, while qualitative data was gathered through in-depth interviews, policy documents, and focus

group discussions. This mixed-methods approach offered a comprehensive view of recruitment processes and reward systems in Zambian universities.

Regression analysis

Recruitment Process: One-Sample t-Test Hypothesis Testing

This section presents the results of the one-sample t-test conducted to determine whether various recruitment-related factors exhibit statistical significance in comparison to a hypothesized mean value of 3, based on responses collected from a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree). The null hypothesis (H_0) for each test posited that the population mean (μ) is less than or equal to 3, while the alternative hypothesis (H_1) suggested that the mean is greater than 3. The test was conducted at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 1: Advert Response

	VAR
Mean	4.227810651
Variance	2.25617357
Observations	676
Hypothesized Mean Difference	3
Df	675
t Stat	21.253
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000
t Critical one-tail	1.647
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000
t Critical two-tail	1.963

Hypotheses: H_0: μ<=3, H_1: μ> 3;
Rejection Region: Reject H_0 if t>1.963;
Test Statistic t=21.253;
P-value: 0.000;
Decision: Because t=21.253>1.963 reject the H_0;
Conclusion: There is enough evidence to infer that the mean is statistically significantly higher than 3.

The analysis of the "Advert Response" variable (Table 1) yielded the following results: the sample mean was 4.228, the test statistic (t) was 21.253, and the corresponding p-value was 0.000. With a critical t-value of 1.963, we reject the null hypothesis because the computed t-statistic (21.253) exceeds the critical t-value. Therefore, we conclude that there is sufficient evidence to infer that the mean is statistically significantly greater than 3.

Table 2: Interviewed by a panel of interviewers

	VAR
Mean	4.087
Variance	1.369
Observations	676.000
Hypothesized Mean Difference	3.000
Df	675.000
t Stat	24.164
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000
t Critical one-tail	1.647
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000
t Critical two-tail	1.963

Hypotheses: H_0: μ<=3, H_1: μ >3;
Rejection Region: Reject H_0 if t>1.963;
Test Statistic t=24.164;
P-value: 0.000;
Decision: Because t=24.164 > 1.963 reject the H_0;
Conclusion: There is enough evidence to infer that the mean is statistically significantly higher than 3.

For the variable "Interviewed by a Panel of Interviewers" (Table 2), the sample mean was 4.087, the t-statistic was 24.164, and the p-value was again 0.000. The critical t-value is 1.963, and since the test statistic (24.164) exceeds the critical value, we reject the null hypothesis. Thus, we conclude that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the mean is statistically significantly greater than 3.

Table 3 Underwent stages and process of recruitment at this institution

	VAR
Mean	4.417
Variance	8.495
Observations	676.000
Hypothesized Mean Difference	3.000
df	675.000
t Stat	12.642
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000
t Critical one-tail	1.647
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000
t Critical two-tail	1.963

Hypotheses: H_0: μ<=3, H_1:μ >3;
Rejection Region: Reject H_0 if t>1.963;

Test Statistic: t=12.642;
Decision: Because t=12.642 >1.963reject the H_0;
Conclusion: There is enough proof to say that the mean is statistically significantly greater than 3.
The mean for the variable "Underwent Stages and Process of Recruitment" (Table 3) was 4.417, with a t-statistic of 12.642 and a p-value of 0.000. The computed t-statistic exceeds the critical t-value (12.642 > 1.963), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. We conclude that there is sufficient evidence to infer that the mean is statistically significantly greater than 3.

Table 4: Recruitment was done in a fair and transparent manner

Mean	4.314
Variance	0.867
Observations	676.000
Hypothesized Mean Difference	3.000
Df	675.000
t Stat	36.671
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000
t Critical one-tail	1.647
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000
t Critical two-tail	1.963

Hypotheses: H_0: μ<=3, H_1:μ >3;
Rejection Region: Reject H_0 if t>1.963;
Test Statistic: t=36.671;
Decision: Because t=36.671>1.963 reject the H_0;
Conclusion: There is enough proof to say that the mean is statistically significantly greater than 3.
For the "Recruitment Was Done in a Fair and Transparent Manner" variable (Table 4), the mean was 4.314, with a t-statistic of 36.671 and a p-value of 0.000. Since the t-statistic (36.671) exceeds the critical value (1.963), we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we conclude that the mean is statistically significantly greater than 3.

Table 5: Duties and responsibilities was disclosed and agreed

	VAR
Mean	4.036
Variance	1.465
Observations	676.000
Hypothesized Mean Difference	3.000
df	675.000
t Stat	22.241

P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000
t Critical one-tail	1.647
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000
t Critical two-tail	1.963

Hypotheses: H_0: μ<=3, H_1:μ >3;
Rejection Region: Reject H_0 if t>1.963;
Test Statistic: t=22.241;
Decision: Because t=22.241 >1.963 reject the H_0;
Conclusion: There is enough proof to say that the mean is statistically significantly greater than 3.
The test for the variable "Duties and Responsibilities Were Disclosed and Agreed" (Table 5) showed a mean of 4.036, a t-statistic of 22.241, and a p-value of 0.000. As the test statistic (22.241) is greater than the critical value (1.963), we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is sufficient evidence to suggest the mean is statistically significantly greater than 3.

Table 6:Overloads depending on enrolment of student and course availability

	VAR
Mean	3.303
Variance	1.992
Observations	676.000
Hypothesized Mean Difference	3.000
df	675.000
t Stat	5.586
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000
t Critical one-tail	1.647
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000
t Critical two-tail	1.963

Hypotheses: H_0: μ>=3, H_1:μ <3;
Rejection Region: Reject H_0 if t>1.963;
Test Statistic: t=5.586;
Decision: Because t=5.586 >1.963 reject the H_0;
Conclusion: There is enough proof to say that the mean is statistically significantly less than 3.

In the case of "Overloads Depending on Enrolment of Student and Course Availability" (Table 6), the mean was 3.303, the t-statistic was 5.586, and the p-value was 0.000. The test statistic (5.586) exceeds the critical value (1.963), indicating that we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, the mean is statistically significantly greater than 3.

Table 7: At recruitment agreed to overload because of incentives attached to it

	VAR
Mean	2.938
Variance	1.872
Observations	676.000
Hypothesized Mean Difference	3.000
df	675.000
t Stat	-1.181
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.119
t Critical one-tail	1.647
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.238
t Critical two-tail	1.963

Hypotheses: H_0: μ>3, H_1 :μ< = 3;
Rejection Region: Reject H_0 if t>1.963;
Test Statistic: t=-1.181;
Decision: Because t=|-1.181|<1.963 accept the H_0;
Conclusion: There is enough proof to say that the mean is statistically significantly greater than 3.

For the variable "At Recruitment Agreed to Overload Because Of Incentives" (Table 7), the mean was 2.938, with a t-statistic of -1.181 and a p-value of 0.119. Since the test statistics do not exceed the critical t-value (|-1.181| < 1.963), we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Consequently, we conclude that there is insufficient evidence to infer that the mean is statistically different from 3.

Results of the Factor Analysis of Recruitment Process variables

Cronbach's alpha(α)	**Components**				
	0.962	**0.947**	**0.947**	**0.877**	**0.912**
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
DCSV6: My workload is in line with my duties and responsibilities as stated in the contract I signed with the university.	0.873				
DCSV1: I underwent all the stages and process of recruitment at this institution	0.880				
DCSV2: My recruitment was done in a fair and transparent manner	0.794				

DCSV8: My compensation for workload can be in the form of Leave, profit sharing, Share schemes, Through an overtime rate, through the overtime policy, Part-time rate e.tc.		0.750			
DCSV4: During recruitment process, I was informed that overloads may be there depending on the enrolment of students and course availability etc.		0.543			
DCSV3: During recruitment process the duties and responsibilities of my Job was disclosed to me and I agreed			0.786		
DCSV7: I am paid according to my workload and am compensated for all my overloads			0.819		
DCSV4: I am paid according to my workload and am compensated for all my overloads				0.590	
DCSV5: At recruitment I agreed to overload because of the incentives attached to it					0.538
Eigenvalue	**24.702**	**3.919**	**3.236**	**2.845**	**2.580**
Variability (%)	**50.413**	**7.997**	**6.605**	**5.807**	**5.266**
Cumulative %	**50.413**	**58.410**	**65.014**	**70.822**	**76.087**

Factor analysis was justified by a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$), indicating sufficient correlations among items. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.515, which is marginally acceptable for factor analysis. The reliability of the overall scale was excellent, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.962, and all five components showed strong internal consistency ($\alpha > 0.87$).

Reward System Related Factors Correlation Analysis

This section explores the correlation between various Reward System-related factors, examining whether these factors are significantly associated

Reward System and Terminal Benefits

The aim of this test is to discover whether the Reward framework is associated with Terminal benefits

The null hypothesis for this test is:

H0: Reward framework is not associated with Terminal benefits.

To verify the influence a Pearson's Correction analysiswas conducted. The result of the test (Table 4.4.1) demonstrated terminal benefits did not significantly influence the hypothesis as evidenced by the Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.105 which was above the one percent significance level.

Table 1:Reward System and Terminal Benefits Correlation

		REWARD	I want a reward system that constitutes all terminal benefits
Reward	Pearson Correlation	1	.105**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006
	N	676	676
I want a reward system that constitutes all terminal benefits	Pearson Correlation	.105**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	
	N	676	676
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level(2-tailed).			

The null hypothesis tested was that the Reward System is not associated with Terminal Benefits. Pearson's correlation analysis (Table 1) revealed a weak positive correlation (r = 0.105), with a significance value of 0.006, which is below the 0.01 threshold. This indicates a statistically significant but weak association between the Reward System and Terminal Benefits, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Reward System and Qualification

The aim of this test is to discover whether the Reward framework is associated with Qualification

The null hypothesis for this test is:

H0: Reward framework is not associated with Qualification.

Table 2. Reward System and Qualification Correlation

		REWARD	Rewards should correlate with Qualifications
REWARD	Pearson Correlation	1	.200**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	676	676
Rewards should correlate with Qualifications	Pearson Correlation	.200**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	676	676
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The second correlation test examined the relationship between the Reward System and Qualifications (Table 2). The Pearson correlation coefficient was 0.200, with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a significant positive relationship. However, because the correlation coefficient is relatively low, we conclude that while a relationship exists, it is not particularly strong. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and affirm the existence of a statistically significant association.

Reward System and Attractive Rewards

The aim of this test is to discover whether the Reward framework is associated with Attractive Rewards

The null hypothesis for this test is:

H0: Reward framework is not associated with Attractive Rewards.

Table 3. Reward System and Attractive Rewards Correlation

		REWARD	I want a reward system that is attractive
REWARD	Pearson Correlation	1	.076*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.047
	N	676	676
I want a reward system that is attractive	Pearson Correlation	.076*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.047	
	N	676	676
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

For the variable "Reward System and Attractive Rewards" (Table 3), the Pearson correlation coefficient was 0.076, with a p-value of 0.047. Since the correlation is positive and statistically significant at the 0.05 level, we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is evidence of a weak but significant association between the Reward System and Attractive Rewards.

Reward System and Equitable Discharged

The aim of this test is to discover whether the Reward framework is associated with equitable discharged. The null hypothesis for this test is:

H0: Reward framework is not associated with equitable discharged

Table 3:Reward System and Equitable Discharged Correlation

		REWARD	I want a reward system that is equitable discharged
REWARD	Pearson Correlation	1	.185**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	676	676
I want a reward system that is	Pearson Correlation	.185**	1

equitable discharged	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	676	676
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The final correlation test assessed the relationship between the Reward System and Equitable Discharge (Table 4). The Pearson correlation coefficient was 0.185, with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a significant positive relationship. However, given the modest strength of this correlation, we conclude that while the relationship exists, it is not exceptionally strong. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The analysis provides compelling evidence of statistical significance in various recruitment-related variables, confirming that most factors associated with the recruitment process exhibit a mean significantly greater than 3. The results from the correlation analysis suggest both weak and moderate relationships between the Reward System and various factors such as Terminal Benefits, Qualifications, Attractive Rewards, and Equitable Discharge. In summary, the study indicates that while several recruitment and reward-related factors are statistically significant, their practical implications may vary based on the strength of their associations.

Discussion

The study explores faculty recruitment and reward systems in Zambian higher education institutions using the Business Process Reengineering (BPR) framework to identify inefficiencies and propose reforms that enhance institutional effectiveness, faculty satisfaction, and academic quality. BPR was employed to critically analyses existing processes, uncover structural limitations, and design improved strategies. A thematic analysis of qualitative data drawn from literature, institutional reports, and interviews revealed persistent challenges across both public and private universities. Public institutions, though operating within formalized recruitment frameworks, face bureaucratic delays and inadequate government funding. Conversely, private institutions benefit from administrative autonomy but contend with limited resources, impairing their capacity to attract and retain faculty. Reward systems emerged as a pivotal factor in faculty motivation and retention. Public universities typically offer structured benefits such as tenure, pensions, and job security that align with national priorities (Carman, 2019; Brown & Davies, 2017), yet suffer from delays in salary disbursements and rigid, non-merit-based compensation (Wu & Roberts, 2021; Singh & Verma, 2023). Private institutions tend to offer performance-based remuneration, including higher salaries and bonuses (Matakala & Siwila, 2021; Carter & Harris, 2021), but often lack transparency and long-term security, leading to inequity and dissatisfaction (Mumba, 2020; Gauthier & Russell, 2019). The study underscores the importance of balanced reward systems that integrate financial incentives, professional development, and equitable recognition (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Saks, 2006). It

recommends that private institutions align compensation with national benchmarks and introduce transparent, non-monetary incentives, while public universities should modernize reward practices and reduce administrative bottlenecks. International case studies, including those from the University of Basilicata (Italy) and the Democratic Republic of Congo, highlight BPR's potential to enhance workload management and institutional equity (International Journal of Educational and Curriculum Management, 2024; Transforming.com, 2024), offering models for Zambian reform.

Higher Education Authority-Hea Analysis

The research on "Recruitment Process and Reward system in the Zambian Higher Education Sector: A Business Re-Engineering Approach" aimed to engage the Higher Education Authority (HEA) in Zambia to examine key aspects of faculty management within the country's higher education institutions. The study focused on identifying opportunities for improvement in faculty recruitment, reward systems, and faculty recognition practices. Its primary objective was to streamline the recruitment process to ensure greater equity, establish a fair and transparent reward system, and properly recognize faculty contributions.

The major themes identified in the study included:

Recruitment and Selection Process

Reward System and Faculty Recognition

These themes were essential to re-engineering faculty management in Zambia's higher education sector, promoting best practices and fostering an environment of fairness, transparency, and academic excellence.

The recruitment and selection process for higher education institutions in Zambia emphasizes the establishment of a comprehensive recruitment policy that aligns with industry standards, national labor laws, and international best practices. This policy should ensure clarity in contractual agreements and compliance with the Higher Education Authority (HEA) standards.

Key elements of the recruitment process include:

i. **Development of a Recruitment Policy**: Institutions must establish clear policies outlining competencies, qualifications, and career paths for faculty, adhering to national and international standards.

ii. **Incorporation of Industry Expertise**: The policy should include provisions for adjunct staff from industry, bridging the gap between theory and practical application.

iii. **Emphasis on Qualifications and Competence**: The recruitment process prioritizes academic qualifications, pedagogical skills, and practical experience to ensure effective teaching.

iv. **Promoting Inclusivity and Equity**: The process should prioritize gender balance, regional representation, and academic diversity to ensure equal opportunities for all

applicants.

v. **Compliance with National Educational Goals**: Recruitment practices must align with Zambia's educational objectives, improving research quality, teaching standards, and faculty development.

vi. **Formation of Recruitment Committees**: Several committees, including Data Capturing, Selection, and Interviewing Committees, ensure transparency, fairness, and accountability in the recruitment process.

vii. **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Institutional Compliance**: The HEA is responsible for monitoring and auditing recruitment practices, ensuring they meet national standards and contribute to national educational goals.

By following these steps, Zambian higher education institutions can ensure a transparent, equitable recruitment process that fosters quality and inclusivity.

Reward System in the Zambian higher education Institutions

The reward systems in higher education institutions often lack development and fail to adequately recognize faculty qualifications and contributions. This deficiency has contributed to issues such as "moonlighting," where faculty take on additional work outside their primary duties without proper acknowledgment or compensation for their qualifications. Institutions are encouraged to establish clear policies that provide incentives for advanced qualifications and extra workload, ensuring faculty efforts are appropriately rewarded. Recognition should also be extended to research achievements, publication outcomes, and professional experience.

Additionally, a structured progression ladder should be implemented to reflect faculty growth and development. Currently, many reward systems do not align with faculty qualifications or the level of work undertaken, highlighting the need for a more equitable and transparent approach to recognition and compensation.

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) has raised concerns regarding the reward system, particularly with low salaries for qualified faculty. However, the HEA's role is limited to ensuring quality standards in education, while issues related to salary and compensation fall under the Ministry of Labour and the Emoluments Commission. The HEA can only report low salaries during audits, and it is up to the Ministry of Labour to address these concerns and determine if a minimum salary standard is necessary for the sector

Contribution

Recruitment Process

The study explored faculty recruitment processes in Zambian higher education institutions, analysing both public and private universities. Key findings include:

i. **Importance of Recruitment Policies**: Well-defined recruitment policies are crucial for attracting qualified and diverse talent, ensuring fairness and transparency. While 63.6% of institutions have clear policies, the absence of formal policies in 33.3% of institutions highlights vulnerabilities that could hinder long-term sustainability.

ii. **Challenges in Public Institutions**: Public universities face significant challenges, including budget constraints, bureaucratic delays, and competition for academic positions, leading to understaffing and prolonged vacancies. Despite these issues, practices like poaching and headhunting are employed to secure top talent.

iii. **Strategic Adaptation in Private Universities**: Private universities, with greater autonomy, can tailor recruitment strategies to their needs, yet face resource constraints. Despite financial limitations, they effectively use informal strategies like poaching and referrals to attract skilled personnel.

iv. **Role of Staff Development Programs**: Programs like Staff Development Fellow (SDFellow) are crucial for faculty growth and retention, enhancing institutional capacity and performance. These programs also attract candidates interested in professional development opportunities.

v. **Impact of Recruitment Practices on Growth**: Both public and private universities rely on traditional and informal recruitment methods. However, the growing reliance on informal practices underscores the need for greater investment in formal recruitment and retention strategies to ensure long-term institutional sustainability.

vi. **Sectoral Variability and Need for Policy Harmonization**: Differences between public and private universities in recruitment practices highlight the need for policy harmonization to improve the quality of education, foster diversity, and enhance institutional reputation across the sector.

vii. **Future Implications**: A comprehensive approach to recruitment, including improved funding, streamlined processes, professional development, and strategic planning, is necessary to meet the evolving demands of Zambia's higher education system.

In conclusion, the study emphasizes the importance of robust recruitment practices, staff development, and policy alignment in fostering academic excellence and long-term sustainability in Zambian higher education.

Rewards systems

The study investigates the reward systems that motivate and retain faculty members in Zambia's higher education sector, examining both public and private universities. Key findings include:

i. **Public Institutions**: Public universities in Zambia benefit from structured, predictable reward systems, primarily based on fixed salary grades, offering faculty clear expectations regarding salaries, career progression, and pension benefits. Research suggests that salary predictability and career advancement opportunities are significant factors in faculty retention. However, challenges arise from delayed salary payments and pension contributions, which undermine the benefits of the system and contribute to frustration and instability.

ii. **Private Institutions**: In contrast, private universities face challenges with unclear and inconsistent salary structures, which lead to disparities in compensation. The lack of standardized salary frameworks often results in inequities, demotivation, and

high turnover. Many private institutions also fail to recognize non-monetary contributions such as faculty involvement in Open, Distance, and E-Learning (ODEL) courses or research supervision, further contributing to faculty dissatisfaction. Additionally, the absence of formalized performance management systems exacerbates feelings of inequity and favoritism among staff, increasing turnover rates.

iii. **Need for Harmonization**: The study suggests that private universities would benefit from standardized and transparent salary structures aligned with industry standards, promoting fairness and reducing dissatisfaction. Incorporating non-financial rewards, such as recognition for scholarly achievements and professional dedication, could enhance morale and faculty engagement. A comprehensive reward system that balances both financial and non-financial incentives is crucial for improving faculty retention and institutional success.

iv. **Conclusion**: While public institutions generally offer stable and predictable reward systems, they still face challenges with delays in payments. Private institutions, however, struggle with inconsistent and subjective reward structures that hinder faculty satisfaction and retention. To improve faculty retention and institutional sustainability, private universities must adopt clearer, more transparent salary frameworks, implement equitable performance recognition systems, and ensure consistent application of both financial and non-financial rewards across the sector. The importance of equitable and transparent reward systems is central to retaining high-quality faculty and enhancing the overall quality of education in Zambia's higher education sector.

Recommendation

Recruitment process

This study emphasizes the importance of robust Staff Development and Training (SDF) programs for both public and private higher education institutions in Zambia. These programs should be integral to recruitment strategies to ensure consistency and equity across the sector. A comprehensive recruitment process is essential, beginning with thorough screening followed by structured advertising of positions, adhering to the minimum qualifications specified for each role. The process must be conducted equitably, in compliance with labour laws and institutional policies, to ensure fairness.

Key elements of the recruitment process include:

1. **Qualifications**: All candidates must possess qualifications recognized by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), with a particular focus on those from Tier ONE institutions, classified at ZQ10, and verified by the Zambia Qualifications Authority (ZAQA).

2. **Professional Experience**: Candidates should have relevant professional experience and a strong record of research contributions published in reputable, peer-reviewed journals.
3. **Computer Literacy and Passion**: Computer literacy is a fundamental requirement, along with a demonstrated passion for the field, reflected in motivational speeches or references.

Both public and private institutions must implement comprehensive talent acquisition and management strategies to optimize the recruitment process. Transparency in remuneration is essential, with clear communication regarding compensation for each position.

The **Higher Education Authority of Zambia (HEA)** plays a crucial role in ensuring compliance with these guidelines. It must intervene when necessary to enforce adherence to recruitment standards, promoting transparency, fairness, and excellence within the sector, free from political influence. Through clear directives, the HEA ensures that the recruitment process remains consistent, equitable, and aligned with national educational goals.

Rewards System

In the Zambian higher education sector, the development of a robust and transparent reward system by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) is essential for fostering academic excellence and faculty retention. A well-structured reward system, underpinned by clear recruitment standards and workload policies, should ensure that compensation is aligned with both individual contributions and broader economic factors such as the cost of living. The reward system should be merit-based and performance-oriented, maintaining objectivity, fairness, and ethical integrity, which will motivate faculty, enhance retention, and promote a culture of academic excellence.

Financial rewards should include competitive salaries, performance-based bonuses, and salary increments. Clear criteria for these rewards must recognize achievements in teaching, research, and community service, while increasing funding for research grants and conference attendance to support scholarly activities.

Non-financial rewards should emphasize career advancement opportunities and professional development pathways, motivating faculty to strive for excellence. Public acknowledgment of outstanding performance through awards can further boost morale and encourage a culture of achievement.

Professional development opportunities, such as funding for advanced studies, workshops, international collaborations, and faculty sabbaticals for research, are essential for fostering continuous academic growth and retaining high-quality faculty members.

Work-life balance policies, including flexible working hours, remote work options, and adequate leave policies, are critical for enhancing job satisfaction

and productivity. By creating a supportive work environment that prioritizes the holistic well-being of faculty, institutions can improve retention and performance.Ultimately, by incorporating these elements into the reward system, Zambian higher education institutions can create a motivating and equitable environment that attracts and retains top-tier faculty, leading to improved educational outcomes. An equitable system should prioritize transparency, fairness, and recognition of diverse contributions, considering teaching effectiveness, research productivity, and service to the institution and community. Integrating competitive salaries, merit-based bonuses, career advancement, professional development support, and work-life balance policies will establish a cohesive and sustainable reward system that fosters a culture of equity, motivation, and excellence.

Impliactions

The integration of business re-engineering approaches into recruitment and reward systems in the Zambian higher education sector carries several important implications. First, it implies the potential for enhanced organizational effectiveness through streamlined operations, improved decision-making, and more agile responses to academic and administrative challenges. This, in turn, suggests that universities could improve their ability to attract and retain high-quality faculty and staff, thereby strengthening educational outcomes and institutional prestige. Moreover, aligning recruitment and reward systems with long-term institutional goals implies a strategic shift that could significantly boost the competitiveness and relevance of Zambian universities on both national and global stages. The prospect of increased cost efficiency and optimized resource use further implies that institutions may redirect savings toward critical areas such as research, innovation, and infrastructure development. The findings also suggest that such systemic changes could foster broader cultural and institutional transformation by promoting innovation, transparency, and accountability. However, these benefits imply the need for effective change management to navigate potential resistance from within institutions. Ultimately, the study implies a clear need for policy reforms aimed at aligning recruitment and compensation practices with business re-engineering strategies. Such reforms would not only support the successful implementation of these approaches but also create a more conducive environment for sustainable growth and development in the Zambian higher education sector.

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