



**AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF RECRUITMENT AND  
SELECTION PROCESS: AN EXAMINATION AND  
ANALYSIS OF ACADEMIC STAFFING PRACTICE  
AT THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC  
UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA**

By

SAIDI WANJA MJAIDI

Project Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of  
Master of Management  
Management Centre  
International Islamic University Malaysia

2009

## ABSTRACT

*This paper is based on research that was conducted at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) on recruitment and selection process. The paper's aims are to ascertain whether responsibility for recruitment and selection is shared between HRM specialists (Management Services Division) and line management (Deans, Departmental Heads and faculty executives), and whether there is evidence of increasing devolution of this responsibility to line managers.*

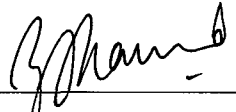
*The paper intends to explore the methods of recruitment and selection that are in use at the university. The paper also intends to describe elements of recruitment and selection activities at the University and upon identification of any deviation to the theories of the two processes, recommendations will be made that could help the management to efficiently and effectively perform these activities. In advancing this aim, the researcher will put much emphasis on what most of the human resource writers consider sound principles for the practice of recruitment and selection activities in comparison with the practical experience of the IIUM.*

*Using both qualitative and quantitative data, the findings obtained from this study reveal that there is evidence that the University is consistent with staffing practices as HR theorists suggest. There is also evidence that the responsibility of recruitment and selection at the University is shared among the HR Specialists and the line management.*

**Keywords:** Recruitment, Selection, Staffing, IIUM, University, Lecturers, Candidates, MSD, HR specialists, Line management, Respondents, Deans, Heads of departments, Faculty executives, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Organisations, Institutions

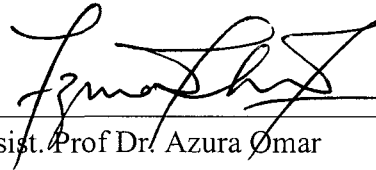
## APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this project and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a Project Paper for the degree of Master of Management.



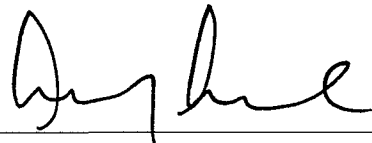
Assist. Prof. Dr. Zabeda Abdul Hamid  
Supervisor

This Project Paper was submitted to the Management Centre, IIUM, and is accepted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management.



Assist. Prof Dr. Azura Omar  
Project Paper Examiner

This Project Paper was submitted to the Management Centre, IIUM, and is accepted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management.




Prof Dr. Arif Hassan  
Chairman  
Project Paper Committee  
Management Centre  
IIUM

## DECLARATION AND COPYRIGHT

**Name** : SAIDI WANJA MJAIDI  
**Matric Number** : G0815299

I hereby declare that this research is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by endnotes giving explicit references and a bibliography is appended.

Signature.......... Date.....16/11/2009.....

© Copyright by Saidi Wanja Mjaidi and  
International Islamic University Malaysia

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved late mother

AKUSEKA BINTI MULI,

And my beloved Children

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Praise be to the Almighty Allah (God), the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds; who said (*Say: "Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endowed with understanding that receive admonition" ... Quran 39:9*). All adoration is due to Him (Allah) for making this study a reality. His Blessings be showered upon the beloved Prophet Muhammad (*SAW*), a mercy for all creatures. And His blessings (Allah's) should go to all His Prophets (PBUT) for guiding the world to the truth.

It becomes paramount to give credit where it is due; to people who without their great effort and contributions, this paper would not have been a roaring success.

With due regard, I would like to, foremost express my profound gratitude and appreciation to my supervisor, Assistant Prof. Dr. Zabeda Abdul Hamid for her valued and well thought suggestions, inspiring guidance, and assistance throughout the journey of this thesis. I acknowledge her intellectual contribution which served to the much needed improvement of this paper.

I would also like to express my utmost appreciation to the examiner of this thesis, Assistant Prof. Dr Azura Omar for her thoughtful comments and remarks. Her suggestions and remarks have tremendously improved the quality of this thesis.

I would be failing in my duty if I didn't also extend my gratitude and appreciation to the entire staff of the Management Centre, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), under the directorship of Prof. Dr. Mohd Ismail Sayyed Ahmad for providing us with resourceful instructors, study materials and ensuring the availability of a conducive learning environment. My many thanks also go to the 2009 Project Paper Committee (PPC) headed by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Noor Hazilah Binti Abd Manaf for their encouragement and support towards the progress of this thesis.

Many thanks to my parents for all the support rendered to me throughout my life. I sincerely thank my father, Sheikh Wanja Mjaidi for his untiring prayers for me to succeed in my studies overseas. I would also like to express my sincerely gratitude and appreciation to my late mother, Akuseka Binti Muli, who passed away in Malawi whilst I was in Malaysia for studies. I sincerely thank her for continuously encouraging me to go further to seek knowledge and for advising me to take education seriously. I try my level best to take your advice earnestly!

I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to my wife, Mrs. Alice Wanja Mjaidi, Nee: Binti Bwanali for taking up extra responsibilities of looking after the children as well as herself during my absence at home. I also thank my children; Elina, Surayya, Jamila, Kauthar, Hadiyya, Usama and Samira for their understanding of my need then to go outside Malawi for further studies which necessitated them missing me for two

consecutive years. I do very much appreciate their patience and their love to me and I equally love you all.

My appreciation also goes to all my siblings; Mjaidi, Afiki and Binti Anafi and all relatives for their tireless prayers that this study should be a reality.

My appreciation also goes to friends and individuals who gave me support and inspiration during my entire study. While I can't mention all of them here, Ogunsola Olanrewaju Kazeem, a classmate from the State of Lagos, Nigeria went beyond the call of duty. I appreciate his encouragement throughout the entire period of my studies in Malaysia and his various support and services rendered to me in the course of carrying out this research. I also extend my appreciation to Mr. Unusu Imran Kamwana, the Government of Malawi's Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development Director of Finance for Salima District Assembly and the IIUM Master of Business Administration 2009 Alumnus for his support and encouragement to me throughout my studying period in Malaysia. I also extend my thanks to Mr. Ramadan Saber, the Sudanese friend and my former MBA programme classmate at the University of Khartoum, Sudan for his support and encouragement in my educational mission in Malaysia.

I also extend my appreciation to the Principal Secretary and the entire management of the Malawi Government's Ministry of Labour for approving my study leave abroad. I also thank all my classmates and colleagues both from the international community as well as the host (Malaysians) for being so helpful to me during my research and study in Malaysia.

Last but not least, I acknowledge the good works of various authors whose journals and books have been instrumental as they helped me in carrying out this research. Likewise I express my gratitude and appreciation to all respondents of this study which comprised of members of staff from the Management Services Division (MSD), Deans, Deputy Deans, Heads of Departments, Directors of various units and institutions, Faculty executives and the lecturers of the International Islamic University Malaysia for sacrificing their valuable time to complete the survey questionnaires.

Finally, I say **THANKS** to all who have either directly or indirectly contributed to the success of this thesis; and indeed, the success of my educational journey overseas. Due to time and space constraints, I am unable to mention all of them. May the Almighty Allah shower His mercies and blessings upon them.

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1 (a): Gender – MSD	54
Table 1 (b): Gender – Lecturer	55
Table 1 (c): Gender – Combined	55
Table 2 (a): Nationality – MSD	56
Table 2 (b): Nationality – Lecturer	56
Table 2 (c): Nationality – Combined	57
Table 3: Kulliyah	58
Table 4 (a): Position - MSD	60
Table 4 (b): Position – Lecturer	60
Table 5 (a): Working Experience – MSD	61
Table 5 (b): Working Experience – Lecturer	61
Table 6 (a): Age – MSD	62
Table 6 (b): Age – Lecturer	62
Table 7: Preferred Candidates’ Qualifications	83
Table 8: Required Working Experience	84
Table 9: Candidates’ Attributes	85



## LIST OF FIGURES

	<b>Page</b>
Figure 2.1: The Recruiting Process	17
Figure 4.1: Response Rate	53
Figure 4.2: Gender - Combined	55
Figure 4.3: Nationality	57
Figure 4.4: Kulliyah	59
Figure 4.5: Frequency Use of Recruitment Methods – MSD	64
Figure 4.6: Recruitment Methods Usage - Lecturers	66
Figure 4.7: Rating of Recruitment Methods - MSD	68
Figure 4.8: Rating of Recruitment Methods – Lecturer	70
Figure 4.9: Frequency Use of Selection Methods – MSD	72
Figure 4.10: Frequency Use of Selection Methods – Lecturer	73
Figure 4.11: Ranking of Selection Methods - MSD	74
Figure 4.12: Ranking of Selection Methods - Lecturer	76
Figure 4.13: Recruitment and Selection Responsibility – MSD	78
Figure 4.14: Recruitment and Selection Responsibility – Lecturer	80
Figure 4.15: Preferred Candidates' Qualifications	83
Figure 4.16: Required Working Experience	84
Figure 4.17: Candidates' Attributes	86
Figure 4.18: Mean Scores on Frequency Use of Recruitment Methods – MSD	90
Figure 4.19: Mean Scores on Frequency Use of Recruitment Methods - Lecturer	91
Figure 4.20: Mean Scores on Ranking of Recruitment Methods – MSD	92

Figure 4.21: Mean Scores on Ranking of Recruitment Methods – Lecturers	93
Figure 4.22: Mean Scores Frequency Use of Selection Methods-MSD	94
Figure 4.23: Mean Scores Frequency Use of Selection Methods-Lecturer	95
Figure 4.24: Mean Scores on Ranking of Selection Methods Usage-MSD	96
Figure 4.25: Mean Scores on Ranking of Selection Methods Usage - Lecturer	97
Figure 4.26: Mean Scores on Recruitment and Selection Responsibility – MSD	98
Figure 4.27: Mean Scores on Recruitment and Selection Responsibility – Lecturer	99
Figure 4.28: Mean Scores on Recruitment and Selection Responsibility - Combined	99

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND THEIR FULL FORMS

ABBREVIATION	FULL FORM/MEANING
IIUM	International Islamic University Malaysia
MSD	Management Services Division
SAW	SallaAllahu Alaihi Wasallama (Peace Be Upon Him)
PBUT	Peace Be Upon Them
RO & S	Research Oriented and Spirituality
RO, S, P, O & F	Research Oriented, Spirituality, Patience, Openness and Friendliness
RO, S & O	Research Oriented, Spirituality and Openness
S & P	Spirituality and Patience
RO, S & F	Research Oriented, Spirituality and Friendliness
HR	Human Resource

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Abstract</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>Approval Page</i>	<i>iii</i>
<i>Declaration and Copyright Page</i>	<i>iv</i>
<i>Dedication</i>	<i>v</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>vi</i>
<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>viii</i>
<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>Abbreviations</i>	<i>xi</i>
1. INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Research Problem	4
1.3 Objectives of the Study	5
1.4 Research Questions	8
1.5 Significance of the Study	8
1.6 Organisation of the Study	12
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction	14
2.2 Staffing Process	15
2.3 Recruitment and Selection in Theory	17
2.4 Sources of Candidates	20
2.5 Recruitment Methods	22
2.6 Selection Methods	30
2.7 Factors Impacting the Process of Recruitment	35
2.8 Factors Impacting the Process of Selection	37
2.9 Summary of the Chapter	39

3.	RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	
3.1	Introduction	41
3.2	Research Design	42
3.3	Population of the Study	46
3.4	Data collection	48
3.5	Data Instrument	49
3.6	Data Processing	53
3.7	Summary of the Chapter	54
4.	DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS	
4.1	Introduction	56
4.2	Data Presentation and Analysis	57
4.3	Respondents' Demographics	59
4.4	Recruitment Process	68
4.5	Analysis of Recruitment Methods	72
4.6	Selection Process and Analysis	76
4.7	Comparative Analysis of Recruitment and Selection Responsibility (MSD and Lecturers)	86
4.8	Candidates' Education and Attributes	87
4.9	Discussion, Interpretation and Research Questions Answering	91
4.10	Summary of the Chapter	106
5.	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
5.1	Introduction	108
5.2	Recruitment and Selection Methods	109
5.3	Recruitment and Selection Responsibility	109
5.4	Candidates' Education and Attributes	110

5.5 Recommendations	111
5.6 Limitations of the Study and Future Research Opportunities	113
5.7 Conclusion	115
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>122</b>
1. Approval Letter to Carry out Research	123
2. Authorisation Letter to Collect Data	124
3. Questionnaires	125
4. Tables of Frequency on Recruitment Methods and Their Rating	135
5. Tables of Frequency on Selection Methods and Their Ranking	139
6. Frequency Tables on Recruitment and Selection Responsibility	142
7. Mean Tables on Recruitment and Selection: Methods Used, Methods Ranking and Recruitment and Selection Responsibility	144
8. IIUM Introduction, Mission and Vision Statements	151

# ***CHAPTER ONE***

## **INTRODUCTION**

In this paper, the researcher reports and analyses the findings of the study into the practice of recruitment and selection of academic staff at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). The study focuses on an empirical investigation into the academic staffing practices at the University. The paper examines a number of specific questions which include; what are the methods of recruitment and selection the IIUM uses of identifying suitable candidates, characteristics of the candidates the selection panels value, measures taken to validate staffing practices, and the extent to which Management Services Division (MSD), Deans, Departmental Heads and faculty heads are involved in the staffing process.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

On the outset, the paper aims at satisfying the partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Management degree of the IIUM. The paper's aims are to ascertain and explore whether there is evidence of the IIUM using recruitment and selection methods which are context specific and whether different practices are used for different job types. The study intended as well to examine whether responsibility of staffing process is shared between the HRM specialists of IIUM, i.e. MSD and the line

management (heads of departments, deans, faculty heads). The study also intended to find out the sources of candidates from which the University carries out its process of recruitment and selection.

Staffing, which is concerned with the recruitment, selection, placement, evaluation and promotion of individuals, lies at the heart of how businesses procure human resources (HR) in an organization (Peters et al., 2000). It is important to state that the need to recruit and select staff for the continuous of the organisation is universal. And while this need may be so, the way in which it is done and the particular methods favoured may well be culturally specific (Child, 1981; Hsu and Leat, 2000; Ryan et al., 1999 and Tayeb, 1995). Therefore, the IIUM being an international high learning institution, it is expected that specific traditional practices are often opened up to internationally adopted methods.

The study also looks into the management responsibility for recruitment and selection of the staff at the institution, especially academic staff. According to El-Kot and Leat (2008), the process of recruitment may begin with advertising vacancies, this may be done internally or externally or both and can be achieved using a range of media, which may involve using the company web site.

There are basic procedures that need to be followed when carrying out the process of recruitment and selection across different organisations and industries



regardless of their size, type and nature. El-Kot and Leat (2008) point out that the process of recruitment may begin with advertising vacancies, this may be done internally, or externally or both, and can be achieved using a range of media, which may involve using the company web site. Kanter (1977) suggests that the recruitment, selection and promotion of administrative staff members in higher education more closely resembles the process in most corporate or industrial settings, compared to the processes for faculty. Therefore, this study intends to explore and examine more on the processes that the IIUM deploys in faculty staffing.

There are two main sources from which vacancies occurring in an organisation can be filled. These sources are the internal and external labour markets. James (2007) explains that the external labour market potentially comprises everyone who is not employed by the organisation but who is open to offers of employment; while the internal labour market consists of an organisation's existing employees. There are merits and demerits in both internal and external recruitment (Wickramasinghe, 2007).

Recruitment and selection can be done both internally and externally (Johnsrud et al, 1992). It is done internally aiming at promoting the existing employees in the organisation. Internal recruitment (promotion from within) enhances current employees' morale. External recruitment and selection occurs when an organisation wants to inject new blood in the organisation. Hsiao and Kleiner (2002) however, suggest that looking first

to those on-staff to fill new openings is good for employee morale as the person already knows the company's ins-and-outs and has acclimated to its corporate culture.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

The purpose of this study is to understand, explore and examine the recruitment and selection methods the IIUM deploys when hiring academic staff. The study also intends to find out how effective the recruitment and selection procedures the University used were. Normally, the more effective recruitment programmes are those that attract large numbers of applicants because the more you have to choose from, the better the choice (Herriot, 1989).

The study further intended to find out whether the processes that the IIUM uses could be improved. Branine (2008) suggests the most preferred recruitment methods in order of preference as: milk round, recruitment brochures, recruitment fairs, direct directories, newspaper and magazine advertising, sponsorship and recruitment agencies. He further mentions the selection methods as: face-to-face interviews and tests, telephone interviews, assessment centres, online testing, application forms, references, pre-selection process, computerised testing and multimedia tests – video conferencing. Therefore, this study will determine the methods of recruitment and selection based on the many different types of methods available in the industry. The study also wants to ascertain whether responsibility for recruitment and selection is shared between HRM specialists, in the case of IIUM, the Management Services Division (MSD) and the line management

-Deans, heads of departments and heads of Strategic Business Units (SBUs)- and whether there is evidence of increasing devolution of this responsibility to line managers.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to investigate whether the IIUM follows what it preaches regarding the importance of applying sound procedures of recruitment and selection as suggested by human resource management theorists. This is the case due to the fact that advocating for ideas is one thing and putting it into practice is yet another. Many issues are easier said than done. “Walking the talk’ becomes problematic in as far as implementation is concerned.

The importance of implementing effective (cost effective in methods and sources) and efficient (producing enough suitable candidates without excess and ensuring the identification of the best fitted for the job and the organisation) recruitment and selection procedures cannot be overstated. The smooth running of any institution be it public or private, profit making or non profit making entity, is in need of adopting and implementing effective and efficient staffing practices for its survival and attainment of its goals and objectives. Specifically, the study will aim at meeting the following objectives:

1. To explore the recruitment and selection methods of identifying suitable candidates. The objectivity is primarily seeking to find out how the university identifies suitably qualified candidates to fill the existing vacancies. This is intended to also find

out which methods among the several available ways and means of identifying suitable candidates for the openings the IIUM put into practice.

2. To determine the recruitment and selection process of the IIUM academic staff. This is aimed at determining what methods of recruitment and selection of the academic staff are being practised at the IIUM. The assumption is that there is a difference in recruitment and selection methods that are being utilised between the academic staff and other positions at the university such as administrative staff.

3. To find out whether the recruitment and selection responsibilities at the IIUM are shared among the HR specialists (MSD) and line managers (faculty executives, deans, heads of departments etc) This also aimed at finding out whether there is evidence of increasing devolution of this responsibility to heads of departments, deans and faculty executives.

4. To identify key individual characteristics of candidates that is valued by selection panels. This is aimed at identifying the preference of the selection panels regarding important characteristics that the employable candidates must possess for employment consideration.

Owing to the fact that recruiting people who are wrong for any institution can lead to increased labour turnover, increased costs for the organisation, and lowering of morale in the existing workforce, therefore, it is paramount that the two processes of recruitment and selection are carried out as effectively and efficiently as possible to avert putting an organisation into an undesired position. Wrongly recruited people are likely to

be discontented, unlikely to give their best, and end up leaving voluntarily or involuntarily when their unsuitability becomes evident and clear. Such employees will not offer the flexibility and commitment that many organisations seek. Managers and supervisors will have to spend extra time on further recruitment exercises, which also come with costs, when what is needed in the first place is a systematic process to assess the role to be filled, and the type of skills and abilities needed to fill it. Bonn and Forbringer (1992) and Lee et al., (1999) suggest that effective staffing practices reduce labour turnover and enhance employee morale.

This being the case, therefore, it is paramount that recruitment and selection process should be exercised properly to avoid unnecessary expenses and inconveniences that can be derived from the negligence in the two processes. Considering the importance of this topic, and its humble contribution to the literature of academic staffing at the IIUM, the study explores and determines recruitment and selection methods and academic staffing practices of the University and their contribution to the smooth operations of its programmes. For the study to realise these objectives, it mainly explores and examines the four major research questions as listed below:

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

Guided by the objectives of the study as listed above, the research questions underlying the investigation in this study are as follows:

1. What methods of recruitment and selection does the IIUM use in the hiring of academic staff?
2. What are the better recruitment and selection methods of identifying suitable candidates for academic positions?
3. Are the responsibilities of recruitment and selection at the university shared/decentralised?
4. What are the characteristics of the candidates the selection panels value?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The importance of this study cannot be overstated. Firstly, the study will give us an opportunity to observe whether the IIUM is consistent with sound recruitment and selection process, as suggested by many authors in the field of Human Resource Management. Johnsrud et al (1992), suggest that the University is well suited for examining staffing decisions because it employs a large number of people. It is important to study the staffing process of an organisation as it is intended to identify prospective candidates who have at least some of the required qualities and attributes to fit well with the hiring organisation as Wickramasinghe (2007) suggests. It is also essential to state that while the literature in recruitment and selection process is available in abundance, similar literature in academic recruitment, selection and staffing practices leaves a lot to be desired. Van den Brink et al (2006) hold the view that there is no extensive literature available on recruitment practices in academia.

The researcher strongly believes that IIUM is well suited for examining its staffing decision because, among other reasons, it is a large higher educational institution that employs a large number of people of different culture, ethnicity, gender, countries of origin, among other attributes. Also, there is a need that HR specialists in any organisation should strive to institute better and appropriate practices of recruitment and selection. Though HR could be enhanced continuously through development, the first step towards making sure that employees possess the qualities sought for is to develop and institute appropriate staffing practices (Ahmad and Schroeder, 2002). Therefore, this study intended to examine whether the process of staffing at the University was developed and appropriately instituted so that it matches with recent trends in the practices.

Additionally, the effective procurement of human resources and its staffing is paramount for the overall health and continuous survival of any organization, let alone the higher learning institution such as the IIUM. The use of employment tests for selection, which is a part of the staffing practice, is very crucial. Employment tests for selection are best practices which are also associated with lower turnover and increased productivity (Schnars and Kleiner, 2000).

There are lots of benefits for the organisation or institution that can be derived from the sound application and implementation of effective and efficient staffing practices. According to Wickramasinghe (2007), staffing is accomplished by developing

concise definitions of the necessary technical requirements (job analysis) and then by determining which job applicants possess the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to successfully fulfil those requirements. Staffing, which is concerned with the recruitment, selection, placement, evaluation and promotion of individuals, lies at the heart of how businesses procure human resources (HR) in an organisation (Peters *et al.* 2000).

It is therefore very essential that all the stakeholders of the institution should have a keen interest on the methods the institution/university uses to realise its manpower for its continuance of rendering services to the beneficiaries, hence the proposal for this study. Wickramasinghe (2007) holds the view that even in today's technically advanced business environment; the human factor is instrumental to the success of an organisation. In any organisation people are the most valuable and important asset. For an organisation to ensure that their people are well taken care of they have to ensure from the start that proper staff are employed. It is therefore important that organisations staff recruitment and selection procedures are in line with the human resource policies. This will enable the organization to do the best selection for its employees. So, the better understanding of the methods of acquiring this important factor (human) is very crucial.

Furthermore, as Wickramasinghe (2007) suggests, it is essential to study staffing practices in different socio-cultural settings; their credibility will be enhanced if the concepts are viewed as being applicable in different country contexts. Critically, the