STAFF SELECTION AND RETENTION AT THE INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION (IEC) BOTSWANA

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Abstract: The purpose of the study was to examine staff selection and retention processes currently in place at the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Botswana and to find out ways in which the organisation could improve them. Another aim was to find out reasons for staff turnover at the IEC. The methodology approach applied in this research was a hybrid one; entrepretivism philosophy, inductive approach, case study, survey and cross sectional time horizon. Quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used. The researcher used a questionnaire and a semi-structured face to face interview guide. The results of the study indicated that there is high staff turnover at the IEC which is caused by among others lack of staff progression, less competitive salaries, lack of recognition and too much workload. The results also revealed that reference checks and interviews are the two main selection processes used at the IEC. The principal conclusion was that there are several issues leading to high staff turnover at IEC. Another conclusion was that the staff selection and retention processes currently in place at the IEC do not assist much in the retention of staff over a long period of time and that there is need for new strategies to be put into place to address the situation. Time allocated to this research was very limited. A longitudinal research on a similar study is recommended. This study would be very useful not only to the IEC but any organisation which is interested in staff retention.

Keywords: Human Resources, Management, Labour Market, Staff Retention, Staff Selection, Staff Turnover.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Impact of Selection and Retention of Staff:

Selection and retention of staff is and will remain an important factor in the Human Resources Management circles. A recent article (Anon, 2011, p.25) emphasises the importance of selecting and retaining key staff by organisations. According to the article "attracting and retaining key employees should be a top priority for any company worth its salt" and that "the consequences of failing to implement effective employee retention strategies can seriously damage even the most proficient of companies". Chan and Kuok (2011) argue that changes in the economy and labour market make attracting and retaining employees challenging. It therefore means that choosing the right employee for a position during the selection process is a priority to any organisation.

According to Samuel and Chipunza (2009, p.410) "Worldwide, retention of skilled employees has been of serious concern to managers in the face of ever increasing high rate of employee turnover". This situation is created by the fact that employees are being attracted by more than one organisation at a time with various kinds of incentives and thus posing a serious challenge to managers.

1.2 Statement of the problem:

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Botswana does not have its own independent written policy for recruitment, selection and retention of staff but relies on the general procedures and practices of the government employer

the Department of Public Service Management (DPSM). This is so despite the peculiarity and nature of its mandate. Such a scenario has led to challenges of effective selection and retention of staff or employees leading to turnover due to staff dissatisfaction.

Due to the small or lean nature of the organisation IEC employees have limited progression paths and this may lead to some recruited staff leaving the organisation to join other Ministries or organisations with better pay structures and progression levels. An organisation like IEC needs continuity by keeping its staff for a longer period in order to preserve its memory and tacit knowledge

Low staff retention levels by IEC are a result of factors attributed to the structure of the organisation which do not favour staff advancement or progression leading to general dissatisfaction by members of staff. IEC has a high staff turnover as a result of various staff welfare issues.

The current selection and retention processes have either failed to produce the right staff for the organisation or the process has failed the staff. Members of staff have complained at various fora such as during staff meetings about lack of a proper organisational structure that will allow staff progression and succession plan. The majority of cadres cannot progress or get promoted unless if they look for posts outside the organisation. This affects the growth of staff and the organisation itself since it end up losing experienced and talented staff to other ministries, departments and possibly to the private sector. According to Samuel and Chipunza (2009) the above scenario can result in the loss of business patronage and relationships, and can even jeopardise the realisations of organisational goals.

As a member of staff of IEC the researcher is interested in seeing the organisation coming up with an effective staff selection and retention strategy as a result of recommendations from this dissertation. Such strategy should be able to address staff turnover which if not addressed will in the long run adversely affect the core mandate of IEC. This research will help IEC to close gaps in its selection and retention processes and therefore reduce staff turnover which is currently devastating the progress or continuity within the organisation. To think of this research being complete and adding value to the strategic plan of IEC is a mammoth motivator which will keep the researcher going to the end of the dissertation. The fact that the researcher is particularly interested on issues of strategy and people management will energize him to go through this research.

Once the study has finished, the IEC will be advised on how to align their selection and retention processes or strategies in order to recruit and keep staff, thus militating against staff turnover. It is hoped that this will enhance the image of the organisation as a whole.

It is hoped that the study would provide information that can be useful for IEC management to evaluate its staff selection and retention processes. It intends to help management find effective ways of addressing staff turnover. There is therefore no doubt that both the IEC management and staff will be interested in this study and thus support it as it is envisaged to help solve a strategic management problem of staff turnover and enhance staff selection and retention processes. It is also hoped that the study will add knowledge to the subject area and may trigger more research around the topic.

Despite the strategic and management nature of issues of selection and retention a closer look at the IEC strategy document does not show any deliberate objectives or strategies geared towards selection and retention of employees. This therefore leaves one with a question as to the commitment of the IEC leadership to the selection and retention of employees.

1.3 Aim and objectives of the study:

The aim of the study is to make recommendations on how to reduce staff turnover at the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Botswana by reviewing staff selection and retention processes currently in place. The specific objectives are to;

1. Find out reasons for staff turnover at the Independent Electoral Commission.

2. Examine staff selection and retention processes currently in place at the Independent Electoral Commission.

3. Find out ways in which the Independent Electoral Commission can improve its selection and retention processes.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Staff Selection processes:

A selection process is a series of specific steps used to decide which applicant or recruit should be hired (Werther and Davis, 1996 cited in Mwobobia et al, 2007).It is also defined as a way of scrutinizing applicants to choose the one(s) from the pool with the required skills, knowledge, attitudes and other characteristics required to perform the job well (Mwobobia et al, 2009)

Grobler et al (2005) emphasised that selection process involves making a judgment- not about the applicant but about the fit between this person and the job. According to the authors almost half of the people, who voluntarily quit their jobs, for example in the USA, within the first year, cited a wrong fit as the reason. Many subjective factors are involved in the selection process because there is no perfect test or gauge of applicants. Well administered selection processes leads to employees achieving personal career goals, and the organisation will benefit from a productive, satisfied employee. They also indicated that the single most important indicator of how a job applicant will perform appears to be past performance. Therefore, during the selection process, obtaining an accurate and verifiable record of the applicant's past performance is critical, although often very difficult. They further suggested that performance of employees will be affected by their ability and motivation. The discovery of which employees are successful will determine what kind of employee to recruit and select in the future. The key of assessing accurately a person's motivation may be the measurement of his or her values. The selection process pulls together organisational goals, job designs and performance appraisals as well as recruitment and selection. It is important for the organisation to have a general hiring policy. Management can either employ the best people in the market place for particular jobs; this often involves high salaries and benefits- or pay relatively low wages and salaries unconcerned with employee turnover or dissatisfaction about wages, benefits and working conditions. The basic elements in the selection process according to Grobler et al (2005) are: selection instruments, job specification, job success criterion, job design and organisational goals.

Chan and Kuok (2011) explain in their study that employers in different countries prefer different selection methods. According to the authors reference checks are the most frequently used selection method in the United States followed by employment interview. They further explain that initial interviews, reference checks, and application forms are the most popular methods in the United Kingdom. In Australia the authors found that application form is the most popular method with about 94% of organisations using it.The study also revealed that interviews are popular amongst both applicants and employers, with 92% of the employers believing that the face to face interviews were more relevant than what was stated in the resumes. The researcher's argument is that even though interviews are popular amongst both applicants and employers their reliability is not guaranteed because of the halo effect issues. Chan and Kuok (2011, p.424) in their study also found that attitude, interest, values and performance inventories are most important during the substantive stage. According to the authors employers also value human relational skills, oral communication and listening skills. They concluded by suggesting that *"job applicants should frame their resumes to meet the expectations of employers, project an appropriate attitude and interest in the position and demonstrate their communication skills during the job interview"*.

Nel et al (2001 cited in Mwobobia et al 2007, p.121) present a traditional and ideal type of selection approach as summarised below:

o Initial Screening: application blanks, short listing.

o Selection Methods: employment tests, interviews, medical examinations, references, background checks, short listing.

o Final Selection Decision: job offer, rejection, appointment.

A survey by Mac Hatton, Dyke and Steiner (1997, p.2) outlines newer forms of managerial selection which include the use of; biographical data, structured interviews, assessment centres, cognitive tests, personality/Interest inventories, honesty tests and realistic Job Previews (RJPs). The above mentioned forms of selection can be very instrumental to selection strategies of organisations however they may be highly expensive (Muchinsky 1989 cited in MacHatton et al 1997).

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2.2 Staff Retention processes or strategies:

According to Akuoku (2012) employee retention is keeping employees that have already been hired. It is also stated that retention is a voluntary move by an organisation to create an environment which engages employees for a long term (Samuel and Chipunza 2009).

It is further argued that the main purpose of retention is to prevent the loss of competent employees from the organisation as this could have adverse effect on productivity and service delivery. According to Herman (1999 cited in Akuoko 2012, p.1) *"When you have hired good people, trained them, built them into high-performing teams, you don't want to lose them"*.

According to Anis et al (2011, p.2679) *"Employee retention is a critical aspect for every company regarding competitive advantage because human resource is the most critical asset of today's modern world.* The researcher believes that the above argument calls for organisations to recognise human resources management as an important aspect of a business strategy that they can depend on to gain competitive advantage in this competitive global economy.

It is believed that retention can be improved by factors such as better recruitment and selection methods, continuous review of job specifications and job descriptions, compensation practices, leadership and supervision, career planning and development, working conditions, team building, centralisation, organisational communication and commitment, counselling leavers, flexible working hours, employee participation, turnover policies and appreciations Rehman (2012). Greenburg and Baron (2003 cited in Rehman 2012, p.85) conceded that "*naturally, as working people, we all want to be satisfied with our jobs"*.

This argument is consistent is consistent with the view that not only does satisfaction keep staff from withdrawing from their jobs, but it also makes them more pleasant and enjoyable.

According to an article (Anon, 2011) in order to retain or keep talented staff organisations must develop strategies that address rewards, workers' autonomy and organisational image. The article outlines initiatives taken by Zenith Bank a Nigerian company geared up to improving employee retention. The initiatives include a strong focus on training and career development, generous contributions to employee retirement funds, provision of welfare services and communication or consultation with employees. The researcher agrees with the above proposed strategy since it informs best practice in the field of staff retention.

Results of a study by Anis et al. (2011) reveal that retaining employees' long term, after their training and development has been completed, without increasing their compensation is not as favourable as when compensation is increased to reflect the completion ability to apply their related skills and capabilities. The researchers agrees with the importance of compensation as a way of retaining staff but would like to point out that it can work in a holistic staff retention strategy.

A paper by WeiBo, Kaur and Zhi (2010) provides a theoretical overview of the different periods of motives and domains or targets of employee retention and turnover and highlights the performing importance from the platform of social capital in research. It also reveals that in the traditional attitude turnover model the process of employees' volunteer turnover is the reversed transformation process of employees' retention psychology and behaviours mainly consisting of four factors which are: the quit forces caused by job dissatisfaction, then employees' search for substitute jobs before turnover, evaluation on such substitute jobs, and occurrence of turnover behaviour. The above argument helps the researcher to understand manifestation of staff turnover.

Chapman (2009, p.126) reviews selected literature focusing on the relationship orientation and socialisation have on retention. Its findings are that orientation is a multi-stage process utilising both formal activities to help assist the employee become part of the culture of any organisation. The author emphasises the need for a human resources program that includes well planned processes for recruitment, selection, orientation, socialisation and retention which will help organisations to be more competitive.

Brewster et al (2003) highlighted that the effective and fair selection practices are important for the strategic deployment of highly motivated and competent employees and act as a vehicle for enterprises to gain a competitive advantage. They also indicated that inadequate compensation leads to high turnover, and job satisfaction determines whether an individual stays or leaves the organisation.

The right to fair compensation, often referred to as the right to a living wage, is derived from the right to life, the right to employment and the right to respect. These indicate that compensation addresses a number of issues among employees. It appeals to the inner being of an individual and shows respect, therefore if someone feels appreciated and respected, they are likely to stay in one organisation for a long time. New pay writers like Brewster et al(2003) recommend that the proportion of pay which is contingent on performance be significantly increased, that base salaries should be only moderately competitive in order to increase the potency of variable pay, that the range of incentive schemes be broadened to include linking pay to group and organisational performance as well as individual performance, that new performance measures of business success be identified and that flexibility should be introduced to compensation plans so that rewards extend beyond monetary ones to include prizes and recognition.

While there is much to commend in the new pay model, it can be argued that from an ethical perspective, these developments in compensation practice are potentially flawed. Brewster et al(2003) further stated that the new developments in pay model represent a 'movement towards greater risk in remuneration' because from an employee perspective, salaries and benefits are less secure and predictable and a 'movement away from employee representation' in the setting of policies and practices relating to compensation systems. The increase in employee risk and a decrease in independent employee representation associated with the new pay are cause for ethical concern and are the focus of the discussion on compensation. Despite possible shortcomings, the employment interview remains the most widely used selection tool and is often the first point of formal contact between a potential employee and an enterprise (Brewster et al, 2003).

2.3 Sources of staff turnover:

According to Taylor (2007 cited in Chan and Kuok, 2011) staff turnover refers to an employee's exit from an organisation. Samuel and Chipunza (2009) posits that staff turnover occurs when employees leave their jobs and must be replaced. Price (1997 cited in Ongori, p.49) defines the term turnover as "*the ration of the number of organisational members who have left during the period being considered divided by the average number of people in that organisation*".

According to Ongori (2007) job related factors of staff turnover are the experience of job related stress, lack of commitment in the organisation and job dissatisfaction. On organisational factors the author found that organisational instability has high degree of high turnover. The implication here is that in situations where organisations are not stable employees do quit to look for stable organisations where they would be able to advance their careers. The other organisational factors raised by the author are the imposition of quantitative approach to managing the employees, poor communication system, insufficient rewards, hiring practices, managerial style, lack of recognition, lack of competitive compensation in the organisation and toxic workplace environment.

Costly et al (1987 cited in Ongori, 2007) notes that a high staff turnover may be a result of poor personnel policies, poor recruitment policies, poor supervisory practices, poor grievance procedures, or lack of motivation.

A study by Chan and Kuok (2011, p.435) explored reasons leading to staff turnover at Macau revealed insufficient work force, shortage of skilled labour, Salary or the overall compensation package, low organisational commitment by the workforce as causes of staff turnover with pay as the main reason for employees to leave their work. The researcher agrees with the above argument, but would like to caution against the generalisation that employees quit because of pay. It is not given that what drives one employee will motivate another. The uniqueness of every member of staff must be recognised so as to understand their needs and what drives them.

There could be many reasons why some organizations suffer from high turnover. Suggestions have included: problems with hiring practices, managerial style, lack of recognition, lack of competitive compensation system, toxic workplace environments, lack of promotion and adequate training and development opportunities (Sherman et al, 2006 in Samuel and Chipunza, 2009).

There are several reasons that are believed to be causing voluntary resignation in organisations and they include incompatibility with organizational values, feelings of not being appreciated or valued, lack of feedback on ones work, inadequate supervision, lack of opportunities for growth and training, unequal salaries or benefits, strained work relationships, too much workload and inadequate resources(Arthur,2001).

Herman (1999 cited in Akuoko and Ansong 2012, p.4) emphasises the above argument by outlining five reasons why employees leave their organisations as incompatible corporate culture, unsatisfactory relationships with co-workers, insufficient support to get tasks accomplished, inadequate opportunities for growth and dissatisfaction with compensation offered.

2.4 Effects of staff turnover:

According to Cantrell and Saranakhsh (1991 cited in Ongori 2007, p.51) the reason why so much attention has been paid to the issue of turnover is because it has some significant effects on organisations. Ongori (2007,p.51) argues that staff turnover is expensive due to direct costs such as replacement, recruitment, selection, temporary staff and management time. In terms of indirect costs he mentions low morale, pressure on remaining staff, costs of learning, product or service quality, loss of organisational memory and social capital as effects of staff turnover.

The above argument is confirmed by Sherman et al (2006 cited in Samuel and Chipunza 2009, p.411) when they point out that "*Turnover is not only destructive to organisations, it is also costly*". This is so because every time an employee leaves, a replacement must be recruited, selected, trained and given time to gain the necessary experience. Rehman (2012) concurs with Ongori (2007) and Sherman et al (2006) that turnover of employees disrupts teams, raises costs, reduces productivity and results in lost knowledge.

2.5 Strategies to minimise staff turnover:

Ongori (2007) posits that since organisations invest a lot on their employees in terms of induction and training, developing, maintaining and retaining them, therefore managers must try by all means possible to minimise staff turnover. Ongori (2007) argues that employee engagement, knowledge accessibility, workforce optimisation, organisational commitment and empowerment of employees as strategies that can be used to minimise staff turnover.

Shepherd, Helms and Haynes (1991) suggest that turnover can be reduced by the use of better selection criteria. A multiple criteria approach is outlined for organisations to use in the staff selection process. They argue that the use of the above mentioned approach will result in a better, long-run fit between the organisation and its staff, thereby reducing turnover and improving satisfaction. The article provides a link or relationship between the selection process and staff turnover.

Employee engagement is one of the ways that can be used by organisations to minimise staff turnover. Gibbons (2006 cited in Hughes and Rog 2008, p.743) identified eight drivers of employee engagement as trust and integrity, nature of work, connection between individual and organisation's performance, career growth opportunities, pride about one's organisation, core workers attitudes, employee development and personal relationship with one's supervisor.

Devi (2009) supports the above idea by stating that if an employee becomes more engaged, he or she becomes less likely to leave the company and is more concerned to meet the customer's needs. Even though the author agrees that pay and benefit can motivate workers, he disagrees that they can do that on their own. He argues that corporate cultures such as team work, pleasant working conditions, the considerate treatment of employees, growth opportunities, skill enhancement and abundant training opportunities can all contribute to employee engagement. Rehman (2012, p.83) states that "*It is essential for the management to realise the importance of employee job satisfaction*". Rehman (2012) also argues that if management in organisations can utilise the information compiled through exit interviews it would result in controlled turnover and there would be able to develop effective retention strategies. This argument is confirmed in the Suffolk Primary Care Trust Policy(2006,p.5) which states that "*If a vacancy is as a result of the resignation of the post holder, then a Leaver Questionnaire must be completed by the post holder*".

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Collection

To collect data, the researcher used a self-administered questionnaire and a face-to-face interview guide. The interview method was chosen because of its depth, low volume, captured nonverbal communication and that it was quick to administer. The questionnaire was used because of its high volume; high range of responses and that it was convenient and cheap. Self-administered questionnaires were also useful in that the researcher could reach many respondents within a

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short period of time. Questionnaires were categorised into three sections. Section A contained personal data and questions were closed. Section B also contained closed questions whilst section C contained both open and closed type of questions. Questionnaires asked for staff perceptions regarding staff selection, retention and turnover at IEC. Response choices were arranged in a five-part likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. An open-ended section was added to collect qualitative responses by asking respondents to share their feelings and opinions about staff selection, retention and turnover at the IEC. Most of the questionnaires were hand delivered while some were faxed or emailed due to distance. Semi-structured interview guidelines were used to interview respondents to allow for modifications where there was need in order to solicit more thick descriptive data.

3.2 Sample and Sampling Procedures:

Sampling is a procedure by which some elements of a given population are selected as representative of the entire population. The main purpose of sampling is to help the researcher to draw conclusions by selecting some elements of a population. A sampling method can either be classified as probability or non-probability (Cooper and Schindler 2013).Stratified random sampling was used in this study. In this case the population was divided according to cadre and gender. Stratified random sampling was used as it allows for better representation across strata. In this case male and female respondents and employees from different cadres. Dividing the population into a series of relevant strata means that the sample is more likely to be representative, as the researcher would ensure that each of the strata is represented proportionally within the sample (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009).

3.3 Target Population:

Target population refers to the entire study population with similar characteristics, from which the sample is selected. In this study population constitutes IEC staff, management and the leavers. The entire population constitutes of one hundred and forty seven (147) members of staff of which seven (7) of them belong to senior management. The leavers figure at the time of conducting this study stood at seventy eight (78) between 2006 and 2013.

3.4 Sample Size:

A study of a sample of about 40% of the total population was used since it was manageable given the time at the researcher's disposal. The findings were generalised to the whole population of IEC. A hundred percent sample was used for the management of IEC as they were few in number. For IEC leavers 45% sample was used. According to Page and Meyer (2000) best sample designs ensure that sample data represent the research population efficiently and reliably. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) argue that dividing the population into a series of relevant strata means the sample is more likely to be representative.

4. FINDINS AND DISCUSSIONS

Section 1: Demographic Data

Q 1.1 Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	25	48
Female	27	52
Total	52	100

The percentage of female respondents was slightly higher than that of male respondents .This relationship represents the ratio of the total number of female employees versus those of their male counterparts at the IEC.

1.2 Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20 to 30	2	4
31 to 40	22	42
41 to 50	25	48
Above 50	3	6
Total	52	100

The majority of the respondents are aged between 41 and 50 years. An indication that most of the employees at the IEC have reached or are nearing the early retirement age which is age 45.Generally the employees are middle aged because in most cases the organisation recruits employees who have worked somewhere else than new recruits. The least represented age category is 20 to 30 followed by above 50 an indication that there are very few youth and those who are nearing a compulsory retirement age of 60 years. There is also indications that in most cases IEC employees retire before they turn the compulsory retirement age of 60.

1.3 Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Married	28	54
Single	24	46
Total	52	100

54% of the respondents are married. This could be due to the fact that the majority of them are middle aged one would expect them to have started families.

1.4 Education/Training	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary	0	0
Secondary	6	12
Certificate	12	23
Diploma	12	23
Degree	16	31
Masters	6	12
Total	52	100

All the levels of education or training are represented except the primary school level. This is due to the nature of the type of posts that are currently present in the organisations establishment register which do not require primary school leaving examination as a requirement. The majority of the respondents have attained their first degrees and very few have attained their masters qualification. This might be due to the fact that most of the posts in the organisation require a first degree as a qualification there after the department was not keen to take its employees for further studies.

1.5 Unit	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Elections	13	25
Information Education & Research	13	25
Corporate Service	13	25
Information Technology	13	25
Total	52	100

All the units were equally represented in the sample to get a true reflection of the whole department. The response rate was 100% for all the units. This was facilitated by the researcher's diplomacy in following up the respondents.

1.6 Length of Service in IEC	Frequency	Percentage (%)
O to 5	18	35
6 to 10	20	38
11to 15	10	19
Above 15	4	8
Total	52	100

38% of the staff have been with the IEC for 6 to 10 years which is in the majority. This is immediately followed by 0 to 5 which is an indication that the organisation has employed many members of staff during the past five years to replace

those who have left the organisation. Those who are above 15 years are in the minority which is also a pointer to the fact that employees work for few years at the IEC and then leave.

Section 2

Part A: Strategic Direction, Selection and relationship with leader/supervisor

2.1 My organisation has clear strategic directions for the future

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	6	12
2. Disagree	12	23
3. Uncertain	16	31
4. Agree	14	27
5. Strongly agree	4	8
Total	52	100

31% of the respondents have stated that they are uncertain as to whether their organisation has a clear strategic direction or not. This might suggest that that a sizable number of staff members are at sea as to where the strategic direction of the organisation is heading to. One wonders as to how they will be able to drive the vision and mission of the organisation if they are not sure as to how it is moving into the future. The implication is that management has to make sure that the strategy of the organisation is cascaded in such a manner that all members of staff understand it so that they can be able to drive it.

2.2 I feel that my personal values are good fit with the organisational values

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	4	8
2. Disagree	5	10
3. Uncertain	18	35
4. Agree	20	38
5. Strongly agree	5	10
Total	52	100

38% of IEC staff agrees that their personal values are a good fit to the organisational values.

This could be said to be an indicator for a good understanding of the organisations values by some of the employees but there was a high proportion of those who were still uncertain as to whether there is a relationship between their values and those of the organisation. The implication is that the leadership of the organisation has to make sure that the values of the organisation is outstanding and focussed so that all members of staff would understand and live such values to help the organisation to achieve its goals.

2.3 My leader/supervisor treats me fairly

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	19	37
2. Disagree	14	27
3. Uncertain	9	17
4. Agree	6	12
5. Strongly agree	4	8
Total	52	100

80% of the respondents fall within the uncertain, disagree and strongly disagree category. The remaining 20% fall within the strongly agree or agree, that is they are fairly treated by their leaders or supervisors. This indicates that the respondents believe that they are generally unfairly treated by their supervisors. The implication is that leadership should spread the fairness across the organisation to help improve staff perception of their leadership or fairness by resolving whatever issues affecting members of staff.

2.4 My leader/supervisor trusts me in making decisions relating to my job

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	18	35
2. Disagree	14	27
3. Uncertain	8	15
4. Agree	7	13
5. Strongly agree	5	10
Total	52	100

10% of the respondents agree and 13% strongly agree that they are trusted by their leaders to make decisions related to their work whilst 87% were either uncertain, disagree or strongly disagree. This scenario indicates that the majority of leaders at the IEC micro manage their supervisees. The implication is that the leadership should develop some sense of trust in their supervisees so that they can develop some confidence and be able to make sound decisions related to their daily work.

Part B: Organisational Commitment and intention to stay/leave

2.5 I am committed to work at my present job for as long as possible

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	14	27
2. Disagree	12	23
3. Uncertain	9	17
4. Agree	8	15
5. Strongly agree	9	17
Total	52	100

The above responses show that 32% of the respondents either agree or strongly agree that they are committed to the organisation whilst 68% fall under the uncertain, disagree and strongly disagree categories. This is an indication that the majority of staff are disengaged or are not committed to the organisation. The implication for the leadership is that they should find ways of engaging the employees so that they become committed to the organisation.

2.6 I will most certainly look for a new job

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	2	4
2. Disagree	10	19
3. Uncertain	4	8
4. Agree	22	42
5. Strongly agree	14	27
Total	52	100

69% of the respondents are of the opinion that they will certainly look for a new job. This is an indication that the majority of employees at the IEC are not happy at their current posts. The implication is that the leadership should find ways of retaining the employees before they decide to leave the organisation as that would cost the IEC both in terms of human and material resources.

2.7 There is little to be gained by sticking with this organisation indefinitely.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	3	6
2. Disagree	6	12
3. Uncertain	3	6
4. Agree	18	35
5. Strongly agree	22	42
Total	52	100

The majority of the respondents believe that it is better to leave than to stick to the organisation. It is not surprising to find the responses above having a similar pattern to the to the ones in 2.6 as they address a similar issue.

2.8 I could just as well be working for a different organisation if the type of work was similar.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	0	0
2. Disagree	6	12
3. Uncertain	9	17
4. Agree	16	31
5. Strongly agree	21	40
Total	52	100

40% of the respondents strongly agree that they were prepared to move if they can get a job elsewhere with a similar type of work.

PART C: Career Development, Opportunities, Remuneration and Recognition

2.9 I was properly oriented and trained upon joining this organisation.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	13	25
2. Disagree	20	38
3. Uncertain	9	17
4. Agree	8	15
5. Strongly agree	2	4
Total	52	100

It is indicative above that the majority of staff were not oriented upon joining the organisation.

2.10 The organisation has a clear and transparent line of progression for staff.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	33	63
2. Disagree	12	23
3. Uncertain	4	8
4. Agree	3	6
5. Strongly agree	0	0
Total	52	100

63% of the respondents strongly agree that the organisation has no clear line of progression for staff. The indication is that the majority of staff stay in one position for a long time without promotion or progression. The implication is that leadership should find ways of improving staff progression issues.

2.11 I am given positive recognition when I produce high quality work.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	9	17
2. Disagree	25	48
3. Uncertain	9	17
4. Agree	6	12
5. Strongly agree	3	6
Total	52	100

The majority of the respondents above believe that they are not given positive recognition as and when they produce high quality work.

2.12 When I think of my pay benefits, I feel that my work is appreciated and my efforts are rewarded.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	12	23
2. Disagree	23	44
3. Uncertain	5	10
4. Agree	12	23
5. Strongly agree	0	0
Total	52	100

67% of the respondents believe that their work is not appreciated and their efforts are not rewarded handsomely by their superiors. The indication is that the majority of IEC staff is not satisfied with their current salaries and benefits. The implication is that the IEC leadership has to make a proposal to government for an IEC staff salary review.

PART D: Communication, Empowerment and Innovation

2.13 There is effective communication and information sharing between senior management and other members of staff.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	15	29
2. Disagree	15	29
3. Uncertain	10	19
4. Agree	10	19
5. Strongly agree	2	4
Total	52	100

By looking at the responses above one would be tempted to state that information sharing at IEC is not done to the satisfaction of the majority of staff. The indication is that other members of that may not know what is happening on the other side of the organisation.

2.14 There is effective communication and information sharing between units.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	13	29
2. Disagree	24	29
3. Uncertain	3	19
4. Agree	10	19
5. Strongly agree	2	4
Total	52	100

The IEC seem to suffer from what is commonly known as silo mentality as indicated by the responses above.

2.15 I get the opportunity to voice my opinions on decisions made by management, and my ideas are accepted irrespective of my position

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	14	27
2. Disagree	24	46
3. Uncertain	5	10
4. Agree	5	10
5. Strongly agree	4	8
Total	52	100

It is clear from the responses above that ideas from members of staff may not always be welcome by management.

2.16 My organisation constantly seeks new ways to improve the way things are done and I am encouraged to be innovative or to take initiative to improve my work.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	13	25
2. Disagree	25	48
3. Uncertain	6	12
4. Agree	6	12
5. Strongly agree	2	4
Total	52	100

The responses above indicate that there was no encouragement of innovativeness by management to members of staff.

PART E: Work Environment

2.17 I enjoy working with the other people in my work unit.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	0	0
2. Disagree	5	10
3. Uncertain	0	0
4. Agree	29	56
5. Strongly agree	18	35
Total	52	100

The above ratings indicate that generally there is a better working relationship within the various units of the IEC.

2.18 The structure of the organisation promotes effective collaboration between units and across the organisation.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	9	17
2. Disagree	23	44
3. Uncertain	10	19
4. Agree	10	19
5. Strongly agree	0	0
Total	52	100

THE IEC structure is a hindrance to staff collaboration as indicated above by 61% of staff who opted for disagree and strongly disagree options.

2.19 I have enough resources to do my job timely and efficiently.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	7	13
2. Disagree	18	35
3. Uncertain	14	27
4. Agree	13	25
5. Strongly agree	0	0
Total	52	100

From the above responses there is an indication that the majority of staff did not have enough resources to do their jobs effectively and efficiently. The implication is that the leadership should address the issue of shortage of both human and material resources.

2.20 My organisational leadership is committed to ensuring occupational health and safety.

Ratings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. Strongly disagree	27	52
2. Disagree	14	27
3. Uncertain	6	12
4. Agree	5	10
5. Strongly agree	0	0
Total	52	100

The responses above indicate that the IEC leadership did not give priority to issues of occupational health and safety. The implication is that the leadership should give priority to issues of occupational health and safety as they can affect staff satisfaction in their work environment.

Section 3

3.1 Prevalence of staff turnover at IEC:

In response to this question 89% of the respondents affirmed the presence of high staff turnover at the IEC whilst 11% negated.

3.2 Reasons for staff turnover at IEC:

The respondents who answered on the affirmative above stated various reasons for staff turnover at the IEC. They complained that there is no clear progression structure for staff. One of them stated that he joined IEC in 2001 as a Principal Elections Officer and even today he is still in the same position. Another reason was less competitive salaries at the organisation. The majority of respondents felt that there was generally lack of recognition and appreciation for staff contribution by the leadership of IEC. One of the participants lamented that " In IEC when you work hard nobody gives you a pat on the back but when you make a mistake, they fall on you as a tonne of bricks".

A quest for better employment opportunities was mentioned as one of the reasons for staff turnover at the IEC. Not giving attention to staff welfare issues, low staff morale and lack of support by senior management towards self-development initiatives were also stated as contributors to staff turnover at the organisation. Other reasons mentioned were Election Management Body (EMB) as a government institution as opposed to an independent one, inadequate communication between senior management and staff especially outstations and dissatisfaction with management style which is more autocratic than democratic.

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3.3 Measures to be put in place to address staff turnover at the IEC:

On measures to be put in place to address staff turnover at the IEC the respondents gave a number of suggestions including; introduction of an organisational structure that takes into account progression of staff, increase staff salaries, introduction of staff retention strategies/programme, recognise staff input, promote staff welfare programmes, staff complement at out stations, management to be positive about staff contributions, change of leadership, promote team building initiatives, and transformation of the IEC into a fully-fledged independent institution. One of the respondents stated that "IEC should be transformed from a government institution to be independent so that it can have its own retention strategy".

IEC Management Interviews:

1. The processes and procedures of recruiting new staff.

According the IEC management for recruitment to take place a vacancy need to exist. The establishment register indicates the post and where it is. The management then asses internally if any staff qualifies. If so an internal advert with a deadline of 7-21 days is done. The design of the advert is standard, aligned to job effectiveness description and indicates competencies required. If there is no suitable candidate the advert is extended externally, locally and then to non-citizens. Some members of the management team felt that advertising in only one newspaper was not enough and there is room for improvement.

2. Selection procedure

The process of advertisement is then followed by screening or short listing where some fall off and are replied to; further short listing using added advantage is done before determining a date for interview. There are three appointing or selection boards, one chaired by the appointing officer and responsible for selection of D4 and above salary scales, the second one is chaired by the deputy appointing officer and is responsible for the C band salary scale. The third one is chaired by the manager- human resources and administration and is responsible for salary scale B1 and below. Before the interview competencies (definition and deliverables) are sent to the candidates since the interviews are competency based and are meant to check for competencies. According to some of the respondents, the interviews used for selection are generic and may not produce the best candidates. Competency based assessments would work better only if they are adapted to the organisational situation.

During interview all the members of the panel have to be there. Some members of management reported that sometimes they delay to fill vacant posts due to the absence of members of the selection Board especially chairpersons. Due to such delays it usually takes up to over six months before some posts can be filled. Every panellist takes notes, compare notes and reach consensus on all the questions and agree on the rating immediately after the interview. Background checks are also done. The appointing authority then writes an appointment letter.

3. What they look for from an applicant

They are guided by the government's competency framework for various levels such as executive, senior and middle management. The problem with the framework is that it takes a very long time without being reviewed and may become irrelevant to the current situation in the organisation.

4. Orientation and induction of staff after selection

Orientation comes immediately after selection through the use of predesigned briefing notes. For outstations it is done when there are meetings. Induction is done at the Botswana Public Service College. Generally the organisation does not appear to give orientation and induction a priority as under the current setup it takes place after a long time or never.

5. The presence of high Staff turnover at the IEC

The majority of the IEC management conceded that there is staff turnover however some who were few in number said they don't consider it very high.

6. Reasons for staff turnover

Most participants believed that turnover is caused by the fact that IEC establishment is comparatively small, but with a big mandate and as big ministries advertise positions, officers see that as opportunities and it is difficult to keep them.

Some are attracted by the private sector and parastatals as they have better salaries and conditions of service such as housing and training. The views of majority of the management team members on the issue of staff turnover seems to point outside the organisation as opposed to general staff members and the leavers whose views were that the causes of staff turnover lie within the organisation.

7. Retention strategy

IEC does not have its own retention strategy of its own but relies on the entire government's scarce skill retention and attraction policy determined by the Department of Public Service Management. There is also a contributory pension fund, medical aid and other schemes such as salary advance designed for lowly paid officers.

8. Other measures for staff retention

The department was reported to be working on a human resource strategy which will include a retention strategy, but it has to be within the public service policy framework. The human resource strategy would also be focussed on the wellness of staff and customised to the IEC to attract employees. It will also be focussed on training and development. The strategy will be aligned to the corporate strategic plan of the IEC.

9. Exit interviews

Exit interviews were reported to be done as they are a requirement; however there was no evidence to back up what was said by management of the IEC. It was also reported by management that in most cases individuals cite greener pastures as reasons for leaving for both those who are joining other government departments or the private sector.

10. Other comments.

According to management the IEC is facing an insurmountable challenge as regards to its structure and has never been reviewed to meet the international standard as outlined by the Institute for Democratic Elections Assistance (IDEA)

IEC leavers' interviews:

1. The reasons for leaving IEC

The respondents cited the following reasons for leaving the IEC; lack of progression or promotion, low salaries, better salaries/greener pastures elsewhere, lack of recognition for their contribution by supervisors, too much workload and insensitive leadership. One of the leavers said, "When I worked for IEC I used to have burnout due to too much work, now I am ok".

2. The encouragement and recognition of new ideas

According to the majority of the leavers the IEC management did not encourage and recognise new ideas at all as the management was mostly logical.

3. Opportunities of growth within the organisation

The respondents unanimously agreed that within the IEC there were no opportunities for growth because of poor organisational structure. One of them stated that members of staff remained stagnant until and unless someone died, retired or resigned and that internal recruitment was rarely practiced.

4. Management's expectations versus the level of resources given

Almost all the respondents agreed that the IEC did not have enough resources and that it was largely dependent on other government departments for both human and material resources making it difficult for them to achieve their objectives.

5. Organisational lines of communication

Lines of communications were reportedly very low especially between the head office and outstations who sometimes receive conflicting information. Quite a number of leavers stated that they used to get some information about IEC in the media without having received it from the leadership.

6. Immediate supervisor's response work related problems

The majority of the leavers were not satisfied about the response time of their supervisors to their work related problems and this sometimes brought conflicts between themselves and their supervisors.

7. Level and amount of supervision you received

The amount of supervision received by the leavers was said to have been inconsistent and haphazard and was only intensified during election year.

8. Performance evaluations at the IEC

It was also reported that performance evaluations were not consistent at all and like supervision were done in a haphazard manner with some supervisors stressing on their importance and others not reviewing their supervisees every quarter as it is the requirement. It is evident that the IEC does not give performance management the seriousness it deserves.

9. Comment about salary and benefits at the IEC

All the respondents stated that the IEC salaries for the posts that they left were lower than where they have moved to.

10. Overall satisfaction on working for the IEC

The respondents unanimously agreed that they were not satisfied and that is the reason why they left the organisation. One of them lamented "You cannot leave an organisation if it satisfies you, would you?"

11. Recommending a colleague for employment at the IEC

At most the respondents said they would not because of the work load and lack of progression while very few said they would do so because there are little employment opportunities all over especially for beginners.

12. Suggested changes at the organisation

The leavers proposed changes such as; introduction of competitive salaries, employment of more officers to reduce the workload and adoption of a structure that will enable officers to progress reasonably.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The study critically reviewed staff selection and retention at the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Botswana. The aim of the study was to make recommendations on how to reduce staff turnover at the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Botswana by critically reviewing staff selection and retention processes that were in place.

The topic examined the staff selection and retention processes that were in place at the IEC.The researcher further explored ways in which the organisation could come up with effective selection and retention strategies to address staff turnover.

The respondents comprised of IEC members of staff, IEC management and IEC leavers. The findings were generalised to the whole population of IEC.Questionnaires were used for the general IEC staff members whilst a semi-structured interview guide was used for the IEC management and leavers. The questionnaires contained closed-ended and open ended questions. The research was a case study focusing on the IEC.

The general view of the respondents was that there has been a problem of high staff turnover at the IEC for some time due to lack of sound selection and retention strategies or processes. A total number of seventy eight (78) IEC employees left the organisation between 1996 and 2013. By the end of the first quarter of the financial year 2013/2014 six (6) employees have already left the organisation for the year.

The researcher concludes that there are several issues leading to high staff turnover at the Independent Electoral Commission which include no clear progression structure for staff thus leading to them staying in one position for a long time, too much workload not commensurate to salary, lack of recognition and appreciation for staff excellence, not giving attention to staff welfare issues, inadequate communication between management and staff and lack of staff support by the leadership on self-development initiatives.

Research revealed that the majority of the IEC employees work for a short time and then leave the organisation because of some of the above mentioned factors.

Staff turnover leads to costs such as replacement, recruitment, selection, temporary staff and management time. Other factors include low morale, pressure on remaining staff, costs of learning, product or service quality, loss of organisational memory and social capital.

Some of the strategies that can be used to minimise staff turnover include employee engagement, organisational commitment, empowerment of employees, rewards and compensation training and development, communication, management, leadership, use of better selection strategies and utilisation of information collected during interviews.

The researcher also concludes that the staff selection and retention processes currently in place at the IEC do not assist the organisation to attract and retain its employees over a long period of time. In fact the IEC does not have its own peculiar retention strategy but relies on what is offered by the Department of Public Service Management. Several selection methods were identified in literature and they include interviews, references, background checks, employment tests, medical examinations, references, background checks, shortlisting, rejection and job offer. Newer forms of managerial selection include the use of biographical data, structured interviews, assessment centres, cognitive tests, interest inventories, honesty tests and realistic job previews.IEC has not taken advantage of the newer selection strategies but is stuck to the traditional selection strategies such as oral interviews and references.

A well administered selection process leads to employees achieving personal career goals, and the organisation will benefit from a productive and satisfied employee.

The findings of the study reveal that the IEC can improve the retention of its employees by introducing an organisational structure that facilitates smooth staff progression, promotion of staff welfare programmes, introduction of incentives such as increasing staff salaries. The findings of the study also revealed that as a result of realising that it is not able to retain staff the IEC is intending to start working on a human resource strategy which will include a retention strategy and also focussed on the wellness of staff and customised to the IEC to attract employees.

Employee retention is an important aspect of any organisation's Human Resource strategy as they can depend on it to gain competitive advantage. In order to keep talented staff organisations must develop strategies that address rewards, staff autonomy and organisational autonomy. There is a general understanding in that for organisations to be successful and competitive globally, they must adopt best practice when implementing retention strategies which include but not limited to promoting autonomy and empowerment in the workplace, employee commitment, participation, openness, transparency and communication (Mac Duffe, 1995 cited in Bach, 2005).

It is evident from the research that a sizable number of IEC staff either do not understand the strategic direction of their organisation or are uncertain as to whether there is a relationship between their values and those of the organisation. This therefore means that some of the employees do not fit with the organisation's values and therefore may not be able to drive its strategy and thus an easy breeding ground for staff dissatisfaction and turnover.

At the IEC there is no effective communication and information sharing between senior management and other members of staff but there is effective communication and information sharing between units. Another point of note is that generally at IEC employees are not encouraged to voice their opinions on decisions made by management and to be innovative. This results in docile or hostile employees who are likely to bring about very little positive change to the organisation. The majority of the IEC staff are disengaged and are not committed to the organisation and are of the opinion that they will certainly look for a new job.

Findings also reveal that the organisation does not have enough resources to enable staff to perform effectively and efficiently and that is a worry to the majority of them. It is argued that enough resources should be allocated to prevent employee dissatisfaction and to keep them motivated (Shipley and Kiely, 2007).This is in line with Herzberg's Theory of Motivation.

There is also an indication that the organisational leadership is not committed to ensuring occupational health and safety an issue that is of paramount importance to employees in general.

The researcher concludes that currently the IEC is not an employer of choice because a good employer should know how to attract and retain its staff (Akuoko and Ansong, 2012).The majority of staff members at IEC cannot foresee their path of career development under the current set up and there are chances that they will leave the organisation as soon as they get an opportunity. It is argued that growth and development are a critical component of every employee's career (Akuoko and Ansong, 2012).This argument is consistent with the view that employees would want to work for an organisation which has opportunities to grow.

It is evident that several factors must exist at the IEC for it to be successful in its retention efforts.

Finally the researcher concludes that the research objectives were met and that the instruments used to collect data were appropriate.

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