

Digital Platforms And How They Affect Human Resource Planning In Zambia's Commercial Banks. A Case Study Of Zambia National Commercial Bank Plc.

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ABSTRACT.

The study assessed the effect of digital platforms on human resource planning in Zambia's commercial banks looking at ZANACO Plc as a case study. Traditional approaches to recruitment are being swiftly supplanted by digital alternatives, exemplified by the use of social networking platforms and web-based tools such as Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Twitter (X), Instagram and others, for recruitment purposes. A sample of fifty-four (54) respondents comprising of staff that operate in the HR department, including branch managers were engaged for this study. Primary data was obtained by way of questionnaires and oral interviews, Secondary data on the other hand was obtained from existing empirical studies and written books and Magazines. Data for this study was analyzed using the statistical Package for the social sciences (SPSS) version 26.0 and Microsoft excel. These tools allowed the researcher to conduct hypothesis testing and linear regression analysis in order to check for the significance of the results. Three key analyses were done to come up with the major study findings and interpretation of those study findings. The first was the descriptive analysis where the background information of the respondents was presented. The second was the regression analysis that was used to assess the impact of individual variables on the operation of the HR systems and thirdly, ANOVA was used for the joint significance of the variables. Specifically, a 1% increase in digital platforms for recruitment processes would improve HR efficiency by 38.8%, holding other factors constant. The study has established a significant impact of digital platforms on the efficiency and effectiveness of the HR operation process at ZANACO. The study has established a significant and positive long run impact of digital platforms on the efficiency and effectiveness of the HR planning process within

ZANACO. The results were significant at a P-value of 0.05 or $P \leq 0.05$

Key words: Digital Platforms, Human Resource Planning, Recruitment, ZANACO, Facebook.

I. INTRODUCTION

There is no question about the importance of human resource (HR) planning for any organization's success. The main aim of human resource planning is to ensure that employees have the best level of interactions with their jobs (Hassan, et al., 2014).

Jonathan Rice (2011) stated that Human Resource Planning is a long lasting process organized in a way that properly employs the human resource of the organization. In order to establish a vital connection between strategic organizational objectives and HR programs and policies, this process comprises of evaluating an organization's present and future needs for human resources (Stella, 1987).

According to Vetter (1967), HR planning is a crucial activity that management uses to coordinate change from the current manpower configuration to a more desirable one. Proper Human Resources Planning can increase workers productive and contributes to the success of an organizations. Over the years, there have been a lot of digital platform integrations in the HR planning which has revolutionize the HR planning process. Drawn to this view point, scholars have been investigating various ways in which digital transformation impact Human resources planning.

Zambia National Commercial Bank Plc, (ZANACO) was used as a case study in this research so that the question, Digital platforms and how they affect human resource planning in Zambia's commercial banks may be answered.

The background of Zanaco is that, it was founded on 1st January, 1969 and has its

headquarters in Lusaka, Zambia. In 2007, the Zambian government sold 49% shares of its stake in Zanaco to Rabobank. As at December, 2020 the bank had a branch network of sixty-two (62) branches spread across the country. ZANACO is the largest employer in the Zambian banking industry, with a total number of One thousand three hundred and sixty-one (1,361) employees as at December 2023. Source: www.zanaco.co.zm.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW.

2.2 Digital Platforms and Human Resource Planning:

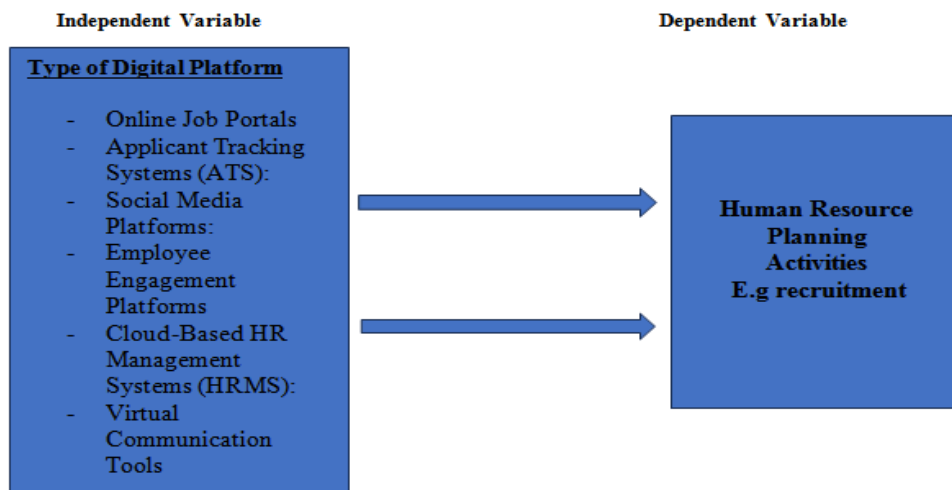
According to Eshan and Binoy (2018), digitalisation in recruitment and selection were found to be very important functions of human resource management. The process of recruitment in human resource management starts first, and then followed by selection of the candidate. These days, the online social networks have made the development of human resource to be easy and cheap. Digitalization has made the recruitment process to be more effective and efficient. The recruitment process has been made more robust and quicker with the advent of digital platforms, a job seeker just needs to complete and upload their details on the online platforms and after completing all the details and after that the organization's recruitment team will then shortlist. With the coming of digitalization, a lot of organizations use social network sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Skype and other platforms for recruitment. Because of the mass usage of technology, traditional recruitment and selection methods have been replaced with digital platforms or social networking sites and other web-based platforms, such as LinkedIn and Facebook. Mochi et al. (2018) stated that online networking has allowed access to a wide pool of potential employees with a lot of abilities and skills set. Digitalization brings about speed and efficiency in the recruitment process, and helps in recruiting passive candidates, especially the individuals who might not be searching for a new

job because they will easily have access to social media. Digital platforms also provide information to prospective job candidates regarding organizations and their vacant employment positions. The aim of social media platforms is to reach as many people as would be necessary and make organizations identifiable by candidates. These aims are important for recruitment and selection, and also for company branding. Social media digital platforms appear to be suitable to recruit millennials of the 2000 era that are viewed as digital natives and represent a significant part of the present workforce. (Stone et al. 2018) said that the use of digital technology has increased e-recruitment and selection. This is a positive contribution to upgrading company work and also helps in building human resource planning in the organization.

Digitalisation was also found to be increasing employee performance, effectiveness and efficiency of the work being performed by the workers, Anastasia (2019). According to Tatiana, (2019), digitalization, has been found to have a significant impact on labour market transformation. She further states that new technologies are changing the usual functionality of workers in various professional fields. This digitalization era entails that digital tools are being introduced in business processes, including human resources management processes such as recruitment, Anastasia (2018).

2.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

In this study, a Theoretical framework containing two variables was developed to show the relationship and effect of the independent variables (predictor variable) on the dependent variable (criterion variable). The digital platforms such as the on-line job portals and social media platforms are the independent variables while the Human resource planning practices such as recruitment and selection are the dependent variables.



III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Population

The population of this study encompasses sixty two (62) employees namely the Human resource personnel, and the ZANACO Branch managers who are the line managers of staff members, the branch managers also involved in the recruitment process by the HR department.

3.2 Study Sample

A sample of fifty-four (54) respondents comprising of staff that operate in the HR department together with branch managers were engaged.

3.3 Sample Size:

Sample size was determined using the William Cochran`s formular:

$$n = \frac{no}{1 + \frac{(no - 1)}{N}}$$

where, no is Cochran`s sample size (385) , N is the population (62) & n is the sample. A sample size of 54 respondents was obtained.

Cochran`s sample size of 385 is determined by: $\frac{(196)^2 * 0.5 * 0.5}{(0.05)^2}$ where; 196 is the Z score and 0.05 is the margin of Error.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Regression Results

4.2 Efficiency.

The second specific objective of this study was to assess the effects of Facebook on the efficiency of the recruitment process at ZANACO. To address this objective, the study conducted regression analysis for efficiency.

Table 4.6: Regression Analysis of Facebook and HR efficiency

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.352	1.165		2.020	.050
	Facebook platform operation	.242	.161	.218	1.503	.140
	Data-Driven Decision-Making	-.053	.183	-.047	-.288	.775
	Training and Development	-.133	.198	-.107	-.674	.504
	Recruitment Processes	.388	.153	.349	2.536	.015

a. Dependent Variable: Overall efficiency in HR operations

To establish the impact of Facebook on the efficiency in HR operations, four variables were used as regressors. These included Digital platform operation, Data-Driven Decision-Making, Training and Development, Recruitment Processes. The results showed that Facebook platform operation in the management of HR tasks by ZANACO has an insignificant positive impact on the efficiency in HR operation. However, singling out the use of Facebook platform for recruitment processes significantly affects the efficiency in HR operations. Specifically, a 1% increase in Facebook

platforms for recruitment processes would improve HR efficiency by 38.8%, holding other factors constant.

The study also conducted a joint significant test for all the regressors using ANOVA. The null hypothesis tested was that the regressors have no joint impact on efficiency in HR operations. This was tested against the alternative that the regressors have a joint impact on efficiency in HR operation. Table 4.7 below summarizes the ANOVA results.

Table 4.7: Analysis of Variance for Facebook Platforms and HR efficiency

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8.357	4	2.089	3.202	.022 ^b
	Residual	28.705	44	.652		
	Total	37.061	48			
a. Dependent Variable: Overall efficiency in HR operations						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Digital platform operation, Data-Driven Decision-Making, Training and Development, Recruitment Processes						

At an 8.357 regression sum of squares and 28.705 residual sum of squares, with the respective 4 and 44 degrees of freedom, there was sufficient evidence for the joint significance of the regressors. This conclusion follows from the observed F-statistic of 3.202 and the corresponding probability value (Sig.) of 0.022 which is less than 0.05 critical level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis of no joint significance was rejected in favour of the null. Therefore, Facebook platform usage has a significant impact on efficiency in HR operation at ZANACO bank.

4.3 Effectiveness

The Third specific objective of this study was to assess the effects of Facebook platforms on the effectiveness of human resource planning

practices within ZANACO. To address this objective, the study conducted regression analysis for effectiveness.

A tests to assess the significance of the Facebook platform operation on the effectiveness of HR operation was conducted using regression analysis and analysis of variance. Table 4.8 below shows the results from regression analysis. The critical probability value was a 0.05 level of significance. Facebook platform operation produced insignificant short run impact on the effectiveness of HR operations. However, the recruitment process produced strong significant and positive impact on the effectiveness of HR operation. Just like in the case of efficiency, the other control variables produced insignificant results.

Table 4.8: Regression Analysis of Facebook Platforms and HR effectiveness

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	1.043	1.094		.953	.346
	Facebook Platform Operation	.103	.151	.095	.678	.501
	Data-Driven Decision-Making	-.066	.172	-.061	-.386	.702
	Training and Development	.154	.186	.127	.829	.411
	Recruitment Processes	.565	.144	.523	3.928	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Overall effectiveness of HR planning at ZANACO						

To further check for the impact of Facebook platforms on the effectiveness of HR operation, a joint significant test was conducted

using ANOVA. Table 4.9 below shows the ANOVA results. The null hypothesis of no joint significance was tested against the alternative

hypothesis that there exists a joint significant impact of the regressors on the effectiveness of HR

operation.

Table 4.9: Analysis of Variance for Facebook Platforms and HR effectiveness

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.723	4	2.431	4.221	.006 ^b
	Residual	25.338	44	.576		
	Total	35.061	48			
a. Dependent Variable: Overall effectiveness of HR planning at ZANACO						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Facebook platform operation, Data-Driven Decision-Making, Training and Development, Recruitment Processes:						

At a 9.723 regression sum of squares (with a 4 degrees of freedom) and a 25.338 residual sum of squares (with a 44 degrees of freedom), there was strong evidence of a significant impact of Facebook platforms on the effectiveness of HR operations. This is because the observed p-value of 0.006 is smaller than the 0.05 level of significant.

4.4 Discussion of the Findings

This study sought to investigate how Digital platforms affect human resource planning in Zambia's commercial banks. The study took a mixed research approach and was dominated by the quantitative part. Hence, the study adopted a concurrent nested research design. The study had

three specific objectives and each of these objectives had a specific research question. The study established answers to all the questions raised in this study. The following sections provides a discussion of each of the research questions.

4.4.1 RQ1 - What are the effects of Facebook on recruitment process?

Conclusion - The first research question sought to find the effects of Facebook on recruitment process at Zanaco. Results from respondents showed that 92% of the respondents agreed that when Facebook was employed in the recruitment, selection and training, the following were the effects obtained outlined below;

Effects of using Facebook in recruitment
Enhanced talent acquisition and recruitment processes
Improved employee engagement and communication
Streamlined training and development initiatives
Data-driven decision-making for HR strategies
Increased efficiency in HR operations

4.4.2 RQ2 - What are the effects of Facebook on the efficiency of the recruitment process?

Conclusion - The study has established a significant and positive long run effect of Facebook platforms on the efficiency of the HR planning process within ZANACO. The results were significant at 5% level of significance. These results are consistent with the findings by Celebi and Demir (2022) who conducted a similar study in Turkey's hotel businesses. This means that a successful implementation of digital platforms for use in the HR department and by the HR team has a tendency to improve operations of the team. Notable and commonly used platform was established to be the recruitment platform. A significant impact in the short run was observed from recruitment process to both efficiency and effectiveness of HR operations at ZANACO bank.

4.3.3 RQ3 - What are the effects of Facebook on the effectiveness of the recruitment process?

Conclusion - The study established a significant and positive long run effect of Facebook platforms on the effectiveness of the HR planning process within ZANACO. The results were significant at 5% level of significance.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. Conclusion of the Study

This study sought to investigate the impact of digital platforms on the HR operation process, taking the case of ZANACO bank. One of the specific objectives sought to identify and categorize the types of digital platforms being utilized by ZANACO for human resource planning. The second objective sought to examine the perceived benefits and challenges associated with digital platforms in human resource planning within ZANACO. The last specific objective sought to

assess the impact of digital platforms on the efficiency and effectiveness of human resource planning processes within ZANACO. To address these objectives, the study adopted a mixed research approach. The Positivism paradigm guided the study with an employment of the concurrent nested research design.

With a sample of size 54, the study used descriptive analysis, regression analysis, and the analysis of variance to measure the stated objectives and therefore provide answers to the research questions. The study used a semi-structured questionnaire to collect data. The actual collection of the data was done using Google forms. The method allowed the researcher to have access to live data as it is being collected in order to have strong quality control measures.

Results from descriptive analysis revealed that most of the respondents were male. Further evidence showed that ZANACO's HR team is dominated by a youthful workforce due to the skewness of the age distribution. In terms of education, the results revealed that most of the respondents were bachelor's degree holders and this happened to be their highest level of education attained. From the empirical results linked to the study objectives, the study established a number of digital HR platforms. These included online job portals (e.g., LinkedIn, Indeed); Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS); Learning Management Systems (LMS) for employee training; Employee engagement platforms (e.g., Slack, Microsoft Teams); Virtual communication tools (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams) for remote collaboration; Data analytics tools for HR insights; Cloud-based HR Management Systems (HRMS); Performance management software; and social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) for recruitment.

The study established that effects of using Facebook in recruitment process enhanced talent acquisition, improved employee engagement and communication, streamlined training and development initiatives, improved data-driven decision-making for HR strategies and Increased efficiency in HR operations

In terms of inferential analysis, the study established a significant long run impact of Facebook platforms on the efficiency and effectiveness of HR planning process for ZANACO bank. These results were obtained through regression analysis. The significance of the results was read at 5% level of significance. The analysis of variance provided sufficient evidence for the joint significance of the independent variables (digital platforms).

5.2. Recommendations

The recommendations made in this study are direct:

1. ZANACO bank management should invest in procuring more digital platforms in order to migrate HR activities to the server
2. Management of ZANACO should conduct in-house trainings for all on-boarded staff in the HR department. This will address the issue of knowledge gap in the system usage
3. ZANACO management should also consider enrolling their staff into institutions of higher learning for certificates of diploma in system use for HR management.
4. ZANACO should have multiple internet sources to avoid prolonged network outage. If operation of HR team is to be backed by digital platform usage, there is a great need to have strong and consistent internet connectivity

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