UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE

# ADVANCED PERSONNEL PSYCHOLOGY: A

## IPS 512

HONOURS EXAM PAPER

**JUNE 2023**

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|---|---|---|
| TIME | : | 3 Hrs. |
| SUBJECT | : | ADVANCED PERSONNEL PSYCHOLOGY: A |
| MARKS | : | 100 Marks |

**This paper consists of six (6) pages, including the cover page.**


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**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. **Read** carefully and answer **ALL** questions in this paper.
2. A **Case Study** is attached at the end of your question paper. Read it **before you answer Q.1**

**QUESTION 1**

Read the **case study** on Recruitment & Selection and then answer the following questions:

1.1 Indicate the main reasons why a vacancy may occur in an organisation. (5)

1.2 What are the advantages of using Internet recruitment? (5)

1.3 Suggest alternative recruitment methods that Seal-Easi School could use. (5)

1.4 Why do you think Seal-Easi felt that one-panel interview was insufficient as a selection method? (5)

1.5 What are the advantages of asking students to participate in the selection process? (5)

1.6 Do you have any concerns about Seal-Easi School using students as part of the selection process? Explain your answer. (5)

**/30 marks/**

**QUESTION 2**

2.1 Explain what strategic human resource management (SHRM) is and how it differs from human resource management (HRM). (5)

2.2 Discuss the contingency models/ frameworks presented in your textbook, and then critically compare them with the proposed strategy by the South African Board for People Practices (SABPP), the "PEOPLE" Factor Strategy 2020 – 2030. (20)

**/25 marks/**

**QUESTION 3**

In strategic human resource management (SHRM), practices must not only be performed well, but they also need to align. This means vertical alignment with organizational goals and horizontal alignment of practices with each other. Demonstrate this alignment by presenting a cycle of HR practices, giving workplace-relevant examples to indicate what happens from entry through to exit. (39)

**/39 marks/**

**QUESTION 4**

There are various considerations that one must consider when preparing for job analysis. Discuss these considerations. (6)

**/6 marks/**

**Case Study**

**Read before you answer the FIRST QUESTION of your EXAM PAPER**

**RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

## 1. Introduction

Seal-Easi School experienced increased employee turnover and as a result, a higher level of recruitment activity. This case explores the recruitment and selection strategies used by the school. The first part of the case study introduces the system that was initially used and concludes by identifying some of the system's weaknesses. The second part of the case study discusses the improvements made following a system review by the HR manager.

## 2. Recruitment

For many years, Seal-Easi School relied on a single recruitment method to advertise all teaching positions in a specialist newspaper publication called TES (Times Education Supplement). Basic advertisements were placed in this publication one time, and interested candidates were instructed to contact the school to request an application package. The application package included the following information:

- A letter detailing how to apply for the job.
- A brochure about the school
- An application form

Additional information was sometimes enclosed, but this depended on the department head advertising the vacancy. Additional information could include:

- Information about the current staff in the department.
- Examples of departmental projects (e.g., the head of the French department included information about student exchanges and visits to France that students and faculty had taken).
- A copy of the school development plan for the next three years.

Other schools in the area also used TES for recruitment, but, in addition, they placed advertisements in a local newspaper and on a website for teaching vacancies. Some schools even launched a page on their school website to enable candidates to download all of the application information.

## 3. Selecting the Right Candidates

Candidates submitted an application form along with contact information for two people who could provide references and returned the information to the appropriate department head. Once the closing date had passed, three staff members reviewed the applications independently and graded them A, B, or C (where A is the highest mark and C is the lowest) based on the candidate's ability to meet the selection criteria. The panel would then convene to discuss the A-rated application forms and agree on a list of candidates who would be invited to attend a selection day. The staff members assessing the applications were usually teachers from the relevant subject area. Training was not offered to panel members to help them to select the best candidates. Before selection day, references would be requested for all candidates. Copies of the references would be provided to interview panel

members; employment offers were contingent on the receipt of satisfactory references. Selection days usually involved four to five candidates, depending on how many applications had been received. The days normally followed the following agenda:

***09h00:*** *Welcome from the principal.*

***09h30:*** *Tour of the campus.*

***10h00:*** *Informal interviews lasting approximately 20 minutes per candidate.*

***11h30:*** *Lunch in the staff canteen.*

***12h30:*** *Formal interviews lasting approximately 30 minutes per candidate.*

***14h30:*** *Panel convenes to make a decision.*

***15h00:*** *Panel contacts the successful candidate and offers them the position.*

The agenda shows that the organization relied on two selection methods for all of their teaching vacancies—an informal and a formal interview. The first (informal) interview was led by the principal and an administrator; this was used to learn basic information about the candidate and to review the information on the application form. The second interview was more detailed and explored a wide range of issues with the candidates. The panel consisted of the following staff members: **Principal; HR manager; Department head; and Senior teacher.**

Due to time constraints, panel members were usually unable to meet in advance, so they developed their interview questions independently.

Although the principal chaired the interviews, they were rarely carried out in the same manner, and there was not a high level of consistency with the questions. No formal scoring system was used. At the end of the interviews, there was a panel vote to see which candidate should be offered the job. This often led to a heated debate about candidate strengths and weaknesses.

Candidates usually remained at the school until a decision was reached so they could be informed personally of the outcome. If they were unable to wait for the outcome, they were phoned later that day with the decision. Unsuccessful candidates received some brief verbal feedback but were not asked for comments on their interview experience. Unsuccessful candidates would sometimes contact the school and ask for further written feedback; this was usually provided by the principal.

## 4. HR Manager's Review of the School's Recruitment and Selection Methods

The HR manager reviewed the school's recruitment and selection methods because there was concern that best-practice methods were not being used. In addition, the principal thought that some inappropriate candidates had been hired, which could have been avoided if better methods had been used. A number of areas for improvement were identified:

- Using one recruitment method was insufficient and was not making the most out of the available recruitment resources (in particular, the Internet).
- The existing method may have resulted in some unsuitable hires who left the organization after a short time. A wider candidate search might attract different types of people.
- Other schools in the area were using more varied recruitment methods, which may mean they are accessing a larger (and potentially better) pool of candidates.
- The materials in the recruitment package were basic and not professionally designed, which may have failed to impress potential applicants.
- The selection methods used were limited and had not kept up with trends used in other organizations.
- Candidates were being hired based on a good interview. Their teaching style and ability were unknown.
- Staff on the interview panels had not been trained and in the past, had asked potentially discriminatory questions.
- There was little chance of internal promotions because career progression was not a focus within the school or encouraged within the recruitment and selection policy.
- Lack of an objective scoring system resulted in complaints from unsuccessful candidates who did not understand why they did not get the job.

### 5. Improving the Recruitment Methods

The HR manager continued advertising teaching jobs in *TES* in line with local and national competitors but re-designed the standard layout and content of advertisements to be more engaging and informative. In the future, advertisements for all teaching jobs will also be placed in the local newspaper which has a weekly jobs supplement and high readership in the area. The school had a strong IT team, and they were consulted about the best ways to use technology as a recruitment method. They designed a simple website that could be accessed through the school's home page. It contained relevant information about the organization and the actual vacancy. Candidates could complete and submit the application form online or print and mail the completed application form. The page was being monitored to gauge the success of this method.

The HR manager agreed with the Principal that a greater emphasis should be placed on internal recruitment, particularly for positions with management responsibilities. This would encourage talented staff to remain with the school as part of an overall retention strategy.

The HR manager also reviewed the quality of the information provided to prospective employees so that candidates would have a more realistic picture of what the job entailed and the character of the

school.

6. **Enhancing Selection Methods**

The school had relied on interviews as their sole selection method. The HR manager and principal did not think that this method was sufficient. It was decided that all candidates for teaching vacancies should deliver a brief teaching session while being observed by a senior teacher. Teaching observation sessions enabled the senior teacher to assess the following knowledge and skills: Relationship with students; Delivery style; Innovation in teaching methods; Communication skills; Subject knowledge; and Ability to engage students.

Candidates were informed in advance to prepare a 20-minute teaching session. At the end of the sessions, the observer gave comments and ratings to the main interview panel. The rating system involved the observer's ratings in the six areas shown (1 being the minimum and 10 being the maximum number of points). Observers were also asked to give examples (where possible) to justify their scores.

Following the discussions with stakeholders (including the student council), it was decided that students should have input into the selection process. To achieve this, student interview panels were added to the selection process.

Students on the interview panels were selected by the relevant department head. After training to ensure they did not ask inflammatory or discriminatory questions, they were asked to write their questions to ask candidates. Student panel members provided feedback to the principal and main interview panel members.

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