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## Recruitment and selection chapter

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### Introduction

This chapter focuses on recruitment and selection processes. These systems may be the first formal interaction candidates have with the organisation, and their impact can be immense not only in terms of who is attracted and selected to work in an organisation, but also in the subsequent attrition of staff. In this chapter two key aspects, attraction and selection and the tools and instruments which comprise them are discussed. Three distinct paradigms for examining these initial HR processes is raised and how these perspectives have shaped both research and practice are explored. The subsequent discussion of the attraction and selection tools notes the influences of these approaches. Finally emergent concerns are discussed including demographic changes, global recruitment and selection, and the role of trust in shaping perceptions and behaviours of selectors and applicants.

### What is selection and recruitment?

Recruitment and selection are often consolidated together, almost as one term and whilst the central tools and processes are the same it is worth being aware of a key difference between them. Recruitment focuses on the identification and selection of individuals from a pool of applicants which is external to the firm, whilst selection involves only internal applicants (Searle, 2003). As a result the attraction of capable applicants can be major and additional process in recruitment. These processes form one the key opportunities for an organisation to change the type of staff it employs, however, such changes may need to attend also to attrition levels to see precisely who is leaving (Schneider, 1987). So whilst an organisation might identify the need for distinct and different profiles of its new recruits, such as where a step change in technology has occurred and a skill shortage has been identified, they also need to be aware that inducting and retaining their new employees might require attention too.

Applicant attraction is an important process of ensuring that organisational staffing requirements are met through a pool of potential candidates. As we shall discuss in more detail later, the attraction, selection and attrition of staff create *restrictions of range*. This is a reduction in the variance of individual differences in a setting that we would expect to see by chance. Thus an organisation whilst seeking to attract a broad range of potential applicants from which to choose new staff, will actually have a reduced pool of actual applicants who are attracted to *that* type of job role within *that* type of organisation. The range of diversity of employees is further reduced through the selection of successful applicants and any loss of existing staff. Thus the homogeneity of employees within an organisation can increase, potentially reducing its flexibility and long term viability. Recruitment and Selection are just one stage in the HRM cycle of a firm, but one that can have a very significant impact on the effectiveness and productivity of the organisation in the future. Whilst it is a central process at the onset of employment it can have wide ranging implications for other HR processes, such as organisational development and change and attrition. Evaluating the effectiveness of selection and recruitment involves assessing not only

the quality of the new recruit but also their effective integration and retention, and their impact on existing employees and on the organisations performance.

### **Three Paradigms for selection and recruitment**

Organisational and occupational psychology has much to say about the effective enactment of different selection activities, however before we examine these process in depth it is important to step back and look at three distinct paradigms that determine the focus and the questions researchers use to arrive at these findings. Through understanding these distinct perspectives we can begin to respond more meaningfully to the question, such as, why is there a gap between research and practice?

#### ***a. Psychometric paradigm***

There are three distinct paradigms involved within this field. The most well-established approach to recruitment and selection is the *psychometric or predictivist paradigm* (Schmitt and Chan, 1998). Implicitly in this approach is the dominance of the organisation, who is regarded as able to identify, measure and select the applicant with the best knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) for the job. Central to this paradigm are three key factors: *individual difference* in which applicants are regarded as having discernable and stable differences; job roles which can be performed only one way and can be objectively captured and quantified to create a criterion space; and finally, that there is rationality in the decision-making of organisations and their agents. Despite much being known about the cognitive limitations of individuals and the bounded rationality of our decisions (Simon, 1960), especially in a selection context (Zedeck, 1986), the impartiality of organisations remains unchallenged by this approach.

In this paradigm the role of an applicant is essentially passive; they provide data by means of undertaking, of course to the best of their ability, the tests and tools designated to assess their KSA and thus their suitability. Much of the research undertaken in this framework is from large volume multiple vacancy positions, such as government agencies, armed forces or accountancy. In such situations recruitment involves a large scale process with multiple applicants being screened. These volume processes are increasingly being outsourced to external recruiters. Given this type of volume process, a critical issue becomes the availability of a pool of qualified applicants from which a choice can be made, and the reduction of any job into a set of KSA. Indeed because recruitment becomes almost a routine process an important feature of the success of such selection systems is the ongoing availability of a large pool of candidates (LaHuis, MacLane & Schlessman, 2007): Candidates rejected in one round may in the future reapply and have developed sufficiently to retake and pass the tests (Lievens, Buyse and Sackett, 2005), or more cynically, they now have some familiarity with the process and may have learnt some tricks to help them succeed. As a result the ongoing attractiveness of the employing organisation and the job can become a significant concern.

A central critique of the effectiveness and validity of this paradigm is the stability of the job role criterion. There are a number of factors which challenge this assumption and are common in our modern world such as: rapid change in the structure and

location of organisations, increasing flexibility in forms of organising, further uptake of team-based working and a rising unpredictability concerning the future (Howard, 1995). These fast-changing developments and the increasing export of jobs into a more global context are undermining the stability of the criterion space used to identify applicants (Anderson, Lievens and van Dam, 2004). As a result it is necessary for selection and recruitment specialists to be able to predict first the most likely components of the job role to change *before* they can begin to identify with any accuracy the job criterion. Whilst this has resulted in the emergence of Future Orientated Job Analysis (Landis et al, 1998) and the identification of new more adaptive facets of work behaviour, such as: organisational citizenship behaviour and pro-social behaviour (Borman et al, 1997; Motowidlo, 2003), nevertheless the predictive validity of this approach has been compromised.

### ***b. Social process paradigm***

An alternative paradigm, and one that holds increasing importance in a rapidly-changing, more global context, and one where labour scarcity is emerging in certain roles, is the *social process approach* (Herriot, 1987). This paradigm seeks to re-balance the selection and recruitment process by focusing attention on to the social interaction between the two central parties; the applicant and the recruiting organisation. In this perspective the applicant becomes an active negotiator and co-constructer of any recruitment or selection activity. They are no longer regarded as having one set of KSA, but as having multiple facets and skills that they can bring to the job role, potentially changing not only how their role is undertaken, but impacting on the jobs of others as a result of *their* distinctive enactment of the role. Attention is thus on the development of a relationship between applicant and the organisation, fostering a conducive environment in which trust between both is enhanced and thus the elevating the level of disclosure.

This approach is far more effective in illuminating the process of specific, one-off vacancies, such as those found in senior professional roles where the organisation is seeking an applicant with specific skills, abilities and approaches to the role that will, at best mesh, and potentially enhance the delivery of the job. The approach emphasises that each event in the selection process, and each new person with whom the applicant interacts, provides information. Therefore, during the process of recruitment both the applicant and the organisation are continually assessing, and adjusting, their views of each other.

The change of emphasis found in this paradigm has significantly altered research attention and alerted practitioners to an alternative perspective. This perspective regards each selection event as unique. Whilst this approach does not purport to provide an alternative as to how employees might be selected, it does identify new research topics and practical implications for organisations to consider in the design and implementation of their recruitment and selection processes. Increasingly this paradigm is challenging researchers to look afresh at the pre-entry process (Ryan, Sacco, McFarland and Krista, 2000), and begin to regard applicants as already having perceptions of the organisation and identified some salience in their social identities before making the application (Herriot, 2004; Searle, 2006), rather than it begin formed as a consequence of the selection process. This perspective makes more prominent issues such as trust development and maintenance which may not only

enhance the selection process, but also produce more committed and motivated new employees for the organisation.

A key and under researched insight from this approach is the role of social identity within a selection context. Applicants can be argued to have a repertoire of social identities, some of which they bring to a selection context (Herriot, 2004). During the process of selection they are looking for clues as to the identity of the firm in terms of its beliefs, values and norms of behaviour of the organisation, in order to evaluate the congruence between the two. For example, research suggests that organisations do have an identity and that they attract, recruit and retain staff who match a prototype in terms of personality (Schneider, Brent smith, Taylor and Fleenor, 1998) and values (O'Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell, 1991). Therefore if we are to understand selection processes better it might be important to research how identities are formed and developed. For example, which is more important in identity and therefore job attraction, organisation-produced advertising or more independent social contacts and their testimonials? Are there differences in the identity formation between new job seekers and more experienced recruits?

Importantly, this paradigm does offer some valuable insights into research-practice differences such as why there might be resistance to certain scientifically tested selection tools. Whilst validity studies indicate biographical questionnaires are an effective selection tool, there is reluctance to use them possibly due to hostility of applicants who regard them as irrelevant and intrusive (Robertson, Iles, Gratton and Sharpley, 1991). In contrast evidence suggests applicants are far more comfortable with unstructured interviews (Kohn and Dopboye, 1998) and focus on the propriety of the questions they are asked when discerning the procedural justice of the selection process (Gilliland, 1995). Thus the choice of test or tool used by an organisation can alter applicants' perceptions of the organisation.

### ***c. Person Organisation (PO) Fit***

More recently a third paradigm has emerged which highlights the multidimensionality of these processes – *Person Organisation (PO) Fit* (Bowen, Ledford & Nathan, 1991; Levesque, 2005 Schneider, Kristof-Brown, Goldstein & Smith, 1997). The focus of this approach is on the interaction between an individual and their surroundings. Mischel (1968) argued that the environment in which people find themselves dictates their behaviour. This is in direct contrast with trait theory and the psychometric view which contends that individual traits shape individual behaviour and the way people respond to the situations. Following Bowen's (1973) study which identified that the interaction of person and situation factors was approximately twice as powerful a predictor of behaviour than either person or situation factors, interactional psychology emerged as the most accepted explanation of human behaviour (Krahe, 1992). Like the social interaction perspective, this final approach focuses on a balance between both the individual and the organisation, with a unique emphasis on achieving a mutually beneficial goodness of fit. In this perspective attention is given to the continual evolution of organisations and the complexity involved in the isolation individual factors which contribute to the prediction with any degree of success to prolonged high performance. Thus individuals are seen as whole people with external lives that may impact on the firm and who may change the firm through their presence and interaction with the context and other employees.

In the next two sections two key processes commonly found in recruitment and selection, namely: attraction and selection will be discussed. Due to the space constraints the focus of this chapter is limited and so I would draw readers attention to Hough and Oswald (2000) or Searle (2003) for a more comprehensive and in-depth review.

### **Attraction**

A two tier job market has emerged over the last few year with increased competition amongst employers to attract the most qualified applicants (Micheals, Handfield-Jones & Axelrod, 2001), whilst those without qualifications find it increasingly difficult to become shortlisted for vacancies. As a result the attraction of the best candidates has become seen as critical to organisational success (Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin & Jones; 2005). A recent survey from the CIPD (2007) suggested that 84% of organisations experienced difficulty in recruiting staff. As a result of these changes and pressures there has been renewed interest in attempts to understand the reasons behind job seekers attraction to firms (Barber and Roehling, 1993; Carless & Imber, 2007; Imus and Ryan, 2005).

Organisations involved in both selection and recruitment have to attract a pool of potential applicants for their vacancies. In many countries there are legal frameworks governing the processes of advertising for new employees. Obviously a central difference between the recruitment and selection is the interface and engagement with the external world as the main source of generating an applicant pool. There are a number of tools organisations utilise to attract applicants, these include: through paper media and internet job advertisements; word-of mouth with existing or previous employees; or the use of specialist third-party recruiters, known as head-hunters. These sources will now be explored.

#### ***a. Media and Internet***

Over the last ten years the processes used to attract and recruit staff have shifted radically through the increasing deployment of the internet. Since 1998 there has been an increase of 60 per cent in the application of corporate web sites for recruitment purposes with 91 per cent of Global 500 firms web sites featuring vacancies. The internet provides organisations with a very cost effective and efficient means of reaching applicants on a global basis. For example, traditional job adverts cost \$3, 295 compared with \$377 for their web-based counterparts (Harris and De War, 2001). In addition, it offers a portal for organisations to provide relevant and dynamic job information in a far more consistent manner than in the past (Lievens and Harris, 2003) and the opportunity to showcase the organisation, its achievements and credentials. Organisations can now use their web sites more effectively to enable jobs to be previewed, organisational fit to be assessed and unsuitable applicants to be deterred whilst maintaining a positive view of themselves (Dineen, Ash, and Noe, 2002). This novel application not only represents a significant cost saving for recruitment but also enables the relationship with would-be applicants to be sustained and even enhanced; the pre-application deterrence of unsuitable candidates arguably leaves candidates with the view that the organisation has done a service by providing them with information of their lack of fit thus saving them time, effort and face.

The rapidity of technology development has resulted in dual systems with companies developing both their own hosted sites on which vacancies appear and the creation of an additional presence on other sites, such as second life, youtube, myspace and vivo which are designed to appeal and raise their profile to an IT literate youth market. At the same time such sites offer organisations potential access to information about applicants through the use of personal postings on these sites. This is a new application of the technology whose impact remains under research.

Applicants have never had such an immediate, quality and plethora of sites to assist them in their job search, plus the speedy dissemination of job vacancies from different networks. This has resulted in a change in the way information is used in the job search with more attention being given to independent non-company sites (Cable & Turban, 2001). The internet has provided the digitisation of job search systems with message systems designed to enable the posting of vacancies by firms and C.V.s by those seeking new job opportunities wherever they may be. Potentially this technology has removed previous geographical barriers to applicant attraction. However, it is also offering organisations new developments in the identification of desirable candidates with the potential to use both legitimate “spiders” or “bots” to search for candidates, plus more covert and surveillance-based processes, such as “flipping” and “peeling” to gather such data (Searle, 2006).

### ***b. Word of mouth***

One of the most enduring sources of job seekers information is word of mouth. Evidence suggests that it remains a highly credible and important source, especially when it is focused on the organisation (Van Hoyer and Lievens, 2007). Its application, therefore, is not merely in supplying independently credible information about the potential employer, (dependent on the reliability of the source (Fisher, Ilgen and Hoyer, 1979) but also as means of discerning organisational attractiveness and enabling insight into person-organisation-fit.

The internet has given new means of communicating this type of more personal information and so word of mouth remains a significant tool for applicants. It is clear that organisations have attempted, with some success to mimic the type of process through the development of employee testimonials on their web sites (Fisher et al, 1979; Van Hoyer and Lievens, 2007). However, its role as a source of information remains under researched, although some have speculated as to its more significant role amongst experienced applicants, who have wider networks they can draw upon (Searle, 2006).

### ***c. Headhunters***

Increasingly third parties, such as headhunters, are becoming an important part of the recruitment process especially for experienced staff. Shortages in key skill areas have created more opportunities for headhunters to use their in-depth knowledge of previous candidates to identify other potential candidates and provide shortlists for clients. This area is a key difference between experienced and inexperienced applicants. Given the bespoke nature of the process it remains under researched. We therefore can only speculate as to its role in the attraction process. However, those interested in the social process of recruitment need to pay more attention to the potentially negative impact these third parties can have on the recruitment relationship (Searle and Billsberry, 2007).

## **The selection process**

The psychometric paradigm has long dominated research into the selection process. Seminal papers have identified and differentiated between the effectiveness of distinct selection tools. Amongst such research is the central role of intelligence testing as the best predictor of job performance, above that of personality assessment or value fit (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998; Schmidt and Hunter, 1998). However, senior HR professionals either challenge or remain unaware of such clear scientific findings (Rynes, Giluk and Brown, 2007). Indeed recent attention has shown a significant gap between research evidence and HR practice regarding selection tools. Let us now explore distinct tools commonly used in selection processes, including: ability testing, work sample tests or situational judgement tests, integrity tests, interviews and personality assessment.

### ***a. Cognitive ability tests***

In examining the evidence from this psychometric perspective cognitive ability testing remains one of the most effective means of selection to enhance job performance (for example, Robertson and Smith, 2001). The job performance validity of cognitive ability tests alone is around 0.51, but taken together with structured interviews, in which the format of the interview is focused onto the job criterion, it increases to 0.63. Ability tests are designed to assess the maximum performance a candidate can currently achieve, as such they are timed tests, which comprise of multiple choice items based on abstracted situations, focusing on key skills, such as numerical and comprehension skills. Test developers have produced an array of different instruments designed for distinct job levels, such as graduate and managerial, clerical or craft apprentices. Whilst evidence does show that these tests can differentiate between individuals concerns remains as to the lower performance of ethnic minority groups (Bobko et al, 1999; Schmitt and Mills, 2001). In addition evidence suggest that the shift of many of these tools onto internet delivery platforms may serve to further advantage those who are more familiar with this new technology, such as young, more highly educated, white males (Czaja and Sharit, 1998; McManus and Ferguson, 2003). As selection processes potentially become more global in their applicant pool care must be taken to ensure that the best candidate is indeed identified and that build-it biases do not continue to result in the false-rejection of otherwise effective candidates.

The link between assessment and job performance has been identified as complex, but given the more dynamic nature of job roles and the aforementioned compromised the criterion space, how certain can we be that the ability tools which are chosen can effectively differentiate and identify the best candidate? A factor in answering this question concerns on what ability tests actually measure. Cognitive ability can be categorised into two distinct elements: fluid intelligence, which involves the application of reasoning skills into novel situations; and crystallised intelligence, which focuses on more culturally specific reasoning skills. An instrument may measure either or both of these dimensions. Much has been written about how tests are constructed and the problems associated with different development techniques (Searle, 2003). Kline (1993) has long highlighted the role of statistical convenience rather than the underlying rational in determining item inclusion. Frequently such measures are validated against other general intelligence instruments rather than through external work-related outcomes, such an on-the job performance. In addition the scores obtained from any assessment instrument are only part of the answer,

because any result has to be assessed against the relevant norm group in order to interpret its meaning. Test manuals provide details of these norm groups, which should reflect the applicant population in terms of ethnicity, age, gender etc, however, this might not always be possible; particularly where selection is being used as a tool to increase employee heterogeneity and so neither similar composition, nor job performance data is in existence.

There are three important factors which may influence to different degrees the effective measurement of ability. One may be the failure of tests to actually measure fluid intelligence and instead concentrate on the assessment of more culturally-specific crystallised knowledge. Thus minority ethnic groups' true ability remains un-assessed. There is a significant body of research showing differences across race (Chan, 1997; Chan and Schmitt, 1997; Chan, Schmitt, DeShon and Delbridge, 1997; Ryan, 2001). In addition, demographic studies suggest that this problem is exacerbated with age, with older people more likely to use culturally specific crystallised skills in problem-solving (Horn and Noll, 1994). Finally, whilst having a good brain does permit intelligent performance, but it does not dictate it (Hunt, 1999) and motivation to perform to your maximum remains a central underlying component in any assessment (Goff and Ackerman, 1992). Some argue that the impact of these motivational differences is so significant that its elimination could reduce race-related cognitive ability test difference (Ployhart and Ehrhart, 2002). Motivation remains an important but under-researched component to understanding the effectiveness and fairness of assessment.

Recently attention has shifted onto the candidate and the exploration of perception in shaping organisational attractiveness and performance motivation. The inclusion of information, such as the use of ability tests within selection procedures, has been found to raise suspicion and reduce organisational attractiveness for some applicants, regardless of their personal experience of these tools (Reeve and Schultz, 2004). Whilst, the inclusion of test validity data can positively enhance alter such perceptions (Holtz, Ployhart and Dominguez, 2005). However, evidence shows that accumulated historical experiences of certain groups, such as black applicants, may significantly reduce the effort they extend in selection and recruitment because they simply do not believe they will be offered a job even if they score well (Sanchez et al, 2000). The complexity of these different group differences remains a significant and important research topic if we are to improve the effectiveness and ultimately the fairness and veracity of these tools.

### ***b. Work sample***

One of the central tools that appears to reduce the negative impact for ethnic minority groups, and are perceived to have higher face validity, are work sample or situational judgment tests (Lievens and Klimosky, 2001; Schmitt and Mills, 2001). These selection instruments offer a more complex assessment focusing on applicants' work based judgements, abilities and behaviours. Used alone in a selection they show consistently high job performance validity (0.56), which increases when coupled with ability tests (0.60) (Robertson and Smith, 2001). One of the central ways these tests differ from ability tools is through the contextualisation of the content into a specific work situation. These tools can therefore provide data on the applicants' specific skills, but also an insight into their cultural fit. This is an important development as

increasingly there is a shift in emphasis, particularly within key professions such as medicine, away from *what* is done, i.e. skill and ability assessment, towards an inclusion of *how* such job tasks are performed. With the incremental validity these instruments provide, above that of cognitive and personality testing (Chan & Schmitt, 2002; Clevenger, Pereira, Wiechmann, Schmitt, & Harvey, 2001), their ease and cost effective delivery through the internet they are rapidly replacing the multiple assessor, multiple task approach of the assessment centre, or being used as a pre-screening device. This type of assessment provides a strong fidelity, or relationship between the assessment and the actual work, which appeals to both applicant and recruiter (Kanning, Grewe, Hollenberg, & Hadouch, 2006).

Work sampling is however, not without its draw backs: These types of instrument can require more in-depth job knowledge than those required to develop more generic ability tests. As a result despite their obvious utility benefits, they can be time consuming and costly to produce, offering limited transportability to different contexts. Given their contextualised skill assessment, they may be difficult to use with applicants who have limited work experience, such as graduates. Of more concern however, is the increase in response bias or faking found with these tools. Although the ease which faking can occur can be reduced through altering instruction from behavioural-tendency (e.g. “what are you most likely to do?”) to knowledge- base formats (e.g. what is the best answer?) this shift also adversely affects the racial discrimination of such tools (Nguyen, Biderman, & McDaniel, 2005).. Finally evidence suggests a higher level of shrinkage found in these tests over more generic ability tools (Siegel and Bergman, 1975). However, this latter issue might be due to erroneous assumption that jobs are static. These tools provide not just an assessment of how and what a candidate can perform, but they also contain job preview information for applicants enabling them to make more informed career decisions.

### ***c. Integrity tests***

A more recent introduction into the suit of tools available to recruiters is integrity testing. Together with ability testing shows high job performance validity (0.65) (Robertson and Smith, 2001). Integrity tests have been shown to predict undesirable work behaviours, such as theft, absence or other behaviour which takes advantage of the employer without discriminating against ethnic minority groups, (Ones, Viswesvaran and Schmidt, 1993; Ones and Viswesvaran, 1998). However the reason I include them here is they typify the gap between theory and practice through their limited adoption in recruitment despite strong research. Integrity tests are a tool in which potential for faking is high due to the clear social cues about the preferred response in a hiring context. As a result their value can be reduced both as an accurate tool, but also because their inclusion may raise questions for candidates about the organisation and its ethos. They are likely to be found in situations where their inclusion may act as a legal safety net for employers should a violation occur. They raise interesting questions about the perceived trustworthiness of staff.

### ***d. Personality tests***

Personality testing is an increasingly common technique used to discern candidates’ behavioural style and disposition. Its predictive validity varies considerably (Barrick and Mount, 1991; Gardener and Martinko, 1996). Its job performance validity is

however quite low, between 0.21 (Schmidt et al, 1984) to 0.40 (Robertson and Smith, 2001). There has been on going debate within the literature concerning the breadth of factors, or bandwidth, which personality can be meaningfully reduced to. Some favour a multiple factorial design of tools going into thirty or so factors, (although there can be limited agreement as to their labelling), whilst others argue for the role of five main dimensions, including: openness, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness and neuroticism (Costa and McCrea, 1985). A further contention concerns the prominence of one dimension, conscientiousness, as the main predictor of job performance validity (0.22). The increasing use of meta-analytic studies ensures this debate will continue.

More recently popular personality tools have begun divert into novel fields. This includes assessment of factors such as candidates' derailment potential with Hogan's "dark side" inventory (Hogan, 1992) or differentiating between behavioural styles and motivation to deploy them (Saville, 2006). As with other psychometric tools they do discriminate unfavourably for ethnic minorities, however through contextualising them to work some of these differences can be reduced (Holtz, Ployhart and Dominguez, 2005).

#### *e. Interviews*

Interviews remain one of the most common methods of selection although their criterion related validity can vary widely from 0.19 (Schmidt & Radar, 1999) to 0.62 (Wiesner & Cronshaw, 1988). Bias and discrimination remain ongoing concerns with this selection tool (Billsbury, 2008). A wide range of biases have been identified including: race, gender, appearance, age, attitude, non-verbal behaviour, physical setting and job-market situation (Avery and Champion, 1982). On average white applicants perform 0.25 SD above those from ethnic groups, although the magnitude of difference can be reduced through the use of structured formats with recruiters asking pre-defined questions and assessing responses against pre-defined responses (Huffcutt and Roth, 1998). This type of structured approach can, however, place interviewing on a par with cognitive tests alone (0.51 (Robertson and Smith, 2001)) reducing the quality of the interaction to a verbally administered ability test.

Herriot (1993) identified the interview as the most important social process tool in assessment, representing an opportunity for both parties to meet and formally assess each other. Recently further corroboration has been added to this perspective recognising the role of recruiters in influencing the decision making of applicants (Carless, 2003; Searle, 2006; Wang and Ellingson, 2004). The interviewer behaviour has been found to significantly influence the attractiveness of the organisation and the acceptance of job offers (Carless and Imber, 2007; Goltz and Giannantonio, 1995; Schmitt and Coyle, 1976). In particular recruiter characteristics such as empathy, friendliness, positive affect and showing of interest have been found to have positive impact.

There are major cultural differences in the use of interviews in selection with, for example, French recruiters favouring them as a means whereby everyone who would work with the applicant becoming involved, versus a more Anglo-American approach of typically one or two interviews (Shackleton and Newell, 1994). However changes are occurring with some Anglo-American organisations, such as Google, favouring a multiple interview format with interviews ascending right up to director level for even

fairly low level vacancies. This reflects their focus, as with the French, on organisational and employee fit. These preferences around the interview highlight both different approaches to selection, but also how candidates' *expectations* of the process might vary.

### ***f. Assessment centres***

Assessment centres remain the most in-depth form of selection comprising of multiple exercises and assessors assessing multiple criterion. They involve many of the aforementioned selection tools, including psychometric tests, interviews and more work sample type exercises, such as group exercises, presentations, role plays or in-tray exercises. These approaches tend to be more commonly deployed on managerial and graduate level vacancies, although they have wider scale applications, however, their high development and running costs can focus their use on highly level vacancies.

There has been an increasing use of self-assessment exercises within these systems which provide applicants with formal reflection time to assess their performance on key exercises, as well as an implicit opportunity to reflect on overall organisational fit. The use of these systems links into the non-traditional selection paradigms.

## **Emergent issues and concerns**

In this final section we reflect on some overarching concerns which have emerged from exploring the distinct attraction and selection tools.

### ***a. Faking and culture***

The use of the internet as a medium for delivering tests has enabled a most cost-effective high volume administration of these tools across wider geographical areas. This change whilst increasing applicant pools, has also seen an escalation in concerns about cheating and faking. Selectors have always been aware that in such high stakes environments the temptation and reward for cheats is high. Salary details of C.V.s have long been finessed and job responsibilities expanded. However, the increasing proliferation of non-supervised testing has focused recruiters and test developers attention on how both to identify and reduce its impact. Solutions include: increasingly sophisticated candidate verification, from photographic systems through to iris recognition; two tier systems in which same form of tests are administered later in a controlled setting and the results compared; the use of sophisticated item response and item generation systems which ensure that whilst the content of the test is the same, the items are not; additional in-test measurements, such as the applicants latency of response which increases with faking. All of these techniques maximise the benefits of large scale un-supervised testing and reduce the damage of fraud.

However there is another more sensitive issue concerning cheating and faking that remains more limited in its discussion. This concerns cultural difference. The increasing globalisation of some applicant pools means that the stakes in some contexts are far higher. Indeed in some contexts, selection is viewed as a game in which the applicant uses every resource to acquire a job. In these contexts behaviour such as using others to take tests, or taking the credit for others work, especially if they work for you, might be perceived as acceptable. The intention behind this behaviour might not be to deceive per se, but to maximise ones chances. In this way

faking and cheating behaviour can be viewed as a complex culturally-determined function of the capacity, willingness, and opportunity to fake. For example a commonly used fake-checking item in a personality tests is “I’m always willing to admit when I make mistakes”, however, this item might illicit very different responses in Japan or Greece in a high stakes selection context than in the UK where a more socially conditioned response is expected. Thus issues such as honesty and faking can be viewed as socially constructed. Until we have more insight into how cultural dimensions which might colour perceptions of honesty and integrity within selection contexts we should be cautious of the acceptance of global behavioural dimensions.

### ***b. Global systems?***

A consequence and tension produced by the increasing internationalization of recruitment and selection is the need to balance systems that can be used across multiple countries with recognition of local particularities (Schuler, Dowling, & DeCieri, 1993). These tensions include not only the aforementioned tensions pertinent to assessment centres, but wider issues such as the differences in cultural values, such as power distance and uncertainty avoidance (Ryan, McFarland, Baron and Page, 1999), but also the value and acceptance of distinct characteristics and criterion, such as explicit proven job experience in Australia, Canada, Germany and the US, whilst innate potential and team working is preferred in South Korea, Taiwan and Japan (Huo, Huang, & Napier, 2002; Von Glinow, Drost, & Teagarden, 2002).

In addition the acceptance and value of these multiple tool selection processes varies across different cultures. Whilst there are no studies which have examined the generalisability of selection procedures criterion-related on a global basis, evidence does suggest the universality of selection exercises may be limited. For example, one study of assessment centres in Europe and Japan found support for group exercises as a predictor of future performance amongst Japanese supervisors, but not for presentations (Lievens, Harris, Van Keer, and Bisqueret (2003).

### ***c. Older workers***

Demographic changes in many countries have altered employment patterns with older workers, through economic necessity or choice continuing or re-entering the labour market. The issues of attraction and selection of older workers remains under-researched (Brotherton, xx). This emergent topic will create further changes with work shifting to a more part-time occupation; becoming just part of how older adults spend their time. In addition this might influence the criterion space forcing more organisation-person fit dimensions to the fore as social and esteem requirements of work come more to the fore (Hedge, Borman and Lammlein, 2006). Limited attention has focused on validity of the assessment and measurement of older workers. Older workers are likely to be more knowledgeable than their younger counterparts when we examine knowledge as a broad concept (Ackerman and ). Indeed older workers may actively be compensating for any potential decline by adopting new strategies to optimise their existing skills and abilities, and thus they may in fact be doing things smarter than their younger colleagues.

#### *d. trust*

##### Research call

Within this literature there remains a dearth of work focusing on the effectiveness of attraction processes for experienced applicants with a prominence of data gathered from student populations. As a result much of the findings relate to hypothetical situations and thus their generalisability of their findings to real situations with experienced applicants is open to challenge. For example, there is an evident dynamic difference between attraction through a head-hunter where the identity of the recruiting organisation may be initially hidden, with that of real applicant-led recruitment. The process takes time and effort and thus has a significant opportunity cost attached to it. In addition there may be difference in the criterion professions with a few job experiences apply to looking for a new job with those utilised by fresh graduates with limited work experience. Few have looked at this difference.

##### Need to put in some trust stuff

Research has revealed that ethnic minority groups exhibit different patterns than less historically disadvantaged groups. Disadvantaged groups attribute their own behaviour to external, global and stable dimensions (Dyal, 1984; Mirowsky and Ross, 1983). As a result of past experiences of discrimination perceptions are biased, such that even neutral events are interpreted negatively (e.g. Crocker, Luhtanen, Broadnax and Blaine, 1999; Kluegel and Smith, 1986). These findings suggest that in the same selection situation perceptions of fairness and therefore trustworthiness may vary widely, for example Sanchez et al (2000) outlined how historical experiences of black applicants may reduce the effort they extended within a job search context because they do not believe they will be offered a job even if they score well. The impact of these motivational differences is significant, with Ployhart and Ehrhart (2002) suggesting its elimination could reduce cognitive ability test differences. Applicants require favourable attributions about their would-be employers before they can make an application. The attributions they make concern the trustworthiness of the organisation and therefore influence the application process. We can only speculate as to whether trust differences reflect racial and other ethnic group differences.

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