

DOES OWNERSHIP MATTER? EMPLOYEE SELECTION PRACTICES IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS

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Abstract

The continuous need to adapt to the dynamics of the environment requires employers from both public and private sectors to select qualified human resources. It is people who lead the organization towards performance, and selecting competent employees is critical for competitive success. The paper is focused on the job selection practices implemented by hiring organizations in a developing country. Due to the differences that exist regarding the employee selection policy between public and private organizations, the paper aims to understand the characteristics of the job selection process according to the ownership of the employer agent. Based on a quantitative survey applied on 64 companies, the results analyze the main selection stages implemented in private vs. public sector employers in a developing country. While in private companies the most frequently used selection stages are the job selection interview, CVs screening and trial period, in public institutions the hiring process is based on the job selection interview, written knowledge tests, and practical tests. Compared to private companies, in public institutions the written knowledge tests rank a higher position in the selection stages hierarchy, but the private employers rely more on CVs screening stage than public institutions. Emphasis is laid on understanding the reasons leading to variations in job selection practices according to the ownership of the employing agent. The predictive validity of the job selection stages implemented by the companies is also discussed.

1. Employee selection practices: a literature review

Within the process of occupational selection, the employers' main objective is to hire the most competent candidates. Regardless of the ownership type of the employing organization, the goal of the selection is to identify the most suitable person for the vacant position. In order to achieve this goal, the organizations will make use of highly valid indicators for the selection process, with an effective predictive value of the candidate's future performance (Wolf and van der Velden, 2001).

The prerequisite of the selection process resides in the identification of the labor force demand, according to the human resources planning and the evaluation of the resource availability (both outside and inside the company). The success of the hiring process is closely dependent on the recruitment process. The selection of the human resources aims to identify the most suitable individuals for the job vacancies, satisfying both the job and the organization requirements (Beardwell, Holden and Claydon, 2004; Rogelberg, 2007), and predicting thus the best future performances (Hackett, 1991).

The occupational selection process comprises a sequence of components: the indicators/criteria pursuant to which the employing company makes the decision, the stages and the methods of gathering the required information about the candidates (including the candidates' assessment), and the actual selection decision (Brown and Smetherham, 2006; Milkovich and Boudreau, 1991). Based on the scholarly literature, Cappelli (1992) identifies three main categories of consequential components within the selection process: testing the candidates' skills, the analysis of their personal data and the candidates' actual performance of a job-related task.

As a process of candidates' assessment, the selection is based on the criteria pre-established by the employer, according to the job and the organization requirements. Both the job's and organization's requirements ought to be satisfied, as, against the dynamic background of the market economy (Swoboda, Pop and Dabija, 2010; Stegorean and Gavrea, 2010), there occur ongoing changes within the organizational chart of a company (Osoian and Zaharie, 2009). Consequently, the companies should have in view the adjustment of the organization needs to the human resources' needs, including the means of the selection process.

The organization of the selection process depends both on the characteristics of the company and on other external factors. The studies conducted for the purpose of understanding the job selection practices include a series of research works attempting to identify the main factors determining the use of certain occupational selection practices and criteria (Beardwell, Holden and Claydon, 2004).

The selection process can be viewed as a sequence of selection stages, which, in their turn, may include a series of selection methods. The purpose of each series is to provide specific and relevant information about the candidates, based on which the most suitable person for the available position can be selected.

The CVs screening (as well as the cover letter) lays at the foundation of most employee selections. Although the importance of the cover letter is lessened by a

large number of employers, it can provide helpful information about the candidate's objectives and strengths on the one hand, or about the candidate's lack of skill to draw-up a correct motivational letter. Nevertheless, a major disadvantage of this stage is represented by the employer's uncertainty whether the data revealed thereby are true or not. Moreover, this stage fails to provide information regarding certain personal and interpersonal abilities of the candidate (such as communication skills, work attitude, stress resistance), compelling thus the company to resort to further selection stages.

The standard application form (or employment application) generates information about the candidates under a standardized form, facilitating assessment and comparison among applicants. The contents thereof may differ, yet more often than not, it comprises of information about the education, the work experience, the motives behind the change of the previous workplaces, achievements and motivation. Although rarely used in our country, as noted by Anderson and Shackleton (1990), these forms may also include verifiable information about the candidate's history, enabling an accurate analysis of his/her evolution (bio-data). In public institutions, as legislated by the Government Decision no. 286/23.03.2011, the application can take the form of a request addressed by the candidate to the company management in order to enroll in the job contest.

The selection interview constitutes one of the most frequent stages used in the selection process. Its frequency is associated with a great variety of interview types used for employee selection. The differences may be rendered by the objectives established, the number of interviews conducted with one candidate, the number of candidates participating in the interview (individual or group interview), the number of interviewers or the interviewing method (one-to-one, telephone or other types of interviews). The interview is particularly useful as it enables the verification of the candidate's information credibility, as well as provides a deeper understanding of the candidate's personal features; also, it allows the interviewer to check the candidate's compatibility with the company profile. A more and more frequent interview type is the telephone-interview or video-interview. Due to the fact that it is cost-efficient and preserves the majority of the interview's advantages, it is particularly used during the initial stages of the pre-selection.

Testing represents another important component of the selection process. Either performed during the interview, or as a separate selection stage, testing is considered by many companies as compulsory for a good selection. Using tests within the selection process starts from the limits regarding the validity of the data obtained during the previous stages.

In practice, companies make use of different types of tests, some of whom do not comply with the scientific validity criteria. We deem that validated tests may provide accurate information about the candidates (Werther and Davis, 1996). With regard to the use of tests in the selection process, Harris, Dworkin and Park (1990) show that the perception upon the method's validity, the frequency with which the method is used by other companies, the risk of the candidate perceiving the test as offensive and the difficulty level of the test represent determining factors, which

influence the practitioners' desire to use the respective test. The meta-analytical study conducted by Salgado (1997) at the level of the European Union states shows that the personality dimensions are good indicators of the work performed by the candidates after employment (scrupulosity and emotional stability).

Viewed by certain authors as a form of testing, the **assessment centers** represent a form of evaluation, where a group of participants undergo a series of tests, situations and work tasks, applied in group or individually, for the purpose of assessing their competences. Among the defining characteristics of the assessment centers Beardwell, Holden and Claydon (2004) indicate: the usage of a variety of evaluation techniques (and necessarily a work sample) and the presence of several assessors, the employment decision being based on the information gathered.

Online evaluation: the recent decades brought forth the online technology as novelty in the selection process, in order to render it efficient. Meade, Michels and Lautenschlager (2007) made a comparison between the psychometric indicators for a personality test applied both on pencil-paper and online, showing that there are no differences, from the validity point of view, between the instrument applied in written form and the instrument applied online.

Practical tests/work samples represent a frequently used method, primarily for positions which allow the performance of tasks similar with the job-specific activities. Although it may require a greater amount of time, the work sample is characterized by high validity, due to its practical nature. Nevertheless, other important aspects for the selection process are more difficult to assess, such as the candidate's real work motivation, his/her objectives, or occupational pursuits (it is possible that the applicant has the necessary skills to carry out the activity entailed by the work sample, yet he/she does not have the necessary motivation for employment). At the same time, due to the high level of stress, the candidate's performance during the work test may prove irrelevant for his/her real potential, knowledge and competences. Moreover, at the moment of the employment test, the candidates may not have the necessary competences and knowledge for performing the task, but in many cases these could be learned in a very short period. Anyhow, the practical tests remain one of the most reliable sources of information regarding the candidates' competencies.

Reference validation and recommendations (from former employers, teachers, colleagues, and acquaintances) are purposed both to confirm the data provided by the candidate and to provide additional information. Beardwell, Holden and Claydon (2004) point out two types of information which can be verified: the factual data and the information about the candidate's person. Under the reserve that the references may be inaccurate (Armstrong, 2009), these are contemplated by some companies within the selection process (most of the time during the final selection stage). Also, due to the fact that it encourages candidates to provide correct information, the reference check is often done by the employing organizations.

The medical examination, which is a compulsory stage, is necessary to assess the candidate's general health condition, as well as certain physical, mental skills and abilities necessary for the job; with regard to the latter, the medical requirements for

each position should be justified, reasonable and in line with the working conditions specific to the job.

The trial period, as legislated by the Law no. 40/31.03.2011, art. 31, for amending and supplementing the Law no. 53/2003 – Labor Code, allows the employers to verify the newly hired employees' competencies. The trial period was increased by this law to maximum 90 days for any positions other than executive and maximum 120 days for management positions. Since this period occurs after the employment of the candidate, we do not consider it an actual selection stage; but most organizations resort to the trial period in order to monitor the skills of the selected candidates. Its main disadvantage if used as a selection stage lies with the high costs incurred during the time span necessary to acknowledge the selection as a correct decision. In addition to that, during the trial period, the candidate may perform better than under usual conditions.

Although it is not mandatory to undergo all these selection stages and methods (Osoian and Zaharie, 2009), we believe that an efficient selection process should contemplate an optimum combination thereof, depending on the job description and the selection goals. Any additional stages or methods entail time costs and personnel selection costs. Their usefulness is particularly rendered by the validity and accuracy of the information provided by the candidates.

The essence of the selection process resides precisely in acquiring relevant information about the candidates, enabling the best decisions regarding their future job performances. To this end, the employer resorts to the most suitable selection methods for the job requirements, based on which the information necessary about the candidates will be obtained. An important part of the selection process resides in establishing the selection criteria. By combining these criteria in accordance with the weight allotted to each of them, the employers will decide upon the selected candidate.

At least three perspectives are contemplated when establishing the selection criteria (Rogelberg, 2007):

1. *Compatibility with the organization* – includes the personality traits considered important by the company so as the future employee to be efficient. Barclay (1999) considers that the compatibility with the organization is rather expressed in personality traits, attitude, commitment and objectives, and not so much in skills specific to the position held. Compatibility with the organization is particularly important for the jobs whose content change frequently or even for the jobs assigned to fresh graduates.

2. *Functional compatibility, with the team* – includes more specific characteristics than the previous perspective, but looser than the next (the compatibility with the job), mainly focusing on the candidate's compatibility with the team's features.

3. *Compatibility with the job* – includes characteristics regarding the job description and specification, resultant from the job analysis. When establishing the selection criteria, some companies start with developing the skills profile required for the job. Nevertheless, it is not recommended to restrict the selection criteria to the set of skills demanded for a certain job (Whiddett and Kandola, 2000).

An important objective is to identify the criteria considered important by employers within the selection process (the variables which define performance) as well as the indicators used by employers for the candidates' assessment (data considered of predictive value) for the purpose of estimating their future performance at the workplace.

The majority of the studies on occupational selection focus on the selection practices and their frequency in companies. Moreover, the studies which analyze the occupational selection practices have attempted to identify the manifold variations of the content of the organization selection process, according to different factors. Both external and internal factors were surveyed by the field literature: the particularities of the national culture, the activity field, the organization's strategies and size, the training and preferences of the human resources heads of department (Terpstra and Rozell, 1997; Terpstra and Rozell, 1993; Ryan, McFarland, Baron and Page, 1999; Belcheir, 2002). Therefore, the selection process unfolds against a background of external and internal influences (Beardwell, Holden and Claydon, 2004). Schuler and Jackson (1996) emphasize the main classes of factors impacting this process, and identify two main classes of factors:

1. *The external background* (at local, national and international level): the employment legislation (legal constraints regarding employee selection, retention, development, evaluation or discharge of the employees, the occupational anti-discrimination principles), the national culture, the unions, the labor force market (unemployment rate, population by age groups, the educational level of the labor force), the economic development (the development of certain economic sectors, usage of technology in the hiring process).

2. *The internal background* (at organizational level): the company technological development, the company policies regarding human resources, the company's development level in relation to the organization life span, the competition strategy, the organizational performance (profit, turnover), the job description.

One of the factors found to influence the content of the selection process is the company ownership type. Depending on the company ownership type, the scholarly literature points out certain differences regarding the recruitment and selection process between the privately-owned and the state owned companies (Beardwell, Holden and Claydon, 2004). Whereas private companies resort more often to recruitment and selection agencies, the public institutions prefer instead the application forms, the recommendations, being more careful with the candidates' education and training.

Analyzing these differences between the two categories of companies, the survey conducted by Lewis, Shimerda and Graham (1983) on 210 companies, proves that the state institutions consider the candidates' academic results as more important, whereas the corporations focus rather on their interview performance and work experience. We deem that the results above are in line with the traditional orientation of the labor force market: the public institutions, either due to the legislative requirements regarding the candidates' education and training, either due to a greater openness

towards other public institutions (such as education institutions), are sometimes more focused on the candidates' education.

In consideration of the scholarly literature, we find that these results are analyzed more in depth by further studies. Therefore, in order to identify the differences between the companies in respect of the skills demanded upon employment, Smith and Ahadiat (1995) carry out an inquiry upon 34 governmental agencies and 11 of the largest state accounting companies of the United States. The results show that, with the federal agencies, the indicators related to the candidates' education (such as professional certificates) were rendered the greatest significance, along with indicators related to the candidates' performance (reliability, training for the job, previous professional achievements).

On the contrary, neither the candidates' education, nor their professional certificates proved important for the publicly owned companies in the accountancy field. Submitting to comparison these results with those obtained by Lewis, Shimerda and Graham in 1983, one can notice a shift in the preferences of the state companies. What interests the employers, even those from the public institutions, is the candidates' attitude, their pleasant appearance, their development potential, enthusiasm, and ability to perform under stress.

2. Research methodology and results

2.1. Research sample

In consideration of the exploratory nature of this survey, we applied a non-probabilistic sampling technique, namely the judgment sample/purposive sample. This technique of selecting the participants in the survey is based on the researcher's reasoning that the selected participants embody the characteristics of the target population. Our purpose was to include in the sample both state and public companies, of different sizes and from various activity fields. Thus, we made sure that the sample of organizations covered a wide range of characteristics regarding their size and activity field. One of the advantages of this technique lies in the possibility to control certain characteristics of the population included. On the other hand, the impossibility to control the sampling error prevents this technique from allowing the generalization of the results to the entire population.

The sample of the survey comprised 65 Romanian companies. The average number of employees of the companies included in the sample is 75, and the average age of the companies is of 12 years, ranging from more than 90 years to less than 1 year from incorporation. In respect to the fields of activity, they are diversified, including: trade, manufacturing (textiles, footwear, furniture or wire derivative products), consultancy, telecommunications, constructions, real estate, education, tourism and transportation.

Labor cost survey in Romania indicates that 29% of the employed population is hired in public ownership, whereas 71% of the population is employed in private ownership enterprises (Romania Yearly Statistics, 2009). Starting from these figures, we tried to scale them into the sample. As a result, with regard to the legal form, 38% are limited liability companies, 22% joint-stock companies, and 40% public institutions.

One of the important criteria in the selection of the companies was related to their experience in employing higher education graduates. On average, out of all the individuals employed the previous year in the sample organizations, 30% were higher education graduates. The person who completed the questionnaire was part of the human resources department or occupied a management position within the company. An important condition was for the respondent to have experience in the job selection process.

2.2. Research instrument

The questionnaire attempted to identify the particularities of the occupational selection process within state and private companies. The instrument featured the list of occupational selection stages, and the respondents assessed on a five points scale the frequency of each stage within the selection process (a scale ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning very rarely and 5 meaning very often).

With regard to the validity of the results, considering that the sample is not probabilistic, we did not expect a high external validity (namely, the results to be generalized to the entire population). Nevertheless, we tried to ensure good construct validity of the instrument, through the design of the questionnaire. This paper highlights only one of the questionnaire's sub-components, aiming to identify whether there are differences between the private and the state institutions with regard to the job selection practices.

2.3. Research results

In respect of the usage frequency of the selection stages, the results indicate that the individual interview constitutes the most frequent stage for the selection of the future employees (mean 4.84). Regardless of the ownership type of the employing company, the job interview is considered an important stage in the selection process. The invariability of using the interview for the selection is also supported by the low value of the standard deviation ($\sigma = 0.47$), proving that the deviation from the standard mean is extremely low; almost all respondents claim to use the interview as a selection means. Another frequent stage used in the selection process is the CVs screening (mean 4.62).

As it results from the responses, the trial period is reported as a rather important selection stage of the future employees (mean 4.08). Although we do not view the trial period as an efficient employee selection practice (it succeeds the selection stage and the employment of the candidate), 56% of the companies report to use the trial period on a permanent basis in order to select the candidates.

While the job interview and CVs screening are very often used in the selection process, other stages are less frequently used. Among the least frequent selection stages used by the sample organizations are the standard employment forms (mean 2.36) and the group interviews (mean 1.84). Although the standard employment forms are used by organizations in Western countries (Anderson and Shackleton, 1990), they seem to be less used by the Romanian employers.

Table 1: Frequency in implementing employment stages in the job selection process

Frequency in implementing job selection stages	Mean	Std.dev. (σ)
Individual interview	4.84	0.47
CVs screening	4.62	0.92
Trial period	4.08	1.33
Practical tests	3.58	1.42
Selection tests (psychological, skills testing)	3.23	1.61
Cover letter	3.19	1.43
References/recommendation validation	3.03	1.44
Written knowledge test	2.96	1.53
Standard employment forms	2.36	1.62
Group interview	1.84	1.24

The answers show that the selection stages considered to have a higher validity prediction are not that often used by the sample organizations. The selection tests, practical tests, and assessment centers are not the most frequently used stages. On the other hand, the traditional selection stages, CVs screening and the job selection interview are the employers' most favorite selection stages. A possible explanation could relate to the higher costs of the latter ones (constraints regarding the time required to implement them; costs related to the tests fees; complexity in organizing job group interviews, assessment centers, and practical tests; costs related to the experience and number of the interviewers participating to the selection process).

Comparing the results according to the company ownership type (public or private) we planned to identify the differences and similarities existing between the two with regard to the selection practices.

Table 2: Differences between private and public sector in employee selection stages

	Private companies	Public institutions	Independent sample t test
Individual interview	4.80	4.94	-2.42
CVs screening	4.71	3.75	2.78*
Trial period	4.20	3.37	1.80
Practical test	3.57	4.00	-1.68
Selection tests (psychological, skills testing)	3.24	3.25	-0.07
Cover letter	3.24	2.62	1.39
References/recommendation validation	3.06	2.62	1.04
Written knowledge test	2.78	4.50	-6.02*
Standard employment forms	2.29	2.75	-1.02
Group interview	1.81	2.28	-0.95

Comparing the two categories (state and private organizations), the job selection interview is the most important stage for both types of employers. The differences we

identified concern the number of interviews organized with each candidate. Whereas in public institutions there is usually only one interview with each of the candidates who meets the minimum job application requirements, in private companies the candidates usually participate in a series of job selection interviews.

The results of the independent sample *t* test show that within the private companies, the CVs screening is more frequently used ($t = 2.58, p < 0.05$). On the other hand, the public institutions report to make use more frequently of the written knowledge tests ($t = -6.02, p < 0.05$). Even if there are not statistical significant differences, in public institutions, practical tests seem to be more frequently used. Usually they include computer skills tests, language tests, or other job-related tasks. Also, standard employment forms and group interviews are more frequently used in public institutions. On the other hand, the trial period and the cover letter are more frequently used in private companies.

Compared to private companies, in the public sector the job application procedure is more complex. While in private companies the employment application usually includes the CV, the motivation letter and less often some pre-screening written questions the candidates have to answer when applying, in state institutions the application file is thicker. The job selection process in public institutions is regulated by the Government Decision no. 286/23.03.2011 regarding the general employment principles in public sector. A vacancy in public institutions can be occupied through a contest or an exam. Some of the most common documents required upon application are: the contest application form, CV, legalized copies of identity card or other identity documents, education diplomas, work experience certificates, criminal record certificate, medical certificate, and any other job relevant documents. For each job contest a job selection commission is nominated, which includes at least 4 members: one president, two members and one secretary.

As required by the legislation, the employment process in public institutions includes at least three distinct stages (Government Decision no. 286/23.03.2011): the application file, the written test or/and practical test, and the job interview. Only candidates admitted for the previous stage can participate in the next one. The selection output of the application files is the acceptance or the rejection of the candidates' file. The written tests aim to verify the candidates' theoretical knowledge. In some situations, the candidate can get further information about the literature references necessary for the job contest, which can be obtained from the recruitment commission secretary. Moreover, the application procedure may include an application fee that has to be paid by all the candidates for the evaluation of the application file. For all these reasons, but also because of the frequent lack of trust in the objectivity and fairness of the selection process, the number of applications may be low. On the other hand, even for public sector job openings there are situations where the number of applications exceeds the recruiters' expectations. Getting employed in a public company may guarantee employment security and less workload. Besides that, according to the legislation, any candidate can apply if he/she meets the job requirements. That is why the number of candidates may vary according to a wide range of factors.

Despite the number of applications, the challenges in employee selection for recruiters from public institutions may be higher compared to those faced by private companies. Due to the legislative employment constraints, but also to the candidate's chance to file a complaint regarding the fairness of the job selection process (which is a well-known possibility for job vacancies in public institutions), the recruitment commission needs to have clear proof in favor of the final employment decision.

By analyzing the responses to the open questions of the questionnaire and the national legislation, we provide some potential explanations for the differences identified between private and state organizations.

According to the ownership of the employing company, the strongest differences between private and state employers are related to the usage of written knowledge tests. Whereas in public institutions the theoretical knowledge test is a more frequent stage used in the job selection process (mean 4.50), it is less used in private companies (mean 2.78). The difference can be explained by the legislative requirements for public institutions to include in the employment process a written test or/and a practical test (see Government Decision no. 286/23.03.2011). Since for many of the vacancies, organizing a written test may be more at ease than preparing a practical test, especially for graduated jobs, most of the employers rather choose the former. Moreover, in public institutions the candidates' knowledge on national legislation, but also field and job specific knowledge is conferred increased importance than in private ones. Referring to private companies, other studies confirm that private employers do not value to a high degree the educational indicators in the job selection process, while public employers put more emphasis on the candidates' education (Osoian, Nistor and Zaharie, 2010).

Regarding the rather confined use of the CVs screening in public institutions, several explanations may be possible. Some organizations blame it on the restrictions imposed by the national legislation. While in state companies the application file becomes by itself one of the first screening stages in the employment process, in private companies, the screening of CVs has the same role of a first screening stage, but done by recruiters. Due to the constraints regarding the hiring process, 11% of the state companies in our sample consider the information included in the CVs of little help in tie-breaking the candidates. With state institutions, the recruitment advertisements lay down clearly the conditions to be met by the candidates thus preventing the CVs from bringing useful adjacent information. Moreover, according to the respondents' answers, since for some of the vacancies there are usually not many applications, it means that screening the CVs is not anymore strongly required. No matter the reasons stated by employers in public institutions, we believe that there are still enough reasons for valuing the CVs during the selection process. Besides the need to verify the accuracy of the information included in the CV during the job interview, it can bring useful information regarding the candidates' extracurricular experiences and career trajectory.

The frequency of using practical test also seems to differ in public and private companies. Even if there are not significant statistical differences, in public institutions

practical tests seem to be more frequently used. Usually the practical contest includes computer skills tests, language tests, or other job-related tasks. The fact that public institutions use the practical tests more seldom can be again a consequence of the national legislation requirements (see Government Decision no. 286/23.03.2011). Since the employment process in public institutions has to include a written test and/or a practical test, seldom institutions include both of them. Moreover, if we refer to the fact that once employed, the dismissal process is even more difficult in the public sector, we can understand that the employing commission is encouraged to make the best hiring decision.

Also, standard employment forms are more frequently used in public institutions. This is explained by the fact that when referring to this selection stage, public employers relate to the contest application form, which is again required by the national legislation. On the other hand, the trial period and the cover letter are more frequently used in private companies. Regarding the trial period, both private and public organizations are legally allowed to use it, respondents from private companies more often indicate dismissals of the candidates during this period. For many of the private sector respondents, the trial period is considered to be a selection stage. On the other hand, for public employers starting again the employment process could seem an inefficient solution. Moreover, there is a common misbelieve among candidates and private organizations that during the trial period the employer can decide whether to hire the candidate or not. It must be stated that the employment contract has to be signed before the first day of work (see Law no. 53/2003 – Labor Code). For this reason the trial period may even not be considered a selection stage, since it does not provide information for making the decision regarding the selection of the candidate to be hired.

The opinions concerning the usefulness of the cover letter for the hiring process are greatly different within both private and public institutions. Still, in the private companies the cover letters seem to be more appreciated (mean 3.24). The main argument brought by the private employers is that the cover letter helps recruiters to get a first impression about the candidates' motivation. Even the fact that the candidate is not able to write a rather original cover letter and prefers to copy-paste it from the internet models may bring useful information for the selection process. Furthermore, the reluctance of the public institutions in valuing the cover letter can be associated with the lack of emphasis during the selection process on the candidates' motivation for work.

As one can note, there are many differences in the selection practices implemented by the private and public organizations. The results outline the profile of the selection process for the two categories of organizations. While for the private companies the hiring process is based on the individual job selection interview, CVs screening, and trial period as the most frequent selection stages, in public institutions the hiring process is based on individual job selection interview, written knowledge tests and practical tests.

3. Concluding remarks

Regardless of the HR practices implemented, both private and public organizations are labor-intensive enterprises that strongly depend on the potential and competency of their employees. Organizations have to implement effective HR strategies in order to get access to the qualified labor force. One prerequisite in achieving success is to understand and implement in the personnel selection process the practices that guarantee the hiring of the best employees. By analyzing the content of the job selection process the paper develops the profile for the job selection process in private and public organizations. The research identifies the main differences between the two categories of organizations, providing an explanatory approach for the results obtained.

The traditional selection stages (job selection interviews and CVs screening) are mostly used by employers, regardless of the ownership type. Stages considered to have a higher predictive validity are less used by the employing organizations. However, a set of differences in the hiring practices are identified. In public institutions the written knowledge tests rank a higher position in the selection stages hierarchy. Also, for private organization the CVs screening stage is rendered more importance than in public institutions.

As the open answers of the respondents indicate, beside the ownership, other factors such as the characteristics of the vacant position influence the selection process. Factors such as the hierarchical level of the vacant job, but also the job specialization, need to be further analyzed in order to understand better the practices implemented in the employment process. As further research, the extension of the analysis on a larger and more representative sample would bring a confirmation of the results. Judging by the results obtained, the research instrument used for the analysis of the job selection process should include other selection stages such as: on-line evaluation of the candidates, assessment centers, pre-screening telephone/e-mail interview, intelligence tests, and medical tests. These stages may become more frequently used within the selection process of the latest period, becoming thus important to be included in the research instrument. Further analysis of the frequency in usage of the stages that demand the recruiters' higher qualification could bring explanations for the relations established between the characteristics of the recruiters and the content and quality of the job selection process.

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