Impact of ownership structure on e-recruitment practices in Banks in Sri Lanka

ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the relationship between nature of ownership and level of adoption of e-recruitment practices in banks in Sri Lanka. The main objectives of the study were to examine the levels of e-recruitment practices currently adopted and to be adopted in the near future, perceived constraints and motives of e-recruitment and the degree of managerial perception on e-recruitment practices, particularly in banking sector organizations in Sri Lanka, are among objectives. The study analyzed responses given by 46 managerial employees who are responsible for staff recruitment in the respective banks in Sri Lanka. The study revealed that the patterns of adopting e-recruitment practices among State Banks (SB), Local Private Banks (LPB) and Foreign Banks (FB) are varied, and LPB is toped. The study further revealed that though perception of HR practitioners, towards e-recruitment is positive in LPBs than FBs and SBs and perception among line managers and senior managers remain negative in all three sectors. Reduced time taken for hire and reduced administrative burden/paper work were identified as key motives while lack of knowledge and negative attitudes were identified as major constraints in practicing e-recruitment as a major source of recruitment in banking sector organizations in Sri Lanka. .

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KEYWORDS

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INTRODUCTION

In the wake of the Internet's rapid expansion at the end of the twentieth century and its continuing success story at the beginning of the twenty-first, there is hardly a profession that hasn't been affected by internet and the World Wide Web (Blickenstorfer, 2006). In recent years, the internet has made an impact on the Human Resources field (Bussler & Davis, 2002) and some HR functions has developed commercially Recruitment is being assisted with higher involvement of the Internet.

HR practitioners are facing great challenges in hiring the most appropriate persons for the respective organizations within a short period while keeping the cost down. Here, there are two specific questions to be answered by HR practitioners;
Can the organizations allow HR practitioners 8-16 weeks (Yelland, 2002) for hiring a person for an important position, without badly affecting its business operations? How can HR practitioners reduce the period of time, without affecting the quality of hiring?
Organizations in today's increasingly competitive business world, such a delay in recruitment will make heavy disturbances or even on firm's existence and will have to compensate quality if it moves to quick hiring under traditional methods.

As a response to these challenges, in some countries internet based recruitment and selection systems called e-recruitment methods have been developed to reduce the cost and the time consumed for the hiring process while maintaining its quality (Byrne, 2000 Rembrandt, 2001; Walters, 2002; Yelland, 2002). It has achieved a significant level of success and now it is increasingly popular across the world (Evans et al., 2007; Holm, 2010; Marr, 2007).

Since the Sri Lankan economy too is affected by globalization, and the challenges in staff recruitment is not been much different in Sri Lanka from the global context, it's an emerging need to have more efficient systems like e-recruitment to be used in staff recruitment in Sri Lanka as well. However, until recent years it was hard to see any significant move towards internet based recruitment and selection systems (e-recruitment methods) being widely used in Sri Lanka. Even today, except for the corporate web sites of a few large organizations including multi-national companies and very few specialized web sites such as Topjobs (www.topjobs.lk), Jobsnet

(www.jobsnet.lk) and Sri Lanka Job Bank (www.srilankajobs.net), many examples in practicing advanced e-recruitment methods in Sri Lanka cannot be seen.

In Sri Lanka, banking sector, being a prominent sector under the service category, can be identified as one of the leading sectors which is widely utilizing developments of ICT. Also it is expressed that Sri Lanka's ambition is to become the regional financial services hub for South Asia and has consolidated most technological advancements in that area. Such initiatives could be seen in corporate web sites of leading banks. However, it has not been witnessed that even the banking sector has utilized the full advantage of ICT for its non-operational (non-banking) activities including staff recruitment.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

HR professionals in many countries have been continuously researching on more efficient ways to perform organizational activities, incorporating the benefit of modern technology. The staff recruitment, as one of the most important managerial activities for the successful day-to-day functioning of any organization (CIPD, 2008) facing a challenge in hiring the most appropriate staff despite time/cost constraints. Therefore, the HR practitioners have to adopt emerging techniques such as Internet based methods which are among the most successful and increasingly popular such techniques (Evans et al., 2007; Holm, 2010; Marr, 2007) around the globe. Though e-recruitment methods are relatively modern practices (Byrne, 2002), relevant literature and surveys confirm that such methods are capable enough to take-up the challenge, by considerably reduce time and cost needed without compensating the quality of hiring (Byrne, 2000; Cappelli, 2001; Marr, 2007; Singh & Finn 2003 cited by Holm, 2010; Yelland, 2002).

Though there are many success stories in the global context i.e. *FedEx* , *KPMG*, *Reuters* (www.jeffgrout.com) in Sri Lanka, even in banking sector it appears that e-recruitment are neither widely practiced nor very popular among HR practitioners, but are still in their initial stages. However, such statements are not backed by strong evidence and it is needed to test, using empirical data which could answer the following questions, in respect of the banks in Sri Lanka;

1. What is the relationship between nature of ownership and level of adoption of e-recruitment practices in banks in Sri Lanka?
2. What is the degree of perception on e-recruitment, among HR practitioners who are responsible for staff recruitment in banks in Sri Lanka?
3. What are the future trends of Sri Lanka's banks relating to e-recruitment practice?
4. What are the critical factors which limit Sri Lanka's banks to practice e-recruitment as a major recruitment method?
5. What are the main drivers to adopt e-recruitment in banks in Sri Lanka?

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

As study done by IESE Business School in Spain (2001) on use of e-recruitment tools discovered that 51% of companies use e-mail as a recruitment tools, while owned corporate websites used only 44%. According to "*Recruitment practices and trends in Ireland* (2006)" done by the Public Appointment Services; 58% and 64% of Irish firms are using their corporate web sites and third party job websites respectively, among their recruitment practices. National news papers are used by 86% and rated by 30% as the main (top) recruitment method. 72% of public sector firms surveyed use the "corporate web site" as one of their major recruitment sources, while it is only 51% for private sector firms. Therefore, in Ireland, the level of adoption of the e-recruitment practices is different between public sector firms and private sector firms (Public Appointment Services, 2006).

However in Sri Lanka's context, as a whole the state sector is recognized as less IT-friendly. Until establishment of ICTA few years ago, the sector is hardly shown notable developments using Internet/WWW, when compare with advancements and innovations archived by the country's private sector. Here, it has been assumed that the same pattern can be seen in banking sector organizations too. The other hand, though number of technologically advanced and internationally reputed banks are operating in Sri Lanka, most of which are operating with one or few branches with very less number of employees. Probably, their staff recruitment function is neither very challenging nor need to adopt modern recruitment methods like e-recruitment. (e.g. Standard Chartered Bank – Sri Lanka, one of the two most popular foreign banks in

Sri Lanka does not maintain separate web page for staff recruitment). Contrast, LPBs are fast growing in number of branches/employees. Based on the above literature it is hypothesized that

Hypothesis – 1**: There is a difference in the level of adoption of the e-recruitment practices between state owned (SB), local private (LPB) and locally operated foreign banks (FB) in Sri Lanka.**

H_{1a} – **Level of adoption of e-recruitment practices in local private banks (LPB) is greater than state banks (SB).**

H_{1b} – **Level of adoption of e-recruitment practices in local private banks (LPB) is greater than foreign banks (FB).**

Odumeru (2006) has done a cross sectional survey done in Nigeria, on the factor affecting the adoption of online recruiting technology using Rogers Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory, and it was revealed that there is a strong relationship between attitude (or perception on relative advantages) towards e-recruitment and the use of the same. According to "Recruitment practices and trends in Ireland 2006" done by the Public Appointment Services (2006), views relating to online recruitment is positive among recruiters. Also 25% of Irish organizations are planning to enable candidates to complete applications online, while 34% of them are already facilitating it. Likewise, more companies are planning to adopt or upgrade more sophisticated e-recruitment practices. Also except "seeking candidates' feedback online", all other activities related to e-recruitment are expected to be increased in the future.E-recruiting has a limited ability to attract some types of job seekers because of lack of personal touch; lack of geographical targeting and all job seekers do not have internet access (Chang, 2001). So, e-recruitment may not be suitable for recruiting executive/top management level candidates (Arboledas et al., 2001; Arkin & Crabb, 1999; Brilliant People.com). e-recruitment tends to used only for junior positions and may not be suitable for recruiting executive/management level candidates (Arboledas et al., 2001). Such candidates still prefer personal contact (Arkin & Crabb, 1999) and concerned on data security issues relating to internet based methods. Therefore, e-

recruitment tends to be used only for junior positions and may not be suitable for recruiting executive/management level candidates (Arboledas et al., 2001; Brilliant People.com).

According to the finding of a survey conducted in Spain (IESE Business School, 2001) time saving for recruitment process (64%) is the main advantage e-recruitment. However, a report released in 2006 (Public Appointment Service, 2006), reduce recruitment cost (77%) was the main driver in Ireland. Ability to post jobs for job seekers internationally was ranked the top benefit of e-recruitment by Hamarna (2011) in the study done in Palestine. E-recruitment can eliminate a lot of paper work and speed-up the hiring process. (Richardson, 2000). The use of electronic recruiting instruments reduces the time invested in HR management by 25% to 30% (Blickenstorfer, M, 2006). E-recruitment achieves faster recruiting cycle through faster electronic communication i.e. faster posting jobs, receiving resumes, processing and screening fast. (Blickenstorfer, 2006; Othman & Musa, 2006).). Based on the above literature it is postulated that

Hypothesis – 2 **There is a difference in degree of perception on e-recruitment between state owned (SB), local private (LPB) and locally operated foreign banks (FB) in Sri Lanka.**

H_{2a} **– Degree of perception on e-recruitment is more favorable among managerial employees in local private banks (LPB) than state banks (SB).**

H_{2b} **– Degree of perception on e-recruitment is more favorable among managerial employees in local private banks (LPB) than state banks (FB).**

Figure 1: Conceptual framework
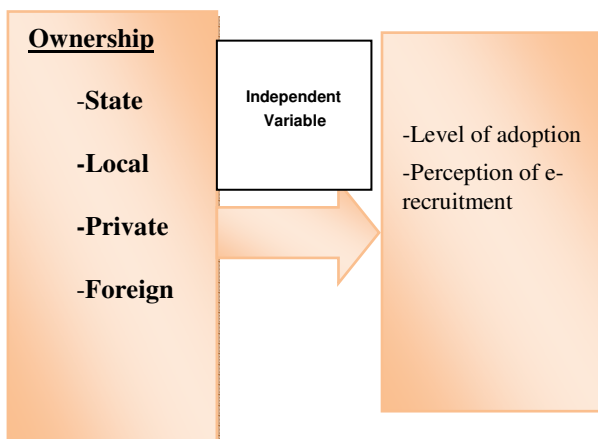
Banking sector is among the most ICT adopted sectors in Sri Lanka, consist of 22 LCB's and 09 LSB's. Managerial employees were selected for this empirical study as technology adoption theories emphasized that perception/attitudes managers is one of the major determinants of adoption of technological innovations like e-recruitment (Huy at el, 2012; Odumeru, Nigeria).

The sample; There were 93 questionnaires were distributed among managerial employees who are responsible for staff recruitment in LCBs and LSBs. Sent about three (3) questionnaires for Human Resources Departments of each bank and to be filled by randomly selected managerial employees engaged in staff recruitment in their respective departments. The rate of response and representation of banks/managerial employees in the sample as given in the table 01.

Table 1: Composition of the Population and the Sample (Banks)

No of Banks represented each category				
	State Owned	Privately Owned (local)	Locally Operated Foreign Banks	Total
No of Banks in the Population	7	13	11	31
No of Banks represented in Sample	5	8	6	19
Percentage	71%	62%	55%	61%
No of responses (sample)				
No of responses	19	18	9	46
Percentage	41%	39%	20%	100%

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION: PRIMARY DATA SOURCE

A questionnaire consists of MCQs and 5 point Likert scales was developed by the researchers used to collect data from respondents.

Mainly quantitative methods are used to analyze the data captured and present the research outcome. Statistical measures such as percentages, mean, mode, variance/standard deviation, t-tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA) have been used in data analysis. Since the study is to examine the behaviour, choices or perception towards e-recruitment practices, most of the data collected through the questionnaire was more qualitative (ordinal and discrete) in nature rather than quantitative (interval data or continuous data). However, in order to analysis results relating to number of questions/sub questions/statements (i.e. five-point Likert scale) or respondents as groups (i.e, state, local private and foreign banks) it has been frequently used central tendency measurements like Mean (Average). Also, when it makes comparison between groups of respondents or set of questions/statements, quantitative analysis methods have been used, considering the continuous/quantitative nature of such means.

Data Analysis and Testing of Hypotheses

Table 2: ANOVA (average responses between all three participants' groups)

ANOVA: Single Factor	α=	0.05				
SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance	SD	
State Banks	19	61.684	3.247	0.12590	0.355	
Local Private Banks	18	67.895	3.772	0.16751	0.409	
Foreign Banks	9	30.211	3.357	0.30179	0.549	
Total	46		3.474		0.477	
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F	P-Value	F crit
Between Groups	2.7045	2	1.352 27	7.72403	0.001	3.21448
Within Groups	7.5281	43	0.175 07			
Total	10.2327	45				

Source – Survey data

Table 2, shows that the results generated by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA table), which test the equality of "average response given for 19 sub-questions/statements by survey participants in three groups i.e. state, local private and foreign banks". The table has illustrated a precise view of the responses given for question number 13, which consisted of 19 numbers of Likert type sub questions/statements aiming to measure the level of perception. The scale is from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to the positive statements listed (Table 02 above). The table shows that average rating of 3.77 of local private, 3.25 of state banks and 3.36 for foreign banks while overall average rating stands at 3.47.

The ANOVA table confirms that the difference in average responses given by participants from three groups are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) at 95% confidence level, hence at least the average responses of one group of participants are differentiates from others.

Table 3: T-test – compare average responses, SB Vs LPB
Source – Survey data

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances	**α=**	**0.05**
Unequal Sample Sizes		
	State Banks	*Local Private (LPB)*
Mean	3.2465	3.7719
Variance	0.1259	0.1675
Observations	19	18
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	34	
t Stat	4.162	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000	
T Critical one-tail	1.691	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000	
T Critical two-tail	2.032	

In terms of the survey data presented above, it is clear that more positive perception on e-recruitment

practices could be seen among managerial employees in local private banks (LPB) than in state sector banks (SB) and locally operated foreign banks (FB).

Table 4: T-test – compare average responses, FB Vs LPB

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances	**α=**	**0.05**
Unequal Sample Sizes		
	Local Private (LPB)	*Foreign Banks*
Mean	3.7719	3.3567
Variance	0.1675	0.3018
Observations	18	9
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	17	
t Stat	2.006	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.031	
T Critical one-tail	1.740	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.061	

Source – Survey data

According to Table 4. Currently 85% of participants are accepting applications through E-mail and 70% post vacancy details in the web site/page, while 44% and 13% of them respectively are planning to do so. Also 59% of them are currently allowing candidates to forward resumes (e-mail) through their web site and another 15% of them are planning. 33% of them are planning to implement on-line self selection exercises (psychometric tests, writing ability … etc), though only 13% of them are currently using it. Also 24% banks are planning to have online application form to be filled and forwarded, on top of the 41% of them who are currently using it. When we consider all 19 activities listed relating to e-recruitment, an average of 30% participants is currently using them while we can expect the figure to increase up to 46% in medium-term.

Table 5: E-recruitment activities currently in-use and planned.

	Currently Use	Plan to Use	Total
a) Accept applications via E-mail	84.8%	4.3%	89.1%
b) Describe and advertise vacancies on web sites	69.6%	13.0%	82.6%
b) Post jobs on free Internet job boards/sites	21.7%	13.0%	34.8%
c) Have a dedicated recruitment website/page	47.8%	10.9%	58.7%
d) Post jobs on recruitment agency sites	45.7%	10.9%	56.5%
e) Respond to requests for further information on-line	45.7%	10.9%	56.5%
f) Let applications be forwarded through e-mail	58.7%	15.2%	73.9%
g) Applications completed on-line	41.3%	23.9%	65.2%
h) Build a database for future vacancies (computer based)	26.1%	17.4%	43.5%
i) Offer on-line self-selection exercises	13.0%	32.6%	45.7%
j) Initial screen on qualifications on-line	19.6%	26.1%	45.7%
k) Initial screen on competencies on-line	19.6%	8.7%	28.3%
l) Use personality tests at initial screen	10.9%	13.0%	23.9%
m) Use on-line testing at assessment stage	2.2%	21.7%	23.9%
n) Invite candidates to interview on-line	13.0%	10.9%	23.9%
o) Notify non-selected candidates on-line	23.9%	23.9%	47.8%
p) Make job offers on-line	10.9%	26.1%	37.0%
q) Give feedback to non-selected candidates on-line	8.7%	17.4%	26.1%
r) Seek candidate feedback on-line	4.3%	13.0%	17.4%

Source - Survey data

Therefore it can be projected that adoptions for e-recruitment practices among banks will be significantly improved in future.

According to Table 6, the majority (56%) of the participants ranked Lack of knowledge on e-recruitment applications as the main reason to limit the adoption of e-recruitment, while it was ranked among top three reasons by 73% of the participants. Respectively, 67% and 52% of the participants ranked Negative attitudes and difficulty in using for every position has been ranked as top three limitations. However limitations connected to data security and legal issues have been ranked among top three reasons by only 2.2% and 19.6% participants.

Based on the survey findings lack of knowledge could be identified as the main factor that limits adoption of e-recruitment practices among banks in Sri Lanka.

Table 6: Main Limitations

Limitation	Top1 -%	Top3 %
Lack of knowledge on e-recruitment applications	56.5%	73.9%
Initial investment is high	17.4%	21.7%
Factors relating to data security	2.2%	2.2%
Legal/policy issues	8.7%	19.6%
Difficult in using for every position	2.2%	52.2%
Lack of technological expertise	0.0%	28.3%
Negative attitude	13.0%	67.4%
Other	0.0%	0.0%

Source - Survey data

26% of the participants ranked Reduce recruiting cycle (i.e. time taken to hire) as the main factor which encourages adoption of e-recruitment practices, while Reducing administrative burden and Attract more skilful candidates are ranked among top three reasons by 17% and 13% respectively.

However, 56%, 54% and 43% of the participants have respectively ranked Reduce administrative burden/paper work, Reduce recruiting cycle and Attract more skillful candidates among top 3 encouraging factors for e-recruitment practices.

Table 7: Main benefits of e-recruitment

Advantage	Top1 -%	Top3 %
Reduce advertising costs	10.9%	26.1%
Reduce recruiting cycle *ie* time taken to hire	26.1%	56.5%
Reduce administrative burden/paper work	17.4%	54.3%
Target a larger & more diverse candidate pool	8.7%	10.9%
Attract more skilful candidates (computer literate .etc)	13.0%	43.5%
Improve employer brand & image	0.0%	8.7%
Easy to build & manage candidate database	6.5%	13.0%
Reduce overall cost of recruitment	6.5%	21.7%
Because candidates prefer it	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0.0%	0.0%

Source - Survey data

Therefore, reduced recruitment cycle could be identified as the main driver encouraging the adoption of e-recruitment among banking sector organizations in Sri Lanka.

FINDINGS

The aim of the hypotheses H_{1a} and H_{1b} was to understand relationship between nature of ownership and level of adoption of e-recruitment practices in banks in Sri Lanka. Since it could be found that level of adoption of adoption of e-recruitment practices in local private banks (LPB) is greater than both state banks and foreign banks, the hypotheses H_{2a} and H_{2b} are proved. The lowest level of adoption could be seen in state banks (SB), while the highest level of adoption has been shown in local private banks (LPB) which lead FB marginally. However, FBs have not been ranked any of the e-recruitment methods among their top three. Among

the reasons that foreign banks reported less adoption level are that some of the foreign banks whose managerial employees were included in the sample operate in Sri Lanka having only one or very few branches with a limited number of staff (less than 100 and part of them are expatriates) and recruitments per annum is less than 25. Such banks were even reluctant to set up corporate web sites for Sri Lankan operations or add a separate recruitment page, whereas most local private banks whose staff strength is growing were willing to do so.

Compared with a survey done in Ireland, adoption to e-recruitment is more in the public sector than in the private sector organizations, which reports the use of corporate websites as a source of recruitment, is 72% in the public sector, while it is only 51% in the private sector. Overall popularity of e-recruitment in Sri Lanka's banking sector also appears relatively low and out of which company web site/page uses by 54% while third party websites used only by less than 30% of the participants. When compares with Ireland's, adoption for corporate web sites (i.e. 58%) is somewhat closed, but adoption for third party job sites are more than twice (i.e. 64%) in Ireland.

The survey data also confirms that e-recruitment practices have been widely used for recruit managerial/professional employees. However the finding is contradictory with the popular fact that the E-recruitment may not be suitable for recruiting executive/top management level candidates (Arboledas at el., 2001; Arkin & Crabb, 1999; Brilliant People.com).

The objective of the hypotheses H_{2a} and H_{2b} was to understand the degree of perception on e-recruitment, among managerial employees in banks in Sri Lanka. Positive perception has been reported in all 3 categories of banks (3 groups of respondents) while highest degree of positive perception could be seen among local private banks than state banks and locally operated foreign banks. Therefore, both H_{2a} and H_{2b} are also proved. However since the difference in degree of perception between state banks (SB) and foreign banks (FB) are statistically not significant, the degree of perception on e-recruitment among SB and FB could be considered as similar. Finding of state banks' less favorable perception on e-recruitment, confirms the popular fact that Sri Lanka's state sector is less ICT-friendly, while FBs' degree of perception on e-recruitment has largely

affected by their very small scale operation (no of staff/branches) as explained above.

The other notable fact here is perception on e-recruitment among the line managers in all 3 categories of banks is negative while senior managers in state banks are also having negative perception. This situation is not only in Sri Lanka's banks but even in Ireland (Public Appointment Services, 2006) the negative perception among line managers could be seen (See table 2.17). Many research findings including TOE framework and Rogers' Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT), confirm that attitude and perception of managers towards technological innovations like e-recruitment are among key determinants for adoption of new technology (Huy at el., 2012; Kim & Crowston, 2011). Here the perception/attitude of managers is negative, which may partly responsible for lower e-recruitment adoption.

Examine future trends relating to e-recruitment practices among Sri Lanka's banking sector organizations was one of the objectives of this study. The survey data confirmed that e-recruitment practices in the banking sector organizations in Sri Lanka are in a growth path. Higher degree of growth can be expected in recruitment of fresh graduates, clerical/secretarial occupations as well as recruitment of school leavers, than other categories of employment.

The survey data is revealed that the lack of knowledge as the most critical factor which limits practicing e-recruitment in banks in Sri Lanka. Also, recent study done in Sri Lanka on e-commerce implementation in Sri Lanka confirm that lack of knowledge among employees is a negative factor to implement e-commerce (which include e-recruitment as well), a technology innovation (SLBDC, 2002). Reduced recruiting cycle (i.e. time taken to hire) was found as the main drivers to adopt e-recruitment in Banking Sector organizations in Sri Lanka, similarly time saving was the main advantage at the study of IESE Business School in Spain. However, according to the survey done in Ireland, cost was the main driver, while ability to access diverse pool and reduce administrative burden ranked respectively at second and third. Lesser degree of economies of scale that could be enjoyed in Sri Lanka than in Ireland may be among many reasons that caused the difference in survey findings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

All most all banks are maintaining their own web sites. Those that have not separate section for recruitment of human resources, add separate section without delay in order to capitalize benefits of e-recruitment. In case that any bank don't have sufficient resources internally to manage its own, outsource by create a link to a third party recruitment site.

Despite of higher cost, the dominate position of national newspapers in advertise job vacancies was seen in the survey data as well. However it may be a practical idea to make the newspaper advertisement more precise as possible and invite readers/potential candidates to the web site/page for more details. (i.e. comprehensive vacancy information along with detailed job description, job locations, career path, salary and benefits, employment terms and conditions, company information, online application format with a facility to attach own resume etc).

Common recruitment web site recommends to be set-up by a recognized professional body (i.e. Sri Lanka Banks' Association, Association of Professional Bankers Sri Lanka … etc), exclusively for banking sector jobs. That can be further developed as a fully-fledged recruitment and assessment agency for the banking sector, which can obtain rating for psychometric, language, numerical or/and similar tests. So that it won't be necessary to invest every individual organization. Leading recruitment web sites like www.topjobs.lk and www.jobsnet.lk still does not offering sufficiently advanced e-recruitment tools like online interviews, online testing … etc, which can be add and can be become fully fledge e-recruitment service provider, beyond just a job vacancy advertiser and resume data base administrator. Also some reputed banks may prefer to have its own resume data base than sharing with common/third party web sites, probably due to data security concerns; therefore there will be IT/BPO firms specializing e-recruitment to be undertaken the management of such systems.

Since more e-recruitment activities can be expected in the future, more opportunities will also be opened for professional who are having higher degree of understanding on e-recruitment practices and strategies. In the other part of the world there are separate designations i.e. "online recruiters" "e-recruiters" introduced for qualified professionals in this area, therefore it is necessary to introduce a separate subject in the curriculums of professional HRM courses (i.e. Diploma level and above), then only there will be HR professionals with the sufficient knowledge in the area of e-recruitment.

Apart from that there should be frequent awareness programs conducted on e-recruitment practices, by way of seminars, training programs etc, this can be initiated by Institute of Personnel Management (IPM) or Institute of Bankers Sri Lanka (IBSL) … etc with the assistance obtain from international professional bodies like CIPD (UK), in order to make aware and update HR professionals and business strategists. Frequent awareness programs, experience sharing sessions and researches will help to dilute knowledge deficiency and negative attitudes, among the practitioners. Further the awareness programs which emphasized relative advantage, must be extended to senior managers and lime managers who can influence the technology adoption decisions, as some research findings confirmed that attitudes is largely determined by the perceived relative advantage of the technological innovation. (Huy at el., 2012; Odumeru; 2002)

Awareness should be improved among jobseekers (candidates) as well. Expansion of internet infrastructure and reducing the cost of it, as a result of stiff competition among key service providers, along with the increased proficiency in web application among educated youth, who are the potential candidate for the banking sector will, encourage any such initiatives. Also since internet access through (GPRS/3G/HSDPA) mobile phones becoming popular especially among young generation, it is important to be designed web portals suitable for such users (e.g. WAP). Then they can register with specialized job site and check whether any opportunity that matched with own resume.

Cost conscious companies/banks, apart from those time conscious, need to think of adopting some of the less popular e-recruitment activates like notify non-selected candidates and give them a feedback with escalating postage and printing costs.

CONCLUSION

The main purposes of this study were to understand relationship between nature of ownership and level of adoption of e-recruitment practices in banks in Sri Lanka.   The sample of the study was randomly selected 46 managerial employees who responsible for staff recruitment function in 19 banks in Sri Lanka. Collection of data was done through specially designed questionnaire.

The findings of this study are important basically in practical aspect and also theoretical aspect by contributing to reducing the knowledge gap. Since the study explored that the main constraint for adoption of e-recruitment practices is lack of knowledge, through conducting specially designed programs as suggested, can mitigate such constraint in the development of modern e-recruitment practices. Also discussion on similar topics would stimulate IT professionals/enterprises towards e-recruitment as a potential e-business application; this study itself would be one of the key contributions.

The findings of this study would help both employers (i.e. organizations) and job seekers to adopt for less time consuming, less costly but more efficient recruitment practices, particularly   in extremely competitive environments. In this highly competitive corporate world, employers may use e-recruitment practices in order to expedite recruitment and selection process without affecting its quality. Further some of the policy recommendations of this study may contribute to expand dimensions of the HR profession, particularly related to banking sector in Sri Lanka.

However, the study is basically on e-recruitment, relatively a new area, has not been subject to undergone frequent studies, especially in Sri Lanka context. The study investigate only in banking sector organizations which a part of service sector, and researched basically employers' point of views. Therefore it is important to carrying out further studies throughout different segments in order to generalize for Sri Lanka context, at least for service sector. Also it may be worthwhile to analysis case studies of some local companies which adopted for e-recruitment practices.

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