

RECRUITMENT PRACTICES IN PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

Background

Recruitment is one of the most important management tasks. Employees are the core resource in almost all public organizations, and the organizations' results depend on the employees' competences, motivation and effort. Being able to attract, recruit, on-board and retain competent employees is therefore key to creating successful public organizations and securing stable public management. It is also important in uncertain times, which often call for reorganization via recruitment of new types of employees with the right competences.

Objective and research method

We have surprisingly little research-based knowledge about recruitment in public organizations in Denmark and internationally. The project will address this shortcoming. The objective is to understand which recruitment practices are used, identify differences and similarities in recruitment practices between different types of organizations or authorities, and not least to study consequences of different recruitment practices.

We define recruitment broadly as the entire process from a job ad is posted until a new employee is hired and functioning in the organization. The study thus covers attracting job applicants, the hiring process and on-boarding.

The project contributes new knowledge in an important but under-studied area. We do not have a complete overview of recruitment practices in different organizations today. These processes are typically closed and have to take discretion and anonymity of applicants into account, which makes it difficult for public managers to learn from each other or test alternative methods.

We will, for example, examine how recruitment varies between different types of organizations and across the country (city/rural).



The project also aims to relate the different elements in recruitment to different organizational outcomes. Overall, the project will generate new knowledge that will allow managers to make qualified decisions about recruitment methods in different situations.

The project is based on a large questionnaire study concerning recruitment methods in public organizations. To maximize validity and details, we will focus on real-life recruitment in "executive units". In other words, we are interested in hospital wards, schools and nursing homes rather than general HR policies in a region or a municipality.

Data collection is based on a broad random sampling of public organizations in municipalities, regions and the state, in which managers answer a questionnaire about their recruitment practice when they hire new employees.

Additional information

The project is headed by Professor Anders Villadsen in close collaboration with Associate Professor Ann-Kristina Løkke Møller and support from other relevant researchers at the Center. The questionnaire is planned for late spring 2019, and initial results are expected in the fall of 2019.