# Selection process of teaching faculties in Tribhuvan university, Nepal

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**Abstract:** Selection is the prerequisite process of choosing the finest candidates from the pool to full fill the vacant posts in an organization. This paper aims to explore the selection process of teaching faculties at Tribhuvan University (TU) concerning Mathis et al. (2012) approach. For achieving this purpose, I employed socio-constructivism with a narrative inquiry, research design in this study. The information is collected from 2 informants via in-depth interviews and discussed with supporting the several kinds of literature. This study explores the application forms, selection test, interview, appointment, and placement as the selection process employed on TU. This selection process seems not adequate for TU for selecting the quality candidates to perform high work productivity and organizational effectiveness.

**Keywords:** Application forms, Interview, Placement, Selection, and Tribhuvan University.

## Introduction

Selection is the process of Human Resource Management (HRM) which comes after the recruitment and ends at the placement process. It refers to the process to choose a few from those who applied (Saiyadain, 2009). The selection procedure is concerned with identifying the most excellent candidate for jobs from the collection of eligible applicants (DeNisi & Griffin, 2008). As a supplement, the entire selection process can be referred to as the process of choosing the best candidates who have prerequisite qualifications and it is required to fill the vacant posts in an organization (Mathis et al., 2012). Thus, the selection can be revealed as the process where an

organization predicts the individual as the right person who will best fit the organization from the pool of applicants and reject remaining others as they are unsuitable for the job.

Selection is the most important concern of every organization because without the qualified employees in the organization will not be able to make them successful. It is also considered to the Tribhuvan University (TU) which consists of large teaching faculty, they were 7966 in numbers (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2015). This information portrays that the selection process is vitally important in TU in employing the best candidates. Selection processes in the TU aim to identify the best candidate and placing them on the job about the right man in the right place at the right time. The selection process is entirely depending on a job analysis (Boundless, 2016) and it is not an easy task. In this context, Mathis et al. (2012) argue that hiring hard will eventually help to manage easily soon, but when hiring is not properly happening, it will become hard to manage even through good training will not work to correct that bad selection. This argument posse the importance of selection processes in TU by keeping it as a vital part of the entire procurement of human resources in an organization. Thus, the selection process in the TU is one of the acquisition tasks specially belongs to human resource management where the organization selects the best-qualified candidate among available applicants who are provided through the recruitment process, and ultimately it makes the placement of those selected assets in vacant posts.

The selection process can be referred to as the series of several steps and select the best candidate for vacant posts. Many organizations adopt the sequence of steady steps to process and choose suitable applicants for jobs (Mathis et al., 2012). The selection process seems to differ with each other due to the organization size, nature of the job, applicant's number, uses of electronic technology, and the number of people needed. Considering it, Mathis et al. (2012) identify some steps of the selection process as employment application forms, initial screening, selection test, Selection interview, background check, reference check, physical examination, appointment, and placement respectively. Employing these all steps of the selection process is the rigorous task and it assures that the organization selected the best candidate who can give high performance for the organization. For taking these accounts, the TU has also employed a certain selection process and claimed that they selected the quality faculties in the organization. However, recently some responsible officials of the Tribhuvan University Service Commission (TUSC) were blamed that

they selected some low merit candidates instead of capable human resources in the vacant posts via the selection process. Consequently, these selected, low merit candidates degrade the organizational performance and work productivity, which is seen in these days while comparing with international and the other national university like Kathmandu University.

In these scenarios, my main concern is that without addressing the issues in the selection process will not solve the problems. Thus, there is a need to explore the missing steps of selection and make it rigorous to select the deserving candidates in the post. In this situation, as a researcher, I believe, there are copious questions to be addressed as: How TU selected its faculties? What is lacking within the selection process of TU regarding Mathis et al. (2012) model? For providing the answers to these questions, I aim to explore the selection process of teaching faculties of TU based at Mathis et al. (2012) approaches and identify its lacking in the process while selecting them.

**Delimitations of the Study**

This study confines its study concern as only the open competition as the selection process of Assistant Professor in TU via TUSC.

## Literature Review

The selection process includes several steps for choosing a suitable candidate who has the desired qualifications to full filling a vacant job in the present as well as in the future period (Dias, 2016).  Every organization has its distinct selection steps, and they adopted it for identifying the best candidates for the job. The process of selection should organize in a hasty manner which eliminates confusion and suspicions about the selected candidate (Chand, 2016). In this context, Mathis et al. (2012) determined the following steps of selection which are adopted by most organizations as follows.
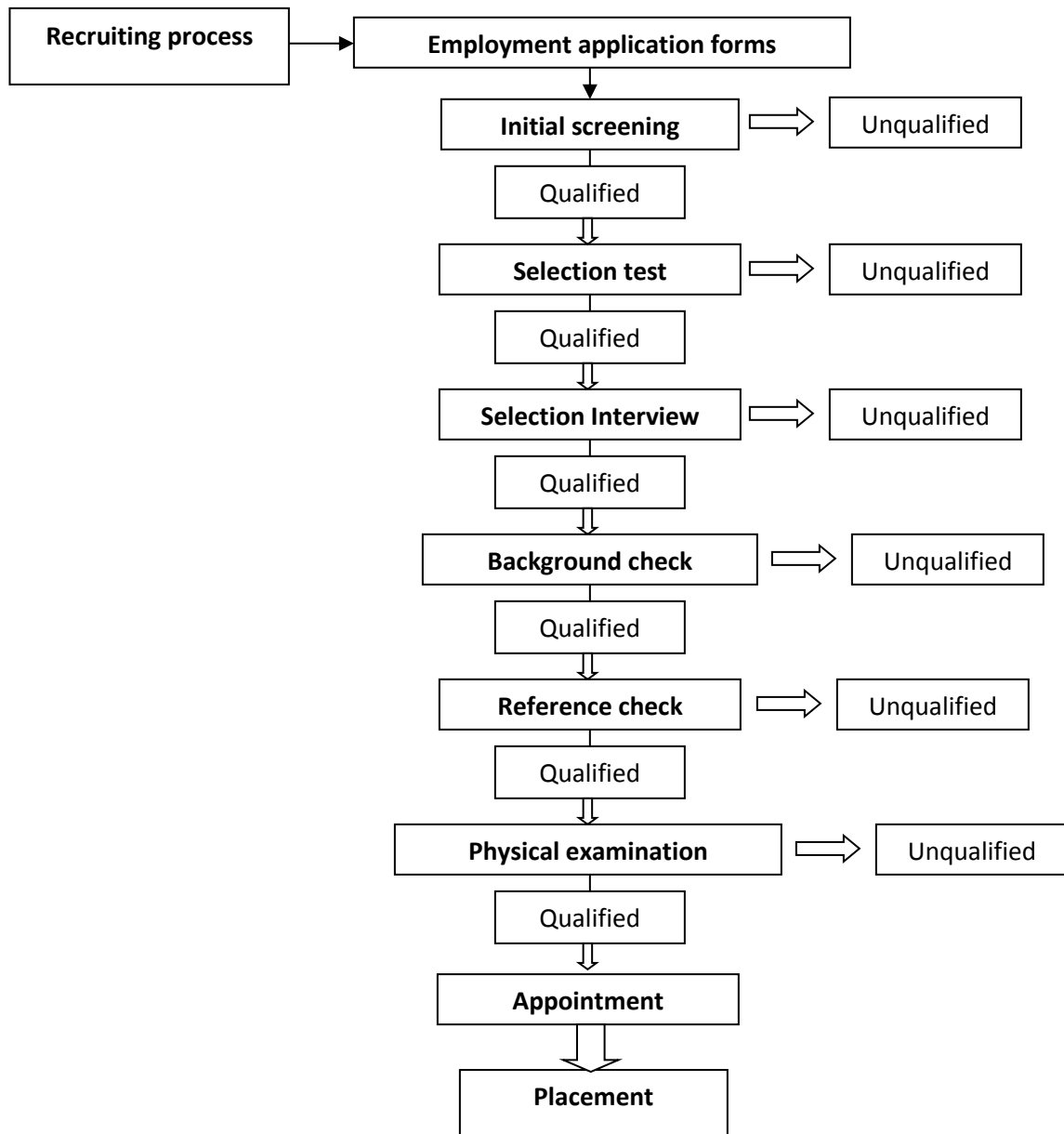
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Figure 1. *Steps of Selection*

*Note: Idea adopted from Mathis et al., 2012

**Employment Application Forms**

It refers to a standardized format to collect the necessary information about an applicant to determine suitability for the job or not (Durai, 2010). Employment application forms ask various bits of information from the applicant and it pertains to background information in detail like biographic information (age, sex, and ethnicity), socio-cultural information (religion, language), educational qualification, work experience, contact address, additional information, and references. The collected information through application forms is useful for assessing individual ability and determines the individuals either suitable for the job or not.

Most of the organization makes the provision of collecting an application form as the initial stage of selection, but some organizations adopted its alternative approaches as collecting CV, Bio-data, and application letters.  In the context of Nepal government makes the provision of application forms, but private firms collect the CV and application letters as their initial stage of selection.
Initial Screening

Initial screening is adopted as one of the selection steps whiles there were presences of many applicants for the vacant job.  In this stage, the HR department screens the applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the job.  Initial screening determines the applicants who meet the minimum qualifications among the entire applicants and eventually opens jobs before they have the applicants fill out an application (Mathis et al., 2012).  The purpose of this screening is to cut off the extra applicants for the job before requiring a number is obtained thus it is the prime stage, which contributes to reducing the farthest cost during other steps of selection.

There might also include the auditions as a screening test for certain jobs like artistic fields like singing, dancing, and teaching, etc. The HR department can also adopt the Electronic Assessment Screening (EAS) as the modern technology which utilizes the computer software to analyze the many resumes and application forms received during the selection process application (Mathis et al., 2012). These EAS systems speed up the process of screening in a short period and reduce the operational cost. Very few Nepali governmental organizations conduct initial screening, but private institutions widely adopted it and among them, some INGO started to practice the EAS system for screening an applicant as a step of the selection process and got better output in entire HRM.

**Selection Test**

The selection test is a device which is adopted by some organization for making their selection decision (Ivancevich  & Hoon, 2002) about determining either candidate were fit in the job or not.  Those candidates who are selected through the screening are only eligible to attend a selection test.  It helped to select qualified employees through conducting different types of test and these test items are developed through a job analysis. This selection test includes several test items and contributes to predicting candidates' performance to find they are suitable for the job or not before hiring.

There were various tests to measure cognitive abilities, motor, and physical abilities, skills, personality and interests, achievement, honesty, and literacy of candidates.  Some example of these tests is a literacy test, skill-based test, personality test, achievement test, honesty test, and ability test (Dessler & Varkkey, 2016).  The test is the most reliable tool for selecting the best candidate thus most institutions organize one or more tests for assessing a candidate.  After conducting tests, these were eventually evaluated by experts according to pre-established criteria and gives results.

These selection tests are seen extensively practices for selecting an employee in the governmental organization of Nepal. Any governmental agency likes the Public Service Commission (PSC), the Teacher Service Commission (TSC) conducted written tests, but beyond this, there are not many practices of a test in private firms in the context of Nepal.

**Selection Interview**

It is widely used tools for collecting information from the candidate who is selected through the initial screening as well as a selection test.  The selection interview is defined as a face to face interaction between the Employer agency (interviewer) and the potential candidate (Adhikari, 2012).  But some organizations directly intake candidates in the selection interview without conducting a selection test as well as other steps of selection.  The most used method of interview is a face to face conversation between the interviewer and candidate (Durai, 2009).  Organizations can adapt the structured/unstructured, surfaced/ in-depth, stress, panel, and computerized interview in the selection process as their needs.  Nowadays, an interview is the most common and easiest tool for evaluating a candidate so almost an organization adopted it as an indispensable part of the selection process.

From this process of interview, the organization can predict the future performance of the candidate by asking them several questions and getting oral responses as the answer or information. The main purpose of organizing an interview is to judge the candidate either they were suitable for the job or not. But now a day many organizations adopted virtual interview by using Skype and video conference, which makes the selection process more easily and reduces the cost of the interview. Thus, these virtual interviews eventually give benefits to the organization as well as a candidate by saving their time.

**Background Check**

Background checking is the process where it provides the various bits of information which is essential for ensuring the potentiality of a candidate for the job. Mathis et al. (2012) explain "Failure to check the backgrounds of people who are hired can lead to embarrassment and legal liability" (p. 259). When the organization hires employee without sufficient background checking will make it possible to hire a criminally minded person and eventually it leads an organization for bearing a lot of legal burdens. So, it avoids negligence in the hiring process which ultimately increases the retention in the organization.

There are two main reasons for checking the background in the selection process: first is to verify the applicant's information and the second is to uncover damaging information (Dessler & Varkkey, 2016). It's been the prime tool for verifying the information which is already stated in the application forms either it was true or false. Although these background checks can be done through several sources like past job records, credit history, testing records, educational and certification records, medical records, and police records.

Now, due to technological advancement background checks were also done by checking the candidate's profile in social media like Facebook and twitters. These Facebook and twitters are now very popular and most of the individuals expressed their perspectives and writes about themselves so it the best approach for assessing their attitudes.

**Reference Check**

Reference checking is one of the steps of selecting a process where HR managers mostly inquiry to those people whose names are cited by candidates in their CV and application form. It is the process of cross-checking information that was provided by applicants in various steps of the

selection procedure with the references cited by them (Durai, 2010).  The goal of reference checking is to gain insight into the possible candidate who had required experience among the pool of applicants (Bernardin, 2013).  Thus, these references helped the HR manager for cross-checking information and elicit truthful information for making a good decision in the selection process.  But besides these references have very limited predictive value because every person puts only those people as in reference who always talks well for them.

Mathis et al. (2012) further talk that references from preceding supervisors can provide a valuable snapshot of the applicant's background, performance, and attitudes.  Now the telephone is the common medium for checking references which is itself is the easiest and cheapest way for inquiry. Thus, whatever it helped to predict the appropriateness of a candidate for the job.

Physical Examination

Physical examination refers to the medical test to ensure that the selected candidate is either physically fit the job or not (Durai, 2010).  In other words, physical fitness denoted physical examination (Agrawal, 2012). It is conducted by very few organizations as the steps of the selection process for ensuring that selected candidate is physically fit as well as better health.  Physical and mental capabilities are the vital things of employees for giving better output in the organization so every each organization tries to recruit the healthy person which gives better results.

Most of the organization makes the provision of submitting either health reports or physical examinations for only a finalist because it is costly.  But some organizations like the Army and Police took both health examinations and physical examinations as the selection process of human resources.  These physical examinations contribute to ascertaining the stamina and physical endurance among the candidate (DeNisi & Griffin, 2008) and this will be required for some jobs like Police, Army, and some industrial employees.  Thus, these physical examination decreases the chances of employee turnover and absenteeism in the organization (Adhikari, 2012).

Appointment

The last step of the selection process is referred to as the appointment.  In another term, it is known as the detailed job offer for selected candidates.  Durai (2010) mentions "A job offer is a formal communication from the employer to the selected candidate that specifies the details of an offer of a job.  It provides information about the job, reporting authority, payment particulars, and

leave eligibility" (p. 153).  The initial information about the job offer is given through the telephone to the selected candidate in the initial period.  Then, the organizations formally offer the job and provide information about job descriptions to the selected candidate through the offer letter and finally gave an orientation to them which makes them familiar with the organization.

These offer letters are prepared and reviewed by the HR manager with the helped of legal counsel and it also named as the appointment letter. One of the main elements in this appointment letter is the contract signed between two parties termed as employee and employer so it is also known as a job contract.  While the signs between two parties were completed, then formally the appointment as well as an entire selection process will accomplish and leads towards the placement.

## Methodology

I cleared my philosophical position as the socio-constructivist to advocating multiple realities about the selection process of TU and its lack in comparison to the Mathis et al. (2012) approaches in this study. Likewise, I employed narrative inquiry as to the research design of this study, which is qualitative in nature. Thus, I gathered the qualitative data from two selected participants in this study. These participants were selected purposively and gave pseudo names as "A" and "B" for maintaining anonymity. Among these participants, one belongs to an official of TUSC and other referring as Head of Department (HOD) of the university campus. Then, I collected data from them by employing in-depth interview and collected data were first codified, categorized, and transcribed to make them thematic. After this, I analyzed and discussed the themes by comparing Mathis et al. (2012) approaches and other pieces of literature.

## Results and Discussions

Selection is the process of Human Resource Management (HRM) which starts from employment application forms and ends in the placement process according to Mathis et al. (2012) approaches. Considering it, the selection process of TU begins with collecting the application form from its potential candidates, which is also revealed by the participants of this study. The first participant "A" elucidates that the TU publicly announces the notice of vacancy and also determines the minimum requirements for the vacant post. Likewise, the participant "B" agrees to the "A" and further adds "*the candidates who have the minimum sorts of requirements mentioned in the vacancy*

*can fill in the application form. The application forms are available in the TUSC office and candidates cans get it by paying the charges of application forms*". They both, participants mention that the candidates can get 35 days to fill in the form. In addition, if they lost the given time duration to fill-in form, they will also get an extended date, but instead, they must pay double charges. Furthermore, participant "B" proudly claims "*There were a lot of candidates who applied for the vacant post on TU. So there is a tough competition to be selected in the vacant post.*" This information reveals that the number of applicants in the vacant post was overcrowded in TU and TU collects an abundance of money as the name of the application fee from applicants. Whatever the provision of this filling application form reveals as the first stage of the selection process concerning Mathis et al. (2012) approaches. The purpose of the filling application forms is to derive the detailed information of the potential candidates and leads to the second step as an initial screening.

The initial screening is carried when the organization got a number of the applicant's file for the vacant posts. It employs to sorting the small number of capable candidates from a pool of applicants. Considering it, if the organization took exams or other measures to select candidates for the entire applicants, it took a lot of time and spends huge resources. So, the adoption of this step saves the huge time and resources to select appropriate candidates and utilize the surplus resources in other steps of selection. In the context of TU, I derived it did not employ the initial screening as a step in the selection process. Both participants agree to these facts and further tried to explain its reasons as "*We did not conduct the screening test among applicants because we charged them a huge amount of money as the name of applicant fee. So ethically we can't stop them from participating in writing the exams. If we sort them, the applicants will resist it.*" This statement divulges that the omitting of the screening step in the TU is due to the provision of huge charges as the application fee for the applicants. So, they moved directly towards the selection test without initial screening.

The selection test in the TU is referred to as the written exam for the candidates. For this purpose, TU conducted the written exams for all candidates who filled in the application forms whatever they were highly qualified or not. In this context, participant A says "*the experts construct the two sets of the question for the written exam for the applicants. The applicants must solve these*

*questions within the given time frame in the examination center. After the exam, the answer sheet written by applicants was checked by the examiner*." Likewise, participant B adds "*the applicant who secures 60 percent in these both subjects were selected as the pass candidates from the written test. Then, the candidates who secured higher marks among entire applicants were selected for the interview purposes*." It means that the TU organized the written exam for assessing the applicant's quality either they suit the post or not. However, many scholars argued that written test cannot exactly measure the intelligence and skills which is required for the faculty. It mainly measured the memorization power and concept regard subject matter within the applicants. So, the researcher believes that due to the pitfalls of written tests, there are also chances to selects the incompetent candidates in the post which outcomes are worst in the organization. It is seen as the poor educational achievement among students of TU in their exams. Likewise, the research and publishing scholarly work in high impact journals also seems low on TU. One of the reasons for this low productivity in the TU is due to selecting the incompetent candidates as the faculty and errors in this selection process are due to mainly lacking in the selection test as written exams.

The successful candidate for writing test was called for the interview in TU (Shrestha, 2019). More specifically, the TUSC conducted the interview process and the candidates were evaluated by the expert teams. In relation to it, participant "B" reveals "*the experts asked several questions to the candidates and judged them according to the answer given by the interviewee. In addition, the expert also assesses the candidate's quality via their attitudes, gestures, and way of presenting themselves in the interview process*." In the meantime, participant "A" adds that officials of TUSC also checked the interviewee's background, certificates, and medical status while conducting interviews. It refers that there is no separate process of checking background, references, and medical tests as the selection process on TU. Thus, due to those lacking rigorous background, medical, and references, checking there is some probability of selecting the false candidates who own duplicates certificates and experiences. This type of incident is also exposed in TU which signifies the lacking the rigorous selection process for the faculties.

Furthermore, both participants' told that the candidates who scored higher marks altogether written and interview exams were declared as successful candidates from the selection process. And finally, TUSC selects the successful candidates and refers to the TU for appointing them as a faculty

(TUSC, 2013). After this, TU appoints those successful candidates and makes their placement in the vacant posts (Shrestha, 2019) and the selection process is formally accomplished. However, these selected candidates were not directly appointed as the permanent faculty, they were in probation period. TU (1993) mentions "there is a provision of 1 year probation period in TU based on Teacher and personnel service regulation 2050, article 5 (as cited in Shrestha, 2019, p. 44). Then, the candidates who complete the probation periods were only selected as the permanent faculty members on TU.

Overall, TU performed the major steps of the selection process but not rigorously conducted entire steps proposed by Mathis et al. (2012). Due to those lacking in the selection process, TU is not always success to select deserving candidates in the posts. It means, sometimes TU also selected the few numbers of less competent and deserved candidates in the post which gives a low performance and productivity in organizations. In addition, these less deserved candidates also ruin the performances of other deserving candidates in the organization (Ekwoaba et al., 2015). That's why the consequences of low performance are seen in its world ranking regarding web-metrics. For instance, TU lost its previous world ranking 3678 (in 2018) to the 3767 ranks in 2020 (Orduna-Malea & Aguillo, 2020). Thus, TU continuously loses its world ranking among global universities, which means its performance is in degrading phase due to its few numbers of incompetent faculties.

## Conclusions

The entire organization's proficiency is based upon the selection process and it is a prime act to choose the best candidate for the organization. Thus, the selection process must be organized hastily to select a qualified employee who can contribute the organization for achieving success. For this purpose, TU employed the application forms, selection tests, interview, appointment, and placement as the selection process. However, this selection process lacks several crucial steps like screening, checking background, references, and medical tests mention in Mathis et al. (2010) approaches. This lack in the selection process drives TU to appoint incompetent candidates in the vacant post. As a consequence, TU severely faces low work performance, productivity, and effectiveness in the organization and its overall effects in its global ranking.

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