# Skill Marketing and Job Matching in the Employment Industry

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1: Background Study;

The era of globalization has given rise to profound changes in the way labor is utilized, specifically in terms of employment patterns and practices, as well as related issues of earnings (Anugwom 2007; Campbell 2018). The use of workers both in homes and organizations in Kenya has been increasing, and this has made formal and informal employment in the country’s labor market a subject of intellectual concern. Generally, around the world, in/formal workers are even filling positions that aren’t permanent in nature (Whitehouse et al. 1997; Junor 1998; Knox 2016). According to Wandera (2011), the job market as a whole hasn’t been well served in terms of creations and innovations sufficient to link up participants in the industry. The job market is largely classified as formal and informal sectors, where the informal sector is usually less catered in many fronts (Gusdorf 2008). Wandera (2011) conclusively linked poor framework and systems for casual/informal job market to reduced productivity.

Casual job recruitment is the process of selecting and hiring the most suitable candidates for a task (O’Donnell 2014). In this case, casual job matching would be defined as an activity of linking those looking for casual job to those with casual jobs (Kalejaiye, 2014). Kalejaive (2014) also ascertains that in/formal job recruitment in a timely and cost-effective manner is a common goal for the above two parties. A practical in/formal job recruitment solution can help both formal and casual job seekers easily obtain recruitment opportunities and reduce the time they need to spend and also free recruitment companies from resources allocated in advertisements and screening (Georgios et al., 2003; Drigas et al., 2004).

With the rapid development of the internet and networks, online recruitment platforms have become the mainstream channel for jobseekers to hunt jobs and recruiters to find suitable employees (Connelly & Gallagher, 2014). Over the past few years, numerous software systems have been developed and claimed as a solution to the casual recruitment problem. However, Kalejaive (2014) was of view that the traditional recruitment platforms are inefficient, while Greebberg (2010) concluded that the technologies or algorithms used in current recruitment systems are insufficient to achieve quick, satisfactory performance in relation to in/formal job matching.

This study proposes an innovative job matching system, serving both the formal and casual job markets. The system has been christened Employmetoday.com –and aims at simplifying the traditional recruitment process and optimize the existing job matching algorithms. The system will be user driven, and will provide well-built features and intermediary services identified in literature review.

The project will first review the existing recruitment systems and platforms, and identify deficiencies of them. Secondly, it will explain the proposed job-matching algorithm and intermediary services, followed by the design, testing and validation, and implementation. Thirdly and finally, present results, conclusion and recommendations.

## 1.2: Statement of the Problem;

Matching of skills and jobs in the employment industry is gaining importance with rising unemployment, unemployability cases and increasing difficulties for people entering the labor market to find jobs matching their portfolio of skills, with more relevance to what they are attached to. At the same time, structural trends challenge the country’s ability to provide the skills that its economies need to grow and prosper. One major challenge to addressing the skills gap is the lack of quality vocational training. The skills needed in energy and mining sectors in Kenya are usually acquired through informal technical and vocational education and training institutions.

A major case in the country is its extractive sector - covering oil, gas and mining – is booming. There have been recent discoveries of commercially viable resources, like oil and gold. The sector’s contribution to the country’s gross domestic product currently stands at around 1%. But the government expects this to reach 10% by 2030. This suggests there’s still a great deal to be exploited. But to realize the potential of these resources, more people with the right skills are needed. The number of skilled workers in Kenya’s labor market does not match the extractives sector’s current needs. Although the size of the skills gap in Kenya is unknown because detailed research hasn’t been done, industry sources have made it clear that they are struggling to fill posts. According to a report on Kenya’s petroleum sector, the extractives sector is still dominated by foreign expertise in technical, exploration and production skills. In Turkana County for example, where most upstream petroleum operations are taking place, the high unemployment rate is linked to the mismatch between workforce skills and new employment opportunities.

Such instances support the purposeful objective of this proposal in that, for the unemployed lot who graduated in courses of such fields in institutions of high learning, despite the levels of education, from certificate qualifications to PHDs, there would be a countrywide platform that gives them the privilege to market their acquired skills via a personal online portfolio to the corporations and employers seeking qualified employees to work for them. This can help reduce unemployment levels within the country and the need to seek external contract-awarding and employment, with the turnover being of benefit to the local government, corporations, business owners, employers and, in the largest scale, the potential jobseekers within the job industry.

## 1.3: Objectives;

This proposal covers the following objectives as a whole, split into both the main objectives as well as the specific objectives.

**1.3.1: Main Objectives;**

* Provide a countrywide platform through which personal skillsets are marketed by jobseekers.
* Provide a countrywide platform through which employers are able to handpick potential jobseekers for jobs with particular criteria.

**1.3.2: Specific Objectives;**

These will be the in-depth objectives of the project and related study;

* To provide a skill evaluation system that employers set criteria with and selects jobseekers with the closest match for the set criteria.
* To provide a detailed skill basis for jobseekers, entailing the skill set and level required to suit a particular job, outlined by employers in the platform.
* To provide a benchmark for making career planning for the employees in the organization, laid out by employers in the platform.
* To investigate the indicators affecting jobseekers’ and employers’ requirements in an in/formal employee-employer matrix.

## 1.4: Scope;

The proposal seeks to cover a set of problems faced by the two relevant side(s) of the job industry i.e., **employers** and **jobseekers**. On the greater scale, the country’s employment rate is affected. The suitability of this proposal under these segments is discussed individually below;

**1.4.1: Employers;**

This covers business owners, shareholders, corporations and companies (private-owned or government-owned). A vast majority of employers require specific skillsets when hiring and a difficulty is experienced when looking for potential jobseekers who match the requirements of the jobs in terms of skills, knowledge, advances and technicality. A major goal of employers and corporations is to reach their desired goals through what they give to their environments, and their caliber of employees plays a big role in achieving this.

Thus, the need to find best-fit jobseekers and employees within the industry grows in demand over time and the lack of promotion of such jobseekers causes the employers a lack of view of potent in the local industry thus end up opting for external employment, which in turn leads to unemployment within the local industry. This proposal seeks to fill that gap by providing employers a platform through which they can handpick potential employees and test them in whichever way to determine their suitability in their companies.

**1.4.2: Jobseekers;**

With the introduction of this system, jobseekers with different levels of knowledge, skillset and technicality now get the chance to market their portfolio through the platform, out to the greater market that awaits to find suitable employees. Through this platform, jobseekers are given a space to place their portfolio from studies to work experience and any other records relevant for employment suitability. The more merit a job seeker’s portfolio holds, the higher the chances of securing employment in their fields of interest within the industry.

**1.4.3: Government and country;**

This is considered the greatest scale in the scope of the proposed system as the gap between potential jobseekers and employers and could see a drop in the unemployment rate amongst youths and other graduates of different age groups, from as young as 21. The priority target of the proposal though, is the high institution learners and graduates as they face the greater threat of unemployment and lack of jobs in their fields of interest. With the support of the government and other major shareholders of the system, we project a 30-35% drop in unemployment rate amongst the set target group in a matter of a decade, along with creating a market in which skill and technicality are more in demand which in turn leads to greater investment in the acquisition of the two through high education institutions.

## 1.5: Justification;

With the introduction of the proposed system to the labor market, a number of advantages can be gained with its implementation in the hiring process. A major scale of advantages and benefits are witnessed by the employers seeking potential jobseekers to suit their needs. These advantages are explained as follows;

* **Increased overall company performance**; an estimated 79% of business leaders see retention and engagement as problems in their organizations. Creating an engaged workforce starts with building the right team – and that starts with hiring the right people. An engaged workforce is a powerful, productive workforce, and the best way to find the right members for your team is to use a tool that matches candidates to jobs, based on such critical factors as qualifications, personality, skills, job requirements, and company culture.
* **More profitable organizations**; it happens that when a business reduces its recruitment and retention expense, it has more money to devote to other programs. With a job matching system, it’s able to maximize its human capital management investments. In this way, organizational growth depends on the success of the recruitment department.
* **Reduced turnover costs**; hiring candidates who just partially or mostly fit a position is only a temporary fix to a bigger problem. While it does fill the vacant position, it’s only a matter of time before the position is vacant again. If you use a job matching system to hire the right employee the first time, you can avoid costly retention problems. Moreover, when your retention rates are high, you won’t have to spend so much money on training replacement hires all the time.

In summary, smart hiring means using the right tools to help you recruit better. A job matching system may be just the thing to help you find the best candidates for your organization. Job matching platforms can also uncover some concerns in certain candidates, subsequently saving you time and money in assessing their fit.

Finding the best candidate isn’t always easy, but it can be easier with the right tools. It is therefore important for employers to find tools that help them build a talent-driven workplace in which team performance and employee retention are boosted tremendously.

## 1.6: Budget;

## 1.7: Schedule;

The project’s specific development stages are to be undertaken as indicated in the chart below;

Figure 1; Development stages and their allocated time.

## 1.8: Overview;

The employment industry has over time come across situations where applicants selected by companies and businesses for specific jobs do not satisfy the required skill capability that the jobs demand. This has caused immense negative impact to the employers at large (companies, businesses, individuals) in that productivity of their day-to-day functions depletes due to lack of capable skill level to handle the errands required. With the proposed system, however, employers should now have a more complex way to assert that qualified applicants have the skill level required to handle the job at hand. This in turn helps employers to be sustainable in their productivity and achieve their goals in a handier manner, giving them satisfactory outcome.