

EXPERIENCE-BASE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION REQUIREMENTS AND STAFF PERFORMANCE IN PES IN RIVERS STATE.

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ABSTRACT

The broad objective of the study is to investigate the relationship between experience-base recruitment and selection requirements and staff performance in PEs in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to: determine the effects of experience-based recruitment and selection on financial profitability of public enterprises in Rivers State, Descriptive survey design was adopted and a total population of two thousand eight hundred and six seven (2867), drawn from the area of the study was used. The sample size of the study was 351 which was calculated from the total population using Taro Yameni formula. Structured questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Data collected for the study were analysed using frequency distribution tables, and simple percentage method while Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to empirically test the hypotheses formulated for the study. Findings revealed among others that lack of financial profitability among PEs in Rivers state is associated with the neglect of experience-based recruitment and selection requirements for sourcing applicants into the public enterprises. The researcher therefore, recommended that in order to improve the competency of staff of PEs in Rivers State, there is need to uphold experienced candidates with relevant skills should be employed in order to gain financial profitability and return on investment by PEs in Rivers state in order to improve the quality of service delivery of public enterprises in Rivers state.

Keywords: Experience-base, Recruitment, Selection, Competency, Service Delivery

INTRODUCTION

Ojeifo and Alegbeleye (2015) also added that one major reason why public enterprises featured prominently in developing economies is because at independence their indigenes were either too poor or too unknowledgeable and so could not muster enough capital to embark on major commercial projects to run public enterprises. So the government has closed the gap. Many sectors such as telecommunications (before privatization) power, oil and gas could only be established as public enterprises because they are highly capital intensive.

In view of the above, it can be argued that public enterprises play critical role in the economy of every state. Hence, recruitment and selection of persons to man the affairs and activities of these enterprises become imperative in order to make sure that they continuously and efficiently discharge their assigned responsibilities. It has been argued by scholars such as Djabatey (2012) and Ekwoaba, Ikeije and Ufoma, (2015) that in order for the enterprises to build and sustain competitive advantage, proper staffing is critical. Thus, recruitment and selection have become imperative in organizations because individuals need to be attracted on a timely basis in sufficient numbers and with appropriate qualifications. Croft (1996) in Odor, Martins-Emesom and Bakwuye (2019) defines

recruitment as the analysis of a job and the features the organization will look for in attracting candidates to apply to the organization and the offering of various terms and conditions of employment to a chosen potential employee. Fatiregun (1992) in Onah (2015) also sees recruitment as that process of assessing a job, announcing the vacancy, arousing interest and stimulating people to apply. While recruitment is the process of identifying and attracting potential candidates from within and outside an organization to begin evaluating them for future employments, selection, begins When the right caliber of candidates are identified.

Selection therefore, is the process and rank ordering of the applications and interviewing applicants in order to determine the offer of jobs. After recruitment exercise has produced an applicant pool, selection activities aims at identifying the most suitable applicants and persuading them to join the organization. It is the large stage in the recruitment circle that deals with making final decision on the most suitable candidates to fill vacant job positions based on relevant qualifications, experience and aptitude (Omisore and Okofu, 2014, Onah, 2015; Adeyoriyu and Fajebe, 2018; & Fathmath, Ferdous & Ahmad, 2020).

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in the course of the study.

HA1: There is significant relationship between experience-based recruitment and selection and financial profitability of the selected public enterprises in Rivers State.

HO1: There is no significant relationship between experience-based recruitment and selection and financial profitability of the selected public enterprises in Rivers State.

Concept of Selection

After attracting candidates through recruitment process, the next step is to select from this pool those that will be employed. Selection therefore, is the process of choosing from the pool of applicants, those to be hired by the organization based on the specified organizational requirements. This stage in the recruitment circle is very crucial as it is through this that the employers made decisions on who is the most appropriate candidate to be employed of all the job applicants that has the relevant qualifications (Yaro, 2014). It is in this stage that the recruiters are very much careful not to select candidates that will be a burden in the workforce. The key point of selection is how to make fair and relevant assessment, which indicates strengths and weaknesses of applicant (Djabatey, 2012). A lot of candidates may apply for a particular position, candidates even though in most cases with same qualification but with different background, different experiences, different affiliations and different attitudes or characters. However, even if all of them are qualified to be offered the job, not all of them are going to get it as such the most suitable candidate is the one to be selected. If this is done, it is an indication that the organization is powerful and has strength. Strength in this sense connotes the ability to do the right thing. This is where most recruiters in the Nigerian bureaucracy are found wanting. Instead of going on the right direction by appointing only those that deserve to be employed, the reverse is the case. Recruitment and selection process is based on action between "applicant and job", which is dependent on stating a need by an organization, using the most appropriate recruitment and selection techniques and on "reviewing, evaluating and modifying the recruitment and selection system in the light of experience". Despite the fact

that both activities are directed towards obtaining suitably qualified employees, in which recruitment activities lay the groundwork for the selection process by providing the pool of applicants from whom the selectors may choose. Differentiate the two terms while establishing a clear link between them in the following way: "Recruitment is the process of generating a pool of capable people to apply for employment to an organization. Selection is the process by which managers and others use specific instruments to choose from a pool of applicants a person or persons more likely to succeed in the job(s), given management goals and legal requirements." This is a clear barking of the views of who emphasized on recruiting only those that will show commitment and contribute to the organizations progress. In setting out a similar distinction, suggest that: "although the two functions are closely connected, each requires a separate range of skills and expertise and may in practice be fulfilled by different staff members". Perhaps there are certain protocols and processes involved. even though the functions are carried out almost simultaneously i.e. within the same context at the same time, the process involved is conducted bit by bit i.e. in stages handled by an expert in each stage. First of all a written application has to be submitted which must be screened and then be forwarded to the next stage for sorting and filtering and finally selection of the right candidate.

Performance Approach

- (a) **Goal approach:** This approach assumes that organizations are planned logical goal-seeking entities and they are meant to accomplish one or more predetermined goals. Goal approach focuses on output side and whether or not the organization attains its goals with respect to preferred levels of output. Goals defined areas in which organization have been or are expecting to be directing their energy (Hable, 2006). It sees effectiveness with respect to its internal organizational objectives and performance. Typical goal-attainment factors include profit and efficiency maximization (Osah, et al, 2017). However, it is argued that one of the major constraints of this approach pertains to the content comparability of organizational goals. To Gable (2006), what an organization declares as its formal goals are typically dependent upon its standards of social desirability. More specifically organizations which are goal oriented tend to avoid more negative outcomes. The utilization of goals as a standard for assessing employee performance is challenging. The goal approach presumes consensus on goals. However, considering the fact that there are numerous goals and varied interests inside an organization, consensus, is probably not possible.
- (b) **System Resource Approach:** This approach was developed in response to goal approach. Goal approach did not take cognizance of the fact an organization operates within a given environment. The system resource approach however, sees an organization as open system. The organization obtains inputs, participates in transformation processes, and generates outputs. Cunningham, (2001) in Osah, et al, (2017) observes that the systems resource model defines the organization as a network of interrelated subsystem. It sees most organizations as entities which function in order to survive, at the same time rivaling for scarce and valued resources. It places much emphasizes on inputs over output and assumes that the organization consists of interrelated subsystems. If any sub-system functions inefficiently, it is going to influence the performance of the whole system. Organizational performance is therefore influenced by the nature of relationship that exists between its inter dependent parts within its internal and external environment. The

disadvantage of this approach relates to its measurement of means. For instance, a higher amount of obtained resource is not going to promise effective usage. In addition, it is difficult to define an ideal degree of employee efficiency across district organizations.

(c) **Internal Process Approach:** This approach has been developed in response to a fixed output view of goal approach. It looks at internal activities. Internal process approach assumes that performance is assessed as internal organizational health and effectiveness. In view of the approach, effectiveness is the capability to get better at internal efficiency, co-ordination, commitment and staff satisfaction. It assesses effort as opposed to the attained effect. The organization may assure its existence and development by synergetic implementation of efficiency and effectiveness the process control (Potocan, 2006). Some experts have criticize the internal-process approach, like the system-resource approach, cannot lead to legitimate indicators of employee performance itself. Rather, it is accepted as approach for studying its assumed predicators. Similar to the system-resource approach, the internal-process approach could possibly be applied only where comparable organizational outcomes can hardly be assessed accurately. This approach deals more narrowly with internal mechanism (Sharma, 2017, Osah, et al, 2017).

(d) **Strategic Constituencies Approach:** This focuses on the groups that have a stake in the organization which are directly or indirectly influenced by the firm (Sharma, 2017). The approach suggests that an efficient organization is one which fulfills the demands of these constituencies in its environment from where it needs support for its survival. It assesses the effectiveness to satisfy multiple strategic constituencies both internal and external to the organization. Strategic constituencies approach is ideal for organizations which rely highly on response to demands. The organization is seen as a set of internal and external constituencies that negotiate a complex set of constraints, goals and referents (Henri, 2003).

In view of the above, the present study aligns with the strategic constituencies approach. This assertion draws from the fact that the true measure of organization performance lies with its impact on the recipients of such organization's services. Public enterprises are established to render services to the general public. The public therefore, constitutes the constituencies of PEs. It follows rightly that any attempt to evaluate the performance of PEs without considering the impact of their services to their constituencies is a misnomer. Even though the other approaches such as Goal approach, Internal Process Approach and System Resource Approach made useful contributions to the management of public enterprises, they failed to take cognizance of the fact that organizations do not operate in a vacuum, rather they operate within a given system and environment which conditions their operations. The system resource approach sees an organization as open system. The organization obtains inputs, participates in transformation processes, and generates outputs. The resource system approach recognizes the fact that the workings of the external and internal environments of PEs determine their success. It's from the environment that PEs can make valid decisions regarding recruitment and selection of persons to fill vacant positions in the organization. Public enterprising in Rivers State is just a part of the entire agencies, parastatals, and all gamut of governmental apparatuses of the state. Other parts of the system such as the key relevant stakeholders, government

appointees, elected representatives among others may influence recruitment decisions in the PEs.

Quality productivity/Output

For PEs that produces goods and deals on certain products, their productive capacity or output can be used to measure their performance. This may take two dimensions. One could be to determine the unit productive capacity of individual members of the organization or an aggregate measure of the entire organizations output. One thing to consider, however, is the percentage of work output that is rejected or must be redone. In their contribution, Osah, et al, (2017) observed that organizational goals are strategic objectives that a company's management establishes to outline expected outcomes and guide employees' efforts, effectiveness is measured or gauged by how well the organization meets or exceeds its goals. Quality of output is most widely used effectiveness criterion for organizations. Dahi, Nesheim and Olsen (2009) propose six (6) dimensions to be included in the measurement of quality of work which are; job security, pay and fringe benefit, intrinsic reward system, work intensity, skills and autonomy. There are many advantages of establishing organizational goals:

They guide employee efforts, justify a company's activities and existence, define performance standards, provide constraints for pursuing unnecessary goals and functions as behavioral incentive.

Friedman (2013) added that having a working environment that promotes wellness and happiness do not only increase the mood of employees but also the quality of output. Organizations should clearly communicate organizational goals to engage employees in their work and achieve organizations desired ends.

According to him, while an organization can communicate its goals through formal channels, the most effective and direct way to do so is through employees' direct supervisors. This allows managers to work with their staff to develop smart goals that align with the organization's goals.

On productivity, Kalliola (2003) in Darabi (2017) argues that the legitimacy of public services is derived from the capacity to respond to needs of citizens in an economically efficient way. However, scholars who research on performance and productivity in the public sector are not always in an agreement when it comes to the exact distinction(s) or the functional relationship among concepts such as: output, outcome, results, impact, objectives, accomplishments and direct/indirect or primary/secondary performance indicators. In Kalliola's formulation, at least two point illustrate the issues that make the whole question of public sector productivity a highly contentious one in many countries. Are citizens being provided with what they need, and how could those concerned move better use of the resources at their disposal? Arising from the foregoing, Onyegbule (2017) conceptualized organizational productivity as systemic approach for continuously improving an organization's performance capacity and clients outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

For the purpose of this study, descriptive survey design was adopted.

Population of the Study

S/N	Selected Public Enterprises	Saff
1	Notore Ltd	119
2	Siat Nigeria Ltd	102
3	Pabod Breweries Ltd	156
4	Delta Rubber Company Ltd	204
5	Rivers State Vegetable Oil Ltd	218
6	Rivers State Television Authority	149
7	Rivers State Newspaper Corporation	197
8	Greater PortHarcourt City Development Authority	183
9	Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation	245
10	Rivers State Fire Service	191
11	Rivers State Development Agency	166
12	Rivers State Microfinance Agency	112
13	Rivers State Waste Management Agency	144
14	Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Agency	181
15	Enlightened Public	500
	TOTAL	2867

Source: Personnel Departments of the Selected Government Establishments in the study area, 2020.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Due to the large size of the population, Taro Yamene’s formula was applied to get the sample size

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for data collection was questionnaire instrument structured using Likert’s four (4) point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument was structured into section A and Section B. Section A contained socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents while section B contained structured questionnaire items.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected for the study were analyzed using frequency distribution tables and simple percentage method. Also, Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation through SPSS was used in empirical testing of the hypotheses that guided the study. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to find the relationship between variables that was measured on the interval scales. It measured the goodness of the fit of the least square lines. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was computed by using the following formula:

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y))}{\sqrt{(n(\sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2)(n(\sum y^2) - (\sum y)^2)}}$$

Where r = Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient

- n = Number of Paired Observations
- Σx = Sum of squared scores on variables
- Σy = Sum of scores on variables
- Σy² = Sum of squared scores on variables

The hypotheses were tested at 5% level of significance. Hence, when the p-value is lesser than 0.05, the alternate hypothesis would be accepted whereas when the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis would be accepted.

RESULTS

Correlations Test of Hypothesis one

Correlations

		Experience_Based_Recruitment	Competency_of_Workers
Experience_Based_Recruitment	Pearson Correlation	1	-.772**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	322	322
Competency_of_Workers	Pearson Correlation	-.772**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	322	322

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result of the correlation analysis above shows a negative correlation value of -0.772 and a probability value of 0.000 which implies a significant negative relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Since the PV of 0.000 is less than 0.05 at 5% level of significance, we then reject the second null hypothesis, and conclude that there is significant negative relationship between experience-based recruitment and selection and financial profitability of public enterprises in Rivers State. The implication is that while public enterprises in Rivers State violate experience requirements in the recruitment and selection of candidates, their financial performance continues to dwindle. In other words, candidates with right experience make positive contributions to management and by extension, financial profitability of public enterprises. However, in Rivers State public enterprises, recruitment and selection of persons who lack the experience specifications limit expertise necessary to boost the financial performance of the enterprises. This is further buttressed by the result of the data presented in tables 16 to 23 above.

Effects of Experience-Based Recruitment and Selection on Financial Profitability of Public Enterprise in Rivers State

Objective two sought to determine the effects of experience based recruitment and selection on financial profitability of public enterprise in Rivers State. As such, data was collected and analysed in using frequency distribution tables while hypothesis was empirically tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics. The result of the correlation test of hypothesis two showed a negative correlation value of -0.772 and a probability value of 0.000 which implies a significant negative relationship between the dependent and independent variables. In view of the result, we therefore reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant but negative relationship between experience-based recruitment and selection and financial profitability of public enterprises in Rivers State. The implication is that while public enterprises in rivers state violate experience requirements in the recruitment and selection of candidates, their financial performance continues to dwindle. In other words, candidates with right experience make positive contributions to management and by extension, financial profitability of public enterprises. However, in Rivers State public enterprises, recruitment and selections who

lack the experience specifications limit expertise necessary to boost the financial performance of the enterprises. This was further buttressed by the result of the data presented in tables 16 to 23.

Table 1 of the study sought to find out whether public enterprises in Rivers State have standard experience specifications such as previous roles, skills and years of experience in the recruitment and selection of candidates. From the table above 170 (52.8%) strongly agreed 82 (25.5%) agreed, 44 (13.7%) disagreed while 26 (8%) strongly disagreed. This implies that public enterprises in Rivers State have standard experience specifications such as previous roles, skills and years of experience in the recruitment and selection of candidates. The set experience requirements match the skills and expertise required for given positions in the organisation as revealed in Table 1 which shows that 154 (47.8%) strongly agreed 68 (21.1%) agreed, 58 (18%) disagreed while 42 (13%) strongly disagreed. This means that the set experience requirements match the skills and expertise required for given positions in the organisation. From table 18 it was revealed that, 102 (31.7%) strongly agreed, 98 (30.4%) agreed, 86 (26.7%) disagreed, 36 (11.2%) strongly disagreed on whether the specified recruitment guidelines for work experience requirements are not religiously followed in recruitment and selection of candidates into the public enterprises in Rivers State. This means that the specified recruitment guidelines for work experience requirements are not religiously followed in recruitment and selection of candidates into the public enterprises in Rivers State. Not only candidates who fulfill the skill and experience requirements are recruited into the public enterprises in Rivers State as revealed in table 19 where it was revealed that, 122 (37.9%) strongly agreed 96 (29.8%) agreed, 61 (18.9%) disagreed while 43 (13.4%) strongly disagreed. This implies that not only candidates who fulfill the skill and experience requirements are recruited into the public enterprises in Rivers State.

However, the consequences of recruitment and selection of candidates in contravention of the set experience specifications has on the financial profitability of the public enterprises in Rivers State. Table 20 for instance sought to find out whether public enterprises in Rivers State cover costs of operations in their financial performance. Findings from data analyzed shows that 51 (15.8%) strongly agreed, 82 (25.5%) agreed, 75 (23.3%) disagreed while 114(35.4%) strongly disagreed. This implies public enterprises in Rivers State do not cover costs of operations in their financial performance. Moreso, Table 21 aimed to find out if public enterprises in Rivers State consistently generate surplus revenue return on investment for the government through their operation shows that 24 (7.5%) strongly agreed, 31 (9.6%) agreed, 93 (28.9%) disagreed while 174 (54.0%) strongly disagreed. This means public enterprises in Rivers State do not consistently generate surplus revenue return on investment for the government through their operation. In Table 22, the study sought to find out if public enterprises in Rivers state do not depend on subventions from government for its operations. From the table above, 13 (4%) strongly agreed, 37 (11.5%) agreed, 92 (28.6%) disagreed while 180 (55.9%) strongly disagreed. This implies that public enterprises in Rivers state depend on subventions from government for its operations. Table 23 further sought to determine whether public enterprises in Rivers State have diversified their investments in financially viable activities for improved revenue generation. From the table was observed that 15 (4.7%) strongly agreed, 11(3.4%) agreed, 192 (59.6%) disagreed, 104 (32.3%) strongly disagreed. Therefore, Public enterprises in

Rivers State have not diversified their investments in financially viable activities for improved revenue generation.

CONCLUSION

Recruitment and selection taking as one process that centres on employee resourcing is a critical and very crucial human resource management function. The above buttresses the importance of recruitment and selection requirements to the performance of PEs generally and Rivers State in particular. By the provisions of chapter two (fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy), sub-section 16 (1&2), Nigeria is a mixed economy state and state participation in the ownership of enterprises is justified and not a misnomer. This informed the decision of Rivers State government to establish enterprises. These enterprises are to provide services in special areas ranging from information, to road maintenance, fire service, commerce, etc. However, the performance of public enterprises in Nigeria and Rivers state in particular over the years is not commendable. This, the study has linked this to non-adherence to recruitment and selection requirements, in the course of employing people to man the affairs of these establishments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Experienced people with relevant skills should be employed in order to gain financial profitability and return on investment by PEs in Rivers state. This can be achieved by adhering to recruitment and selection requirements each time there is job openings that needed to be filled. This can start from genuine advertisement of the vacant positions among others.
2. In order to improve the quality of service delivery of public enterprises in Rivers state, there is urgent need to always conduct aptitude test before job offer. Tests are increasingly becoming an integral part of the selection process because of its obvious advantages-ability and aptitude tests measure specific skill sets and the resultant score gives an indication of existing ability or potential to learn skills required for the job.

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