

Recruitment and Selection Requirements and Performance of Selected Public Enterprises in Rivers State 2010-2021

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Abstract: *This study examined the relationship between recruitment and selection requirements and staff performance in PEs in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to: ascertain the extent to which Quota System-based recruitment and selection has affected competency of workers in the Selected public enterprises in Rivers State; and determine the effects of experience-based recruitment and selection on financial profitability of public enterprises in Rivers State. Resource-Based Theory developed by Wernetfelt (1984) and expanded by Barney (1991) was used as the theoretical framework for the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted and a total population of two thousand eight hundred and sixty 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: there is no significant positive relationship between quota system-based recruitment and competency of workers in the selected public enterprises in Rivers state. The study also found 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 enterprise. The researchers therefore, recommended that there is need to uphold merit system rather than quota system in recruitment and selection of candidates into public enterprises in Rivers State in order to improve the competency of staff of PEs in the study area, experienced candidates with relevant skills should be employed in order to gain financial profitability and return on investment by PEs in Rivers state; among others.*

KEYWORDS: *Recruitment, Selection, Performance, Competency, and Financial Profitability*

INTRODUCTION

Performance of public enterprises (PEs) or what may be referred to as corporations largely depends on the quality of their staff usually drawn from an objective recruitment and selection exercise. Public enterprises are business organizations entirely or partly established and controlled by the government through the state authority (Nwali, Nwokeiwu & Oganezi, 2019). To Laleye (2002) it is an organization that is set up as a corporate body and as part of the governmental

apparatus for an entrepreneurial or entrepreneurial -like objective. In most countries of the world, particularly the developing ones, the decades following World War II (particularly, the 1960s and early 1970s), witnessed a massive intervention of the government in national economics. One of the ways through which the government intervened in the economies of those countries is by establishing

public enterprises or state owned companies (Ezeani, 2005). In Nigeria in particular, Ojeifo and Alegbeleye (2015) note that the genesis of government involvement in the establishment, ownership and management of public enterprises could be traced within the epochs of Nigeria's pre-independence and post independence experiences. During the colonial rule and after independence in 1960, it was discovered that it was imperative that government became involved in business like activities as an entrepreneur to perform some business roles. This led Nigeria military government to establish the Nigeria Enterprise Promotion Decree of 1972, which commenced on 1st April 1974 and later amended in 1976, with the cardinal objective of encouraging government participation in the ownership and management of public enterprises (Ojeifo and Alegbeleye (2015). The legal foundation that rationalize government involvement in public enterprises in Nigeria and Rivers State in particular is drawn from the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended. For instance, Chapter II of the Constitution: Fundamental objectives and Directive of principals of State Policy, Section 16 (Economic Objectives subsection 1, a, b & c, among others stated inter alia:

The state shall within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in this constitution: (a) harness the resources of the nation and promote national prosperity and an efficient, a dynamic and self-reliant economy; (b) control the national economy in such a manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and operate the major sectors of the economy; (c) without prejudice to its right to operate or participate in areas of the economy, other than the major sectors of the economy, manage and operate the major sectors of the economy; (d) without prejudice to the right of any person to participate in areas of the economy within the major sector of the economy, protect the right of every citizen to engage in any economic activities outside the major sectors of the economy; (2c) that the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of

wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group.

In line with the above, scholars have over the years advanced reasons/rationale in different perspectives to justify the existence of PEs. For instance Lalaye (2002) in Obikeze and Obi (2004:253) outlined the reasons to include: The desire to use PE as an instrument of effective plan implementation in a context where it appears futile to devise a development plan for the private sector; the need to secure economic independence; the urgent desire to assure government control over strategic "sectors of the economy (example, Central Banking, broadcasting, iron and steel, roads, shipping), the need to separate some activities from the civil service and allows more autonomy in running them; the perceived need to provide employment for the citizens in context where private sector offers limited employment opportunities; the need to ensure state control of key profitable enterprises with a view to generating revenues that will add to available national capital for financing development programmes and projects and the desire of some socialist enterprises to pursue the objectives of preventing the concentration of wealth or of the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group (example, promoting equitable distribution of wealth). 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.

Considering the fact that recruitment and selection gives the organization the opportunity to fill job positions with people who possess requisite qualifications and experience towards the accomplishment of the stated organizational goals. It is apt to argue that the performance of public enterprises is strongly tied to its adherence to recruitment and selection requirements for sourcing

of members of her staff. Hence, Onah (2015) submits that the importance of having efficient and effective procedures for recruitment and selection can hardly be over exaggerated. If organizations according to him are able to find and employ staff who constantly fulfill their roles and are capable of taking on increased responsibilities, they are immeasurably better placed to deal with the opportunities and threats arising from their operating environment than competitors who are always struggling to build and maintain their work force. Ekwoaba, et al, (2015) in this regard observes that recruitment and selection criteria have significant effect on organization's performance and that the more objective the recruitment and selection criteria, the better the organization's performance. It provides the opportunity for

Statement of the Problem

Scholars and research students alike have continued relentlessly in the study of recruitment and selection based on the fact that efficient and qualified human resource is inevitable if organizations and in particular, public enterprises must perform up to the acceptable standard. The essence of recruitment and selection requirements, criteria or policies is to make sure that the right steps and procedures are taken to equip the organization with the right caliber of persons towards the attainment of the stated goals and objectives. This is why Igbokwe, Chinyeaka, and Agbodike (2015) in Odor, et al, (2019) established that there is a significant relationship between recruitment policies and practices and employees performance in Nigeria civil service.

However, instead of strict adherence to such issues as human resource plan, job analysis, descriptions, competence, experience, aptitude test, educational qualifications among others, which constitute recruitment and selection requirements, the opposite appears to be the case in the recruitment and selection of persons into public enterprises in Rivers State. Unfortunately, in practice considerations such as political affiliation, ethnicity, executive order, religious balance,

the human resource managers to stock the organization with persons with relevant skills and human capital.

The criteria, procedures or steps that must be taken or principles that should be considered in conducting an efficient recruitment and selection in the organization are what the researcher referred to as requirements. However, rather than application global standard recruitment standard which include merit, competency among others, what obtains in Nigeria including is considerations as quota system, catchment area, federal character, etc. These practices seem undermine performance of PEs. It is based on the above that this study became imperative to investigate the relationship between recruitment and selection requirements and staff performance in PEs in Rivers State.

and quota system seem to characterize recruitment and filling of positions of authority in public enterprises in Nigeria and Rivers State in particular. Political influence in pursuance of the quota system more often than not increases the chances of filling superior positions with less qualified persons and appointment without identifying vacant positions especially in the management of public enterprises in Rivers State. In a bid to accommodate multi-cultural and multi-tribal components of Rivers State in recruitment of persons into the state owned enterprises, merit is often undermined at the expense of quota considerations.

Public enterprises in Rivers State appear moribund. Huge resources are expended in the establishment of such enterprises, yet most of them do not last long. Year in year out, net returns on investment of most state-owned enterprises stand at zero or negative threshold whereas output in social service provision remains invisible. It was therefore for this pitiable performance that Anyebe (2018) lamented that from the stand-point of return on investment, there is sufficient evidence that in the main, state-owned enterprises in Nigeria and Rivers State in particular have

proved a huge failure in comparison with results from similar investments in the private sector. He lamented that, in terms of their social objectives, including the provision of employment opportunities and the modernization factor, their general ineffectiveness has made it near unfeasible to achieve any meaningful result. One thus finds scattered across the country the skeletons of defunct or moribund state-owned enterprises whose establishments were marked with high expectations and fun-fare several years past. Some barely outlast the life span of the government administrations that establish them. There is always a question of sustainability of those enterprises. Yet these enterprises are run and operated by individuals. Could it be that the right kind of people were not used for running them? Omoleke & Adeopo (2005) document that appointments in Nigeria are often made based on political inclination not necessary on merit. This seems to hinder appointment of qualified persons in most public enterprises in Rivers State and manifests in the productivity level of those enterprises. In Rivers State PEs, Technocrats usually appear to be kept aside while unqualified politically well connected persons are given appointments based on federal character criterion at both federal and state levels. Given the fact that the success or failure of enterprises is dependent on the quality of the workforce of that enterprise, human resources needed for effective performance of those enterprises may not be adequately and effectively recruited through neglect of standard recruitment requirements and processes.

Administrative staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) 1983 in Anyebe (2018: 2) in their reports indicates that:

One such impediment is the administrative structure which government itself has foisted upon them. On one side, there is a governing council or board of directors mostly without professional knowledge relevant to the activity. This board has wide-range powers over policy matters and over

matters of staff recruitment, promotion and discipline.

It is pitiable in Rivers State and other states that people can now permutate and predict correctly who becomes a board chairman or board member as soon as new administration comes on board. By mere fact of working for the party in power during an election, or having supported the party financially or accepting to step down for the "party's" preferred candidates "qualifies" one as a member of board of public enterprise not minding the necessary qualifications and experience required.

Related to the above is ethnocentrism- the belief that one's ethnic group is superior to others and should dominate. This tendency manifests in ethnic bickering, ranchor and jostling for positions in government institutions and establishments. This is not different from what obtains in recruitment and selection of persons into public enterprises in Rivers and appears to hinder performance. Ahmed (2011) asserted that most of the universities in Nigeria marginalize the minorities of either tribe or religion or gender which are major characteristics of ethnicity. In the same vein, Ogbonaya (2009) in Ene (2016) succinctly stated that in most of the Nigerian Universities, appointment of the governing council and vice chancellor, staff employment, and promotions are usually done on the basis of ethnic considerations. In the quest for ethnic and tribal balancing in Rivers State, recruitment and selection requirements appear to be undermined. Primordial considerations such as where one's and not what they can offer to the establishments seem to be the order of the day. Available records show that little is known about recruitment and selection requirements and performance of public enterprises especially in Rivers State.

It is also worrisome that executive orders are often considered in sourcing for man power of public establishments in Nigeria and Rivers State in particular. In this circumstance, the question of merit and determination to make sure that recruitment and selection are based on the set standards

and requirements will not be there. There appears to exist a strong relationship between protecting the interest of the chief

Research Questions

Based on the problem of the study, the following research questions were formulated for the study.

1. To what extent does the practice of quota system in recruitment affect

Objectives of the study

The broad objective of the study is to determine the effects of recruitment and selection requirements on performance of selected public enterprises in Rivers State. Specific objectives are:

1. To ascertain the extent to which the practice of quota system in recruitment

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Review

Recruitment

Searching for, and obtaining potential job candidates in sufficient numbers and quality and at the right cost is the best way for organisation to get the most appropriate people to fill its job vacant positions (Onyeagbala & Hyacinth 2016; Odor, Martins-Emeson & Bakwuye, 2019). Organisations nowadays are mere concentrating on acquiring appropriate human capital because the employees are the most valued and most precious assets of an organisation. It is the individual performance of employees that will converge to form the overall performance of an organisation (Oaya, et al, 2017).

Croft (1996) in Odor, et al, (2019) defines recruitment as "the analysis of a job and the features the organization will have for in a potential employee and attracting candidates to apply to the organization and offering of various terms and conditions of employment

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

executive and appointment of unqualified persons into public enterprises in Rivers State.

competency of workers in the selected public enterprises in Rivers State?

2. What is the effect of experience-based recruitment and selection on financial profitability of selected public enterprises in Rivers State?

and selection has affected competency of workers in the selected public enterprises in Rivers State.

2. To investigate the effect of experience-based recruitment and selection on financial profitability of selected public enterprises in River State.

to a chosen potential employee. Berneth (2004) defined recruitment as the process of attracting a large opinion o Omale (2006) recruitment is that process which begins from getting an applicant motivated to invite an application for a particular job in a particular organization and the process stops when in his contribution Fatiregun (1992), in Onah (2015) sees recruitment as the process of assessing a job, announcing the vacancy, arousing interest and stimulating people to apply. Recruitment according to Mathis & Jockson (1997), is the process of generating a pool of qualified applicant for organizational jobs. To Okereka (2015) the essence of recruitment is to create a large pool of persons who are willing and available to work for a particular organization. Cole & Kelly (2011) in Okeke-Uzodike & Subban (2015) see recruitment as the process of locating identifying and attracting capable applicants.

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.

Public Enterprises

Ojeifo and Alegbeleye (2015), PEs or state-owned enterprises are those institutions established through separate Acts of parliament. Hence, they are also regarded as statutory corporations. The functions and powers of the corporations are clearly defined in the Acts through which they were established. They are corporate bodies specially created by a legislative enactment with clearly defined powers and functions and enjoying considerate financial and administrative autonomy. In the words of

Okereke, et al, (2016), the term public enterprise is used in the broadest sense to mean all industrial and commercial firms, mines, utilities, transport companies, and financial institutions owned by the government. They are distinguished from the rest of the government enterprises because they are expected to earn most of their revenue from the sale of goods and services, are self-accounting, and have a separate legal entity. This definition of state-owned

enterprise also implies the concept of expected return on investment. In his own contribution, Ogohi (2014) in Abuh, et al, (2016) define public enterprises as legal entities apart from government ministries, department or agencies and they engaged in

Performance

The concept of performance either viewed from the individual members of any given organization or looking at the entire organization is a measure of how tasks and responsibilities have been carried out over a given period of time in line with the agreed standard. According to Oaya, Ogbu & Rwmilwkun (2017), organizations nowadays are more concentrating on acquiring appropriate human capital because the employees are the most valued and most precious assets of an organization. It is the individual performance of employees that will converge to form the overall performance of the organization. Campbell (1990) in Oaya et al (2017) sees performance as "behaviours or actions that are relevant to the goals of the organization. Performance refers to the proficiency with which an employee performs central job tasks. Contributing to the

Financial Profitability

This is commonly referred to as return on investment. Anyebe (2018) maintained that questions are naturally asked about the return on investment in various public enterprises, the opportunity cost and priorities in view of new economic realities. The argument made here is that performance of PEs at both federal and state levels can be ascertained using the profits they made if any. The same applies to public enterprises in Rivers State, from the stand- point of return on investment or financial profitability, there is sufficient evidence that in the main, public enterprises have proved a massive failure compared with results from similar investment in the private sector, in terms of their social objectives, including the provision of employment opportunities and the modernization factor, their general inefficiency has made it almost impossible to achieve any meaningful result. One thus finds

economic activities with the sole aim of providing essential goods and services for the citizens so as to meet their social, demographic, ecological, cultural and economic needs.

discourse Gberevbie, et al (2014: 2) observed thus.

In the light of a job, performance refers to the aggregate effort comprises of abilities as task employees expended on their jobs. Effort refers to physical and mental energy expended by employees in executing tasks assigned to them. Abilities are individual personal characteristics such as competence, aptitudes and special skills individual exert on their jobs in order to accomplish task their jobs in order to accomplish tasks assigned. Put different, the perceived individual expected performance is a function of reliable such as motivation, emotional stability and psychological status.

scattered across the country the skeletons of general government enterprises whose birth-days were marked with fun-fare years earlier (Anyebe 2018).

The profitability of an enterprise influences its value and the amount of income it generates for its owners. Among other things, two financial indicators that measure the profitability of an enterprise are the net profit and the return on assets. The percentage of the net profit is the amount of net profit divided by the amount of sales times hundred (100). The percentage of return on assets is the amount of net profit divided by the total value of the assets of the firm times hundred (100). The percentage of net profit, or net profit margin, measures the ability of public enterprises to generate surplus cash. The percentage of return on assets measures how efficiently the enterprise is using its resource.

Competency

The concept of competency is usually applied to define the whole of individual abilities, skills, behaviours and knowledge, oriented to effective performance in particular working environment (Kolibacova, 2014). Armstrong (2006) averred that abilities the dimensions of behaviour needed by organizations to achieve a high performance. It is emphasized that performance of an individual as well as the organization performance and success depend on individual competencies (Savaneviciene, 2008).

In the scientific literature, competence is divided into hard and soft competency. Hard one, professional competency, is determined by organizational performance. Soft competency is defined by personal postures of an employee, his or her behaviour, necessary for a good job performance, and can be either professional, social or conceptual (Kolibacova, 2014). Some benefits are associated with competency. These benefits according to Homer (2001) include reduced training costs, reduced staff turnover or increased employee

productivity, hence performance. Competency as a performance indicator focuses on behaviour of employees and managers to determine how they affect the overall performance of the organization. It concentrates on the essential activities that lead to the success of the organization. Among other things, scholars are in agreement that competency in the organization can be measured through the following tools: Annual Appraisal, 360 degree feedback questionnaire, analysis of the performance indicators and regular one-to-one meetings with line managers.

Martinelli (2014) describes few steps that should be taken to bring a new model leadership competencies, competencies which will be useful in the future, among board members such as visionary and future focus, entrepreneurial spirit, risk talking, system thinking, ability to communicate effectively at all levels, imagining new forms of partnership and alliances and a deep appreciation of the strength of diversity which promotes creativity, innovation and organizational learning.

Recruitment and Selection Requirements

Recruitment and selection requirements are making more than the formal policies and procedures for attracting and fill vacant positions in the organization with qualified and credible job applicants or candidates. They deal with the organization policies on employee resourcing. In multi-ethnic and federal states such Nigeria, such requirements include the federal character principle of recruitment and quota system, especially in public sector organizations. This extends employee qualifications, competency, etc. it is argued that the most important step in the process of planning to encourage and attract a pool of talented candidate into any organization is to establish sound recruitment and selection policies and procedures. It addresses issues concerning equal employment opportunities, source of recruitment, the recruiting authority as well as approaches to be adopted in the recruitment exercise. For instance, recruitment policy is expected to cover the

following crucial issues others-whether job opening should be advertised internally or externally; prompt reply to all job applicants with minimal delay; provision of vital information to potential employees in good faith about the job details and conditions of services, processing all applications with utmost efficiency and courtesy; seeking candidates on the basis of their qualifications for the advertised vacancy, ensuring that invited applicants for interview are given fair and level playing grand, etc (Ejumudo, 2011).

Recruitment policies in the public sector are drawn to reflect the cultural diversity of the country and cover specific issues as merit, affirmative action's among others. Recruitment policy stipulates the objective of the recruitment and also provides a framework for the implementation of the recruitment programme (Richard, 2011).

Onah (2015) added that in Nigeria, there is the federal character principle and gender mix

understanding, especially when appointments in public organizations are at issue. Is the recruitment providing qualified applicants with an appropriate mix of procted-class individuals?

A recruitment process begins by specifying human resource requirements (numbers, skills mix, levels, time frame), which are the typical result of job analysis and human resource planning activities (Cascio, 1986; Biobele, 2007). Information from job analysis and human resource planning activities activates the rent phase in the recruitment process, namely, attracting potentially qualified candidates to apply for vacant positions in an organization (internal sources), and or recruitment outside the organization (external sources). After this phase, the organisation should device selection tools to help start out relative qualifications of job applicants and appraise their potentials for being good performers in a particular job. Those tools include applications and resumes, interviews, reference checks, tests. The essence of these recruitment activities is for the organisation to appoint the best applicant with the right ability, temperament and willingness (Mullins, 1996).

Lending credence to the above view, Okereka (2015) argued that the only criterion that supports effective recruitment and selection is adequate job analysis, manpower planning, Job description and job specification rather than extraneous variables of ethnic affiliation, religious bigotry, federal character principle that dictate the essence of hiring of personnel identified factors. Thus, making it to recruit staff that are not qualified, and thereby face a lot of problem of inefficiency in service delivery. The scenario according to him has made scholars and practioners to be weary of the recruiting bodies who in spite of the universally unraveled negative effects of biased recruitment, continue to conduct recruitment exercises using those identified factors. Ezeani (2006) in Odor, et al, (2019) is in agreement with the foregoing discourse where he argued that the process of recruitment and selection begins with the manpower planning, which indicates areas in

the organisation where there are likely to be shortages of people, and the number of people to be recruitment to meet anticipated employment needs.

In what appears mere specific, Grobler, et al, (2005) and Pita (2004) in Onyeaghala & Hyacinth (2016: 2) outline the recruitments and steps, stages that are imperative for efficient and effective recruitment and selection ever in the organization to include:

- (i) Carry out human resources planning, job analysis, description and specification.
- (ii) Application blank/soliciting for/receiving application.
- (iii) Short listing of qualified candidates and screening out the unqualified applicants.
- (iv) Arranging for and conducting preliminary interview or initial screening.
- (v) Employment test designed to find out how well an individual can do a job. This also constitutes aptitude test.
- (vi) Checking of reference source.
- (vii) Medical/physical examinations to ensure that the individual is in good health.
- (viii) The selection decision.
- (ix) Find approval/placement/engagement.

A cursory look at the above shows that the major goal of these requirements is to furnish the organization with qualified, competent and experienced job candidates towards the accomplishment of the organization's intended goals and objectives

Worthy of attention here is also principle of federal character which is considered as one of the requirements or what must be considered in sourcing for job applicants into public sector organizations in Nigeria, the constitutional backing the issue of federal character. For instance, section 14 sub-section 3 and 4 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended made provision for the federal character principle. Hence, sub-section provides that:

The composition of the government of the federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be not predominance of persons from a few state or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or any of its agencies.

In the same vein, sub-section 4 contains that:

The composition of the government of a state, local government council or such agencies shall be carried out in

such manner as to recognize the diversity of the people within its area of authority and the need to promote a sense of belonging and loyalty among all the peoples of the federation.

The above provision therefore, justifies the recognition of federal character principle as one of the factors that are considered in sourcing for applicants to fill vacant positions in the organization. This also explains why the study beamed its search light on recruitment and selection requirements such as federal character principle experience, aptitude test, and educational qualification against performance indicators such as competency, financial profitability, service delivery and effectiveness of public enterprises in Rives state.

Review of Empirical Studies

Santos, Setiawan and Rofiq (2020), adopted descriptive survey design to study the "Effect of Recruitment, Selection and Culture of organizations on State Personnel Performance". The National Personnel Agency and 14 ministries were selected. The study was conducted using proportional random sampling, so that from each work unit, a total of 1000 target population and 286 samples were obtained using questionnaire. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method with Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) approach was used for data analysis. It was found that well-programmed recruitment was not able to provide significant results either directly or through organizational culture, but recruitment could have a significant effect on job performance through mediation selection. Moreover, well-programmed recruitment backed by selection could improve employee performance among other things, the researchers recommended for a good quality selection process as a tool to improve employee performance.

Fathmath, Ferdons, and Ahmad, (2020) found that recruitment and selection practices are manipulated in the civil service. It stated that such abuses, corruption, the problem of high nepotism on the selection practice fail to achieve the objectives with

unqualified and less-skilled employees. For that reason, the organizations face major difficulties to deliver professional public service. In their study, Matolo, Iravo and Waititu, (2019) revealed that employee relations respectively had a positive relationship on their performance. The paper recommended that employees should be involved in decision making and grievances should be addressed fairly and promptly.

Ogohi (2019) discovered that e-recruitment practices in some national and provincial departments are not complaint with prescripts and this affects employee morale and ultimately the effectiveness of departments. Usmani, (2019) revealed that recruiters focus more on the confidence, skills of a candidate, dressing sense and clarity of resume rather than physical attractiveness. Physical/facial attraction does not influence decision making and their chance of being selected. Ogohi (2019), on his part concentrated on the banking sector or what may be referred here as the private sector which operates differently from public establishments.

Otoo, Assuming and Agyei (2018), indicated that public sector higher education institutions in

Ghana predominantly relies on recommendation as its main mode of employment; identification of available vacancies and delay in feedback after interviews were the two main challenges with the public sector higher education institutions in Ghana recruitment and selection practices. Harkey, (2018) found that organizational performance is mainly related to the capabilities of prospective candidates based on the reward and demands inherent in jobs. The researcher recommended that there is need to maintain equality for applicants, avoid nepotism, tribalism and favouritism when recruiting or selecting employees,

Theoretical Framework

The study adopted Resource-Based view theory developed by Wernettefelt (1984) and Barney (1991) as the theoretical framework of analysis. Resource –based theory assumes that sustainable competitive advantage is attainable when firms have a human resource pool which cannot be imitated or substituted by rivals. Taece, Pisano and Shuen (1997) in Ramon-Jeronimo, Florez-Lopez and Araujo-Pinzon (2019) view resources as stocks of knowledge, physical assets, human capital, and other tangible and intangible factors owned or controlled. Barney (1991) in Madhani (2010) also added that resources that are valuable, are rare, inimitable and non substitutable. Competitive advantage only occurs when there is a situation of resource heterogeneity and resource immobility.

According to the resource-based view, firms should constantly evaluate their workforce to ensure that they have the right people with the right skills in the right places to ensure sustained competitive advantage and when this is not the case, firms should make up for the shortfall by employing appropriate recruitment and selection criteria.

The resource-based perspective has an intra-organizational focus and argues that performance is as a result of firm's possession of specific resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991, Wernerfelt, 1984). These capabilities are inherent in human resources. Resource-based theory addresses the question of an organization's identity and it is principally

selected employees should be well informed about the policies of the job so as to enhance development. Osah, Ukoha & Alagah (2017) studied "workplace Discrimination and Employee performance in Nigerian Food and Beverage Sector". Using the spearman rank order correlation coefficient to test the hypotheses of the study, it was found that there is a significant relationship between workplace discrimination and employee performance. However, gender discrimination, religious discrimination and ethnic discrimination were negatively correlated with quality of work and employee efficiency.

concerned with the source and nature of strategy i.e. capabilities. Lacity and Will (2008) in Mweru and Muya (2016) in support of resource-based view maintained that the resources possessed by a firm are the primary determinants of its performance, and may contribute to a sustainable competitive advantage of the firm.

According to the Resource-Based view, firms should constantly evaluate their workforce to ensure that they have the right people with the right skills in the right places to ensure sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 2001; Ekwoaba, et al, 2015).

Performance of PEs is strategically linked to its resources, specifically human resources who are drawn through an efficient recruitment and selection exercise. Resources of organizations that are valuable, rare, imperfectly inimitable and imperfectly substitutable are main source of sustainable competitiveness (Barney, 1991, Madhani, 2010). Capabilities on the other hand, are firm's complex bundles of skills and accumulated knowledge, exercise through organizational processes, which enable the organization to coordinate activities and make the best use of its resources. They concern the firm's ability to combine, develop and use its internal and external resources in ways that create competitive advantage and drive superior performance (Rmon-Jeronimo, et al, 2019).

It suffices to state here that recruitment and selection are imperative as a potent means to furnish the organization with human resources that are valuable. And this is achieved if sound and conventional recruitment and selection requirements are adhered to in sourcing for the organization's manpower. Alluding to this line of thought, Fatiregun (1992) in Onah (2015) observed that "if we can have a reliable and eternally valid selection process, training and personnel development efforts would appear superfluous". The importance of having competent workforce cannot be over-exaggerated. One if not for anything else, it helps the organization to enjoy competitive advantage. Santos, et al, (2020) argued that the success of an organization to obtain quality human resources (HR) is through the recruitment process, since in this way the organization can choose the best number of workers from the many prospective applicants to be employed in their organizations. An organization with valued staff is better positioned to perform better than their counterparts who do not possess such qualities.

Eventually, to achieve organizational strategic goal, an organization must ensure that recruitment and selection practice ensure to hire the right number of employees into the organization (Eva, 2018). Selase (2018) indicated that a pool of proficient employees would gain a competitive benefit of maintaining the employees with the right skills and would determine greater extension to their performance by achieving organizational objectives. Fathmath, et al, (2020) added that a substantial amount of

research indicates that an organization expects to have potential skills, from the applicants such as work experience, qualification, and interpersonal skills. Work experience and qualifications are dealing in measuring the competency concerning the applicants' abilities.

Sparrow (2002), posited that technology and capital can be acquired by most organizations any time, for a price, but it is not easy to acquire a ready pool of highly qualified and motivated employees. Thus, in order to be differentiated, public enterprises are expected to draw a pool of competent and valued workforce.

The relevance of the theory to the study is based on the fact that it relates to human resource mobilization in the organisation. Resource-based theory maintains that the only way organisations can be sustained is to ensure that the right people with the right skills in the right places are employed which can be achieved through recruitment and selection practices that determines functionality of any firm. Resource-based theory stresses the inevitability of human resource to the success of public organizations that intend to achieve their set goals and objectives. These organizations have to explore the opportunities inherent in the pool of human resources available for recruitment and selection. It is through this process that relevant skills, talents and experiences are harvested to improve the performance of the organization. In the case of public enterprises, this will enhance the quality of service delivery to the general public.

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was used for the study. Fifteen Public were randomly selected for the study. The population of the study was 2,867 being the total staff strength of the selected enterprises, including 500 members of the public, while the sample size was 351. The sample size was calculated using Taro

Yameni formula. The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire drawn on five point likert scale. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypotheses formulated for the study.

Results

Table1: Correlations Test of Hypothesis One
Correlations

		Quota_system Based_Recruitment	Competency_of_ Workers
Quota_system _Based_Recruitment	Pearson Correlation	1	-.730**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	322	322
Competency_of_Workers	Pearson Correlation	-.730**	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 -0.730 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 null hypothesis, and conclude that there is significant negative relationship between federal character-based recruitment and selection and competency of workers in public enterprises in Rivers State. The implication of the findings is that the practice

of federal character principle in recruitment and selection of candidates has negative effect on the competency of workers in public enterprises in Rivers State. As public enterprises continue to recruit workers based on ethnic and tribal considerations, they end up hiring incompetent people who lack expertise, morale and professionalism necessary for competent job performance. Therefore, as federal character practices in recruitment and selection increases, competency of workers decreases in public enterprises in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two

HA2: There is significant relationship between experience-based recruitment and selection and financial profitability of public enterprises in Rivers State.

HO2: There is no significant relationship between experience-based recruitment and selection and financial profitability of public enterprises in Rivers State.

Table:2 Correlations Test of Hypothesis Two
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.

Discussion of Findings

Effects of Quota System-Based Recruitment and Selection on Competency of Workers of Public Enterprises in Rivers State

Objective one of the study sought to determine the effects of quota system based recruitment and selection on competency of workers of public enterprises in Rivers State. As such, data was collected and analyzed using frequency distribution tables while hypothesis was empirically tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics. The result of the correlation test of hypothesis one revealed a negative correlation value of -0.730 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 federal character-based recruitment and selection and competency of workers in public enterprises in Rivers State. The implication of the findings is that the practice of quota system in recruitment and selection of candidates has negative effect on the competency of workers in public enterprises in Rivers State. As public enterprises continue to recruit workers based on ethnic and tribal considerations, they end up hiring incompetent people who lack expertise, morale and professionalism necessary for competent job performance. Therefore, as federal character practices in recruitment and selection increases, competency of workers decreases in public enterprises in Rivers State.

The findings of the study was corroborated by the findings of Zirra, Ogbu and Ojo (2017) which revealed that the more effective

organizations recruit and select candidates, the more likely they are to hire and retain satisfied employees. Nwogwugwu and Oluwabukunmi (2015) found that as federal character increases by 1%, it will result to a multiplier effect of 63% in appointment into the civil service system in Nigeria. It was further revealed that federal character negatively affects appointment into the civil service in Nigeria, as merit is scarified on the altar of quota or representativeness. When merit is scarified or considered secondary in recruitment and selection of persons into public enterprises, competency requirement will be undermined. In a similar way, Asaju (2015) discovered that misapplication of federal character principle has negative consequences on national development. He therefore, recommended merit over federal character principles, which more often than not, promotes mediocrity over meritocracy.

The findings of this study is also in agreement with the discovery of Aondoakaa & Orluchukwu (2015) who submitted that despite constitutional provision of the federal character principle, it has not resolved the challenge of lack of adequate representation by the federating states to national integration and economic development. They regretted that the Nigerian state over-emphasizes, the federal character while de-emphasizing merit and hard work and promote and defend mediocrity and parochialism in running of various sectors of the economy. The practice of quota and its substantial application during recruitment into sensitive positions in government

establishments undermine the principle of merit. Whenever quota is given priority in public recruitment the principle of merit is sacrificed on the altar of ethnic balancing which does not only deny public organizations of the opportunity to fill vacant positions in the organization with qualified job candidates, but also hampers the overall performance of the organization. Relatedly, Aondoakaa & Orluchukwu (2015:55) further notes that:

With the principle of "education of less developed states, many qualified candidates are usually deprived of admission while some candidates that performed woefully in the unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination are given admission. This is a great setback to the efforts of government to enhance the nation's education standard. It even discouraged academic hard work. Nigeria is the only country in the world where citizens are penalized for performing better in examinations and coming from fast developing regions of the country in the name of adherence to the federal character principle. The belief that it encourages some regions to have urge for quality or formal education is even false or rather it encourages those regions to neglect hard work because

what they will achieve with the fruit of hard work, they will achieve by the enforcement of federal character principle. These will end up producing unqualified individuals as graduates thereby making it difficult for employers of labour to find suitable people to employ and at the same time increasing the rate of unemployment as no company, organization or corporation will be willing to employ unqualified or unskillful individual into its workforce.

Okolo (2014) in his submission, argued that even though the FCP has gone some measure to reduce various factors of mutual mistrusts and rivalries amongst the different ethnic groups in the geographical expression called Nigeria, sadly, the implementation of the FCP has hurt severally some section of the country. Thus, there is urgent need for the consultation of all the various sections and for segments in the implementation of the FCP policy in Nigeria.

Gbervbie & Ibietan (2013) also found that the implementation of federal character principle in public service tends to encourage unethical behavior amongst public officials and circumscribe merit in the area of manpower procurement and promotion. The notion of federal character principle is not in consonance with merit or competency requirement for employment into public sector organizations in Nigeria especially in Rivers State. This has been found to negate efforts at improving the performance of PEs.

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.

The findings of the study were corroborated by the findings of Zirra, Ogbu and Ojo (2017) who revealed that the effectiveness of an organization's selection system can influence bottom-line business outcomes, such as productivity and financial performance. An organization that considers experience in filling sensitive vacant positions is likely to improve performance. Specifically, financial profitability does not take place in a vacuum; it requires coordinated efforts of qualified and experience staff. Drawing from the first finding of the study where federal character principle was discovered to constitute one of the major factors that result to the appointment of incompetent job applications into public enterprises, it also affects the appointment of experienced job candidates in the quest for ethnic balancing. This is despite the fact that studies have linked competency and experience to the overall performance of the organization. The issue of financial profitability has become the undoing of most public enterprises in Nigeria, including Rivers State. In the quest for ethnic and tribal balancing in Rivers State, recruitment and selection requirements especially, the issue of experience is undermined. The question now being asked is where one comes from as against what skills and experience do one possess to contribute meaningfully to the performance of the firm. Relatedly, Ojeifo & Algebeleye (2015) revealed that lack of specialized competent and experienced top

height personnel can be attributed to the relative lack of autonomy which hinders competent professionals from being hired and engaged in public enterprises. Professional experts would rather prefer to work in private organizations which are highly equipped with working tools and equipment, solidly funded and enjoying full operational autonomy and where their highly skilled labour would be well compensated for. With the operation of public enterprises they argued that, managers are poorly motivated, and badly paid, and these have combined to reduce the cost of productive efficiency of public provision of goods and services.

Ekwoaba et al (2015) alluded to the above finding, where they revealed that recruitment and selection criteria have significant effect on organizations performance, and that the more objective the recruitment and selection the better the organization's performance. Santos, et al, (2020) asserted that the positive association of recruitment and selection practice incorporate and can be evaluated through four individual indicators. These indicators are supplying qualified workforce on time, proper job analysis and job descriptions, having effective selection practice, and the contribution of direct superior.

In support of the above findings also, Anyebe (2018) concluded that the quantifiable return on the huge volume of investment in the public sector in Nigeria, for example, was not seen as satisfactory in the light of the realities of the country's economy in the 1980s. Most of enterprises operated at sub-optimal levels. There were huge losses in many cases; these losses were charged against public treasury. The phenomenon of external control is contrary to the principle of autonomy granted to the public enterprises. The enterprise's inability to live up to expectation in terms of their physical and financial performance has created a crisis of confidence which was one of reasons for the call for the privatization of the sector in Nigeria.

On return on investment and financial profitability of PEs, Agabi & Orokpo (2014: 151) state thus:

One major implication of the enlarged public sector presence in the economy was that the mixed economy in Nigeria was substantially tilted in favour of the government. Government thus dominated and contributed enormously in the economic activities of the country. Expectedly, actions and inactions of government impacted seriously the economy. This was true in both government's revenue resources and expenditure patterns. The second implication of the bloated presence of government in the economy was that the numerous enterprises made huge financial and material claims on government resources. The magnitude and extent became so extraordinary that in 1986, the federal government openly acknowledged that about 40% of non-salary recruitment expenditure and 30% of its capital budget had gone to support investments in public sector enterprises estimated

at N23 billion (N8 billion equality and N15 billion in loans). This even excluded the state and local government owned enterprises. One single most unfortunate factor in the Nigeria public sector investments was little return on investment.

In a similar finding, the Bureau of Public Enterprises (1999) in Chukwu & Nkwede (2015) stated that PEs consumed about N200 billion of National resources annually, by way of grants, subsidies, import duty waives, tax exemptions, and the like. PEs have consumed nearly half of all the revenue also made from sale of crude oil since 1973; it was discovered that federal government investments on the public enterprise stood at over US\$ 100 billion (Bureau of public Enterprises, 1999). One sees that the cumulative value of FGN investment by way of equity, loans and other transfers to these 62 enterprises are estimated nearly US\$ 70 billion-nearly a third of Nigeria's total oil revenue since 1973. As at December 2000 the total liabilities of 39 out these PEs were in excess of N1.1 billion, with accumulated losses of N93.3 billion (BPE, 2001).The above problem is compounded by the appointment of inexperience personnel to manage financial activities PEs.

Conclusion

Recruitment and selection taking as one process that centres on employee resourcing is a critical and very crucial human resource management function. Organizations can replace other resources such as money, materials, machines, among other things easily, but it is very difficult to replace skills, experience, professionalism and all other attributes that distinctively differentiate and set parallel lines between human resources and other resources of the organization. This is why scholars and authorities have continuously canvassed the inevitability of sound recruitment and selection to accomplishment of job-related tasks and overall performance of the organization.

The promoters of resource based view argued that if all the firms were equal in terms of resources, there would be no probability differences among them because any strategy could be implemented by any firm in the same industry. On the other hand, the human capital development view recognizes the fact that investment in human capital will have ripple effects on other parts of the organizations life. Therefore, it is the human resource an organization possesses that is its strength for competitive advantage; and performance results are a consequence of firm –specific resources and capabilities that are costly to copy by other competitors. Fatiregun(1992) in Onah (2015)

summed it up in his argument that: "if we can have a reliable and eternally valid selection process, training and personnel development efforts would appear superfluous". Even though training and re-training are inevitable in an increasingly modern organization's dynamic environment, no doubt, organizations that undermine the importance of recruitment and selection requirements will run into cost in trying to make up for the employees in unnecessary training programmes which abinitio ought to have been taking care of during the recruitment exercise.

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), subsection 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

Recommendations

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

1. In order to improve the competency of staff of PEs in Rivers State, there is need to uphold merit rather than quota system. Although the federal character is meant to accommodate diverse interests, its application sacrifices qualification on the altar of mediocrity, hence the continuous appointment of incompetent job applicants in the name of adherence to the tenets of federal character principle. It is therefore, recommended that federal character principle should be abolished. All

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. Some of the major requirements which are often undermined include competence, experience, educational qualifications and aptitude test. In practice what is found to be given much consideration in the appointment of persons into public enterprises is federal character principle, quota system, executive order, ethnicity, political patronage and connections, etc. These vices combine to hinder efficient service delivery, financial profitability and the overall performance of public enterprises in Rivers state. The general impression of this is that unless these sharp and unconventional practices are tackled, public enterprises in Nigeria, especially in Rivers state will not cease from performing below the expected level. The policy of privatization and commercialization of moribund state-owned enterprises needs to be re-enforced and properly monitored while the critical enterprises to the nation's economy managed by the government should be strengthened through policy measures.

acts by political office holders which disenfranchise people from gaining employments in government establishments should be discouraged.

2. 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.

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