ORIGINAL ARITICLE

Recruitment and Selection Practices As Strategic Factors for Employee Performance: A Study of Selected Deposit Money Banks in Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the impact of recruitment and selection practices on employees' performance of selected deposit money banks in Nigeria. Survey research design was used to obtain primary data from 126 sampled managerial staff of the largest six deposit money banks (DMBS) through a four point likert scale questionnaire. Hypothesis were formulated and subjected to linear regression statistical test at five percent significance level with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Results showed that recruitment and selection practices have significant impact on employees' performance of the selected DMBs. The study concluded that recruitment and selection practices of the DMBs is a potent tool explaining the performance of employees in the deposit money banking industry in Nigeria. The study therefore recommended that recruitment programmes of DMBs must be properly planned and flexible as this affects the quality of prospective staffs that eventually emerge from the selection procedures and their consequent performance on the job.

Keywords: *Deposit money banks, Recruitment, Selection, Employee performance, Human resources, Nigeria.*

Introduction

Service based firms like the banking require human resources as constituting the most important factor of production. The importance of the human asset is further underscored by its strategic nature given that decision and utilization of other factors of production are taken by personnel of a business concern (Cole, 2005). Thus, human activities within the organization in terms of the qualities of decisions made, risk-taking, innovation and initiatives will have direct impact on the performance of the organization. The centrality of the human factor of an organization therefore necessitates that the process of its acquisition be well-managed to ensure achievement of desired objective of personnel performance. Perhaps two important and early stages of the human resource process which have attracted little attention are recruitment and selection (Elsaid, 2013).

In Nigeria, like many other African countries, where there is high rate of unemployment and people are willing to accept job offers that may not relate to their field of specialization but to just earn a living, it becomes important for organizations to use scientific processes

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.20372/erjssh.2021.0801.01

of attracting the right pool of applicants and selecting those that best fit the job and the organizational needs. The process should also be such that predicts performance of the prospective personnel when they are eventually placed on the job.

The Nigerian banking industry following the Central Bank of Nigeria interventions and reforms have witnessed growth. This growth also necessitated increase in the number of branches and branch network of the surviving deposit money banks and attendant need for more employees to occupy new positions thrown up by the increased branch network (Ejifor, 1989). The scenario meant that the banks needed to put in place mechanism for attracting the right caliber of people to join its workforce. In response to this demand, many banks had resorted to use of external contractors to outsource certain human resource functions to (particularly recruitment and selection process). While this is the common practice for entry level staff, the same cannot be said of experienced and managerial level cadre where use of referrals is gaining weight.

The recruitment process involves those practices and activities carried out by the organization with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees (Breaugh & Starke, 2000) and has long been regarded as an important part of HRM as it performs the essential function of drawing an important resource – human capital into the organization. The recruitment and selection of an effective workforce consequently can be viewed as central to the success of an enterprise and a key function in HRM.

Recruitment is primarily concerned with the process of generating a pool of capable people to apply for employment to an organization and is closely connected with the selection process; the process by which managers and others use specific instruments to choose from a pool of applicants a person or persons most likely to succeed in the job(s), given management goals and legal requirements (Bratton & Gold, 2003). Effective selection processes allow both the candidate and the organization to properly assess the degree to which the candidate fits the job specification. Selection is an opportunity for companies to choose candidates that they believe are most suitable for the job. Bohlander and Snell (2010) define selection as a process of choosing individuals who have relevant qualifications to fill existing or projected job openings. Ofobruku and Iheabunike (2013) defined selection as the process choosing the person(s) form the pool of potential candidates who meet the requirement of the vacancies identified in the organization. It is as a result of the above development that this study seeks to examine the impact of recruitment and selection process on employees' performance.

Improper structure of organizational framework on recruitment and selection poses problem as it can have negative impact on employees' job productivity in Nigeria. The truism of this assertion has been largely neglected by past researchers. The present inability of organizations to attract and engage best suitable employees with the right knowledge, skills and altitude to steer the day to day operation of the business, high turnover of employee and how best recruitment practices can impact positively on employees' performance in banking industry is the major focus of this study.

Problem Statement

Recruiting employees, especially in the Nigerian industry can be a very costly exercise. This is partly because deposit money banks in Nigeria are large organizations with wide spread of branch networks, thus requiring large pool of employees centrally recruited and selected. When the right people are employed for the job, they produce good results and also tend to stay with the organization longer. Coincidentally, the duo of recruitment

and selection are the bedrock of human resources (HR) functions; unless a bank has the right employees, it will not be able to deliver quality services, hence poor organizational performance (Gordon and Stevens, 2004). Attracting and selecting the right prospective employees with the appropriate skill set is a daunting task for many organizations in labor market today. Since there is short supply of industry-tailored trained graduates in Nigeria, competition for the few ones is ever-present (Sriwongwanna (2009).

To cope with this challenge, Nigeria deposit money banks have been adopting different recruitment and selection strategies to staff afloat. While many have been recruiting through third parties like independent HR management companies who perform this function for them and turn in only selected candidates who are in turn offered jobs by the banks, a small fraction of these DMBs recruit directly. Whether this strategy, although cost saving, is competitive given that the same outsourcing companies are vendors to competing firms in the industry (Ofobruku and Iheabunike, 2013).

The banking industry is known to have several multi-layer screening and selection procedures. This partly stems from the fact that the recruiting company is not the employing organization and is likely to reduce the pool of applicants to the best suited ones. However, the employing organization, DMB may only have one contact, usually at the final selection stage with the prospective employee. Although, the selection process is multi-stage, few minutes' contact may be too short to make an objective assessment of an applicant.

This study works with the following hypothesis

H0: Recruitment and selection policies do not have significant association with employees' performance in the Nigeria deposit money banks

H1: Recruitment and selection policies have significant association with employees' performance in the Nigeria deposit money banks

Literature Review

Organizational recruitment and selection process are important in building block of an organization and are also the factors that lay the foundation for effective performance. In the workplace, recruitment and selection process play important roles as they contribute to a sustained increase in employees' productivity (Cole, 2005). Recruitment involves the process of attracting candidates to fill positions in an organizational structure. The position's requirements and their tasks must however have been clearly identified. Stonner, Freeman and Gilbert (2000) stated that the purpose of recruitment is to provide a group of candidates that is large enough to allow managers choice of the employees they assume to best fit the positions available to be filled in the organization structure.

Hannagan (1995) noted that the recruitment process involves the examination of the requirements for filling the vacancy (particularly in relation to job and person specifications); consideration of the sources of suitable candidates, drafting job advertisements and selecting media suitable to carry them; assessing appropriate salary levels for employees; and arranging interviews and other aspects of selection. A good recruitment programme is one that is properly planned and well managed as poor recruitment process could lead to the selection of poor applicants. Jovanovic (2004) reported that through the recruitment process, it is possible to identify the best candidate among all the candidates and that recruitment process has always been the valuable practice which plays an important role in HRM and leads to organizational success. Sriwongwanna (2009) noted that

outsourcing human resource functions such as recruitment and selection is a new trend and it is affecting the future human resource strategy in a very positive way. This practice is also common in the Nigerian banking industry.

Where there are several job applicants for an opening, managers must decide which is the most qualified to fill the position. This is the task involved in selection. Thus, selection is the process seeks to ensure that those recruited individual will best be able to help promote the achievement of organizational goals. Stonner, Freeman and Gilbert (2000) posit that the selection process is a mutual process whereby the organization decides whether or not to make a job offer and the candidate decides whether or not to accept it. From the forgoing, it is clear that, selection is usually made from among many applicants that have applied for positions and meet the organization and job requirements. It is important to maintain a fit between the person and a job. This is facilitated by drafting a 'person specification' defining the background, education, training, personality and other characteristics of the ideal candidate.

Although there is no standard procedure adopted by all firms, selection process involves a set of hurdles applicants are taken through to ascertain which ones best meet organizational need. In Nigeria, it is not uncommon for a typical selection process to consist of preliminary interview, tests, regular interview(s), reference check, medical check and placement.

The initial or preliminary interview is usually quite short and has as its objective of eliminating the obviously unqualified. Among others, applicants may be asked why they are applying for a job with the particular organization; salary requirements are ascertained and an idea of education and experience can be obtained. Reference check help the hiring manager to obtain information about past behavior of applicants and to verify the accuracy of information given on the resume of the applicant. Cole (2005) observed that most public sector organization tend to take up references before short listed candidates are called for interview; while private sector organization tend to take them up after the candidate has been interviewed and a provisional offer of appointment made.

The next step in the procedure is usually to conduct tests. The tests may range from cognitive to personality test among others. While cognitive tests are meant to ascertain the reasoning and inferential capability of a candidate, personality tests usually seek to know the personality profile and predict the behavior of the candidate in given circumstances. Regular interview is probably the most widely used single method of selection. It affords managers to further clarify grey areas that application resumes and tests may not adequately answer. Because the interview is highly subjective in nature, it is usually fraught with different kind of biases.

Different past studies have attempted to ascertain the usefulness of recruitment and selection process to an organization by studying its impact on organizational outcomes. Ofobruku and Iheabunike (2013) assessed the impact of recruitment practices on performance of firms in the hospitality industry within Abuja metropolis. Primary data were collected from directors, managers, and supervisors drawn from twelve hospitality organizational units cutting across four numbers each of the three different grade of the hospitality industry in Nigeria (five star, three, one). Analyses of the data from the questionnaire showed that recruitment and selection practices are important to the performance of the study firms. Data gathered were analysed using weighted mean factor. The study recommended that for hospitality business to be successful it must adhere to keeping good staff, gain employee and guest/customers loyalty that improve their market share, this can be

achieved through the employment of best practice in employee.
Asiedu-Appiah et al. (2013) investigated the recruitment and selection practices of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Ghana. A questionnaire survey was to collect data from two hundred and fifty-eight (258) respondents. The study sampled owner/ managers and all employees of the selected micro and small firms. Using correlation analysis with the aid of SPSS software to analyze the data collected, the study revealed that majority of SMEs do not follow formal recruitment and selection practices. It was also evident that existing recruitment and selection practices were not systematic and lacked consistency as these practices were based on the understanding of owner-managers who had little or no expertise in the subject. The findings indicates that an understanding and adoption of formal and context specific aspects of recruitment and selection practices by owner/ managers will help position the SME's at the forefront of socio-economic development.

Given the poor performance of SMEs in Kenya, Omolo, Oginda and Oso (2012) examined the effect of recruitment and selection of employees on their performance poor in the last decade and found that there was a significant positive relationship between recruitment and selection, and performance of SMEs. The study that the reported average performance of SMEs with good recruitment and selection was higher than firms with poor recruitment and selection practices. Similarly, recruitment and selection accounted for 40.8% of the total variance in performance of SMEs.

Mustapha, Ilesanmi and Aremu (2013) examined the impacts of well-planned recruitment and selection process on corporate performance in Nigerian banking industry. The analytical tools used in their study were regression analysis and analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine the relationship between a well-planned recruitment and selection process on corporate performance. Findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between recruitment and selection based on merit and organizational performance; that effective recruitment and selection is a key to organizational commitment; that a well-planned recruitment and selection contributes to organizational performance.

Zirra, Ogbu and Ojo (2017) examined the impact of recruitment and selection strategy on the employee performance in the real sector in Nigeria using descriptive survey research design. T-test analysis of the hypothesis revealed that the use of recruitment agency and internal employee recommendation in the recruitment/selection process enables organization to recruit committed and productive employees. Their findings reported that the recruitment through the influence of host community may be counterproductive to organizational efficiency and thus recommended that organizations use of independent agencies in recruiting and selection in a transparent manner.

Chukwu and Igwe (2012) investigated the effect of selection process on organizational performance in the Brewery Industry of Southern Nigeria. The data obtained were analyzed using frequency tables and the values expressed in percentages. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used for testing the hypotheses and t-test was used for testing the level of significance of correlation coefficient at 5% error and 3-degrees of freedom. The findings of this study are indicative that there is a positive relationship between employment tests and creativity. It was also found that there is a positive relationship between Selection process, Organization performance, Employment tests and Selection interview.

Similarly in an earlier study, Ekwoaba, Ikeije and Ndubuisi (2015) in a case study investigated the impact of recruitment and selection criteria on performance of a deposit money bank in Lagos, Nigeria as focal point. The analyses of 130 responses obtained through a questionnaire administered to randomly selected respondents revealed that recruitment

and selection criteria have significant effect on organization's performance and concluded that the more objective the recruitment and selection criteria is, the better the organization's performance.

Adeyemi, Dumade and Fakare (2015) assessed the impact of recruitment and selection on organizational performance with analysis of primary data obtained from selected staff of a single branch deposit money bank the use of questionnaire. The results indicated that, advertising of job vacancies to general public, use of employment agent(s) and employee referrals are mostly the mode for recruiting potential employees in the sector. It was also realized that the method used recruiting and employee selection process is effective and helped improve employee performance. The authors recommended that potential employees should be treated fairly in the recruitment and selection process.

Omolo, Oginda and Oso (2012) investigated the effect recruitment and selection on the performance of SMEs in Kisumu Municipality, Kenya. Kenya has 1.6 million SMEs, constituting 96% of business enterprises, employing 75% of the labour force and contributing 20% to GDP but their performance have been poor in the last decade. Thus, the study attempted to determine the suitable recruitment and selection strategies that can increase their performance. The study found that the overall average performance of SMEs in Kisumu Municipality was 60.71%. There was a significant positive correlation between recruitment and selection, and performance of SMEs at $\alpha = .01$. The average performance of SMEs with good recruitment and selection was 81.90%; with moderate was 67.94%, with poor was 53.90%. Recruitment and selection account for 40.8% of the total variance in performance of SMEs. The study concludes that recruitment and selection has a significant effect on the performance of SMEs in Kisumu Municipality.

The study of Onyeaghala and Hyacinth (2016) attempted a comparative analysis between the performance of the private and public sector in Nigeria trying to implicate employment and selection processes as a determinant. While selection process was the criterion or explanatory variable, employee productivity was the predictor variable. Using a survey design with questionnaire as method of data collection, analysis of data from 216 respondents randomly drawn from a private and public organization in Makurdi, Benue State revealed that although the factors influencing selection process in private and public sector organizations are similar, there is a significant difference between the selection process employed by the private and public sector organizations and their productivity they achieved by employing such selection process. The study therefore recommends that, for firms to have healthy and suitable employees capable of achieving high productivity, they should focus only on objectives factors that have direct link with employee performance when hired.

Elsaid (2013) explored the effects of human resource management on overall organizational performance. The researcher employed both descriptive and exploratory design which address the reasons behind organizations refrain from outsourcing its recruitment function. A survey conducted on a sample of 36 top managers from Egyptian and Non-Egyptian companies operating in various fields in Egypt revealed that 55% of these companies were involved in recruitment outsourcing. A contrary to logic result found that the cost reduction factor was not perceived by Egyptian managers as a valuable reason to outsource their recruitment function.

Methodology

Research Design

This research is mainly descriptive in nature, using a cross-sectional research survey design for collection of primary data. This was to enable us study the phenomenon as it is without manipulating the variables. Other past researchers (Gordon and Stevens, 2004) have also employed survey design because it involves meeting with the target population to obtain the opinions on the variables of concern.

Target Population

The managerial level staff deposit money banks (DMBs) in Lagos formed the target population for the study. This category of staffs is more involved in operational and strategic decision making such as recruitment and selection (Bratton and Gold, 2003). More so, they are usually involved in selection panels for the banks when conducting the exercise.

Sample participants and sampling techniques

We surveyed a total of 147 managerial level employees of six selected deposit money banks (DMBs) in Lagos. Lagos state was purposively chosen as over 90% of the headquarters of DMBs are in Lagos state. Like we noted earlier, this exercise are usually conducted centrally at the headquarters. The respondents were selected through a convenience sampling procedure with online survey instrument specially designed for the study.

Instrument and Data collection procedure

With interactions with some of the managerial staff in the industry, we requested our initial contacts to recommend and send the online survey link to other colleagues who met our sample requirement in the selected DMBs. We purposively selected six of the total regular and interest-based DMBs based on branch network. This is because the more the branches, the more personnel staff that will be required to service them and consequently better recruitment and selection practices resulting from learning curve (Gordon and Stevens, 2004). Our respondents were asked to respond to the study statements arranged with a Likert scale of 1 to 4, where 4 indicates strongly agree and 1 indicates strongly disagree with the statement. We used a four point Likert to avoid the controversies trailing an odd point scale with midpoints usually coded as indifference. In all, the instrument has a total of 17 items apart from the demographics. While recruitment and employee performance each had five items, selection had seven items. The questionnaire was self -constructed and validated accordingly. Thus primary data was obtained from 126 respondents comprising of managerial level staffs drawn across human resources, operations and marketing departments of the DMBs.

To determine validity of the research instruments employed for the study, the content and expert validity were used. In achieving expert validity, the instrument was reviewed by two experts in academia and one HR professional. Suggestions and the correction were then incorporated accordingly, to validate the content. We achieved content validity through a pilot study where a test-retest method was employed. The test-retest method was used to test for the consistencies of the instruments. Copies of the instrument were administered twice to a group of 25 respondents did not form part of our sampling frame within a two week interval. The results from the first and second administration of the instrument were

correlated. A Cronbach alpha coefficient of α=0.72, 0.86 and 0.83 were obtained respectively for recruitment, selection and employee performance respectively.

Data analysis Procedure

Primary data obtained in the survey was analyzed through descriptive statistics in the form of charts and tables in percentages. Furthermore, sample t-test and multiple regression analysis were used to answer the research question and test the study hypothesis at 5%.

Model Specification

EP = (RM)
$EP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 RM + \mu$
EP = (SL)
$EP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 SL + \mu$
EP= (RM, SL)
$EP = \beta 0 + \beta 1RM + \beta 2SL + \mu$
Where:
EP represents Employee Performance;
β_0 is the constant term;
β_1 , β_2 are the coefficient of the estimator;
β_1 , $\beta_2 > 0$;
RM = Recruitment;
SL= Selection;
μ is the error term.

For the a prior expectation, it is expected that recruitment and selection will have positive effects on employee performance; hence the parameters of a recruitment and selection should have positive signs.

Results and Discussion

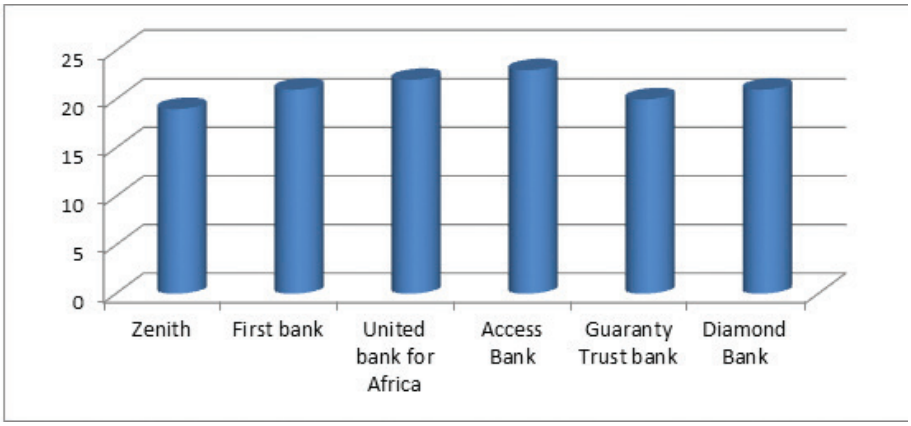

Figure 1: Analysis of respondents by DMB

Source: Field Survey

The participating DMBs are shown in Figure 1 above. The figure also gave a description of statistics of the number of respondents per DMB that participated in our survey. While Access bank had the highest number of respondents, Zenith bank had the least.

Results

Table 1: Cross-tabulation of Employees performance

		High	Low	Total
	Male	61	16	77
	Female	32	17	49
Total		**93**	**33**	**126**

Mean score of 34.5 was used as bench mark based on the scores obtained from the questionnaire. Employees with scored below the means score were categorised as low performers while those with the mean score and above were recorded to have high performance. The result in table 1 shows that 93 (73.81%) of the employees have high performance, while 33 (26.20%) of the have low level of performance. Hence, it is inferred that bank employees are on the average performing at high levels. Although, the table also informed that male staff of the banks are recording higher performance than their female counterparts. This is evident when a comparison on the percentage of males having high performance is compared to that of the females.

Table 2: Difference between old generation and new generation banks on level of employee performance

Bank Category	N	Mean	SD	Std Error	df.	t	Sig. of t
Old Generation	42	17.46	3.136	.483	125	3.620	.063
New Generation	84	20.83	4.721	.515			

In Table 2, we again tested if there is any statistically significant difference in the level of employee performance of old generation DMBs and the new generation DMBs. The table revealed a non-significant outcome ($t=3.620$, $p > 0.05$) with the mean score of 17.46 for old generation banks and 20.83 for new generation banks. This implies that the observed difference between employee performance of old and new generation banks is not significant. We thus test our hypothesis on the association between the recruitment and selection practices in the industry and employee performance.

Test of Hypotheses

H_0: Recruitment and selection policies do not have significant association with employees' performance in the Nigeria deposit money banks.

H_1: Recruitment and selection policies have significant association with employees' performance in the Nigeria deposit money banks.

Variable	Coefficients	T	Sig
Constant	2.632	3.361	0.017
RM (1)	5.901	5.454	0.003
SL (2)	7.923	2.731	0.001
Adj. R2 = 0.452		F-Stat. = 74.127	0.005

Source: Researcher's fieldwork (2018)

Table 3 indicates that both recruitment and selection process jointly have a significant combined effect on employee performance in the selected DMBs in Nigeria, with F stat of 74.127 and probability value of 0.005, which reveals that the two variables have a positive and significant combined effect on performance of the employees of DMBs at 5% level of significance. The adjusted coefficient of determination (Adj. R2) indicates that the duo of recruitment and selection account for 45.2% variation in performance of employees in the sector.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the test of hypothesis shows that recruitment and selection policies have significant impact on employees' performance in the selected DMBs. This means that with appropriate recruitment and selection processes in the DMBs, the right employees with the right sets of skills capable of performing organizational roles are more likely to be employed. However, where informal, subjective factors are the basis of selection even where a good recruitment programme is used by the DMBs, performance of the employees when eventually hired are likely to be sup-optimal. This is because recruitment/selection has high predictive power of employee performance. This finding agrees with the conclusions Adeyemi, Dumade and Fakare (2015), Zirra, Ogbu and Ojo (2017) and Ekwoaba, Ikeije and Ndubuisi (2015).

The findings show that effective recruitment and selection practices have enhanced the productivity and competitiveness of every organization (Asiedu-Appiah, Aduse-Poku & Abeeku-Bamfo, 2013). However, the process of gathering prospective employees and the subsequent hurdles to take them through in order to ascertain which ones best suit the organizational needs are often seen to be Siamese twins. The relative ease, accuracy and effectiveness of the selection phase is inherently dependent on the quality of applicant attracted. The result of effective recruitment and selection can be reduction in labour turnover, high employee morale and improved organization performance (Ofobruku & Iheabunike, 2013). The recruitment and selection process thus forms the first stage of the psychological contract between applicants and organizations, where information is mutually exchanged and role expectations are clarified and negotiated (Cordon & Stevens, 2004).

Conclusion

The most vital asset of every organization under stiff and dynamic competition is its human capital. Recruitment and selection process are important practices for human resource management, and are crucial in affecting both employee and eventual organizational performance. The quality of new recruits depends upon an organization's recruitment practices, and that the relative effectiveness of the selection phase is inherently dependent upon the caliber of candidates attracted. Thus, if recruitment and selection processes are poor, it will be difficult to assign right employee to the right job. Nevertheless, recruitment and selection practices have been effective in the selection of employees for the Nigeria banks even though much needs to be done to enhance it. Recruitment and selection of employees to a greater extent determines the performance of an institution and it is of great importance if institutions want to achieve their goals. In line with the finding of the study, it is recommended that selection of policies of companies should match the requirements of a job with attributes of candidates.

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