

Implication of Recruitment Policies and Procedures for Employee Productivity in Enugu State Civil Service

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Abstract: Recruitment policy and procedure of any organization determines the level of productivity in that organization. Therefore, the success or failure of organization depends largely on the quality of workforce attracted by the organization. This work sought to investigate the recruitment policies and procedures of Enugu State Civil Service and its implications on productivity. Case study design method was employed where copies of questionnaires were shared to a sample size of 208 staff of the service. It was found out that recruitment policies and procedures in Enugu State Civil Service were not based on merit system but rather on subjective factors such as zoning, bribery represented by buying of jobs by applicants and nepotism. The study recommended a strict adherence to merit system of recruitment as a recruitment policy that will bring about sustainable productivity.

Key words: Recruitment • Selection • Policy • Procedure • Productivity • Enugu State Civil Service

INTRODUCTION

Human resource is the soil of any organization. The survival or demise of any organization depends largely on the performance of its human resources. (Khan, 2015) [1], asserts that “it is widely accepted that human resource is one of the most important assets of any organization because things are getting done through employees”. In other words, the success of an organization in realizing its objectives heavily depends on the performance of its employees. Available literature has argued that the success of the enterprise is directly linked to the performance of those who work for that business. By the same token, under-achievement and poor productivity can be result of workplace failures especially recruitment and selection policies. Because hiring the wrong people or failure to anticipate fluctuations in hiring needs can be costly, it is important that conscious efforts are put into human resource planning [2, 3]. That is why Ekwoaha *et al.*, (2015) [4] opined that “one of the most significant developments in the field of organizations in recent times is the increasing importance given to human resources”. They maintained that people are vital to organizations as they offer perspectives, values and attributes to organizational life; and when managed effectively, these human traits can be of considerable benefits to the organization. Supporting these assertions,

[5] wrote that this scenario lends credence to the increasing attention being paid to the people aspect of organizational wealth. This is so because the development of people, their competencies and the process development of the total organization are the fulcrum of human resource management [6].

Civil service in Nigeria is facing a challenge of professionalism mostly attributed to its method of recruitment. It is a truism that the Nigerian civil servant has been known for poor service delivery over the years. They perform their duties with reckless abandon that leaves one to imagine if they are not paid for the jobs they do. In offices, trading of goods by staff has taken over the duties of the day. Attention is not paid to visitors and customers alike leading to piles of files that are left untouched and unattended to. It has unfortunately come to a stage in some offices where bribes are paid to staff by the tax paying public for them to be attended to and their problems solved.

The performance of civil service in Nigeria has indeed been replete with varying contradictions [7] and has even become an epitome of all that is corrupt, mediocre and fraudulent [8].

All these ills are occasioned partly because the right people were not recruited and selected during interviews. Recruitment is done through nepotism, federal character or zoning principles or other subjective modalities that

mostly leaves out the best candidates and allow mediocres and outright low grade candidates to be employed. These are in support of (Ekwoaha *et al.*, 2015) [4] assertion that “there is an implication of an organization’s human resource policies and practices on employee behaviour and attitudes. This has led to loss of public/customer confidence in the civil service organization.

Statement of the Problem: Recruitment form a major part of an organization’s overall resourcing strategies, which identifies and secures people needed for an organization to survive and succeed in the short to medium-term [9]. In fact, the basic purpose of recruitment is to create a pool of suitably qualified candidates to enable the selection of the best candidates for the organization, by attracting more and more employees to apply in the organization whereas the basic purpose of selection process is to choose the right candidates to fill the various positions in the organization [10].

The efficiency and effectiveness of any work place (whether the private or the public sector) largely depend on the caliber of the workforce. The availability of a competent and effective labour force does not just happen by chance but through an articulated recruitment exercise [11].

In Nigeria, recruitment of personnel to the civil service is one of the crucial tasks of modern government [12]. The state and federal civil service commissions serve as employment agents for the civil services in Nigeria [13]. Specifically, the authority for recruitment into the civil service lies with the civil service commissions (state and federal) but they delegate recruitment powers to ministries and departments to recruit junior staff to post graded GL 01-06 [14].

In the process of recruitment, the Nigerian civil service system emphasizes uniformity, standardization and transparency [15] in recruiting and selecting competent applicants. Despite these guidelines however, it is perceived that the recruitment process lacks equity and transparency, making it difficult if not impossible to recruit the best qualified applicants for available jobs in the service [16] and in the process having negative implications on the morale and productivity in the service.

(Briggs, 2007) [16] attributed the perceived problems of recruitment in the civil service to factors such as “inadequate and invalid standards for evaluating job candidates (as a result of absence of job analysis), sources of locating the potential applicants, transparency and independence of the recruiting authority and the

administrative machinery for determination of qualifications”. Environmental influences went on such as “technological, social, political and economic demands also cause problems that affect recruitment into the civil service.

The issue of federal character principle is another perceived problem that cannot be wished away. It was believed that the principle would help to secure and maintain stability in the country and by extension in component states. However, the principle has turned out to be a vehicle of discrimination eliminating excellence, competence and qualifications and bases recruitment on zones, ethnic, tribal and religious inclinations. Merit is therefore discriminated against [17]. The result is recruitment of incompetent people which will lead to poor performance and productivity [18].

Policy documents cited by Babaru, (2003) [15], stipulate that recruitment into Nigeria’s civil service is determined by three factors namely: vacancies, qualifications and federal character principles (in the case of states, zoning) and also emphasize uniformity, standardization and transparency. Enugu State of Nigeria is guided equivocally by these principles evident in its assertion that it is committed to adopting the best human resources management policies and practices necessary for improving service delivery and productivity [19].

However, there are perceptions among the citizenry that recruitment into the public sector of the state and indeed the entire country has largely shifted from meritocracy principles (educational qualification and experience) to factors such as nepotism, political patronage (god-fatherism) and ethnicity [20]. Enugu State Government, 2013, [19], agreed with these perceptions when it postulated that “appointments into the public service over the years have not fully been based on needs as indicated by the user Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

The result in case of Enugu State of Nigeria which forms part of the problems is leaving the public service with an accumulation of over-bloated, underutilized and not properly placed staff [19]. Generally, the public sector appears to have fallen short of expectations in terms of service delivery and productivity which is directly as a result of government recruitment policies, processes and procedures [20].

Objectives of the Study:

- To investigate the recruitment policies and procedures of Enugu State Civil Service.

- To explore the implications of recruitment policies and procedures on employee productivity in Enugu State Civil Service.

Research Questions:

- What are the recruitment policies and procedures of Enugu State Civil Service?
- To what extent has recruitment policies and procedures of Enugu State Civil Service affected employee productivity?

Theoretical Foundation of the Study: This study adopts Resource Based View theory as its theoretical framework. This theory was propounded by [21] who suggests that sustainable competitive advantage is attainable when firms have a human resource pool which cannot be imitated or substituted by rivals. 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 [21]. When this is not realized, organizations should make up for the shortfall by employing appropriate recruitment and selection criteria. The theory postulated that the foundation of any organization's success is based on the caliber of the people employed and the quality of their working relationships. In that regards, Boxall and Purcell (2008), [22], revealed that firms which recruit and retain exceptional individuals have the capability of generating human capital advantage. Technology and capital can be acquired anytime by organizations for a price, but it is not easy to acquire a pool of highly qualified and motivated employees. In order to have a competitive advantage, they maintained that the organizations need to be very careful with the recruitment and selection process.

Applying this theory to our study, it is obvious that finding competent workers will determine the strengths and weaknesses of any organization. According to [23,24], finding competent workers is an important organizational challenge; with the difficulty centering on recruiting and selecting employees with the correct qualifications to help achieve goals [25]. To solve this challenge, Resource Based View theory which emphasizes recruitment based on the right people with the right skills to ensure maximum productivity should be adopted by organizations including Enugu State Civil Service.

Literature Review

Recruitment System in Nigeria Civil Service:

Civil service recruitment is the process through which suitable candidates are induced to compete for appointment into government jobs. In Nigeria's public sector recruitment into the federal government ministries and parastatals are done by the Federal Civil Service Commission as reflected under section 153(1) d, paragraph 116 of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria [26]. The policy document of recruitment stipulates meritocracy and ethnicity amongst others as basis for recruitment into the public sector [27].

It appears though according to Okeke-Uzodike and Subban, (2015), [27], "that adherence to the basis of recruitment and selection especially educational qualifications still remain a challenge facing human resource professionals and the Nigerian Public Sector". Recent studies also have shown that recruitment into the Nigerian public service is influenced by factors such as political consideration/godfatherism, nepotism, quota system, ethnicity (federal character principle) and government direction [28] and [29]. Collaborating, Fajana *et al.*, (2011), [30], opined that factors such as culture, language, religion, gender and educational qualifications are part of the basis for determining who get employed in the civil service. In the final analysis, recruitment steps such as advertisement, test/interview, physical and health fitness test, etc are not applied during recruitment in the Nigeria public sector.

Effect of Recruitment Policies on Productivity of Workers:

Recruitment and selection in any organization is a serious business as the success of any organization or efficiency in service delivery or high productivity of staff depends on the quality of its workforce who was recruited into the organization through recruitment and selection exercises [31]. As Obikeze and Obi (2004), [32] opined that since recruitment and selection involve getting the best applicant for a job, it is only reasonable that recruitment procedures and policies that provide a large pool of qualified applicants, paired with a reliable and valid selection regime, will have a substantial influence over the quality and type of skills new employees possess or their productivity [33]. In the opinion of Bohlander, Snell and Sherman (2001), [34], it is important for managers to understand the objectives, policies and practices used for recruitment and selection. More genuine is those responsible for making selection

decisions. They should have adequate information upon which to base their decisions if productivity in organizations are to be met. As Robbins (2005), [35], observed, organization’s recruitment and selection policies and practices represent important factors for shaping employee behaviours and attitudes that will impact on productivity. As Okoh (2005) [33], asserted, not just that organizational recruitment and selection practices determine who is hired, the use of the proper selection criteria will increase the probability of higher productivity. In the words of Osemeke, (2012), [36], when the best people are selected for the job, productivity increases.

Methodological Frameworks

Design, Sampling and Data Issues: This study adopted the case study design method in examining the implications of recruitment policies and procedures for employee productivity in Enugu State Civil Service. A questionnaire was drafted by the researchers for the soliciting of data. A sample size of two hundred and eight (208) respondents who are staff of Enugu State Civil Service was determined from the entire staff strength of the service using Taro Yamani statistical formula. Simple random sampling technique which is the type of probability sampling in which each person in the population has equal and independent opportunity of being included in the sample for the study was adopted. Frequencies and percentages were employed in the analysis.

Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

The data are presented, analyzed and interpreted according to the order of our two research questions that guided the study. The data analyses are based on those data collected from the respondents through the distribution of questionnaires.

RQ1: What are the recruitment policies and procedures of Enugu State Civil Service?

In Table 1 above, we wanted to find out the recruitment policies and procedures that guided employment into Enugu State Civil Service. Twenty (20) respondents representing 10% of the total respondents pooled stated that merit system is the recruitment policy and procedure of the state service. Thirty six (36) respondents or 17% of the respondents adduced nepotism as the recruitment policy or procedure of the state service. A larger population of one hundred and two (102) respondents believe that zoning or what we call

Table 1: Summary of respondents’ opinions on their perception of Enugu State Civil Service recruitment policies and procedures

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Merit	20	10
Nepotism	36	17
Zoning	102	49
Bribery	50	24
Total	208	100

Source: Research Report, 2016

Table 2: Summary of respondents opinions of the extent recruitment policies and procedures of Enugu State Civil Service has affected staff productivity

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Very High Extent	63	30
High Extent	110	53
Very Low Extent	15	7
Low Extent	20	10
Total	208	100

Source: Research Report, 2016

federal character principle in Nigeria is the overriding policy and procedure for taking new recruits into Enugu State Civil Service. This represents 49%. Another fifty (50) respondents or 24% stated that bribery especially represented by cash for employment is the order of the day in recruitment and selection policy of Enugu State Civil Service. The interpretation and analysis of these data shows that vices of zoning and bribery are the hallmark policies and procedures of employment into the civil service of Enugu State. These policies will result in the employment of mediocres that will influence the quality and productivity at work.

RQ2: To what extent has recruitment policies and procedures of Enugu State Civil Service affected employee productivity?

In Table 2 above, we sought to know the extent these overwhelming negative recruitment policies and procedures of Enugu State Civil Services has affected workers’ productivity. Sixty three (63) respondents or 30% of the total sampled population believe that to a very high extent, productivity at work has been negatively affected. A higher number of one hundred and ten (110) or 53% of the respondents stated that productivity to a high extent affected productivity. However, fifteen (15) respondents or a paltry 7% believe that recruitment policies and procedures of the state civil service affect productivity to a very low extent. Twenty respondents or 10% again supported the above view and state that productivity is affected to a low extent based on recruitment policy and procedures of Enugu State Civil Service.

In sum, majority of our respondents were of the opinion that recruitment policies and procedures of organizations have a direct relationship with workers productivity. In case of Enugu State Civil Service, it affects productivity adversely.

Summary of Findings: It was discovered in this study that recruitment policies and procedures of Enugu State Civil Service are not based on merit system but rather on subjective factors such as zoning, bribery (buying of jobs), nepotism, etc which adversely affect productivity in the long run.

Our research found out that recruitment into Enugu State Civil Service is wrought with some challenges. These challenges include the poor recruitment policies of the service, corruption which is endemic in the system, political interference or influence and finally poor leadership qualities of the management of the service.

Recommendations:

- All forms of subjective move away from merit system of recruitment should be jettisoned. In that regards, zoning formula, all forms of bribery and corruption, nepotism, favouritism, must be stopped.
- Merit system or procedure of employment which include written text, oral interview, physical and medical text, etc must be employed as the recruitment policy and procedure of Enugu State Civil Service.
- The state civil service should evolve a policy of human resource planning. Planning is futuristic and in that line, recruitment of human resource must be planned ahead of time to avoid confusion. When this is done, the right people must definitely be picked.
- The society at large must embrace ethical values of fairness in recruitment if this recruitment quagmire must stop. This society must stop giving out bribes and allow high ethical values to reign in our society.
- Furthermore, enhanced training and development of staff especially management staff is recommended. Such training forum should be used to inculcate the culture of merit in employment and indeed all facets of the service.

CONCLUSION

Recruitment policies and procedures of any organization determines the level of productivity in that organization. This means that the key to an organization's

higher productivity depends on hiring the right people, at the right time and in the right places. This supports Ezeali and Esiagu (2010), [31], assertion that the success of any organization or efficiency in service delivery depend on the workforce who was recruited into the organization through the right recruitment and selection policies and procedures.

Enugu State Civil Service has so far fallen short of using the right recruitment policies and employing the right recruitment procedures. The implication has been the hiring of wrong people and placing them at wrong places. These have adversely affected productivity and service delivery.

In view of these findings, this research suggests that merit system should be at the heart of redesigning and instituting new recruitment policies and procedures. There should also be a long term human resource planning which should include training and development of staff especially management staff. This will enable them understand the objectives, policies and procedures of recruitment and selection in the service. All these will help to boost the productivity and service delivery in Enugu State Civil Service.

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