

Recruitment and Employees' Performance in Organisations in Niger Delta States

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Abstract

The study examines the impact of recruitment and selection practices on employee performance at Warri Refinery and Petrochemical Company Limited (WRPCL) and Indorama Eleme Petrochemical Limited (IEPL). Data were collected via questionnaires, focus group discussions (FGD), and semi-structured interviews. Descriptive statistical methods of data analysis were used in the study. The findings indicated that the WRPCL, a government-owned enterprise in Nigeria, struggles to fulfill its mandate due to politically influenced recruitment and selection processes that prioritize connections over merit, resulting in poor employee performance and inefficiency. In contrast, IEPL, a privately managed entity, excels in productivity, innovation, and efficiency through merit-based recruitment and selection practices. This comparative analysis underscores the importance of strategic, meritocratic hiring practices in enhancing employee performance and organizational success. The study recommends that WRPCL should reform its recruitment and selection processes to align with IEPL's best practices, adopting a merit-based approach to mitigate managerial constraints and political interference, thereby improving employee performance and organizational effectiveness.

Keywords: Recruitment Strategies, Employee Performance, Organizational Efficiency, Niger Delta Workforce, Human Resource Management

Introduction

The Niger Delta region of Nigeria, known for its rich oil and natural gas resources, is a hub for economic activities, especially in the energy sector. Despite its economic significance, organizations in this region often report suboptimal employee performance. Issues such as low productivity, high turnover rates, and frequent labor disputes are common. According to a recent survey by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), only 45% of employees in the Niger Delta meet performance expectations, compared to the national average of 60% (NBS, 2023). Employee performance refers to how effectively and efficiently employees carry out their job duties and responsibilities, contributing to the overall goals and objectives of the organization. As defined by Campbell (1990), employee performance includes both the behaviours employees exhibit and the outcomes of those behaviours. This multifaceted nature of performance encompasses task performance, contextual performance, and adaptive performance.

Recruitment practices are crucial in determining the quality of employees and their performance. Effective recruitment ensures that organizations attract, select, and retain individuals with the necessary skills, competencies, and cultural fit. Poor recruitment practices can lead to a mismatch between job requirements and employee capabilities, resulting in poor performance. Effective recruitment strategies are designed to attract candidates who not only have the required qualifications but also fit well with the organizational culture. Biswas (2012) defines recruitment as the process of searching for candidates for employment and stimulating them to apply for jobs in the organization. Similarly, Fenning and Amaria (2011) define recruitment as a process of choosing the right person at the right time. According to Huselid (1995), selection involves collecting vital information about applicants to decide who is fit and appropriate for employment. Onah and Anikwe (2019) find that organizations with rigorous and strategic recruitment processes reported 30% higher employee performance levels compared to those with less structured recruitment practices. Omisorean and Okofu (2014), note that selection is more than just choosing the best candidate; it attempts to strike a balance between what applicants can do and what the organization requires. Employee performance is intrinsically linked to the

recruitment and selection process. When organizations invest in hiring the right people, they set the stage for higher job satisfaction and performance. Therefore, Guest (2011), stresses that human resource management is a system that brings out employee commitment and involvement in line with organizational goals and objectives.

A robust recruitment and selection process contributes to building a strong employer brand, attracting top talent, and fostering a positive work environment. Organizations prioritizing hiring the right people benefit from immediate performance improvements and long-term gains in employee retention and organizational stability. This study aims to investigate the relationship between recruitment practices and employee performance in organizations within the Niger Delta states. By identifying the challenges and opportunities unique to this region, the study seeks to provide actionable recommendations for enhancing recruitment strategies and improving employee performance.

Literature Review

Person-Job Fit and Person-Organisation Fit Theories

This study adopts the Person-Job Fit (PJF) Theory and Person-Organization Fit (POF) Theory. These theories posit that employee performance is maximized when there is a good fit between an individual's abilities, needs, and desires, and the job's demands and rewards (Edwards, 1991). The Person-Job Fit theory, with significant contributions from Edward, (1973), focuses on the compatibility between an individual's abilities and the demands of a specific job. Key components include specific tasks, responsibilities, and expectations associated with a job, and employee competencies, skills, knowledge, abilities, and other characteristics of an individual. Employees whose skills and abilities match job requirements are more likely to perform effectively, leading to higher job satisfaction and lower turnover rates (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Cable & DeRue, 2002). Organizations should prioritize matching job roles with the specific skills needed to address regional challenges such as environmental management and community relations.

The Person-Organization Fit theory, extensively reviewed by Kristof (1996), highlights the importance of congruence between an individual's values, beliefs, and behaviors and the organizational culture, norms, and values. Key components include shared values, beliefs, and norms within an organization, and personal values, beliefs, and behaviors of employees. Employees who align with the organization's culture are more motivated, engaged, and committed to their work, leading to higher job satisfaction, morale, and reduced turnover (Chatman, 1989; O'Reilly et al., 1991). Integrating PJF and POF theories provides a comprehensive framework for improving employee performance by ensuring alignment between job demands, employee competencies, and organizational culture. In the context of the Niger Delta states, these theories are crucial. Ensuring a good person-job fit is challenging but essential for enhancing employee performance in a region with limited job opportunities. Organizations may benefit from recruitment practices that assess the alignment between prospective employees' values and organizational culture.

Concept of Recruitment

Recruitment is the process of discovering sources of manpower to meet staffing requirements and employing effective measures to attract and select an efficient workforce (Mamoria & Gankar, 2010). It is a foundational element of effective human resource management, profoundly impacting employee performance and organizational success. By implementing strategic and well-designed recruitment and selection practices, organizations can ensure they hire individuals who contribute to organizational goals. Recruitment is regarded as one of the most crucial functions of Human Resource Management because hiring the right people is essential for

organizational success. Recruitment involves identifying, sourcing, screening, short-listing, interviewing, hiring, and on boarding employees. It includes identifying staffing needs and filling them. Madhani (2019) notes that the -Human Resource Managementll facilitates overall organization's goal, effective administration of human capital, and employees being the organization's most crucial asset. According to Yoder, Mamoria, and Gankar (2010), recruitment policies involve commitments by employers to seek and employ the best-qualified persons for each job.

Mediums of Recruitment

Omisore and Okofu (2014) stress that online job portals websites dedicated to job postings where employers can advertise vacancies and job seekers can apply. For example, LinkedIn, Glass door, Monster. Wide reach, easy to use, cost-effective, and allows for targeted searches. Company Websites Organizations often have career sections on their official websites where they post job openings. It Attracts candidates specifically interested in the company, provides detailed information about the organization, and reinforces the company's brand. Social Media. Platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter are increasingly used to recruit candidates. Large audience, ability to engage with potential candidates, cost-effective, and promotes employer branding. Recruitment Agencies (Guest,2011). Robert Half, Randstad. Current employees recommend potential candidates for positions within the organization High-quality candidates, cost-effective, and faster hiring process, and enhances employee morale and retention (Becker, 1993).

Concept of Selection

Selection begins with the preliminary interview and ends with the employment contract. It involves a series of activities, from initial screening interviews to the final employment decision. Fenning and Amaria (2011) emphasized that selection is crucial in Human Resources (HR) because it is closely related to organizational development. Huselid (1995) defines selection as collecting vital information about applicants to determine their fitness for employment. Omisore and Okofu (2014) highlight that selection is more than choosing the best candidate; it balances what applicants can do and what the organization requires. The major aim of selection is to fill vacancies with personnel who meet job-related competencies, are self-motivated, consistent, efficient, and quick learners inclined towards self-development. Effective selection of applicants contributes to achieving organizational objectives. According to Fenning and Amaria (2011), recruitment and selection involve a mutual process where job seekers and employers meet to ensure the right persons are in the right place at the right time. Recruitment and selection significantly impact employee and organizational performance.

Methodology

This study used a cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationship between recruitment, selection, and employee performance in IEPL Rivers and WRPC Delta States. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, Focal Group Discussions (FGD) and semi-structured in-depth interviews was administered, Content validity ensured the questionnaire comprehensively covered all aspects of recruitment and employee performance, evaluated by expert judgment. Test-retest reliability measured the consistency of the questionnaire over time by administering it to the same group of respondents at two different points. stratified random sampling was used to ensure that different sub-groups (organizational sizes, and locations) were adequately represented. A sample size of 350 was determined based on population size, total number of organizations in the Niger Delta states, and a total of 310 questionnaire was returned, a 95% confidence level, and a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$. The expected variability in the data was assumed at 50%.This summary outlines the distribution and responses to a questionnaire designed to study the impact of recruitment practices on employee performance in two organizations within the

Niger Delta states. A total sample size of 350 was targeted, distributed equally between the two organizations. The breakdown is as follows:

Questionnaire distribution -Total questionnaires Distributed: 350; organization A: 175; Organization B: 175

Response rate-Total responses received: 310 (88.57% response rate); Organization A: 155 (88.57% response rate); Organization B: 155 (88.57% response rate)

Table 1: Respondents' Bio Data

Category	Sub-Category	Number	of	Percentage
Respondents				
Gender	Male	180		58%
	Female	130		42%
Age Distribution	18-25years	40		13%
	26-35years	120		39%
	36-45years	90		29%
	46-55years	50		16%
	56 and above	10		3%
Educational Qualification	Secondary	20		6%
	School	60		19%
	Certificate	160		52%
	Diploma	60		19%
	Bachelor's	10		3%
	Degree			
Job Position	Master's Degree			
	Doctorate			
	Entry Level	70		23%
	Junior/Mid-Level	150		48%
	Senior Level	80		26%
Years of Experience	Management Level	10		3%
	Less than 1 year	30		10%
	1-5	120		39%
	6-10	90		29%
	11-15	50		16%
	More than 15 years	20		6%

Table 2: Questionnaire Responses

Questionnaire Aspect	Responses/Findings	Percentage
Total Questionnaires Distributed	350	100%
Responses Received	310	88.57%
Recruitment process	Fair and Transparent	80%
	Significant Impact on Performance	70%
Employee Performance	Satisfactory or above	85%
Key Factors Affecting Performance	Job Training	75%
	Clarity of Job Roles	65%
	Management Support	70%
Recruitment Accuracy	Skills Matched to job Requirements	60%

Source: Research Field Work 2023

Majority of respondents highlighted that their organizations use structured recruitment processes, including interviews and aptitude tests; 80% of respondents believe that the recruitment process is fair and transparent. Besides, 70% of respondents reported that the recruitment practices have a significant impact on their job performance. In the analysis, 85% of respondents rated their job performance as satisfactory. Consequently, the key factors affecting performance included job training (75%), clarity of job roles (65%), and management support (70%). Besides, 60% of respondents felt that the recruitment process accurately matched their skills and qualifications to the job requirements. The study reveals a strong correlation between effective recruitment practices and enhanced employee performance in the organizations surveyed. The data gathered from the questionnaires provides valuable insights into how recruitment strategies can be optimized to improve organizational efficiency and employee satisfaction in the Niger Delta states.

Majority of respondents highlighted structured recruitment processes, including interviews and aptitude tests, with 80% believing the recruitment process to be fair and transparent, and 70% reporting a significant impact on their job performance. Key factors affecting performance included job training (75%), clarity of job roles (65%), and management support (70%). Moreover, 60% felt that the recruitment process accurately matched their skills and qualifications to job requirements. Effective recruitment practices lead to better job performance, higher job satisfaction, and lower turnover rates (Schmitt & Chan, 1998). The findings underscore the importance of a thorough recruitment process in the Niger Delta, where labor market volatility necessitates robust recruitment strategies to ensure the right candidates are hired, thereby enhancing overall performance.

Table 3: Impact of Recruitment and Selection on Employee Performance.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	180	58%
Agree	80	25.8%
Strongly Disagree	20	6.5%
Disagree	30	9.7%
Total	310	100%

Source: Research Field Work 2023

The Table 1.2 indicates that 260 respondents (83.9%) agreed that there is a positive significant relationship between recruitment/selection and employee performance at WRPC and IEPL, while 16.1% disagreed.

Interview Report

Respondent 1: Emphasized that recruiting qualified employees enhances performance and productivity. They noted that political interference often results in hiring unqualified personnel, adversely affecting performance.

Respondent 2: Agreed there is a significant relationship between recruitment/selection and performance. They stated that unqualified employees perform poorly until they undergo extensive training.

Respondent 3: Highlighted the importance of hiring qualified and suitable candidates to increase performance and reduce costs.

Discussions of Findings

The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that effective recruitment and selection positively impact performance. These findings align with Meyer and Allen (1997), who found that fair recruitment processes enhance organizational commitment and performance. Interviews further confirmed the significant relationship between recruitment/selection and employee performance. This supports Omisore and Okofu's (2014) study, which linked employee performance with effective recruitment/selection practices.

Conclusion

The study investigates the relationship between recruitment practices and employee performance in two organizations in Niger Delta states. By identifying the challenges and opportunities unique to this region, the study seeks to provide actionable recommendations for enhancing recruitment strategies and, consequently, improving employee performance. WRPC has failed to achieve its objectives despite abundant resources, skilled manpower, and advanced equipment, resulting in zero product supply and national embarrassment. Political interference in recruitment and selection has led to unqualified personnel occupying key positions, impacting performance and organizational effectiveness. In contrast, IEPL's merit-based recruitment and selection practices have resulted in significant productivity and efficiency. This highlights the importance of strategic and merit-based hiring for organizational success. IEPL's approach serves as a model for WRPC and other public enterprises in Nigeria. The study therefore concludes that there is a significant relationship between recruitment and employee's performance in organizations.

Recommendations

The study recommends:

1. Diversify recruitment channels to include online platforms and partnerships with educational institutions.

2. Reduce political interference in recruitment and allow HR departments to operate independently.
3. Invest in employer branding to attract high-quality candidates.
4. Incorporate advanced psychometric testing to assess candidates' cognitive abilities and personality traits.
5. Implement structured interviews and assessment centers for thorough candidate evaluation.
6. Regularly review and update recruitment policies based on industry trends and organizational needs.
7. Provide on-going training for HR personnel to stay abreast of best practices in talent acquisition.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to the understanding of the impact of recruitment and selection on employee performance. It bridges the gap between theoretical frameworks and practical applications, providing valuable insights for HR practitioners. By employing a mixed-method approach, the study presents empirical evidence linking effective recruitment and selection processes with enhanced employee performance, reinforcing theories such as the Resource-Based View (RBV), Human Capital Theory, and Person-Environment Fit Theory. This research offers practical insights, enriches theoretical frameworks, and sets the stage for future studies in human resource management.

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