



RECRUITMENT PRAXIS AND CORPORATE VALUE – CREATION IN THE NIGERIAN WORK LANDSCAPE

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Abstract

It is desirable for corporate ventures as going concerns to strive to stand out in the delivery of their core mandates. A firm's level of value-creation, which calibrates the firm's worth in the eyes of its customers and stakeholders, is one sure way of fulfillment in this mandate-direction. The deciding factors in the survival of a firm in the face of current hyper-competition are the deliberate actions and inactions firms take. In spite of the principle of equifinality, this paper believes that firms can enhance their distinctive value-creation stratagem by critically examining their inputs and processes. The calibre of employees and processes of bringing them into the firms are grand deciders in the outcome of the much desired drive towards unique corporate mandate delivery. Thus, it becomes imperative and fundamental that the very vital component of recruitment is done accurately and dispassionately. This Paper is an attempt at enhancing corporate value –creation and usefully contributing to the thought and body of knowledge in the conceptual area of workplace behavior and learning by highlighting counterproductive behavioural actions through certain pitfalls of recruitment praxis.

Key words: Behavior, corporate sustainability, Negative knowledge, service delivery, workplace learning

I. INTRODUCTION

The nature of and dynamism in the prevailing contemporary corporate space requires managerial tactics and aptness that will arm firms to the teeth in the face of regularly changing customer's expectations, extreme competition and the need to enhance corporate uniqueness. The uniqueness of a firm can be sustainable if there are deliberate drives towards continuous value-creation in terms of the human resource offerings. The more value created by the firms in terms of meeting customers' expectations and standards, the more likely it is to translate to patronage and direct bottom line of the firms income and serendipitously, to the general wellbeing of the social lives of the members of the society in which the firms operate. In this era of COVID-19 Pandemic when firm are more likely to adopt strategic talent acquisition and other strategic talent pursuit techniques, the service delivery of the recruited employees becomes very critical.

The Nigerian social space may not have derived the optimum benefits in terms of the human resource offerings of firms. The myriads of cases of capacity underutilization, skill mismatch, and complete lack of the mental, physical and psychosocial alertness to deliver on job mandates may be culpable in this quagmire. There is no gain saying that employees are an organization's most important resource and most valuable asset. This makes the investment in employees as an organizational resource just as important an investment as in plant and machinery (Drabek, Lorincová & Javorčiková, 2017). Thus, Employees who possess the requisite skills, competences and deliberate ability to put forth adequate work effort may be a deciding factor. Recruitment into organizations then becomes the very beginning of corporate success. It is glaringly vital that managers should have a good knowledge of how to recruit, select and place the right persons in firms so as to enhance the employees' contributions and achieve the best set of goals for the organization. It will then make common sense to employ people whose skills will be fully utilized and who will provide satisfactory work outcomes in the context of controlled costs. The cost of getting the recruitment process wrong is very high and grossly under estimated. In line with this thought, Szczapa (2021) observed that the recruitment of employees conducted by companies, which is often not given sufficient attention, has a lot to do with the determinants shaping their commitment. Through the rightly patterned recruitment process the firms have the foremost opportunity to get the right persons with the right skills and right frame of mind to into the firms that will boost corporate distinctive competences and social acceptability.

Suffice it to be emphasize that a recruitment process can be said to be rightly done if it follows the structurally prescribed order of the firm and done in a transparently honest manner devoid of any form of ulterior motive and biases as well as meeting all the formal corporately laid down procedures and skill requirements. The employees then becomes arrows in the quivers of firms armoury. This will not only boost firm's confidence but also serves as a self-defense armour in the face of fierce completion. Conversely, the recruitment outcome is faulty if done without due diligence to ascertain the skillsets, experiences and other requisite qualifications of a potential employees as required for the vacancy or when there are misfits of the persons and the positions or the person so recruited is unable to deliver on the job mandate.

In this work, employee recruitment is considered as the whole gamut of processes and activities that tend to endear potential employees to the firm and procedurally choose the best from the lot as well as assigning them to the job openings. Samwel (2018) noted the importance of human resource planning in the success process. Thus, employee recruitment will be used in a broad sense to cover the process from manpower planning to selection and

placement. It is also noteworthy to mention that sources of applicants in the recruitment process could be internal (that is, within the organization) or external (that is, from other companies, advertisements, education institutions, employment agencies and so on). This work focused only on the external sources. For clarity, it is important to state that manpower planning, also known as personnel planning involves the identification of job vacancies to be filled in organizations, selection is the process of screening to scrutinize potential employees to pick from among those who have applied, those who best fit the post advertised while placement involves matching accurately the different job vacancies with the employees. This Paper intends to enhance value-creation in the contemporary Nigerian work landscape by highlighting faulty recruitment praxis

II. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

Billett (2006) has argued that every sort of setting has the capacity to provide physical, social, psychological and cultural contributions to learning and that workplaces as natural settings have great beneficial potentials. From the foregoing, managers will obviously need to relearn recruitment and other organizational praxis through the avoidance of pitfalls and errors that jeopardize the attainment of lofty ideals. For theoretical considerations, this work aligns with the Negative Knowledge thought (Gartmeier, Bauer, Gruber & Heid, 2008). The scholars opine that Negative knowledge is experientially acquired knowledge about what is wrong and what is to be avoided during the performance of a given work situation. This negative knowledge model relates to constructivist theorization and metacognition and contributes to the understanding of professionals' expert practice and learning by emphasizing knowing about what to avoid as part of experts' effective actions. The assumption is that negative knowledge helps to increase individuals' certainty through awareness of possible positive as well as negative outcomes of their actions through the capability to judge their respective probabilities under given circumstances. Metacognitive knowledge regulates actual behaviour. This behavior regulation is aimed at amplifying or triggering appropriate action or inhibiting inappropriate action. Gartmeier, Bauer, Gruber and Heid (2008) also assumed that Metacognitive knowledge increases efficiency during actions as well as enhances the quality and depth of reflection processes on action. The importance of this understanding of negative knowledge becomes obvious when the dynamic nature of many current workplaces is considered. It also explores counterfactual thinking considerations as well as prior and episodic knowledge. This work believes, in line with the tenets of the negative knowledge model, that the avoidance of errors through the learning from previous errors in work situations is an important quality of professional expertise. Many contemporary recruitment praxis are clearly in error and managers will really need the outcome of this work to derive knowledge of the negative knowledge model.

III. RECRUITMENT PRAXIS AND CORPORATE VALUE -CREATION

An employee planning to get into the employ of a firm will presumably want to stay in the firm as a staff and make useful contributions to that organization. However, depending on the nature of the prevailing corporate recruitment praxis, certain behavioural outcomes become noticeable in the employees themselves; the employee – employer relationships, as may be evident in the number of queries, dismissals, forced resignations and premature retirements, based on unsatisfactory performance; as well as in the organizational climate. The effect of recruitment on turnover intention and how high employee turnover rate dampens morale of employees in workplaces have been noted (Makarim & Muafi, 2021; Paul & Hung, 2018). Besides, having to constantly recruit because of high employee turnover is unnecessarily and a wasteful drain of scarce resources of time, money, man hour and energy.

Sutanto and Kurniawan (2016) have opined that a good recruitment program can provide a positive influence to increasing employee commitment, productivity and the quality of work including performance. It was also in their opinion that employee performance could decrease if the employee retention is poor. A major concern of every organization is how to increase its effectiveness and efficiency and many of the managerial decisions, policies and practices are centered on this end. Many managers honestly strive to attempt to accomplish the firms objectives through subordinates but as long as the various positions are not occupied by people with the requisite expertise for the job, firms, objectives will never be optimally accomplished. The managers will thus be forced to sack the employee soon after employment or the employee will be forced to resign the appointment due to inability to deliver on the required job mandate. This situation will continue until and unless there is a total elimination of faulty recruitment praxis. Employee recruitment may be seen as the methods utilised in identifying and attracting the best talents to an organization (Koch, Gerber & De Klerk, 2018) Employee recruitment could also be seen as the deliberate attempt to seek the best pool of individuals with desirable qualities in the available labour markets in order to fill identified job openings.

Nigeria possesses abundant number of persons with requisite skillsets waiting to be tapped for the improvement of the value-creation status and the capacity of contributing firms to national growth and nation building. However, the following faulty recruitment praxis may have hindered the maximization of the aforesaid potentials.

i. Fallacious Qualifications

The outcomes of interview sessions during recruitment processes are essentially to get the most qualified persons into the employ of the firms who, in turn, will create and add value to firm's fortunes. However, the issue of qualification becomes fallacious when the selected qualified persons are actually not qualified for value-creation while on the job. This may be due the reality that the specified qualification requirements for employment are often met by persons with the requisite paper qualifications irrespective of their personality, knowledge, passion, values, emotional quotient and drive. Also, over time, potential employees have been able to identify patterns of preferred interview questions asked and expected favourable responses during sessions. It is not uncommon for persons to tend to want to manage impressions and favourably paint good pictures of themselves but in due time the true images emerge and the manager realizes that a wrong person has been recruited. This may make the manager to be constantly recruiting and replacing.

ii. The Fire-brigade cycle

This fire-brigade cycle to recruitment is an attempt by a firm to quickly get persons with haphazardly- thought- out qualities to fill equally haphazardly- thought- out job openings. The haste at which the recruitment is done makes it susceptible to overlooking the critical manpower planning processes and tell-tale calamitous signs in the qualities of the potential recruits. Even when there are glaring shortcomings in the credentials as well as in the physical countenances and dispositions of the potential recruit, a lot of assumptions are made to cover up for the shortcomings in the interim. In no distant time after placement, the effect of those overlooked shortcomings in the employee may begin to manifest, prompting the firm to hurriedly think of a replacement. The recruitment-replacement cycle may continue as long as it takes for the management to realize the folly of this praxis.

iii. Super-human expectations

In an attempt for firms to get persons with the best qualities and qualifications that will help create value for them, the firms tend to compile lengthy lists of qualities of potential recruits and job description that are expected to be filled. Such job descriptions and expectations will presumably lead to excellent performance of the firm. However, these super-human expectations then leave the firm with a minute domain of candidates and may still omit the best potentials who could better place the firm on the pedestal for success. Since no human is perfect, any identified defect in the employee so recruited may open another shop for replacement sooner than expected.

iv. Perceptual Distortions

Perceptual distortions are errors that occur as people tend to interpret events and situations. These errors could lead to faulty judgments of persons, situations or targets. When such judgemental biases occur during a recruitment process, right persons may be rejected and wrong persons selected. Halo Effect is one of such distortions that could occur. In this situation, a general impression about an individual is drawn on the basis of a single characteristic such as looks, sociability, or carriage. Stereotyping, a situation when someone is judged on the basis of the general perception of the group to which he/she belongs is another possible area of distortion which could affect judgement during recruitment processes.

v. Diversity Mismatch: The levels of diversity in firms may include gender, age, race, religion or ethnicity. Diversity mismatch is the faulty or ill-matching of persons and job roles that occasionally occur in recruitment praxis. For instance, there are some jobs which may be better done by a particular gender or there are some job roles that may be better played by persons of a particular age range. If the recruitment is done otherwise, a diversity mismatch may have occurred. Although special training could be done to bridge any lapses, a properly done recruitment will reduce any extra cost on personnel and give the needed impetus for added value-creation.

vi. Quack interviewer

It is quite unfortunate that situations arise where interviewers for recruitment processes are themselves unqualified. These quack interviewers are those persons who attempt to recruit persons into the employ of firms but lack the requisite knowledge, expertise, disposition, values, drive or even the personal idiosyncrasies that could to get the right persons for the right positions. When wrong evaluations are done by a quack interviewer and firms employ wrong persons, value-creation will not reach the optimum. Needless to say that the interviewer, who may likely be a child- of- circumstance of a previously faulty recruitment exercise is likely to incur more cost for the firm with the added loss of prospective value-creation .

vii. Extraneous Pressures: Extraneous Pressures are all the forces existing on and coming from the outside of the recruitment process that tend to unduly influence or attempt to influence the recruitment process. This may include all such recruitments made based on political, social and allied pressures regardless of skill and ability of candidates. The statutory regulations of the Federal Character Principle and the indigenization policy, among others, are often being used in recruitment in Nigeria may also be regarded as extraneous pressures. It is not uncommon to observe that managers recruit unproductive employees to bow to political, social and even emotional pressures in order to accommodate immediate and distant family relatives, friends and other social relatives as well as other discretionary consideration.

In spite of the identified shortcomings of the extraneous pressures, efforts should be made to check the skillset requirements and the peculiarity of the situation when bowing to the pressure.

IV. VALUE CREATION

Osborne, Nasi and Powell (2021) have opined that the value creation loci for the public service are the individual citizens, society and the ecosystems that they inhabit. A lot is still desired in the realization of the optimum benefits of a rightly done recruitment of employees in the Nigerian corporate space, irrespective of the sector of the economy. Agbazue and Nwobi (2020) have noted that public sector inefficiency and ineffectiveness have been a major hindrance in the success story of the Nigerian State. Ekwoaba, Ikeije and Ufoma (2015) may have observed that those responsible for making selection decisions seem not to have adequate information upon which to base their decisions. As a country with a vast population, the likelihood of having persons with various skillsets is enormous. In other words, the skills and potentials of willing and able persons, if adequately utilized will create extreme positive value to her citizens and world around her. However, the recruitment praxis of firms, public and private alike, may not have allowed for proper skill match that will lift the country from the doldrums of social economic under development. The managers of the processes tend to fail to realize the myriads of repercussions associated with bringing in the wrong people in the overall goal attainment as firms success largely depend on the input of those they hire.

Van Oijen (2020) has identified that the key to success in the drive towards value creation is to adopt goal realization in such a way that it creates an environment where employees feel safe, empowered and confident to go after aspirational, value-based goals while creating alignment and connecting employees to the overall goals and objectives of the organization. Organizations have to realize that value creation is critical to remaining relevant in the industry landscape as well as to the firms survival in the present corporate dispensation. The battle for survival is for the fittest and any unfit firm is eliminated. Hence, firms desirous of relevance and survival ought to incorporate elements that will translate to high and positive metrics of value-creation so as to ensure the accomplishment of their overall mission statement and their organization-wide strategies. Continuous value-creation strategy enhances firms service delivery and should be the focus of any employee recruitment exercise. Value creation could be seen as the whole essence of corporate existence and should be tailored into the fabric of the work content of the activities of each employee. Value creation is the positive and meaningful result generated from a thought, an idea, an experience, an emotion, an activity, an interaction, a transaction, or any other action that enhance the well-being of all relevant stakeholders (Boukouyen, & Mahajan, 2021). Abbo, Abdulrazak and Suyatno (2015) believe that value-creation is a situation where public organizations are able to possess certain characteristics such as innovativeness, productivity, accountability, integration, discipline and professionalism which can create a market-driven, flexible and forward-looking public service. This will indeed translate to the motivation to meet the challenges of achieving sustainable development. Ukeje (2020) observed that little or no indices of sustainable development has been visible in spite of the several reforms aimed at adding or perhaps creating value to the observed system and went further to assert that the recruitment processes have a great effect in the dismal level of the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This may imply that the recruitment processes marked by nepotism, political interference, quota system, community/stakeholders' demand and devoid of merit, and professionalism can never achieve any lofty goal of value creation (Izuogu,

2015). Value-creation will not only benefit the firms' bottom line but also account for social economic developmental level of the generality of the public. The faulty recruitment praxis thus short changes the society, firms and even sometimes the individual employee who may be damned to show gross incompetence and capacity underutilization.

V. METHODOLOGY

This paper explored the use of Content analysis as a guiding tool to derive meaning in the determination of the identified conceptual themes of this work as well as the possible relationships between them.

VI. CONCLUSION

The Consequences of faulty recruitment praxis are highly contributory to the bane of value – creation in the Nigerian work landscape. The cost of faulty recruitment praxis seems highly underestimated and many firms seem to treat the recruitment processes with levity. The firms fail to realize that apart from the huge cost in monetary terms as well as the energy and time spent in a faulty recruitment process and strategies, there is also the loss in revenue in the payment of salary for an unproductive employee till the time the person is either retrained or fired not to mention the cost of shopping for a replacement. While such an employee is still in service, other consequences could include loss in clientele and patronage as the service delivery of the firm will be below par. This could also adversely affect the image of the firm in the eyes of its patronizing public. There is also the implication for the general work climate of the firm as coworkers may still find themselves doing extra work to cover the gap unfilled by the new employee leading to frustrations and bickering or even resignation of competent staff. Learning from previous errors in work situations is an important quality of professional expertise. This work was a calculated attempt aimed at enhancing corporate value –creation. By highlighting counterproductive managerial behavioural actions through certain pitfalls of recruitment praxis and by relying on the negative knowledge model, this paper contributes to the thought and body of knowledge in the conceptual area of workplace behavior and learning.

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