Ways of Increasing the Potentially Qualified Job Applicants in Nigerian Organizations

By

Okere Loveday, Ph.D
Faculty of Administration and Management
Department of Business Administration
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni
Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.
E-mail: okereloveday22@gmail.com
&
Juliet Uboikwang Theo Akugbo (Ph.D)
Faculty of Administration and Management
Department of Employment Relation and Human Resource Management
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni
Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.
E-mail: juliettheoakugbo@gmail.com

Abstract

Potential vacancies occur either through someone leaving or as a result of expansion. When a person leaves, there is no more than a prima facie case for filling the vacancy thus caused. There may be other ways of filling the gap. Vacancies caused by expansion may be real or imagined. Recruiting a new employee may be the most obvious tactic when a vacancy occurs. The study examined the various sources and methods of recruitment, assessing recruiting methods; conveying job and organizational information; and expanding career and job opportunities. Literature survey method was adopted to obtain information for the study, which was analyzed qualitatively. The study observed that by providing new career opportunities and child-care assistance, organizations can enhance their attractiveness while increasing their applicant pools. The research also recommended that organizations can choose from a wide spectrum of child-care services to meet the needs of wage-earning parents.

Key Words: Pool, Job Applicants, Human Resource, Management, Organization, Manager, Employer, and Employee.

Introduction

Recruitment is the biggest single challenge facing human resource managers. Current skill shortages and forecasts of a huge drop in the number of young people available for work in the coming decade point to rapidly deteriorating recruitment prospects, and the situation looks bleak for those employers who fail to change their ways and are slow to look to non-traditional methods of recruitment as well as more innovative forms of employment (Curnow, 1989). Although organizations may use both external and internal sources of recruitment, they may not always obtain the desired number of the applicants nor retain the most valued employees (Okere, 2019). This is especially true in competitive markets for highly skilled individuals. But the organization can enhance recruitment by offering inducements such as relocation assistance or through its efforts to establish auxiliary programmes such as career development or child-care (Randall et al, 1991). Many things that organizations are doing to increase their pools of qualified job applicants have the added benefit of increasing the probability that once hired, the applicant-employee will stay.

Internal Sources of Recruitment

According to Okere (2019), internal sources of personnel recruitment include present employees, friends of employees, former employees, and former applicants. Current employees are a source of job applicants for departments or divisions within the organization in two respects: (1) they can refer friends to the organization, and (2) they can also become applicants themselves by potential promotion or transfers.

Promotion: The case for promotion from within rest on sound arguments. Sayles and Strauss (1977), argued that even jobs that do not seem unique require familiarity with the people, procedures, policies, and special characteristics of the organization in which they are performed. Employees are likely to feel more secure and to identify their long-term interests within an organization that provides them the first choice of job opportunities. Availability of promotions within an organization can also motivate employees to perform. Internal

promotion can also be much less expensive to the organization in terms of time and money (Patton, 1982). However, the type of employee sought often determines whether the organization looks inside or outside. For example, many organizations are more likely to hire highly trained professionals and high-level managers from the outside (Klein, 1982).

Transfer: Another way to recruit internally is by transferring current employees without promotion. Kleiman and Clark (1984), observed that transfers are often important in providing employees with the broad-based view of the organization necessary for future promotions. Once affirmative action and equal employment requirements are met, the basis used to select the internal candidates for promotion or transfer must be decided. One of the major issues is "seniority versus merit". Unions seem to prefer seniority, while some organizations prefer promotion or transfer based on ability (Randall, et al, 1991). Where seniority systems exist, decisions can be made on that basis even if the results appear contrary to affirmative action and equal employment guidelines.

Internal Methods of Recruitment

Job vacancies can be located by a notice on the bulletin board, word of mouth, company personnel records, promotion lists based on performance, potential ratings obtained from assessment activities, seniority lists, and lists generated by the skills inventory in an organization's human resource information system (Okere, 2019). The most frequently used methods include job posting and informal contacts, particularly employee referral programmes.

Job Posting: This method of prominently displaying current job openings extends an open invitation to all employees in an organization. It serves the following purposes:

1. Provide opportunity for employee growth and development.
2. Provide equal opportunity for advancement to all employees.
3. Create a greater openness in the organization by making opportunities known to all employees.
4. Increase staff awareness of salary grades, job descriptions, general promotion and transfer procedures, and what comprises effective job performance.

5. Communicate organization goals and objectives, and allow each individual the opportunity to help find a personal fit in the organization job structure (Rendero, 1980).

Although job postings said Schneider and Schmitt (1986), are usually found on bulletin boards, they also appear in company news-letters and are announced at staff meeting. Generally, except for management positions, all openings are posted. Sometimes specific salary information is included, but job grade and pay range are more typical. Kleiman and Clark (1984), asserted that job posting is beneficial for organizations because it improves morale, provides employees opportunity for job variety, facilitates a better matching of employee skills and needs, and fills positions at a low cost. However, these benefits, of course, are not always realized. According to Okere (2019), job-posting problems include the following:

1. Conflicts are sometimes created if an "heir apparent" in the department is passed over in favour of an outside candidate.
2. Conversely, the system may lose credibility if it appears that the successful candidate within the department has been identified in advance and the manager is merely going through the motions in considering outsiders.
3. The morale of the unsuccessful candidates may suffer if feedback is not carefully handled.
4. Choices can be more difficult for the selecting manager if two or three equally qualified candidates are encountered.

Employee Referral Programmes: Employees referral programmes are word-of-mouth advertisements whereby employees are rewarded for referring skilled applicants to organizations. This method has proven a low cost-per hire way of recruiting, even though the candidates, in many cases, come from outside the organization. The method is useful for finding applicants in short supply and managerial candidates. Edwards (1986) concluded that a major concern with employee referral programme is that the referred individuals are likely to be similar in type, for example tribe and sex, to those currently in the organization.

External Sources of Recruitment

Okere (1995), argued that recruiting internally does not always produce enough qualified applicants. This is especially true for rapidly growing organizations or those with a large demand for high-talent professional, skilled, and managerial employees (Edward, 1986). Therefore, organizations need external sources. Recruiting from the outside has a number of advantages, including bringing in people with new ideas. It is often cheaper and easier to hire an already trained professional or skilled employee, particularly when the organization has no immediate demand for scarce labour skills and talents. External sources can also supply temporary employees who provide the organization with more flexibility to expand or contact the work force than permanent employees would. The external sources are:

1. **Walk-Ins:** The use of walk-ins in recruiting is especially prevalent in filling clerical and plant/service jobs. Individuals become applicants simply by walking into an organization's employment office. This method, relatively informal and inexpensive, is almost as effective as employee referrals in retaining applicants once hired. Unlike referrals, walk-ins may know less about the specific jobs available and come without the implicit recommendation of a current employee. Management, professional, and sales applicants, however, are seldom walk-ins.
2. **Employment Agencies:** Public and private employment agencies are a good source of temporary employees, and also an excellent source for permanent ones. The state employment agencies have a roster of potential applicants to assist organizations looking for job candidates. State employment agencies also provide a wide range of services, most of which are supported by employer contributions to state unemployment funds. The agencies offer counseling, testing, and placement services to everyone. They provide special services to individuals, military veterans, minority groups, and college, technical, and professional people. Private employment agencies tend to serve two groups of job applicants that is, professional or managerial and unskilled. Kenney (1982), showed that the agencies dealing with unskilled applicants often provide job candidates that employers would have a difficult time finding otherwise. Many of the employers looking for unskilled workers do not have the resources to do

their own recruiting or have only temporary or seasonal demands for them (Hutton, 1987).

3. **Temporary Help Agencies:** Taylor and Bergmann (1987), believe that over three thousand temporary help offices annually employ more than 2.5 million people. Their use is growing as skilled and semi-skilled individuals find it preferable to work less than a forty-hour week or on a schedule of their own choosing. Temporary employees also have the chance to work in a variety of organizations; consequently, they can satisfy preferences for schedule flexibility and workplace variety. Furthermore, temporary employees may receive higher direct compensation than the organization's permanent staff, although they also generally forgo indirect compensation. Bjerregaard and Gold (1981) claimed that organizations are using temporary help agencies more than ever because some hard-to-get skills are available nowhere else. In addition many organizations especially in Nigeria need people for only a short time. Okere (1995) observed that getting them without an extensive search while retaining the flexibility to reduce their workforce without costly layoffs and potential unemployment compensation payments is an obvious advantage. In addition, temporaries do not receive indirect compensation. Baldwin (1985), maintained that these benefits must be weighed against the higher direct compensation rate because both the agency and the temporary must be paid.
4. **Trade Associations and Unions:** Unions for the building trades and maritime workers assumes responsibility for supplying employers with skilled labour. This practice takes many labour decisions, such as job assignment, out of company hands. Trade and professional associations are also important sources for recruiting. Their newsletters and annual meetings often provide notice of employment opportunities (Baldwin, 1985). Annual meetings can also offer employers and potential job applicants an opportunity to meet. Communities and schools have adopted this idea and now bring together large numbers of employers and job seekers at job fairs. Of course, with only a limited time for interviews, such fairs serve only as an initial step in the recruitment process. Nevertheless, Okere (1995) demonstrated that they provide an effective means for both employers and individuals.

5. **Schools:** Schools can be categorized into three types (1) high schools, (2) vocational and technical schools, and (3) colleges and universities. All are important sources of recruits for most organizations, although their importance varies depending on the type of applicant sought. For example, if an organization is recruiting for managerial, technical or professional applicants, then colleges and universities are the most important source. These institutions become less important when an organization is seeking plant/service and clerical employees. Randall et al (1991) highlighted that recruiting at colleges and universities is often an expensive process, even if the recruiting visit eventually produces job offers and acceptance. Randall et al (1991), also concluded that 30% of the applicants hired from college leave the organization within the first five years of their employment. This rate of turnover is even higher for graduate management students. Some people attribute this high rate of turnover to the lack of job challenge provided by organizations. Nevertheless, Becker (1987), asserted that college placement services are helpful to an organization recruiting in particular fields, such as engineering and microelectronics, and those seeking highly talented and qualified minorities and women.
6. **Aliens:** As indicated earlier real shortages of some job applicants exist, including professionals such as chemical engineers, nurses, and geologists. As a result, employers seek to recruit aliens, often overseas or in college placement offices (Camuso, 1984). Organizations use aliens for operations in Nigeria and abroad. When they work abroad, according to Okere (2009) aliens serve as host-country nationals, or third-country nationals. In either capacity, alien employees are critical for any company operating internationally. In Nigeria, aliens perform many jobs vital to the company.

External Methods of Recruitment

According to Okere (2019), many organizations in Nigeria looking for applicants of all types engage in extensive advertising or radio and television, in the local paper, and in national newspapers.

Radio and Television: Bredwell (1981), said of the approximately $2 billion spent annually on recruitment advertising, only a tiny percentage is spent on radio and

television. Companies in Nigeria are reluctant to use these media because they fear media advertising will be too expensive or that it will make the company look desperate and damage the firm's conservative image (Okere, 1995). Yet organizations are desperate to reach certain types of job applicants such as skilled workers.

Newspapers and Trade Journals: Newspapers have traditionally been the most common method of external recruiting. They reach a large number of potential applicants at a relatively low cost per hire. Newspaper adverts are used to recruit for all types of positions, from unskilled to top managerial. The adverts range from matter-of-fact to creative. Randall et al (1991) suggested that trade journals enable organizations to aim at a much more specific group of potential applicants than the newspapers. Adverts in trade journals are often more creative and of a higher quality. Unfortunately, long lead times are required, and thus the adverts can become dated. Whatever may be the medium, preparing adverts require considerable skill, (Stoop, 1984). In the opinion of Bucalo (1983) many organizations hire advertising firms to do this rather than attempting it themselves. Thus, selecting an advertising agency must be done with the same care used to select a private recruiting agency.

Computerized Services: A newer and much less common external method is the computerized recruiting services. This service works both as a place to list job openings and a place to locate job applicants. Siedlecki (1983), opined that personnel officers using a Job/Net terminal can find people in fifteen minutes that it would take eight hours to find going through paper resumes.

Acquisitions and Mergers: Another method of staffing organizations is a result of the merger or acquisition process. Combining organizations says Okere (2000), produces a large pool of employees, some of whom may no longer be necessary in the new organization. Consequently, the new organization has, in effect, a pool of qualified job applicants. As a result of the merger or acquisition, however, new jobs may be created as well. Both new and old jobs may be readily staffed by drawing the best-qualified applicants from this employee pool (Okere, 2019). In contrast to the other external methods, this one can facilitate the immediate implementation of an organization's strategic plan (Stoop, 1984). This ready pool

may enable an organization to pursue a business plan, such as entering a new product line, that would otherwise be unfeasible using stand recruiting methods. The need to displace employees and to integrate a large number of them rather quickly into a new organization, however, means that the personnel planning and selection process becomes more critical than ever (Okere, 1995).

Assessing Methods of Manpower Recruitment

Based upon a survey of personnel executives conducted by the Bureau of National Affairs (BNA) , Rubenfeld and Crino (1981) observed that the most effective recruiting method varied from one occupation to another. For instance, private employment agencies were best for locating applicants in sales, professional/technical, and management, whereas walk-ins provide most successful as a source for office/clerical and plant/service applicants. While the results of the BNA survey are informative, they remain executives' perceptions of effectiveness, and not necessarily the answers that would be found if a cost/benefit analysis were done on each method. Such analysis requires measuring the costs involved in using a particular recruiting method. For example, the travel, hotel, and salary expenses incurred by a recruiter visiting a university campus. Although adding the costs in this instance may be relatively easy, determining the benefits can be very difficult (Garcia, 1981; Wallrop, 1981). A more feasible way perhaps of deriving the longevity benefit is to record the length of time hired applicants stay on the job for each method and then compare the cost of each (Okere, 1995). The utility of each method says Levine (1982) may also be judged by measuring which one results in the largest number of qualified applicants eventually hired for an occupational group. However, not necessarily the least expensive, it may nevertheless be determined the most effective.

Conveying Job and Organizational Information

The traditional approach to recruiting is concerned with matching the job applicant's ability with the skills that the job requires. The more recent approach to recruiting according to Okere (2019), although still concerned with matching skills, knowledge, and abilities, is also concerned with matching the job applicant's personality, interests, and preferences with the job and organizational characteristics. For affective human resource management, getting job applicants to stay is as important as recruiting job applicants who can do the job. Two

components of the newer approach to recruiting focus on the job interview and job-matching programmes.

Job Interview: Okere (1995) claimed that a vital aspect of the recruitment process is the interview. A good interview provides the applicant with realistic job preview of what the job will be like. It can definitely be an enticement for an applicant to join an organization, just as a bad interview can turn away many applicants. The quality of the interview is just one aspect of the recruitment process. Other things being equal, the chances of a person's accepting a job offer increase when interviews show interest and concern for the applicants. In addition, university students feel most positive toward the recruitment interview when they can take at least half of the interview time to ask the interviewer questions and when the interviewer does not embarrass them or put them on the spot (Breaugh, 1983). The content of the recruitment interview is also important. Rynes and Miller (1983), pointed out that organizations often assume that it is in their best interests to tell a job applicant only the positive aspects of the organization. But studies by the life insurance industry says Powell (1984), have reported that providing realistic that is, positive and negative information actually increases the number of eventual recruits. In addition, those who receive realistic job information may be less likely to quit once they accept the job (Wanous, 1980). Thus, if job applicants should pass an initial screening, they should be given the opportunity to interview with a potential supervisor and even with co-workers.

Job Matching: According to Makel (1982), job matching is a systematic effort to identify people's skills, knowledge, and abilities and their personalities, interests, and preferences and match them to the openings. Increasing pressure on organizations to maintain effective recruitment, selection, and placement of new and current employees may make an automated job-matching system worthwhile. Job-matching system for non-professional employees is usually evolve from an automated system designed to monitor requisition and internal placement processes. The system is used to identify suitable positions for staff members who wish to transfer or who are seeking another job because of technological displacement or reorganization. The system also ensures that suitable internal candidates will not be overlooked before recruiting begins outside the organization (Naffiziger, 1985). Thus, the system appears not only to help recruit

people and ensure that they stay but also to provide a firm basis for job-related recruitment and selection procedures. Albright (1983) highlighted the two major components in a job-matching system that is, job profiles and candidate profiles. The job profiles are elaborate job descriptions and specifications. The candidate profiles contain information regarding candidates' experience or skills related to specific jobs. These jobs are the same ones described in the job profiles. Candidate profiles also list candidates' job preferences and interests. With these profiles, Okere (2019) posit that the organization can identify many more potentially qualified job applicants for specific jobs than ever before.

Expanding Career and Job Opportunities

By providing new career opportunities and child-care assistance, Dennis (1985) observed that organizations can enhance their attractiveness while increasing their applicant pools.

Career Opportunities: The decision to provide career opportunities involves several choices for the organization. **First,** should the organization have an active policy of promotion from within? **Second,** should the organization be committed to a training and development programme to provide sufficient candidates for internal promotion? If the answers to these questions are yes, then the organization must identify career ladders consistent with organizational and job requirements and employee skills and preferences. Baldwin (1985), established that an organization may identify several career paths for different groups or types of employees. This concept is based on the premise that an organization cannot afford to recruit applicants for jobs at the lower rungs of the ladder when they already possess the skills necessary for jobs at the higher rungs. Acuff (1982), identified that when organization have career ladders and paths with clearly specified requirements anchored in sound job analyses, they can present better legal defenses for their recruitment policies. In essence, organizations establish a case of long term job relatedness. Organizations with clearly defined career ladders may also have an easier time attracting and recruiting qualified job applicants and a better chance of keeping employees. Employers may claim that a university degree is necessary for an entry-level managerial job when they may actually consider the degree necessary only for the second or third job. Such a policy can lead to discriminatory barriers for recruitment and promotion.

Child-Care Assistance: Today, more companies than ever before are providing some kind of child-care services for their employees. The benefits of providing such services include reduced turnover, tardiness, and absenteeism, and improved recruiting success, morale, productivity, public relations, and product quality (Child Care, 1982). Organizations can choose from a wide spectrum of child-care services to meet the needs of wage-earning parents. The possibilities include the following:

1. **Support Existing Facilities:** Employers can help lower costs for participants while improving existing child-care services by contributing funds or products or by donating in-kind assistance.
2. **Set Up Information and Referral Systems:** To help eliminate some of the worries of being a wage-earning parent, the human resource department can keep a current list, fee schedules, and eligibility requirements of child-care centers.
3. **Subsidize Employees' Child-Care Costs:** Providing vouchers and subletting center slots are the two most common ways of underwriting child-care expenses. In the former, the employer issues a voucher for use at any participating center, which then bills the company for the amount of the subsidy. Under the latter arrangement, management reserves a number of slots in a center and then passes along to employees the savings associated with the group rate.
4. **Establish a Child-Care Center:** Where community services are deficient, management can set up its own child-care programmes for workers or even join with other area employers to form a community center (Child Care, 1985). Although Okere (2019), said providing such programmes is expensive, it is probably less so than the expenses due to less effective recruitment, absenteeism, and turnover from not having these programmes. To help keep costs in line and to provide the most appropriate assistance, however, a careful analysis of the organization's need for this type of service and a careful review of what is available in the community should be the human resource department's responsibility. Other ways that organizations increase their ability to recruit and retain people include a whole range of alternative work schedules and the possibility for people to work at home. Because these are also good ways

to improve productivity and the quality of work life for employees, they are discussed extensively in human resource management literature.

Method Adopted

This investigation adopted literature survey method. The information gathered from the past studies that are relevant to the research were qualitatively analyzed.

Conclusions

Organizations are dynamic, and the need to attract the right number of people at the right time and place is perpetual. Recruiting people is costly, however, both in terms of the time and expense involved in recruitment activities and in terms of legal costs when these activities are done inadequately. The challenge for human resource management is to develop effective recruitment activities that contribute directly to organizational productivity, quality of work life, and legal compliance. Recruitment involves internal and external searches, often as a result of the result of promotion, transfer, and turnover decisions. Although organizations vary considerably in terms of the types of jobs available, both external and internal labour markets exist for the recruitment of suitable applicants. Over time organizations weight costs and benefits of internal and external methods in order to choose the most effective one for a given job. Recruitment is fundamentally the search for information, specifically, information about the number of qualified applicants for a given position. Effective human resource management means obtaining the information at the lowest cost possible. Selection is also relevant to recruitment of the right number of people at the lowest cost but also the matching of the right person to the right job at the right time. Also, by providing new career opportunities and child-care assistance, organizations can enhance their attractiveness while increasing their applicant pools.

Recommendations

The study proffers the following recommendations for improved ways of attracting personnel in Nigerian organizations.

1. Organizations can choose from a wide spectrum of child-care services to meet the needs of wage-earning parents.
2. Companies should tap women and minorities to fill job vacancies.

3. Internal and external sources of potentially qualified job applicants should be found and the internal and external methods of recruitment should be used to employ them.
4. Cost in using a particular recruiting method should be analyzed.
5. Utility of each recruitment method should be judged by measuring which one results in the largest number of qualified applicants eventually hired for an occupational group.
6. Longevity benefit can be derived by recording the length of time hired applicants stay on the job for each method and then compare the cost of each method.
7. Job applicant's abilities should be matched with the skills the job requires.
8. Realistic job preview should be provided to the applicant.
9. There should be alternative work schedules and possibility for people to work at home.
10. General legal considerations in personnel recruitment should be taken into cognizance.

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