Recruitment and Selection process, element of Organisational Social Capital Building: A study Of Nigeria Medium Enterprises Human Resources Practitioners.

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Abstract

In today's business operating environment, every organisation focus on gaining fair share of the market; seek competitive advantage; wants increased productivity and performance from and through the staff employ by their human resource unit. Recruitment and selection process are amongst the functions of human resources unit, which takes a central spot of the activities of many organisations. Human resources practitioners are expected to, not just, recruit staffs; they are saddled with the responsibility of employing staffs that fits in with the overall objectives of their firm. While Organisational social capital has been established in numerous studies too have causal link with a variety of organisational outcomes and objectives produced through employees. However, the use of recruitment and selection function to build social capital for firms have not been studied in detail, it therefore deserves proper attention in a contextual manner. This study looks at medium enterprise's human resource practitioner's perspective by studying recruitment and selection function as it contributes to organisation social capital building.

This paper use a quantitative approach to study human resources practitioners acceptance of need to use recruitment and selection function to build organisation social capital for their firms. 451 human resources practitioners were sampled; used a Likert-scale questionnaire and descriptive, bivariate and multiple regression analysis was used to analyse the findings. The study reveal that majority of Nigeria medium enterprise's human resources practitioners were either unsure or believe there is no need to look out for candidates' potential for effective social interaction skills during recruitment and selection process. The paper suggests that to improve social capital building in small and medium-sized enterprises, recruitment and selection functions of human resource need to be integrated with the overall organisation strategy to enhancing organisational outcomes.

Keywords: Social Capital, Organisational Social Capital, Human Resources Management, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, Recruitment and selection, human resources practitioners.

Introduction

Social capital can simply be referred to as the aggregate of the values in human relationships (official and social) that make organisations work effectively (Kale, Singh & Perlmutter, 2000). Adler and Kwon (2002) expressed that human interactions in organisations are characterised by trust, close relationship, respect, and mutual understanding developed in the structure and content of social relations and affinity. These interactions and relationships are also declared to be associated with a common sense of purpose and strong norms of cooperation among actors (employees) in a particular set-up (Cohen & Prusack, 2001).

Van Buren (2008) established that leveraging on the internal resource is one strategy

deployed by many organisations with competitive pressures and dynamic operating environment; while the strength of any organisations is the internal resources, that is, employees' relations and interactions. Sirmon, Hitt & Ireland (2007) suggests that managing relationships between employers and the reputation of its employees individually and collectively is a source of competitive advantage for any organisation. Taken that Arregle, et al. (2007; 77) argued that organisations must acquire or gain access to needed resources from internal and external sources and 'facilitate the coordination of activities as well as projects across various functional units, effective' decision-making processes, and the implementation of the decisions (Hitt, Lee & Yucel, 2002). None of these would be attainable without first recruiting the individuals that would occupy the functional units, make decisions and implement the decisions taken. Van Buren (2008; 685) posits that the benefits accruable to firms from interpersonal 'relationships among its employees are integral to the success of organisations, being an intangible resource' (Granovetter, 2005). Concisely, organisational social capital refers to resource reflecting the character of social relationships within an organisation as it is realized through members' levels of collective goal orientation and shared trust, which create value by facilitating successful collective action.

The causal relationship between social capital and various organisational strategic outcomes such as, growth, performance, innovation, innovative behaviours, organisational citizenship behaviour, organisational humanising culture, knowledge transfer and management, transformational leadership, transaction costs, social profits, new venture creation, quality improvement, and social, economic and technological progress, established in various past theoretical and empirical literatures has been recently espoused by Ajonbadi and Mojeed-Sanni (2015); Ajonbadi, Mojeed-Sanni and Otokiti (2015); Adetunji and Mojeed-Sanni (2015) without an iota of counter argument. The causal role of the basic components of organisational social capital, associability and trust was grounded and linked with these aforementioned organisational bottom-lines in their study in quest to improving organisational/institutional performance.

Recruitment and Selection element of organisation social capital building

Armstrong (2012) defined recruitment as the process of finding and engaging the people the organisation needs. It is the fundamental process concerned with deciding which applicants or candidates should be appointed to fill a vacant job position. It involves numerous processes that differ from one organisation to another depending on size and nature of business and indeed nature of the position and role being filled. The recruitment and selection process are: defining recruitments (role profiles, person specification), attracting candidates (analyse recruitment strengths and weaknesses, analyse the requirement, identify sources of candidates), sifting applications (examining information from candidates, processing applications, sorting applications, draw up an interviewing programme, administering the selection programme, selection method), interviewing (unstructured interviews, structured interviews, competency-based interviews), testing (intelligence tests, ability tests, personality tests, aptitude tests, characteristics of a good test, interpreting test results, the use of test in a selection procedure), assessing candidates, obtaining references, checking applications, offering employment, and following up.

Based on the foregoing explanations, human resource's primary role of recruitment and selection is akin to the development and strengthening the capability dimension of trust. In that, the central role of human resources in organisations and indeed general managers in creating organisation social capital is beyond designing the employment stability practices, and to create an appropriate ethical work context (Pastoriza, Arino & Ricart, 2009). The role of human resources now involves strategically linking different organisational outcomes to strategic human resources practices and functions. It now beckons that organisations employment and engagement practices

must source for the right kind of personnel that key into the strategic goal of the organisation. It now involves attention shift towards creating value adding management processes and procedures. Hence, one of the roles of human resources managers via their recruitment and selection function is to painstakingly use the recruitment and selection process to recruit workforce members capable of exhibiting 'Team learning behaviours'. Team learning behaviour was defined by Emmerik, et al. (2011), as behaviours through which team or better still organisation members seek to acquire, share, refine, or combine task-relevant knowledge and ideas through interaction with one another. It is no gainsaying that human resources practitioner's emphasis should be on the use of the recruitment and selection process to hire not only competent personnel for their organisation; they must seek to employ 'team players' (Longenecker & Fink, 2008). As it has been argued that interpersonal process relate positively to team and organisational performance (Van Emmerik, 2008) through building of work-related networks through which employees share resources such as information, assistance, and guidance that are related to the completion of their work (Sparrow, 2009).

From the angle of 'Trust' components of organisation social capital building, Lobo and Dolke (2012) comprehensively canvassed the importance of 'Co-workers trust' in an organisation, that is, trusting attitudes and trustworthy behaviours displayed among co-workers. According to Lobo and Dolke (2012), 'Co-workers trust' includes; openness, supportiveness, willingness to risk, respect, genuineness, cooperativeness, mutual, a problem-centred attitude, acceptance and warmth, dependable, expertise, and accountability. Fundamentally, recruitment and selection responsibility and decision of the average human resources practitioner lies in the judicious use of the process of recruitment and selection to determine what Sutarjo (2011) termed as Person's fit with the Organisation (P-O fit). They have the onerous task of determining the quality (that is, personality, skills and abilities) and quantity of people employed by their organisation. According to Sutarjo (2011), in the bid to enhance organisational performance and productivity and reduce unnecessary resistance to meaningful change, organisations should, through their human resources practitioners/managers, attract and select persons whose personality, goals and values matches the aspirations, objectives and goals of the organisation. Human resources recruitment and selection process usually starts with advertising the job vacancies and ends with the offering of the appointment letters to the successful candidates. In many organizations, once the manpower requirements are identified, resumes received in response are short-listed, based on the predetermined criteria for the job performance. Next, candidate evaluation is done to ensure that the candidates fit the job. Finally, the successful candidates are presented with the offer letters.

All these processes must be tailored to ensuring recruiting personnel whose abilities and motivations are likely to make them behave more collaboratively (Ingham, 2009). Considering the dynamic, competitive and ever changing technology-driven business environment that organisations operate in this day, employing 'valuable' people, people with high educational background and industry-related experience is not a sufficient criterion to achieving competitive advantage, but merely competitive parity (Barney & Wright, 1998; Barney, 2001). The recruitment and selection procedure and process of the firm must take into account the need for valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable resources requirement of the firm according to the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm (Daou, Karuranga & Su, 2013).

On a more specific note, recruitment and selection function as carried out by the human resources department and practitioners in SMEs and, more importantly for this study, Daou, Karuranga and Su (2013) established that medium enterprise's should be synchronised with the four fundamental and possible generic strategies of SMEs, namely :(1) gaining a sustainable cost advantage, (2) differentiation from competitors, (3) using focus strategy, and (4) using differentiation focus strategy. In other to implement these strategies, organisations must seek to recruit and engage individuals possessing rare characteristics, which cannot be imitated or

substituted by competitors, and put in place a robust organisational structure (systems and practices) able to best exploit them, knowing that 'rarity' comes together with historical conditions, culture and norms, generating causal ambiguity and social complexity within the organisation difficult to be duplicated by the competitors (Wright, McMahan & McWilliams, 1994). Recruitment and selection function of the firm should focus on employing people suitable for the static and the dynamic/turbulent business environment. In a static business environment, the sufficient criterion for recruitment and selection should be high-level human capital – knowledge, skills and educational qualification of the individuals. Whereas, in a dynamic and turbulent business environment the human capital would need to present and demonstrate further characteristics in order to achieve competitive advantage. Therefore, for medium enterprises to have better chance of survival and growth under a turbulent and constantly changing environment, they must rely on using their recruitment and selection process to employ personnel that can relate and cooperate with many external actors. This would enhance SMEs competitiveness, which is often limited due to their size (Bamiatzi & Sinkovics, 2010).

In a study conducted by Bamiatzi and Sinkovics (2010), it was revealed that the majority of the examined companies fostered multiple informal and formal external networks with many different actors in an attempt to compensate for the difficult conditions within their industries. In not too distant past, the importance of making potential for effective social interaction capabilities was amplified with the findings of Bamiatzi and Sinkovics (2010) in their research. They posit that most managers firmly believe the significance for their firm's growth is attributable to their own or their employees personal relationships with other actors inside and outside the company. Such relationships Bamiatzi and Sinkovics said have been attributed to helping promoting the name of the company, attracting new potential clients, receiving quick and valid information about the market and or new possible products/services, and getting advice and consultation especially in difficult situations, to develop employee knowledge towards social capital building of the organisation.

Methodology

451 human resources practitioners were randomly source through the membership directory of four HR professional bodies in Nigeria, that is, Chartered institute of personnel management of Nigeria (CIPMN), Nigeria Institute of Training and Development (NITAD), Institute of Strategic Management, Nigeria (ISMN) and Chartered Institute of Human Capital Development of Nigeria (CIHCDN) using stratified sampling technique, albeit, on unequal allocation between seven sub MEs sectors purposely chosen for this study. Medium-sized enterprises is purposely chosen for this study in line with the view that human resources phenomenon ought to be look at with respect to the size and dynamics of the organisation and their immediate operating environment - which are often distinctive, dynamic, turbulent and with some elements of similarity, depending on the nature of business. Considering the conclusions of Wan Hooi (2006) that large firms, compared to smaller ones, do implement more sophisticated human resource management practices; that there is recent upsurge of interest among SMEs in implementing human resource management practices in their organizations; and that there is significant difference between small, medium and large firms in terms of their human resource management practices. Wan Hooi (2006), supports that there is a relationship between the size of a firm and the extent of adopting human resources practices. Data collated were analysed descriptively using bivariate (cross-tabulation) and multivariate (regression) analysis.

Analysis and Results

In the bid to determine if human resources practitioners understand the need to use their recruitment and selection function for building organisation social capital for their firms, respondents were asked to indicate on a five scale basis how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement that 'a major criterion for recruitment and selection should be based on the candidates' potential for effective social interaction capabilities'. Table 1.1 below depicts the responses of the participants. From the table below, twenty-nine (29) respondents, representing 6.4% of the total participants, firmly opposed the idea that a major criterion for recruitment and selection should be based on the candidates' potential for effective social interaction skills. On the same wave-length of opinion, ninety-three (93) respondents, representing 20.6% of total respondents surveyed, opposed the idea that a major criterion for recruitment and selection should be based on the candidates' potential for effective social interaction capabilities. On the opposite spectrum of opinion, sixty-four (64) informants, representing 14.2% of total participants, agree with the notion, while one hundred and thirty-seven (137) human resources practitioners representing 30.4% of total respondents not only agreed with the notion but did so in strong terms. In the middle ground however, one hundred and twenty-eight (128) respondents representing 28.4% of total participants were indifferent about the statement. That is, they neither agreed nor disagreed that a major criterion for recruitment and selection should be based on the candidates' potential for effective social interaction skills.

From the foregoing analysis, Two Hundred and One (201) human resources practitioners, representing a large majority of 44.6% of total respondents surveyed, were in support of the idea that recruitment and selection process should consider a candidates' potential for effective social interaction capabilities as criteria to be met. As against a minority 27% that hold a contrary view. It is, however, surprising to note that a significant proportion of human resources practitioners surveyed were undecided about considering candidates' potential for effective social interaction capabilities as a major criteria in recruitment and selection process.

Table 1.2 Response to Use of human resources Recruitment and Selection Function to build social capital for Firms as Indication of organisation social capital building

	A major criterion for recruitment and selection should be based on the candidates' potential for effective social interaction capabilities				
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Responses	Strongly Disagree	29	6.4	6.4	6.4
	Disagree	93	20.6	20.6	27.1
	Indifference	128	28.4	28.4	55.4
	Agree	64	14.2	14.2	69.6
	Strongly Agree	137	30.4	30.4	100.0
	Total	451	100.0	100.0	

As regards exploring what influenced understanding and perception of Nigeria medium enterprise's human resources practitioners' appreciation of the need to use recruitment and selection practices to build organisation social capital for their firms. Nine purposely selected socio-

demographic attributes of practitioners were used as the independent variables, since human attitude which influences perceptions is determine by observable constructs such as environment (area of specialization), value systems (span of control, position in organisation etc.), beliefs (religion, education, age), interest and socio-demographic attributes (marital status, gender) Babbie (2010); more precisely, Trehan and Paul (2014, p.5) posit that these aforementioned determinant of attitude 'influences the perception of objects and people, exposure to and comprehension of information'.

In table 1.3 below, the correlation coefficient of .301 in the regression model summary suggests that attitude of human resources practitioners to building organisation social capital through their primary function of recruitment/selection, and changes in their socio-demographic characteristics have a slightly strong linear relationship. Also, the correlation coefficient of determination of .090 indicates that the differences in attitude of human resources practitioners in Nigeria medium enterprises are explained by just 9% of combinations of socio-demographic characteristics of the practitioners. Furthermore, attitude of human resources practitioners to building organisation social capital through their primary function of recruitment and selection positively and significantly changed with respect to changes in their educational qualification. Their attitude also changes significantly, albeit negatively, with respect to changes in years of practice as human resources manager. Pearsons' correlation coefficients in Table 1.4 below further shows the three socio-demographic factors of medium enterprise's human resources practitioners in Nigeria; namely, organisational specialization, years of practice as human resources manager and educational qualification of the practitioners that are the statistically significant factors that determine the attitude of human resources practitioners to using their recruitment and selection function to build organisation social capital at .029, 032 and .001 respectively. As expected, educational background of the practitioners appears to be the most important significant factor in determining the attitude of human resources practitioners in Nigeria medium enterprise's to building organisation social capital for their firm through their recruitment and selection practices. It has a very high and positive correlation of determination value at .836. It also has a statistical significance value of .000 in the coefficient of determination table below. Years of practice as human resources manager is another socio-demographic factor that is statistically significant according to the coefficient of determination output below, it however implies a very negative correlation. Meaning that the higher the number of years spent practising as human resources manager in Nigeria medium enterprise's the less the use of recruitment and selection function to build organisation social capital. The scenario is understandably possible in view of the position to be occupied in an organisation by a human resources practitioner with long years of practice in the firm. A high position would invariable reduce the 'hands on' role that such practitioner(s) would have in the recruitment and selection process. That thus limits the possibility of looking out for potential for effective and affective social interaction capabilities of potential candidate.

Table 1.3 Survey findings on determinants of attitude of human resources practitioners to building organisation social capital through recruitment and selection function

Coefficients [a]							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B	
		Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	8.732	.883		.890	000	6.996	10.467
Position in Organisation	-.209	.211	-.064	.991	322	-.623	.205
Number of Employees Under Control	-.239	.157	-.098	1.527	128	-.548	.069
Organisational Specialization (Sector)	.048	.052	.044	931	353	-.054	.150
Gender	-.066	.226	-.014	.294	769	-.511	.378
Religion	-.096	.149	-.033	.644	520	-.390	.198
Marital Status	-.025	.141	-.010	.179	858	-.301	.251
Age Group	**.040**	.119	.026	337	736	-.193	.273
Years of Practice as human resources Manager	**-.767**	**.187**	**-.291**	**4.106**	**000**	-1.134	-.400
Educational Background	**.836**	**.162**	**.329**	**5.172**	**.000**	.518	1.153
a. Dependent Variable: Building Organisational Social Capital Through Recruitment and Selection Function							

R-Square .090 Correlation coefficient (R) .301　　　　Source: Author, from SPSS research data.

Correlations

		Position in Organisation	Number of Employes Under Control	Organisational Specialosation (Sector)	Gender	Religion	Marital Status	Age Group	Years of Practice as human resources Manager	Educational Background
Pearson Correlation	Position in Organisation	1.000								
	Number of Employees Under Control	-.539	1.000							
	Organisational Specialosation (Sector)	.006	-.145	1.000						
	Gender	-.047	.000	.059	.000					
	Religion	.075	-.101	-.087	243	1 .000				
	Marital Status	-.264	.271	-.033	294	290	. 000 1			
	Age Group	-.602	.665	-.134	080	028	. 482	. 1.000		
	Years of Practice as human resources Manager	-.598	.490	-.013	129	148	. 452	. 644	1 .000	
	Educational Background	-.558	.401	.089	.143	.054	.338	.553	.632	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Position in Organisation	.	.000	.453	163	057	. 000	. 000	. 000	. 0 .00
	Number of Emploer Control	.00 0	.	.001	499	017	. 000	. 000	. 000	. 0 .00
	Organisational	.453	.001	.	.109	.034	.242	.002	.390	.030

Specialosation (Sector)									
Gender	.163	.499	.109	.000	.000	.046	.003	.001	.001
Religion	.057	.017	.034	.000	.000	.282	.001	.7	.127
Marital Status	.000	.000	.242	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
Age Group	.000	.000	.002	.046	.282	.000	.	.000	.000
Years of Practice as human resources Manager	.000	.000	.390	.003	.001	.000	.000	.	.000
Educational Background	.000	.000	.030	.001	.127	.000	.000	.000	.

Table 1.4

Findings and Conclusion

As regards the use of human resources recruitment/selection practices to influence and create organisation social capital for an organisation, this paper found that a slight majority of human resources practitioners in Nigeria medium enterprise's consented that social interaction capabilities potential should form one of the criteria for recruitment and selection. However, majority were either unsure or believe there is no need to look out for candidates' potential for effective social interaction skills during recruitment and selection process. This implies partial acceptance of the need to use of human resources recruitment/selection to build organisation social capital amongst human resources practitioners in Nigeria medium enterprises. Amongst the potential influencing socio-demographic attributes of practitioners shaping their understanding and perception, religion, numbers of employees under the control of human resources practitioners and their organisational specialization, human resources practitioner's position in organisation, practitioner's age group, gender, and marital status are found to have no significant impact on their perception of the need to building organisation social capital through recruitment and selection function. This finding in a way is at variance with human resources 'institutionalism' theorist; such as, Choudhury (2011); Hassi and Storti, (2011) and many others, that work context and relevant contingent factors (e.g. size of the organization, branch of industry, capital intensity, technology used) and workforce characteristics matter a great deal in shaping organizational behaviour; that organizations and human resources practitioners should consider the complexity of diverse work context and cultural differences while managing employees.

However, Number of years of Practice as human resources manager and Educational background and qualifications are found to be highly influential in tilting human resources practitioners' perception of need to use of recruitment and selection to building organisation social

capital building. The impact of number of years of practice and high educational qualification, especially professional qualifications on positive inclination of practitioners towards contemporary human resources issues has been well documented by Long and Wan Ismail (2008); Abdullah et al, (2011), when they posit that human resources practitioners' mastery and competence usually gathered through years of experience and training play a critical role in the effective discharge of their responsibilities as they confer some level of exposure and knowledge to contemporary issues and phenomenon on the holders of the qualification. This particular finding supports the agitation of Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria (CIPMN) that human resources managers in medium enterprises should be professionally qualified (Nnodim, 2012). In practice, on one hand, a well-educated and professional qualified human resources manager would view organisation social capital building as a critical human resources function; on the other hand, high number of years of practice as human resources manager may results in negative attitude to organisation social capital building. For instance, the more years spent practicing as human resources manager in medium enterprise's in Nigeria, the higher the management position given the peculiar characteristics of SMEs, and less hands-on on day-to-day human resources activities of the firm.

Recommendations and Suggestion for Future Research

Organisation social capital building should be seen as a part of the strategy of the organisation and see their human resources practitioners/mangers as strategic personnel who can help the organisation to obtain a competitive advantage and superior performance through organisation social capital building. In addition, recruitment and selection practices in medium enterprise's in Nigeria should be well integrated with the overall strategy of the organisation, such that it focuses on building organisation social capital for firms through setting affective social interaction capability as one of the criteria for recruitment/selection, being a key factor to building organisation social capital and ultimately enhancing organisational outcomes. At operational and functional level of the firm, long serving human resources managers in senior management position should be encouraged to delegate day- to-day human resources activities to junior human resources practitioners in the firm; whilst at corporate strategic level of firms, medium-sized organisations in Nigeria should ensure the employment of professionally qualified human resources practitioners to manage their human resources departments and activities, as the level of educational qualification has a positive influence on the attitude of human resources practitioners to organisation social capital building. This would also be in line with the directives of the human resources-related professional association, in Nigeria, notably, Chartered Institute of Personnel Management (CIPMN) and Nigeria Institute of Training and Development (NITAD).

This study hereby suggests that future research effort should be directed towards establishing the influence of other socio-cultural factors on attitudes of human resources practitioners and managers alike to organisation social capital building and the role of other functional areas of practice in the field of human resources, such as training and development, employee engagement, collective bargaining and salary, compensation and remuneration, in building organisation social capital as a distinctive source of competitive advantage for the firm.

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