

## Organizational Recruitment Practices and Workplace Centrality Amongst Civil Servants in South-South Nigeria

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### Abstract

*This study, scientifically examined the empirical relationship between organizational recruitment process and work centrality among civil servants in South-South Nigeria. The correlational research design was used. Therefore, the questionnaire was primarily used to generate data from a sample of 368 senior level respondents from the different ministries. The instrument showed a reliability alpha of 0.7 for the contrasts examined. The data obtained were examined inferentially using the statistical package for social sciences. The inferential analysis, the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Co-efficient was used. From the analysis done, it was found that a positive and significant relationship exist between recruitment process, and the measures of work centrality which includes dedication, dutifulness and task passion. The study based on the findings concludes that recruitment process correlates with work centrality amongst civil servants and the relationship is moderated by organizational culture. Therefore, it was recommended amongst others that administrators in the civil service should improve recruitment practices that will in turn enhance employee dedication, dutifulness and task passion in the civil service.*

**Keywords:** Organization, Civil Servant, Recruitment Process, Dedication, Dutifulness, Task Passion and work centrality

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### 1. Introduction

Human resource managers are increasingly confronted with the challenge of enhancing the importance workers attach to their work as a crucial aspect of their lives. This perception of work, as an important aspect of workers lives found expression in “work centrality” in organizational behaviour literature (Gagne et al., 2014). Work centrality share common theoretical and conceptual focus with some concepts in behavioural literature like job satisfaction, workers’ commitment, work engagement, employee involvement, self-efficacy, organizational citizen behaviour, pro-social behaviour, amongst others (Gavriloaui, 2016; Hirschfeld & Field, 2000). Recently, the discourse on work centrality like other concepts has gained much momentum against the backdrop of increased turnover rates and counterproductive work behaviour that are having regular places at work (Wang & Liu, 2014). However, but more than this, the degree of work

centrality of the human assets about their work appears to be most important in this consideration, as all other factors of production remain passive until human resource turns them active (Gagne et al., 2014).

The trend of thought on work centrality has directly or indirectly gained prominence in organizational behaviour and human resource management researches. The major attraction has always been to explain antecedents and consequences of the concept of work centrality (Dejours & Deranty, 2010). Such antecedents as individual demographics: age, experience, education, gender, among others was found to have various degrees of influence on workers' extent of work centrality (Gavriloaui, 2016). For instance, Gavrioloaui (2016) used such individual based antecedents as self-efficacy, work involvement, working role salience to identify their relationships with consequences of work centrality. The logical view in this approach is that since work centrality is an individual perception of the importance of work to his life, then the personal or individuals' antecedents are most likely to be accurate explanatory factors to predict work centrality. Concentrating at the individual level of analysis to explain the degree of work centrality is in no small measure emphasizes the important attribute of the individual worker in Organizational success.

(Demo, et al., 2012) in their study on human resources management policies and practices scale suggested recruitment, selection & placement, employee training & development, work conditions, performance appraisal and compensation & rewards as dimensions of human resources management practices. Recruitment, selection and placement are the process of generating a pool of capable people applying to an organization for employment (Gold, 2007). Employers who want to fill a vacancy quickly or are unwilling to invest in the recruitment process may be less discriminating in the quality (or quantity) of the applicants (Russo et al., 2000) while employers who made greater efforts in the recruitment process activate more search channels than employers who did not (Russo et al., 2000).

Extant literature as it relates to the study variables showed that various studies have been conducted in diverse industries (IT, high technology, pharmaceutical/chemical service, manufacturing firms) investigating the relationship between human resources management practices and organizational centred objectives (Hu, et al., 2022) and (Sule et al., 2022), while little attention has been paid to work centrality in South-South, Nigeria. This contributes to the focus of this study in order to fill the explained gap in knowledge.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Theoretical framework

The social exchange theory has its root in the scholarly work of Blau (1964) and has drawn huge attention based on its expressed theoretical focus in explaining dynamics of social relationships. Social exchange theory is instrumental to the genesis of this field (Jackson, 2014; Bibi et al., 2018). As a significant theoretical paradigm in human resource management literature, social exchange theory researchers propound that employees tend to repay their organizations by staying longer and becoming more effective in their performance (Liao et al., 2011).

As green human resource management practices benefit employees by developing green behaviour and commitment, (Al-Hajiri, 2020; Jabbar & Abid, 2014), these practices have therefore had a natural affinity with social exchange theory proponents as both constructs tend to foster employees' obligation to repay the very core human resource management practices used for their benefits (Bibi et al., 2018).

According to (Eisenberger, et al., 2001), an employee performs better when he or she appreciates how the employer supports and values him or her (as cited in Bibi et al., 2018). Thus, the main supposition of social exchange theory is that an employee, as a social being, makes a social as well as a reciprocated relationship with an employer based on mutually beneficial relationships by both parties. Therefore, based on the social exchange theory aspects, it can be argued that millennial employees' retention is dependent on how they are treated and provided with benefits. This is defined in social exchange theory as the reciprocation of benefits between employers and employees. Therefore, such reciprocity further develops the fulfilment of expectations and loyalty (Chopra & Bhilare, 2020) and the embeddedness of employees' organizational commitment accorded to millennials (Ren et al., 2018; Renwick et al., 2016).

## 2.2 Conceptual Review

### 2.2.1 Overview of Recruitment Practices

Recruitment falls under the human resource procurement alongside selection, employment contract, induction and placement (Tamunomiebi & Zeb-Obipi, 2013). Human resource procurement entails the human resource management process of getting the human resource needed by an organisation. It starts with the confirmation of vacancies and ends with placement of employees. Suffice to say that the contribution of the human resource is likely to be determined largely by the calibre of people recruited into an organization. This is premised on the fact that effective recruitment depends on the knowing how both the individuals and organisation views recruitment. Thus, recruitment bothers on those set of activities of an organisation aimed at getting the right individuals interested in applying for vacancy to meet the objective of the organisation.

Different scholars have defined the term recruitment. Taylor (2008) posits that "recruitment involves actively soliciting applications from potential employees which is considered a positive activity that requires employers to sell themselves in the relevant labour markets so as to maximize the pool of well-qualified candidates from which future employees can be chosen". Etomi (2002) asserts that recruitment is concerned with the process of attracting a sufficient number of individuals with the right profile in terms of qualifications, experience, skills and other relevant attributes to indicate their interest in working for the organization. Mathias and Jackson (2004) define recruitment as the process of generating a pool of qualified applicants for organisational jobs. In the same light, Tamunomiebi and Zeb-Obipi defined recruitment as the process of accessing and assembling of potential employees of an organisation. This means that recruitment is the process of announcing job vacancies with a view to attracting a pool of qualified applicants to fill up vacancies in an organisation.

More so, Fatiregun (1992) defined recruitment as the process of assessing a job, announcing the vacancy, arousing interest and stimulating people to apply. Taylor (2008), and Tende and Alagah

(2017) in their studies advanced that recruitment is a positive activity, while selection is viewed as a negative processor activity since the later involves picking out the best of the bunch and turning down the rest. In collaborating with the above submission, Tamunomiebi and Zeb-Obipi (2013) viewed recruitment as an addictive process while selection starts where recruitment ends. Therefore, the main focus of recruitment and selection processes is to ensure the engagement of reliable, competent and qualified employees who will assist the organisation to achieve its set goals.

However, effective recruitment depends on both the individuals and the organisation views recruitment (Eketu & Ogbu, 2017). This means that the human resource manager must be aware of the needs of the both the applicants and the job. Against this backdrop, Tamunomiebi and Zeb-Obipi (2013) highlighted the needs of both the applications and the job that a human resource manager should be abreast with. These are;(i) to find out and develop the sources where the required number and kind of employees are/will be;(ii) develop suitable techniques to attract the desirable candidate;(iii) employ the techniques to attract candidates;(iv) stimulate, as many candidates as possible and get them to apply for the jobs despite the number of candidates required.

Recruitment process is an integral part of human resource management. Recruitment as set of activities and processes utilize by organisation to acquire adequate number of the suitable applicants at the right place and time, as well as serve as a means to project the image of the organisation (Obi, 2015). By implication, recruitment aids organisation from selecting prospective employees from a pool of qualified applicants. Recruitment is a process that provides the organization with a pool of qualified job candidates from which to choose, and begins with implementation of proper staffing plans, as well as forecasting to ascertain the required number of people (Nwafor & Igwe, 2018). As such, this will be based on the organisation's annual budget and short/long plan (possibility of expansion). Recruitment process is techniques adopted in attracting and discovering potential manpower to fill up the vacant post in the organisation. It assists to hire candidates based on their ability and attitude to work for accomplishment of organizational goals.

### **2.2.2 Work Centrality**

Work remains one of the most essential areas in people life. Most people source of livelihood is achieved from the work they do. This is linked to meaning people ascribed to work and the social culture that surrounds them. In essence, the work one does determine his/her social status as working has valued outcomes. Work centrality determines how people act both at the work place and outside the work environment. Work centrality behaviour entails taking work as central life interest to the extent that even in retirement, there is astute willingness to continue to work.

The term "work centrality" refers to the significance or importance of an individual's job in that person's life (Arvey et al., 2004). One way to think about it is as the extent to which an individual's identity, feeling of self-esteem, and sense of purpose are all related to the job that they do. People who have a high work centrality tend to identify themselves by their job and receive a considerable amount of self-esteem and personal satisfaction from it. Individuals who have a low work centrality prefer to define themselves by their hobbies and interests. They are likely to have a

strong work ethic and to be very driven to achieve in their employment. They are likely to have a high level of ambition. They also have a propensity to consider their work as an essential component of their personal identity, and they could have trouble distancing themselves from their profession even when they are not physically present at their place of employment (Arvey et al., 2004; Carr et al., 2008).

Individuals who have low work centrality, on the other hand, may not feel as strong of a connection to their job and may perceive it more as a means to a goal, such as receiving a salary. This might be because they have low work centrality. They could get their sense of self-worth and personal satisfaction from other things, like their family, their hobbies, or their engagement in the community, in addition to their employment. It is important to keep in mind that the degree to which work plays a significant role in one's life may shift over time and be impacted by a wide range of variables, including one's stage in life, family and financial situations, the degree to which one enjoys their work, and their personal beliefs (Diefendorff et al., 2002). Thus, it is generally accepted that maintaining a healthy level of work centrality is beneficial to an individual's health since it makes it possible for them to achieve harmony and contentment in both their personal and professional life. However, having a high work centrality may lead to burnout and neglect of other vital elements of life, whilst having a low work centrality may lead to indifference or unhappiness with one's profession.

Arvey et al. (2004) affirmed that work centrality can be good for organizations in many ways, but there are also some things that can be said against it. Some of the main reasons why work shouldn't be the centre of everything are: (1) it can lead to burnout. When workers think their work is important to the company, they may feel like they have to work all the time and do their best. This can lead to burnout, which can hurt both the health and performance of employees and the organization as a whole. (2) It can lead to a culture of overwork. When workers think their work is important to the company, they may feel pressured to work long hours and be available all the time. This can lead to a culture of overwork and a lack of balance between work and life, which can hurt the health and productivity of employees. (3). It can make people lose sight of the bigger picture. When employees think their work is important to the organization, they may become so focused on their own tasks and goals that they lose sight of the bigger picture. This can cause people to make bad decisions and lose perspective, which can hurt the performance of an organization. (4) It can stop people from being creative and coming up with new ideas. When employees think their work is important to the organization, they may feel pressured to stick to the rules and not take risks. This can make it harder for people to be creative and come up with new ideas, and it can make it hard for the organization to adapt to changes in the market. (5) It can create a culture of competition.

When employees feel that their work is important to the organization, they may feel pressured to compete with their co-workers for recognition and rewards. This can lead to a culture of competition, which can hurt working together as a team and with other people. So, while work centrality can be good for organizations in many ways, it is important to be aware of the possible bad things that can happen as well. Organizations should try to create a culture of balance and perspective and encourage employees to take breaks and keep a healthy work-life balance to avoid these negative effects.

### **2.3 Recruitment and Work Centrality**

Recruitment is the process of discovering, selecting, and hiring the best-qualified applicants for vacant positions in a timely manner in an organization. Its aim is to assist an organization to employ the most qualified candidates from the job market to fill the vacancy. A recruitment process is termed to be good when the best talents are hired; hence, the organization will remain competitive and survival at the long run. The recruitment process involves a high volume of prospective talents to be analyzed, filtered, and contacted for an organization to function most efficiently. When the right calibres of employees are hired who fits the job roles, they will be dedicated, committed and motivated to ensure the organisation meets its goal. Moreover, they will value the job and remain on the job. Some research has shown that efficient human resource management practices influence turnover intentions, commitment and organisational performance (Sabiú, Mei, & Joarder, 2016a). This was evidenced by the research carried out by Abdullah and Othman, (2016), which showed that organizational success, is highly dependent on how well a company deals with its HR management practices.

Also, the study conducted by Anwar (2017), indicated recruiting practices are linked to results and found that selective hiring practices have a positive effect on organizational performance. The study further indicated that efficiency of an organization's workforce would not only benefit the workers but, also benefits all organisational stakeholders. The study concludes that training practices, working together, are positively linked, and employees who undergo training will result in improved work-life balance and greater investment opportunities for the business. Additionally, it was established that effective human resource management (as well as management training and compensation of employees), and organization's human resources (Hanié & Jevtić, 2020) had a strong relationship with the organization overall performance.

### **2.4 Overview of the Civil Service System in Nigeria**

Civil service is a critical sector that serves as a vehicle in achieving the lofty objectives of government. It is strategically structured to effectively discharge its catalytic role of facilitating successful conception, planning, execution and monitoring of the policies, projects and programmes of Government. It is such civil service that seems indispensable to political leadership however civil service has been observed unproductive.

According to (Ade-Ojo, 2020) the Civil service is an organ created to ensure that policies and programs of any government at any particular time are carried out. The Civil service as part of the Government never dies because of its perpetual nature and the changing nature of constitutionally elected government, it has to be endowed with specific peculiarities of that government. The Civil Service is: (1) non - partisan to enable it serve any government of the day (2) made up of experienced men and women with the technical and professional know-how to enable it implement government policies (3) orderly and also ensure that the orderly administration of the country is continuous (4) indispensable since it continues the traditional role of keeping the functions of government running no matter what changes occur in the administration of the country (5) operates under rules which guide its conduct (6) an entity but operates in hives of activities, divided between Ministers and Departments. Each or Department has its set functions and goals.

The civil service is one major constituent of the Public Service. Marshall and Murtala (2015) stated that the meaning of Public service is contained in section 277 (91) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria of 1979 now section 169 of the 1999 Constitution as encompassing the civil service (Ministerial departments), statutory corporations or parastatals, judiciary, legislature, educational institutions, financially wholly or principally owned by government at the State, Local and Federal levels, Nigeria Police or Armed Forces and other organizations in which the Federal or state governments owned controlling share or interest. It implies therefore that the civil service in Nigeria is mainly the civil servants in mainstream of the ministerial departments while the other statutory corporations or parastatals, judiciary, legislature, etc. may be referred public servants. According to (Marshall & Murtala, 2015), in Nigeria, the Country's government bureaucracy is the public service. This is because government at whatever level enunciates and implements its policies, programs and projects through the instrumentally of the public service.

### **3. Methods**

The study adopted a correlational research design which enabled the researcher to relate the predictor variable (recruitment process) and criterion variable (workplace centrality). The study's population was put at 7854 of civil servants at grade level of 13 and above. After the determination of the sample size of 368 by using the Krejcie and Morgan (1978) sample size table determination, a proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to stratify the population into strata which enabled each state to contribute. Then, a simple random sampling technique was used to select elements from each stratum. A 20-item study instrument was used to obtain data from respondents. The instrument was validated with construct and content validity while a Cronbach alpha was used to test its reliability which gave a reliability coefficient of 0.7. The hypotheses for the study were tested using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (SROCC). The Spearman Rank Order Correlation was adopted as the correlation tool as a result of its non-parametric features (normality of distribution, homogeneity of variance for the variables) and its suitability for data which is either scaled on the interval or ordinal level of scaling and SPSS was used to run the analysis.

### **4. Results**

#### **4.1 Recruitment Process and Work Centrality**

Table 1 shows the result of correlation matrix obtained for recruitment process and work centrality measures. Also displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance ( $p$  - value), which makes us able to answer our research question and generalize our findings to study population.

**Table 1: Correlations Matrix for Recruitment Process and Measures of Work Centrality**

		Recruitment Process	Dedication	Dutifulness	Task Passion	
Spearman's rho	Recruitment Process	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.643**	.678**	.613**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	285	285	285	285
	Dedication	Correlation Coefficient	.643**	1.000	.841**	.739**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	285	285	285	285
	Dutifulness	Correlation Coefficient	.678**	.841**	1.000	.700**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	285	285	285	285
	Task Passion	Correlation Coefficient	.613**	.739**	.700**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	285	285	285	285

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Source: Survey Data, 2023 (SPSS Version 23.0 Output)**

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between recruitment practice and employee dedication amongst civil servants in South-South Nigeria.

The correlation coefficient (rho) result in table 1 was used to answer research question. The correlation coefficient (rho) of 0.643 shows the relationship between recruitment process and dedication. This value implies that a substantial relationship exists between the variables. The direction of the relationship indicates that the correlation is positive; implying that an increase in dedication was as a result of the adoption of recruitment process. Similarly displayed in the Table 1 is the statistical test of significance (p-value) and from the result obtained, the sig- calculated is less than significant level ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Therefore, based on this finding the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between recruitment practice and employee dedication amongst civil servant in South-South Nigeria.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between recruitment practice and employee dutifulness amongst civil servants in South-South Nigeria.

Table 1 shows a correlation coefficient (rho) of 0.678 on the relationship between recruitment process and dutifulness. This value implies that a substantial relationship exists between the variables. The direction of the relationship shows that the correlation is positive; implying that an increase in dutifulness was as a result of the adoption of recruitment process. Similarly, the statistical test of significance (p-value) obtained from the table shows that sig- calculated is less than significant level ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). And so, based on this finding the null hypothesis earlier



stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between recruitment practice and employee dutifulness amongst civil servant in South-South Nigeria.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between recruitment practice and employee task passion amongst civil servants in South-South Nigeria.

Also, the (rho) value of 0.613 depicts a substantial relationship between recruitment process and employee task passion. The direction of the relationship indicates that the correlation is positive; implying that an increase in employee task passion was as a result of the adoption of recruitment process. Similarly, (p-value) of the sig- calculated is less than significant level ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Therefore, based on this finding the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between recruitment practice and employee task passion amongst civil servant in South-South Nigeria.

### **5. Discussion of Findings**

The finding revealed that there is a significant relationship between recruitment processes and work centrality amongst civil servant in South-South Nigeria. This finding agrees with the study of (Tende & Alagah, 2017) who examined the influence of human resource planning on organizational performance of fast-food companies in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. From the conclusion drawn from the analysis and discussion on findings, it was recommended that: organizations should through human resource planning policies introduce and institutionalize effective human resource plans to proactively forecast the actual numerical strength of manpower needs of the organization if the intension is to increase productivity and organizational performance.

Also, this study aligns with the findings of the study conducted by (Eketu & Ogbu, 2017) on human resource planning and organisational sustainability of selected telecommunication firms in Rivers State. The study found that human resource planning has a significant relationship with organisational sustainability. The study concludes that human resource planning measured in terms of competence, age and culture enhances organisational sustainability. To further support this, Nwafor and Igwe (2018) investigated the relationship between recruitment and selection of quality teachers into the universal basic education system in Rivers State. The result of the analyses showed a very strong and positive significance relationship between recruitment practices and organizational performance. In the light of the above findings, it was concluded that the quality of employees hired determined the degree of organizational performance.

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This finding agrees with the study of (Fapohunda et al., 2022) who examined the effect of green recruitment and selection practices on organizational sustainability among selected manufacturing firms in Ogun State, Nigeria. Findings from the study showed that green recruitment and selection practices significantly affect organisational sustainability. The study concluded that since green recruitment and selection practices significantly affects organisational sustainability, and then manufacturing firms must uphold and incorporate these practices into their corporate agenda to promoting their sustainability.

Furthermore, another study that agrees with this study is that of Baridam and Diri (2021) who carried out a study on the relationship between green recruitment/selection and corporate sustainability in oil and gas producing companies in Rivers State. The study findings revealed a positive significant relationship between green recruitment/selection and corporate sustainability.

To further support this is the findings of Mwitwa and Kinemo (2018) that examined the role of green recruitment and selection on performance of processing industries in Tanzania. It was found that green recruitment and selection practices are in place and they contribute in attracting more qualified job candidates. The study also found a linear relationship between green recruitment and selection and performance. Further, the study recommends institutionalization of green recruitment and selection and other green human resource management practices in order to improve organizational performance.

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the data generated and analyzed, it was aptly found that positive and significant relationships exist between recruitment process and the measure of work centrality which includes dutifulness, dedication and task passion. The study therefore concludes that organizational recruitment process correlates with work centrality in the Civil Service in South-South, Nigeria.

## 7. Recommendations

Based on the study findings and conclusion drawn the following recommendations were made.

- i. Recognizing the importance of the recruitment process in influencing dedication amongst civil servants, administrators should focus on improving their recruitment practices. This can be achieved by ensuring that job descriptions accurately and comprehensively define the roles and responsibilities of the position. This helps potential candidates understand the expectations and requirements of the job, enabling them to make an informed decision about their fit with the organization.
- ii. Organization should focus on effective recruitment processes in order to enhance dutifulness in the organization. This helps the organization to hire quality employees which will definitely determine the degree of organizational performance.
- iii. Recognizing the substantial influence of recruitment processes on task passion, human resource managers should adopt strategies to improve recruitment processes. This promotes an employee to set himself apart for work assignments.

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