

Full Length Research Paper

Host Community Recruitment Strategy: A Panacea for Youth Restiveness in Volatile Environment

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ABSTRACT: Third-world economies exhibit characteristics of insecurity, underdevelopment, Dutch disease syndrome, and volatility as a result of unstable government and policy summersaults that are detrimental to national security, development, and private business organizations. As a result, with a focus on Nigeria, this study considered host community recruitment strategy as a panacea for youth restlessness in a volatile environment. Data were collected by distributing questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale to 50 selected business organizations in Nigeria's Niger-Delta region. The study's target population (organizations) was chosen using a simple random sampling technique. Validation criteria such as coefficient of correlation (R), coefficient of determination (R²), t-distribution (t-test), and analysis of variance (ANOVA/F-RATIO) were applied to the generated primary data. Hiring manpower from host communities reduced youth restiveness by 50.22 percent, according to the findings. The application of the host community recruitment model (HCRM) by government and business organizations was discovered to prevent future unrest, violence, and militia activities in Nigeria. As a result, it is recommended that the government enshrine a law requiring business organizations or companies to employ at least 50% of their workforce from host communities. It is also recommended that corporations adopt HCRM ideas as a hiring policy because it fosters positive relationships with host communities and an environment conducive to improved organizational performance.

Keywords: Host communities, recruitment strategy, panacea, volatile environment, youth restiveness, national security

INTRODUCTION

The basic purpose of government in every independent country across the globe is to ensure security, that is protection of lives and properties, and to also maintain the welfare of the people. The Nigerian Constitution, as enshrined in chapter two, states that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government." The same Constitution also states that "the people's participation in their government shall be guaranteed, and moreover, sovereignty belongs to the people" (The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended). Though, these crucial functions of government (are spelt out in the supposed basic norm, otherwise called the Constitution), remain unenforceable by the citizens through court actions where government fails to perform. The provisions of ouster clauses forbid the courts from entertaining matters arising from chapter two of the constitution. It is therefore, a leeway and

impunity to bad governance and broad day corruption (Edih and Ganagana, 2020). However, in the meantime, measures must be taken to ensure peaceful and secured environment for business activities to thrive till the Constitution would be amended.

In Nigeria, both adults and youths are restive and violent due to recurring failure of government promises. It is evident that, the government at the Federal, State and local levels have failed to provide the enabling atmosphere that creates opportunities for the people. They (the citizens) felt that the appropriate and corresponding response to failed manifestos (government promises) is protests and restiveness at varying degrees. Restiveness was first demonstrated through coup d'etat by the military boys in 1966. The period from 1966-1999 represented the era of military government in Nigeria. This period witnessed several military regimes- Aguiyi

Ironsi regime, Gowon regime, Murtala Mohammed regime, Obasanjo regime, Buhari regime, Babangida regime, Abacha regime, and Abubakar regime. It therefore means that, Nigeria as a sovereign nation had been ruled by eight sets of military regimes constituting an unstable government and a volatile environment. Adult's restiveness in this context therefore connotes the incessant overthrow of democratically elected government by the military juntas (at times) on frivolous grounds. The sole reason for these ceaseless bloody or bloodless coup juntas were alluded to bad governance.

Similarly, the teeming and able bodied youths in the country have been venting their anger against bad governance and underdevelopment through protest, violent protest, and militia groups. Several secession groups have been formed and negotiating peacefully or violently for the division of the country into several independent nations namely, Biafra, Oduduwa, Niger--Delta, Middle--belt, Arewa to ensure peace and security and invariably good governance or government in the probable new nation-states. The recent 'End SARS (2021) protests' which culminated at Lekki Toll Gate with blood shed, 'Revolution Now 'spear head by Sowore of Sahara Reporters and activities of BokoHaram, farmers'/herdsmen clashes, Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) agitation in the East are pointers to youth restiveness and militia groups against the ills of bad leadership, sectional policies of the ruling government. This is the second version of instability and a volatile environment that can crumble the socio-economic and political fabrics of developing countries.

However, the Federal government during the military era made some frantic efforts to arrest the situation by creating 36 States so that the State governments will assist in assuaging the problem of unemployment and idleness of youths that has metamorphosed into militia activities. The government also established commission and ministry to curb the swelling unrest in the country-- Ministry of Niger--Delta was created in 2008, the Niger--Delta Development Commission (NDDC), 2000 among others (Okah,2010). A national conference was convoked during the government of Goodluck Jonathan (2009-2015) whose communique was abandoned by the succeeding administration.

The concept of security has taken a wide dimension in modern times. Its meaning has gone beyond physical protection of lives and properties by the police, army and other security agencies. National Human Development Programme (2016) defines security in the context of economic empowerment. Economic empowerment is the basis of security and welfare for the people. The lack of economic empowerment buttresses the old adage that says 'a hungry man is an angry lion'. The problem of hunger, diseases, deprivation, and unemployment are traceable to lack of economic empowerment and security. In similar light, Edih et al.(2021b) referred to the position made by Kofi Annan, former Secretary General, United

Nations, that human security encompasses maintenance of human rights, good governance, access to quality education, good health care system and opportunities to express one's innate potentials. It was summed that the current insecurity challenge bedeviling the Nigerian economy is a mixture of experiential fear, hunger, poverty, deaths and diverse forms of human degradation (moral, environmental, economic, political etc). According to World Bank report (2020), majority of the Nigerian populace is below the poverty line. This assertion is confirmed by the great army of End SARS protesters who are unemployed in the country. The dastardly killings of civil protesters at the Lekki Toll on 21st October, 2021 was an understatement of the insensitivity of government to the economic woes blighting the people who owns sovereignty (UNHR, Press Release, 2020). Based on critical studies, the combined effects of joblessness, poverty, hunger, disease and underdevelopment can create economic turbulence and insecurity in any nation (Edih, 2014; Leonard, 2000). Leonard (2000) describes deprivation and unemployment as squalor disease. Insecurity in its diverse shapes (economic, political etc) is a major problem inhibiting human capital development (UNDP, 2016).

It is absurd and painful to pontificate that, a country with so much resources (human, natural) yet, is grappling with the twin maladies of under--development and insecurity. In spite of her abundant natural endowments, Nigeria is ranked among the poorest nations of the world (Tombari, 2019; Batta et al., 2013; Ali and James, 2018). The Dutch Disease syndrome has been identified as one the problems affecting the economy of Nigeria (Agbaeze and Ukoha, 2018; Ajaikaye and Jerome, 2018). However, Edih et al., (2021a) contend that political sentiments fueled by ethnic fanatics and religious bigots are other causes of under-development, insecurity and volatile environment in Nigeria.

The study carried out by Edih (2014) recommended that government should move beyond political solution to a scientific method to address the problem of under development in the Niger--Delta. The author canvasses that, the problem of under--development which is characterized by unemployment, youth restiveness, diseases, and bad governance should be tackled through a dynamic approach. The hitherto political solution that provided amnesty (pardon) to repentant militias has not solved the demands of these youths. Equally, the convocation of national conference for the purpose of dialogue on socio-economic and political issues is not yielding result rather, it amounts to wastage of resources, energy and time and may be deeper confusion. Hence, this study is examining the Host community recruitment model as a panacea for youth restiveness in volatile environment. The assumption/hypothesis to be inferentially tested is that, the application of host community recruitment model would lead to national peace, security and improved organizational performance.

Literature review

Host community recruitment strategy

Edih (2021a) defines host community recruitment as an innovative recruitment strategy geared towards hiring candidates from communities where companies are situated. The reason is to establish a sense of belonging, conviviality and peace between business organizations and the indigenous peoples of the area. According to Gbam (2017), host community recruitment strategy is a form of corporate social responsibility model. However, Zirra et al. (2017) argued that the strategy is a measure of imposing candidates from Host communities on organizations. They opined that, as a compulsive approach of hiring staff, may result to friction between host communities and the recruiting organizations. Reference was made to the River State Employment Edict, 2000, which mandates business organizations operating in the State to ensure that 40 percent of their working team are indigenes.

Powe (2020) also sees host community recruitment as an integral component of corporate social responsibility. The model creates mutual relationship between organizations and indigenes and therefore improve the reputation and performance of these business entities. Spencer (2016) contends that the host community recruitment approach benefits both the organization and their employees. It is on this background that (Edih, 2021) states that host community recruitment strategy is a win-win hiring model for business firms and host communities. He also contends that the model is not one of conventional or commonly used recruitment sources by recruiting organizations. It is a new paradigm and innovation design to ameliorate the ceaseless tensions/frictions between organizations and host communities in volatile environment.

System theory

The study is anchored on system theory based on its emphasis that every organization works as a system. That organization operates in two major systems known as internal and external systems. These systems may be referred to as internal and external environment. A closed organizational system concentrates on the internal sub-systems of the organization which does not relate with the external environment. It is evident that no organization can operate in isolation. That means, organizations must connect/relate with the external environment on several grounds. The employees of a corporation are usually sourced from the external environment and its products are sold to the people (public) who serve as wholesalers, retailers and final consumers. This analogy exemplifies the constant socio-

economic relationships and exchange between organizations and the external environment. In addition, the legal environment which is part of the external environment regulates the activities of the organization through extant laws, rules and regulations. It is on this account that the system theory is relevant to the study.

METHODOLOGY

Data were obtained by administering questionnaire structured in four points Likert scale to 350 staff of the 50 selected organizations in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria. Target population of the study was selected using simple random sampling technique. The Niger-Delta region comprises of nine (9) States including, Delta, Bayelsa, Akwa-Ibom, Cross-River, Rivers, Edo, Ondo, Imo and Abia. The appellation, Niger-Delta is a political configuration that represents the Oil Producing States in Nigeria.

The activities of oil exploration companies have resulted to several oil spills, environmental degradation, and concomitant/resultant joblessness and hunger experienced by the people and especially the youths. The evidential consequences of government insensitivity, exploitation and unemployment are restiveness, violence and militia activities. The primary data generated were subjected to validation tests such as coefficient of correlation (R), coefficient of determination (R^2), t-distribution (t-test) and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA/F-RATIO).

The relationship between host community recruitment model (HCRM) and organizations/communities is expressed as follows (Figure 1);

Mathematically

$$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + \dots + e$$

Where;

Y is dependent variable

B_0 is intercept

B_1 - B_2 is coefficient

X_1 - X_2 is independent variables (HCRM sub variables)

e is error estimate

Therefore, the study's modified regression line equation is

$$NPS = B_0 + B_1PID + B_2BCR + e$$

Where;

NPS is National Peace and Security (in turn curbs youth restiveness)

PID is peace ideals in HCRM

BCR is Business organizations/community relations in HCRM

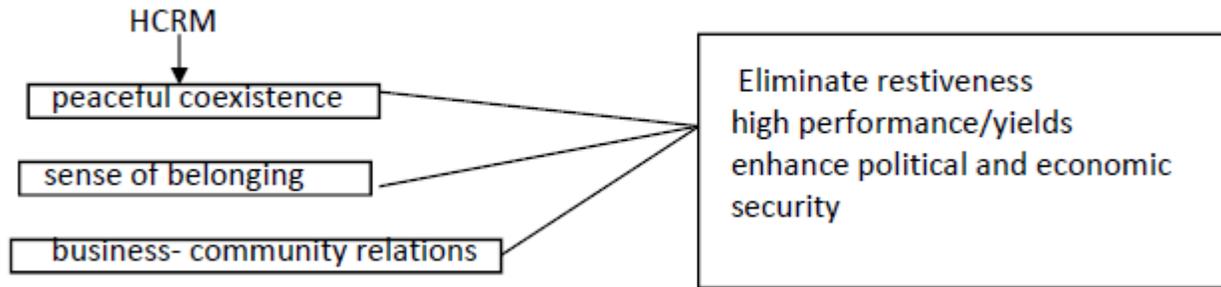


Figure 1: Relationship between host community recruitment model (HCRM) and organizations/communities.

Table 1. Multiple regression analysis.

Model	R	R-square	Adj. R-square	STD Error of the estimate
1	0.2522	0.5022	0.4861	0.497653

a, predictors, (Constant), Peace, Security, organizational Performance.

Table 2: Coefficient of all the variables.

Model	Unstandardized coefficient B	STD Error	Standardized Coefficient B	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.112001		1.5052	5.70	0.000
Peace/ security	0.289759	0.47929	0.38416	4.95	0.000
Improved Perf.	0.032692	0.51164	0.13846	8.10	0.000

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results from (Table 1) demonstrate that the application of host community recruitment model (HCRM) represented by the predictors of peace/security ideals and business organizations/ community relations account for National Peace and Security (reduction in youth restiveness) in Nigeria (Niger-Delta). The R-square figure (50.22) results to 50.22% positive change in National Peace and Security in the Niger-Delta region. That's means the problem of youth restiveness was reduced by 50.22% for progressive ideas and by providing employment to qualified applicants from host communities.

In Table 2, the peace and security ideals in HCRM accounts for 38.42% positive change in National Peace and Security (meaning that the activities of youth restiveness were reduced by 38.42%). Similarly, business organizations and community relations construct of the HCRM positively affected National Peace and Security by 13.84% (connoting that the tempo of youth restiveness was reduced by 13.84%). The regression line equation showing these impacts is as follows;

$$NPS = 1.5052 + 0.3841X_1 + 0.1384X_2$$

The above equation shows that National Peace and Security will increase in average by 0.3841 of unit increase in X_1 and increase in average by 0.1384 of unit increase in X_2 . The regression line equation is statistically significant since ($F = 84.37, p = 0.000$) at 0,05 level of significance (Table 3). Based on the above results, the assumption/ hypothesis that the application of host community recruitment model would solve/curtail the problem of youth restiveness, improve organizational performance and National Peace and Security in a volatile environment is very correct and therefore, accepted. This assertion is in line with the conclusions made in the studies of (Edih, 2021a; Powei, 2020; Gbam, 2017; Spencer, 2016) that HCRM is beneficial to both organizations and host communities. It is also regarded as a win-win hiring model for government and business organizations. However, Zirra et al. (2017) concluded otherwise. The authors see HCRM as compelling approach that may impede the selection of qualified persons for possible employment. The implication is that

Table 3: Significance of the model using ANOVA.

Model	Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	70.265725	1	47.432155	84.37	0.000
Residual	116.59827	343	0.5622251		
Total	189.864	344			

B, Dependent variable: Peace, Security, Org performance.

candidates from host communities should undergo the required selection process to ascertain their competence/qualifications for the vacant jobs to avoid inefficiency, laziness and poor performance.

Conclusion

This study examined host community recruitment strategy as a panacea for youth restiveness in a volatile environment. The study concludes that the government and business organizations cannot run their affairs in a chaotic, violent, and very volatile environment. Therefore, concrete measures must be taken to maintain peace, security and protection of lives and properties. It's on this account that the following recommendations were made:

1. Government should enshrine a Law to ensure that 50 percent of the work force of every business organization in the country be employed from host communities. This measure will instill in the host communities a sense of belonging and part ownership of the corporations.
2. Business organizations should incorporate host community recruitment model as a fundamental staffing policy for hiring qualified indigenes from host communities. It will enhance management's commitment on their corporate social responsibility (CSR).
3. Criteria for competence, merit and others should be considered in the screening process to ensure that qualified candidates are employed to improve organizational performance. This will forestall the notion of automatic employment ticket that may breed indolence and redundancy at work place.

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Conflict of interest

We hereby declare that the study has no sponsor and there is no conflict of interests.

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