

Impact of Human Resource Management on Recruitment and Selection of Transnational Bank in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

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Abstract: Human resource (HR) is considered to be vital, valuable, complicated and least predictable as it is the resource that processes other resources to enable the results of the processes attain the goals of the organization. Managing human resources to achieve competitive advantage is a challenging task, and it is more challenging for Multinational Corporations (MNCs) cutting across various countries with dissimilar cultures and legislations. The decision to adopt management practices from the home country of multinational corporations (MNCs) or to adjust such practices to suit the culture and environment of the host nation also remains a challenging responsibility. Owing to this challenge, MNC's have been severally cited by researchers as playing a major role in the divergence or convergence of selection practices in the globe. The aim of this study is to explore the effect of human resource management on recruitment and selection of Transnational Bank. The research is based on primary data sourced from employees of the case study organization. The primary data was collected by means of a well structured questionnaire distributed amongst the employees based on their positions. The findings and conclusions are based on the responses from the questionnaire relative to information already published in existing HR literatures. The study showed that multinationals still transfer their practices across border to their host countries. However, there is continued significance of traditional orientation and the national culture on their recruitment and selection practices. Notwithstanding these catalysts, evidence reveals that in some cases competency and the applicant's ability to perform the task still overrides all other influences. The study therefore concludes that, human resource management significantly influences recruitment and selection of transnational banks, Port Harcourt, Nigeria, and recommends that, management of Transnational Bank in Nigeria should focus on the cultural influences of recruitment and selection practices to ensure strategic fit.

Keywords: Human resource management,, Multinational Corporations, Recruitment, Selection

INTRODUCTION

Human resource management (HRM) policies and practices are carried out within an economic, social, political and legal environment. There is therefore, a need for considerable historical and cultural insight in local conditions to understand the processes, philosophies and problems (Hofstede, 1993). Recruitment and selection practices in Nigeria firms reflect national culture to a great extent.

Values are a fundamental element in most definition of organizational culture although culture researchers disagree about many aspects of its definition and measurement; they agree that culture plays an important role in determining how well an individual fits into an organizational context (Rousseau, 1990). Past researches and even simple intuition suggest that when our values and priorities match the values and priorities of a particular organization, we are happier and more likely to maintain an association with that organization (Locke & Latham, 2002).

The business environment in recent years continues to get more competitive and firms are continually seeking sources of sustainable competitive advantage. Porter (1998) suggests that sources of competitive advantage can only be sustainable when they are difficult to copy. Technology and capital were the chief sources of competitive advantage but firms have realized that these can be imitated for a price. For this reason, the focus has shifted to human resources as a major source of competitive advantage since it is difficult to acquire a ready pool of highly qualified and motivated staff that can work together and deliver as a team (Pfeffer, 1998).

Recruitment and Selection therefore, receives significant focus as it is the gateway to the organization with the adage; “it’s easier to hire than to fire”. To support this, Dunnette and Borman (1979) showed that a mismatch between jobs and people could reduce the effectiveness of other HRM functions. Mukoro (2005:4) stated “that every organization depends on the effective use of its available resources in order to achieve its objectives”. These resources if they are to be effectively utilized should be obtained in the right quantity, with the right quality and at the right time. Human resource however, is considered to be the most vital, valuable, complicated and least predictable as it is the resource that processes other resources to enable the results of the processes attains the goals of the organization.

Several studies have focused on the impact of other components of the HRM system such as Training and Development, Performance appraisal on organizational effectiveness (MacDuffie, 1995 & Matthew *et al.*, 2001). There is however, little literature on the impact of the recruitment and selection process (Ahmad & Schroeder, 2002). Recruitment and selection needless to say is an important component of the HRM system. The apparent neglect of recruitment and selection is the driving force behind this study which explored recruitment and selection practices employed by Transnational Inc. in Nigeria.

This study is expected to determine the reasons behind the adopted recruitment a selection practices. It is expected to provide a distinctive contribution to the study of the effect of human resource management on recruitment and selection in Nigeria.

Transnational bank is used here as anonymous in place of the real name of the organization. The Transnational bank is one of the largest financial services organizations in the world with an asset base in excess of US\$1trillion. Transnational bank is the retail arm of the large group and has about 1400 branches spread across 50 countries. This bank was chosen for the study because it is a good example of a multinational organization. The banking industry in Nigeria is one of the most sophisticated and developed sectors in the country. This study is expected to fill the

gaps identified above while providing a distinctive contribution to the studies of the effect of human resource management on recruitment and selection. It attempts to achieve this by identifying the recruitment and selection practices in Nigeria using a bank in the country as case study.

According to Anakwe, (2002), gaps exist in the literature with respect to understanding human resource functions and how they are executed in many developing countries of Africa. Most developing countries in Africa and Nigeria in particular have had a tumultuous past and there is a need for up to date information to complement other studies in this area. This piece of work aims to fill this gap.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study which are directed towards answering the research questions set out in the previous section include the following:

- To critically analyze the recruitment practices used by Transnational bank for different levels of employment.
- To critically analyze the selection practices used by Transnational bank for different levels of employment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human Resource Management

Human resource management (HRM) is the practice of recruiting, hiring, deploying and managing an organization's employees. HRM is often referred to plainly as human resources (HR). A company or organization's HR department is usually responsible for creating, putting into effect and overseeing policies governing workers and the relationship of the organization with its employees. The term human resource was first used in the early 1900s, and then more widely in the 1960s, to describe the people who work for the organization, in aggregate. HRM is employee management with an emphasis on those employees as assets of the business. In this perspective, employees are occasionally referred to as human capital. As with other business assets, the aim is to make effective use of employees, reducing risk and maximizing return on investment (ROI).

Some job analyses include job competency which is basically an extension of the person specification but focuses on work behaviour rather than personal characteristics (Bach and Sisson, 2000). Job description and person specification often exist alongside competency based approaches (Taylor, 2002). Glowinkowski, (2009) defines behavioural competence as “a way of behaving that is associated with obtaining successful results”.

Job analysis can be done using a variety of techniques which vary in terms of sophistication, cost, convenience and acceptability and all these need to be considered when deciding on what method to employ (Marchington & Wilkinson, 2007). The most commonly used however include; questionnaires, interviews, observation and diaries (Cooper *et al.*, 2003; Taylor, 2002; Searle, 2003).

Cooper *et al.*, (2003) stressed that several of these techniques could be combined to ensure the development of a clear specification. Although the prescriptive literature suggests the use of job analysis as above, it has been criticized for easily becoming outdated and thus misleading especially for jobs that change very quickly in terms of their content, character and complexity.

Taylor (2002) suggests that regular updating and loose descriptions can be used to minimize the misleading effects of job analysis. The next stage is the recruitment process which is to attract prospective candidates who meet the criteria set by the job description, person specification and job competency framework.

The Concept of Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment for any organization is very important through the lifespan of the organization. Norton (2007) argued that “good organization structure does not by itself produce good performance”. There is reason therefore, to match organization with very sound and quality staff so that performance would become more effective (Mukoro, 2005). The recruitment and selection process is intended to identify prospective employees who will fit well with the hiring organization.

CIPD, (2007) believes that effective recruitment is central and crucial to the successful day to day functioning of any organization. Successful recruitment therefore depends upon finding people with the necessary skills, expertise and qualifications to deliver organizational objectives and the ability to make a positive contribution to the values and aims of the organization.

Recruitment and selection started off as a subset of the area that used to be called Personnel Administration / Management. Salaman & Iles (1995) noted that knowledge in this field is derived from many disciplines; among them sociology, economics, law, engineering – but its major source has always been psychology and in particular industrial and organizational psychology. Although Iles (1999) agrees that the practice has its roots in psychology, he believes it is actually from differential psychology, the study of consistent patterns of individual differences developed in the UK in the late nineteenth century. He further argues that this approach to individual psychology is rooted in a positivist empiricist tradition which seeks to discover objective facts about people by the application of rigorous scientific methods. Blunt and Popoola (1985) noted that applied psychologists were called upon during the world wars to devise selection programmes for the armed forces and their success at this led to a surge in the demand for services in the post world war II industrial boom.

Internal and external models of Recruitment and selection

Recruitment is described below a positive attraction process which is designed to help assemble a suitable pool of applicants against a given job vacancy. In contrast selection can be seen as a negative process of rejection which involves narrowing down the field of candidates until a suitable match against a given vacancy is found (Whitehill, 1991, cited in (Wright, 1991, cited in Wright and Storey, 1997 in Thornhill, 2000:.94). There are two main approaches to recruitment and selection; however, they can be broadly classified into internal and external Labour market:

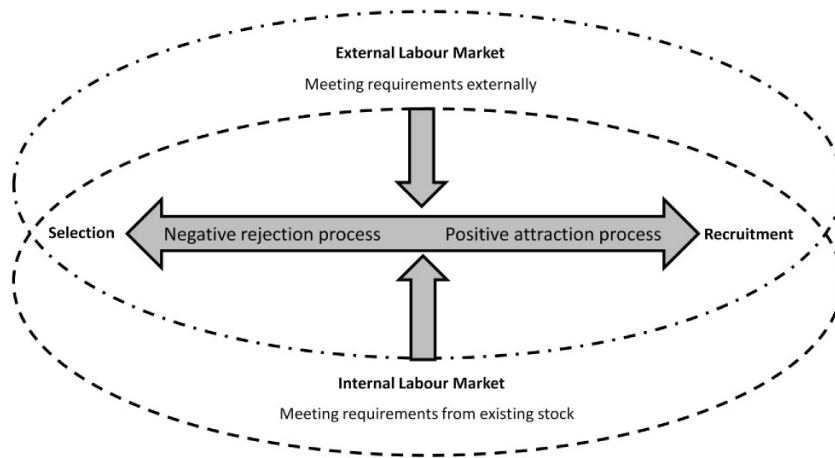


Fig. 1: Internal and external models of Recruitment and selection Adapted from Whitehill, 1991, cited in Wright and Storey, 1997, in Thornhill, 2000:94).

There are numerous approaches to recruitment; however, from the model in Fig. 2.2 they can be broadly classified into internal and external labour market.

Internal Labour Market

The internal methods target staff already employed to fill new vacancies. Commonly used during rationalization than in period of boom and expansion, vacancies are filled through deployment of staff from one task to another task. The employees recruited internally are either seeking lateral moves (job change that entail no major change in responsibility or authority levels like transfer) or promotions (Jones *et al.*, 2000). Internal sources of recruitment are not expensive and are less time consuming as employees are already familiar with the system and the organization also has information about their skills, abilities and actual behaviour on the job (Briggs, 2007). Briggs further stressed that many organizations still rely on external sources despite the fact that internal sourcing boost the morale and motivates employees. Reasons may be that there is a limited pool of candidates internally and the system may not have suitable ones.

External Labour Market

External methods bring in individuals from outside the organization as potential applicants. The targeted labour market, cost, volume of applications and the image of the organization are some of the considerations taken into account in choosing which method to use. External recruitment is likely to be used especially for lower entry jobs in periods of expansion and for positions whose specific requirement cannot be met by present employees within the organization (Briggs, 2007).

There are multiple means by which an organization can recruit externally such as advertising in electronic (including internet) and print media, private and public employment agencies, work-ins by job hunter, employees referrals, academic institutions professional association union and informal networks (Bryson, 2006; Jones *et al.*, 2000; Compton & Nankervis, 2009; Jones *et al.*, 2000).

External sourcing could offer access to a potentially large applicant pool with skill, knowledge and abilities the organization needs to achieve its goals while the new recruits may contribute fresh ideas to solving problems and as they may be up to date on the latest technology. The process is however expensive in terms of the cost of recruitment and training. Lack of knowledge about the organization and uncertainty about the performance of the potential employee is another shortcoming.

Recruitment and Selection Methods

The internet still plays a major role in the recruitment of employees and is widely used by larger organizations. The internet allows an organization to reach a larger and broader pool of applicants than other traditional methods while reducing the turnaround time and paperwork involved (Bach & Sisson, 2000; Marchington & Wilkinson, 2007).

The next stage is the process involves making a choice between the candidates and the most commonly used selection techniques include application forms, interviews and references referred to as the classic trio by Cook (2003). Other forms of selection technique include work sampling, assessment centre and graphology (Taylor, 2002; Cooper *et al.*, 2003).

Of these techniques, the interview remains the most used with about 98% of all employers using it for all job types (IRS, 1997). Survey shows that it is the most effective selection method for groups ranging from managers to unskilled workers (IRS 2004). This is closely followed by application forms used by 72% of all employers for all job types (*ibid*). Independent research by Robertson & Makin (1986) and Shakleton & Newell (1989) both confirmed the IRS report.

According to Marchington & Wilkinson (2007), it is worth stating that selection techniques cannot overcome failures in recruitment, they merely make them evident as no single technique is capable of producing perfect selection decisions that predicts with precision which individual will perform well in a particular role.

Another issue it is worth noting is the variation in specific selection technique between countries. Newell and Tansley (2001) identify that interviews are commonly used in Britain and North America while graphology is commonly used in France and French multinationals, assessment centers in Britain, Germany and the Netherlands.

Although the traditional practices are still widely used, academics and practitioners alike have discounted their usefulness because of their low reliability and validity. According to the IRS

Employment survey (2004), interviews are also the most roundly condemned and criticized for unacceptable levels of reliability, poor predictive validity despite its advantage of being relatively cheap.

Several studies (e.g. Erasmus *et al.*, 2009; Taylor, 2005; Conway *et al.*, 1995; Scmitt *et al.*, 1984; Reilly & Chao, 1982) have supported this assertion and have shown using different

models that traditional methods of selection such as interviews are poorer at accurately predicting job performance when compared to the recent most sophisticated techniques like psychological tests and assessment centers. In fact, Taylor (2005) introduced Meta-analysis which is basically a combination of several studies carried out at different times and under different circumstances in various countries to increase the accuracy of the validity prediction. Validity is measured using the correlation coefficient, which measures how closely scores at the selection stage compare with those awarded for on the job performance. The correlation coefficient will usually have values between 0 and 1. The higher the coefficient, the higher the validity so a coefficient of 1 will mean perfect correlation while a coefficient of 0.00 indicates no correlation at all.

Choice of Selection Methods

Roberson and Smith (1989) classify the selection methods into three groups based on their validity. They noted that work sample tests and ability composite (general mental and psychomotor ability) produce the best validity coefficients of values between 0.38 and 0.53.

Assessment centers, Bio data and general mental ability are next with validity coefficients of between 0.24 and 0.43. Assessment centers are the best in this group with coefficient range between 0.41 and 0.43. References, interviews, personality assessment and self-assessment form the worst group with very low predictive accuracy.

Hunter and Hirsch (1987) however showed that different types of interviews may have different validities with situational interviews showing higher validity. Latham *et al.*, (1980) in support of this showed that situational interviews may have correlation coefficient of up to 0.35 as opposed to about 0.14 for some other forms of interview. The traditional unstructured interview has probably faced more criticism than any other selection method. Anderson *et al.*, (2004) put together a list of the problems usually associated with interviews and they include expectancy effect, information overload, prototyping effect, halo and horns effect, stereotyping effect, primary effect, negative information bias effect amongst others.

An obvious question to ask will be; why are they still widely used in practice despite these problems? One explanation for this can be related to Hunter and Hirsch's (1987) study which showed that different types of interviews have different validity coefficients. Taylor (2002)

summarizes that interviews have a number of distinct objectives including; predicting future job performance and behaviour, focusing on aspects of behaviour that cannot be easily

addressed by other methods, to supply information to the candidate, persuade suitable candidates to accept the job and lastly create goodwill for the organization.

Like interviews, application forms have been criticized for restricting the information that candidates may wish to provide, hence good candidates may be lost this way. Taylor, (2005) showed that poorly designed application forms puts off prospective candidates. The IRS (1997:8-11) however, found that 93% of respondents in a UK survey of 157 employers used application forms. A study carried out by CIPD (2003) produced a similar result stating that 80% of its respondents used application forms.

Smith and Robertson (1993) attempts to explain the reason for the wide use of application forms despite their poor validity by summarizing some distinct functions which includes; enabling a shortlist of candidates to be drawn up, providing information that can be drawn on during the interview, and a means by which information about good but unsuccessful candidates can be filed away for future reference as a means of analyzing the effectiveness of the various recruitment media used and lastly as a public relations tool enhancing the employers image as an efficient, fair and well run organization.

One variation of the application form is the use of biographical data (bio data) which have been found to have high predictive validities. According to Roberts (1997), it can be described as a set of questions framed around “coincidences” in the life of people who are good performers on the job. The evidence however, shows that only about 5% of the employers in the UK use it (IRS 1997). Taylor, (1998) ascribes this to the fact that it is controversial and costly to develop. He also noted that selection using bio data takes a number of forms. Heery and Noon (2001) observed that it is only possible to use the bio data technique where the same information is available for all candidates. IRS (1997) showed that references are used by over 99% of UK employers despite their low predictive validity. Cooper and Robertson (2002) characterize reference letters as being subjective and open to error and abuse because the flow of information is between two people who are unlikely to meet and about an applicant who will never know what is written. The IRS (1997) also showed that most of the references is taken up after the selection decision is made which can be interpreted to mean that they are used for double checking factual information and seeking confirmation of impressions gained during the selection process Taylor (1998).

Ability and Personality testing while having good predictive validity are also fairly widely used in practice. The first findings of the WERS2004 showed that performance tests were more likely to be used when recruiting core employees, irrespective of their occupation and that 34% of all workplaces used such tests for these recruits. On the other hand, personality tests were routinely used for at least some types of vacancies in 19% of all workplaces. Ability tests have been criticized for exposing selectors to legal claims if not properly used (Roberts, 1997).

Roberts, (1997) defined assessment centers as involving the application of a number of techniques over a period of time to build a comprehensive picture of the candidate and have received the best press of all the selection techniques. As noted in the Meta studies described above, they have high predictive validities and are also widely used in practice. According to IRS (1997), they are used by almost half of the organizations surveyed. They also noted that as organization size increases above 5000, the proportion using them went up to 75%.The reason

behind this is certainly related to the cost of using the technique and this has been the major criticism of the technique. Assessment centers usually involve role plays, in-tray exercises, group exercises and presentations in different combinations depending on the role and size of the organization.

Selection techniques commonly used in Nigeria include the use of CV's, application forms, interviews and ability tests. Again, Arthur *et al.*, (1995) showed that the use of interviews for selection was nearly universal. About 90% of the organizations surveyed said they use interviews for selection. 46% of the respondents use references while paper and pencil tests were less frequently used as were work samples (19%) and work simulations (11%).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Due to the unique complex and ever changing world of business, the researcher has taken the interpretivist approach to understand the recruitment and selection practices in Nigeria using a bank in Nigeria as a case study. Interviews and questionnaires were used to collect data in an attempt to answer the research questions. However, the researcher considered and applied some attribute of the philosophical stance of the natural scientist since the research was undertaken in a value-free manner (Saunders *et al.*, 2003).

The simple random sampling research techniques was used to draw a total number of 35 respondents as the sample size of the study from the population for this study which comprises of three units, Level 1 (officers cadre), Level 2 (middle management) and Level 3 (senior management) of the employees in Transnational bank in Nigeria. An attempt was made to interview top cadre of the management to deduce an analytical view. The research techniques used for this study included telephone interviews and questionnaires through email. It is however, believed that this instrument will provide data to answer the research questions. Syntheses of data from these techniques helped in developing a comprehensive assessment and analysis of the topic area.

The researcher collated the completed questionnaire responses before analysis by editing, coding and classifying the data according to levels of employment. Due to the nature of the research, analysis was done mainly by cross tabulation of the various variables to show the use of the recruitment methods and selection technique across level of employment in the bank. Cross tabulation was used to analyze the relationship between the dependent variables and independent variables and descriptive statistics such as percentages were employed for the analysis. Data analysis was carried out using Microsoft excel.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study aimed at identifying the recruitment practices used by transnational bank in Nigeria. Data for this study was collected from the questionnaire administered to the employees and from the interviews of managers in the Human Resource Department of the bank. The numbers of respondents recruited by the various methods are shown in Fig. 2. The result indicate that direct contact is the most used recruitment method by Transnational bank in Nigeria, 45% of the

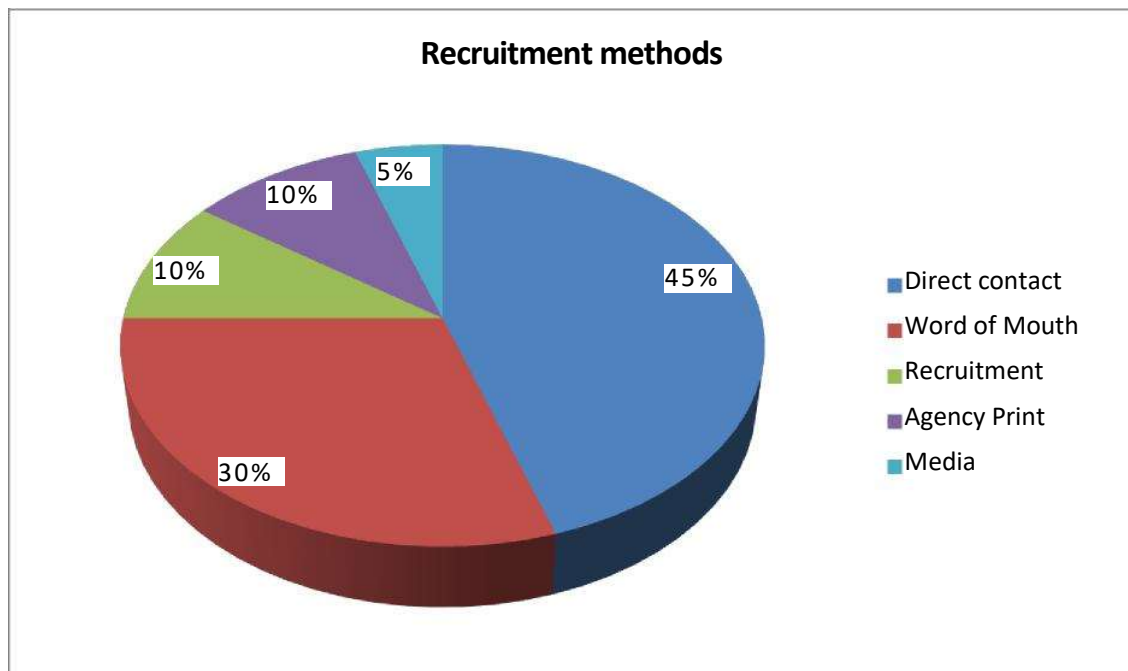
respondents were recruited by direct contact followed closely by word of mouth with 30%. Another 10% were recruited through printed media. These results are consistent with those obtained from interviewing the manager.

Figure 2: Recruitment methods

In figure 2, “Others” depict the candidate that was recruited from the national youth service scheme which is essentially a compulsory one year period between finishing school and starting full time employment during which the graduate must serve the nation.

This result can be explained by the higher rate of unemployment in Nigeria. Advertising on Radio or in the print media will attract much more qualified graduates than they will be able to accommodate because of the organization’s position as a leader in the Nigeria banking industry. This result could be associated with the obvious advantage of speed and cost associated with word of mouth as well as the fact that the candidate will not be completely unknown. If the candidate was referred by an existing staff member there is a high probability they would have socialized with the employee as it is in their interest to ensure the new recruit fits in.

The poor response to the use of internet can be explained by the fact that the internet does not play a major role in the recruitment of employees in Nigeria. Whilst the internet allows an organization to reach a larger and broader pool of applicants than most other traditional methods while reducing the turnaround time and paper work involved, in Nigeria very few



people have access to internet making the use of the internet as a recruitment method fairly restrictive for any organization. However, there are chances for a tremendous improvement in the use of the internet as a means of recruitment in the very near future.

Further breakdown of the recruitment methods by levels of employment is shown in Fig. 3. This depicts that word of mouth, direct contact, print media and recruitment agencies are used to recruit officers and middle managers but in contrast senior management staff is recruited by recruitment department and management consultancy agencies.

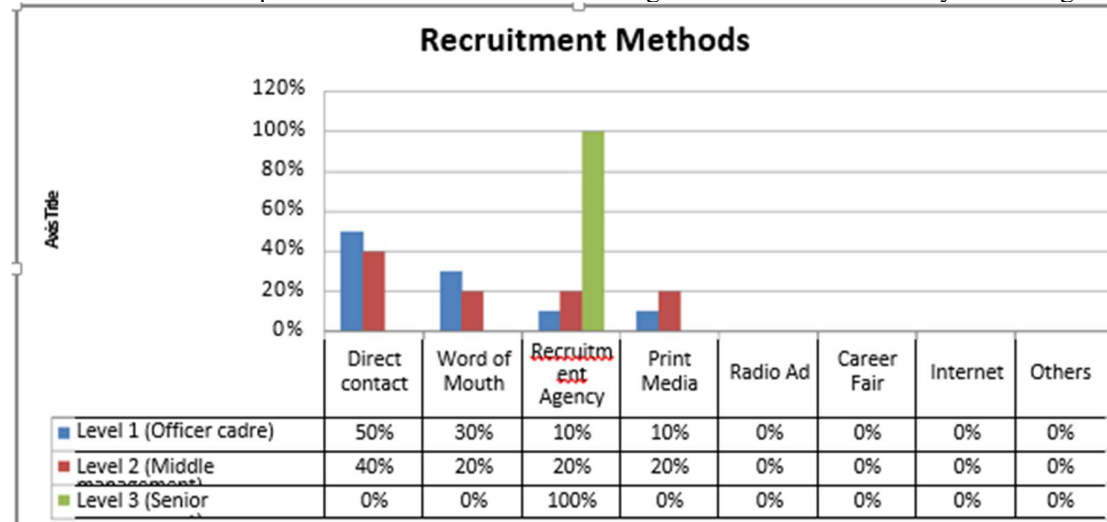


Fig. 3. Recruitment Methods by levels of employment

Managers were asked what recruitment methods they use for the various levels of employment and why their comments were in line with the results obtained from the questionnaire. Although there may be a wide pool of junior applicants to recruit into entry level positions; the same cannot be said for senior management positions in Nigeria. This explains why the Transnational bank uses recruitment agencies to head hunt senior management personnel.

Application Types

In the selection process, the first stage of selection is usually during application. The questionnaire asked the respondents to indicate how they applied for their job position in the organization. In Transnational bank Nigeria, 80% of the respondents applied using CVs for the officer cadre, middle management 80% and 100% for senior management. Interviews also reveal that the CV is preferred by the organization because of its flexibility. It gives the applicant the opportunity to sell themselves by tailoring their application to their strengths. While 20% of the respondent applied online for the officer cadre positions, none of the respondents applied online for a middle management and senior management position. Online application forms are preferred by the Transnational bank for entry level positions because it enables a quick shortlist of candidates to be drawn up and provides standardized information

that can be drawn upon during the Interview. It still remains an unpopular method of recruitment because few people have access to the internet.

Fig. 4 Application by curriculum vitae

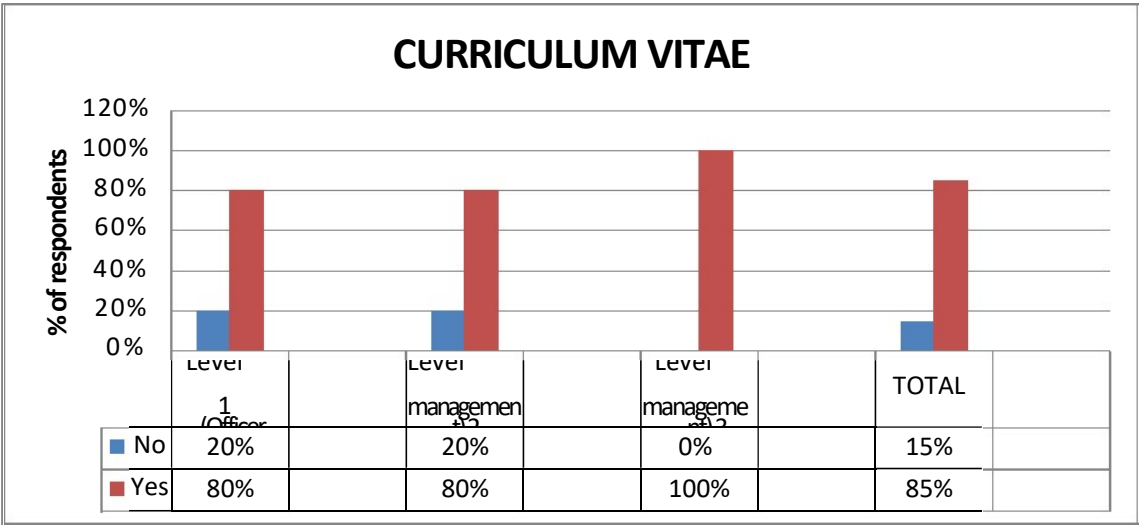


Fig. 4 Application by curriculum vitae

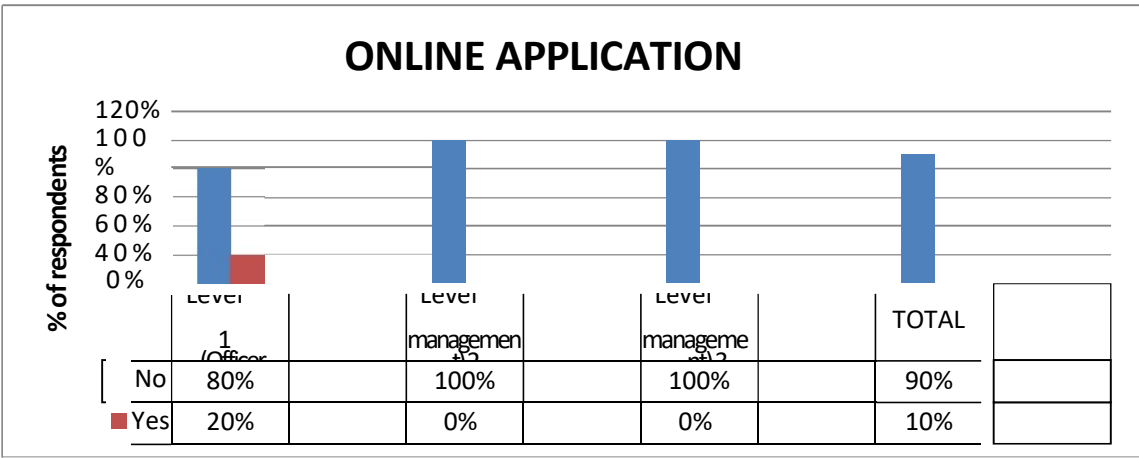


Fig. 5 Online Applications

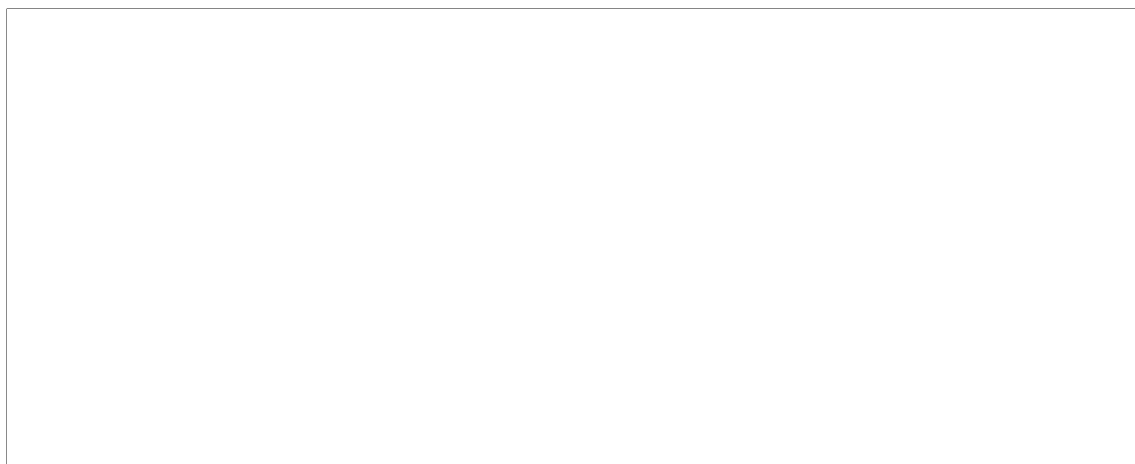
Selection Methods

To answer the research question relating to the selection practices used by Transnational bank, two survey instruments were used while the questionnaires were aimed at determining what practices are being used, the interviews were aimed at establishing “why” and “how” Transnational bank uses a combination of selection methods.

Interview

In response to the question “through which of the following methods were you selected”, all the respondents ticked interviews, every employee of the bank was interviewed at some point in the selection process. A summary of the questionnaire response is presented in Fig. 6: The use of interview as a means of selection

The responses in Fig. 6 are in line with previous studies on recruitment and selection in Nigeria.



Arthur *et al.*,(1995) showed that about 90% of the employers in Nigeria use interviews for all levels of employment Also when asked why interviews are still widely used in the organization despite the fact that research has shown that they are low predictors of performance (Armstrong, 2006). Managers noted that interviews are convenient and less costly and that their efficiency outweighs their ineffectiveness. Another likely reason for the wide use of interviews by the organization is that it offers the employer an opportunity to meet face to face with the candidate and facilitate negotiation where necessary.

The number of interviews per candidate was measured in the questionnaire to establish the significance of the method. The result shows that 20% of the respondents were interviewed once and another 30% interviewed twice. Almost 50% of the respondents had three or more than three interviews. The interview with managers in the HR department revealed that most of the interviews especially the earlier ones are panel interviews. The candidates' performance in an initial interview determines whether they will be recommended for further interviews. This is illustrated in Fig 7.

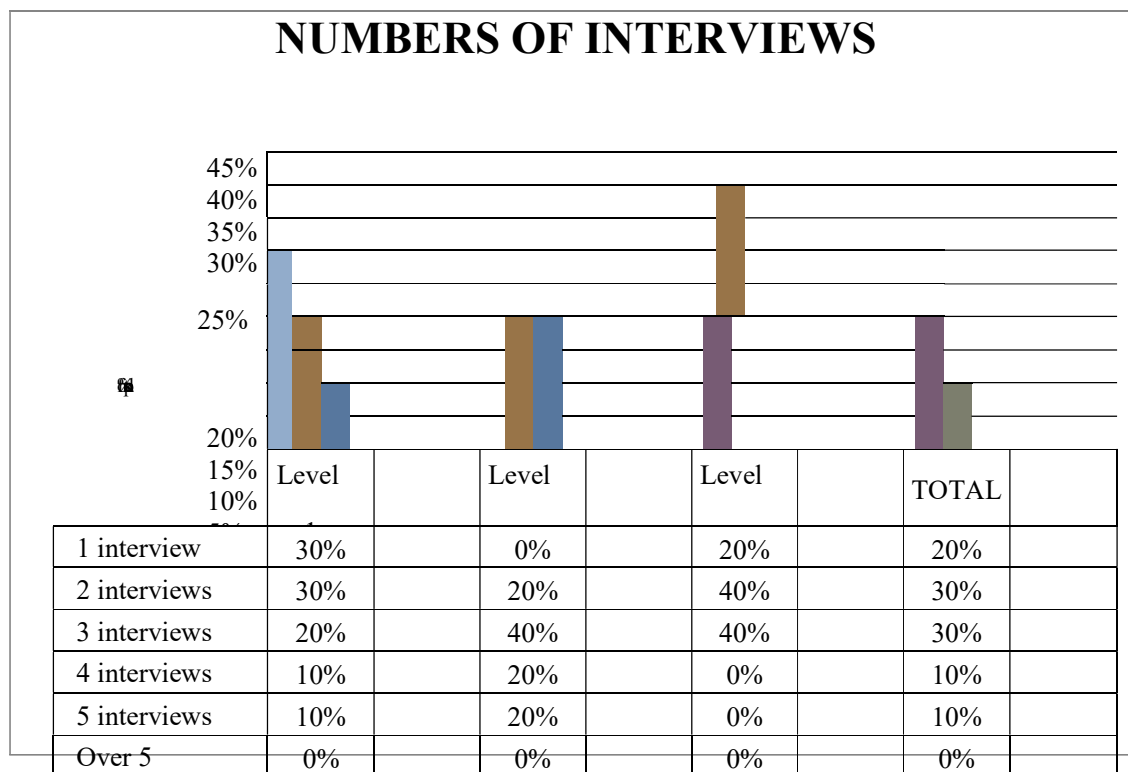


Fig. 7: The numbers of interview by level of employment

Ability and Personality Tests

Paper skill tests were used to select 90% of officers and 60% of the middle managers. Personality tests are used for both managers and officers; however the online skill tests are not popularly used in Nigeria. The interviews revealed that most managers are recruited internally through interviews. This is in line with several earlier studies (e.g. Robertson & Makin 1986). They suggested that interviews are the bedrock of selecting managers with 81% of the managers in their study selected through interviews. The reasons proffered for the use of the ability test are their effectiveness as good predictors of performance. Managers were also aware of research evidence showing that tests of intellectual ability are the most effective predictors of job performance. Performance in the test is a major determinant of whether an applicant will be hired or not by the bank.

Also the test performance determines what department of the organization the new recruit will be hired into. Brilliant performers are hired for the more intellectual jobs like treasury operations and risk management while others are placed in less tasking jobs like customer services and branch operations. The use of ability test is illustrated in the Fig 7 -10.

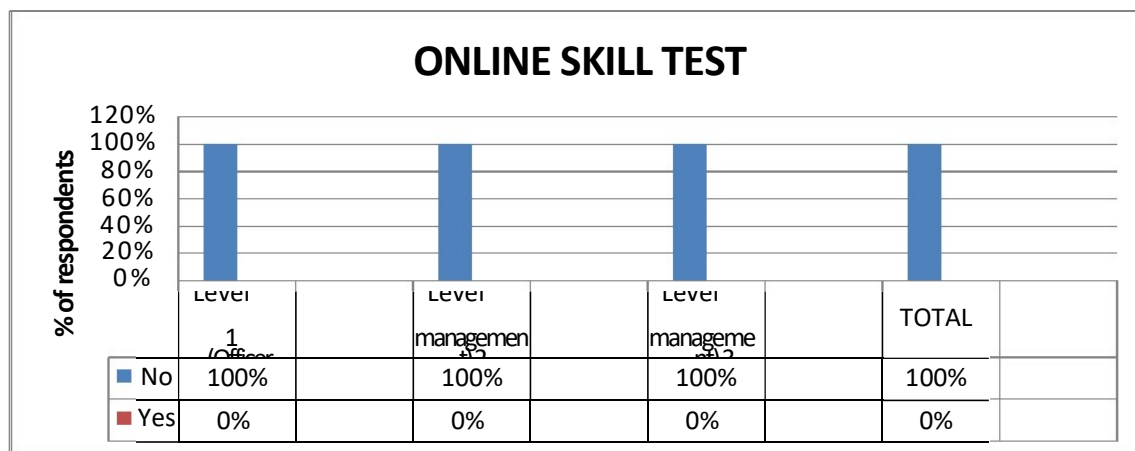


Fig. 8 The use of online skill test by levels of employment

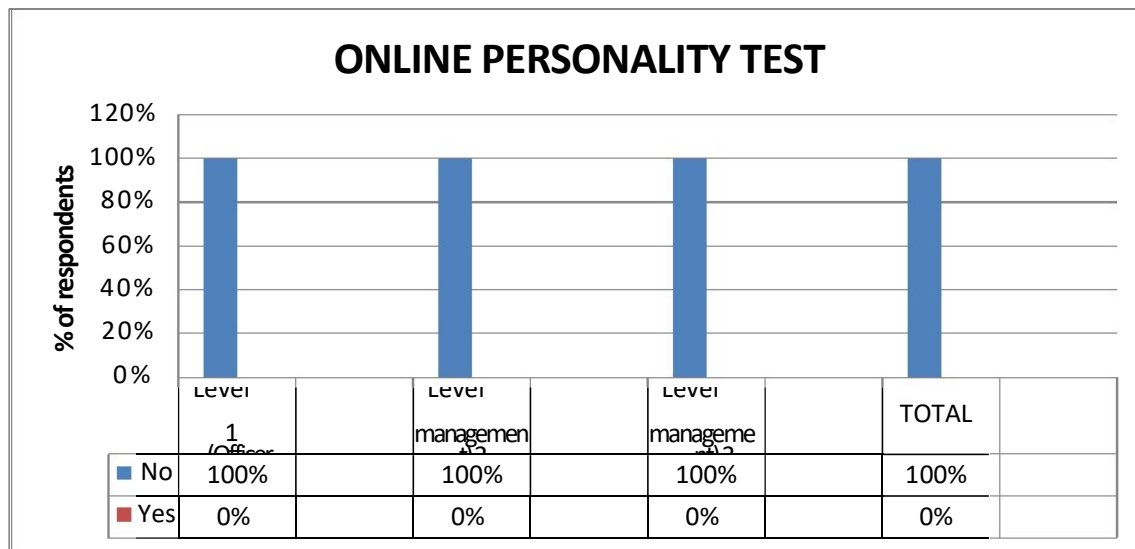
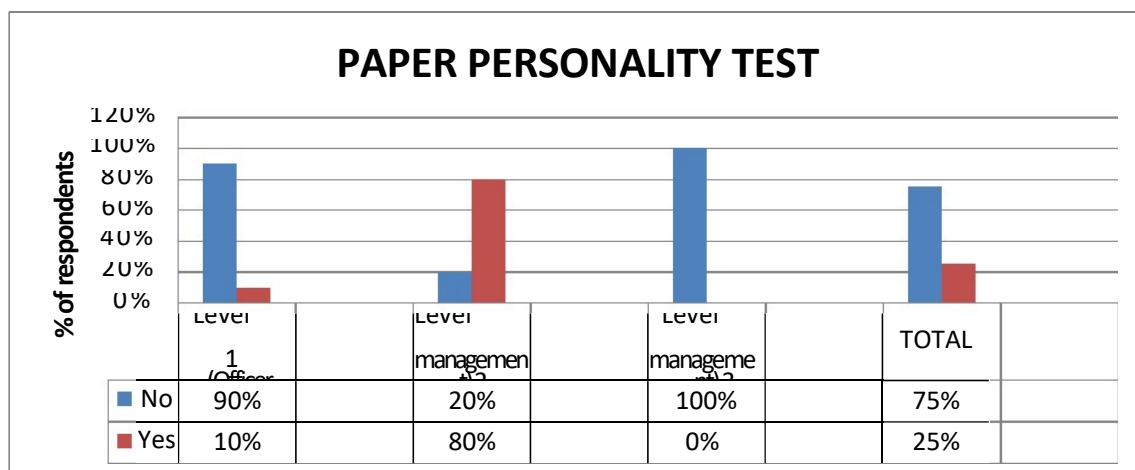


Fig. 9: Online personality test by levels of employment.



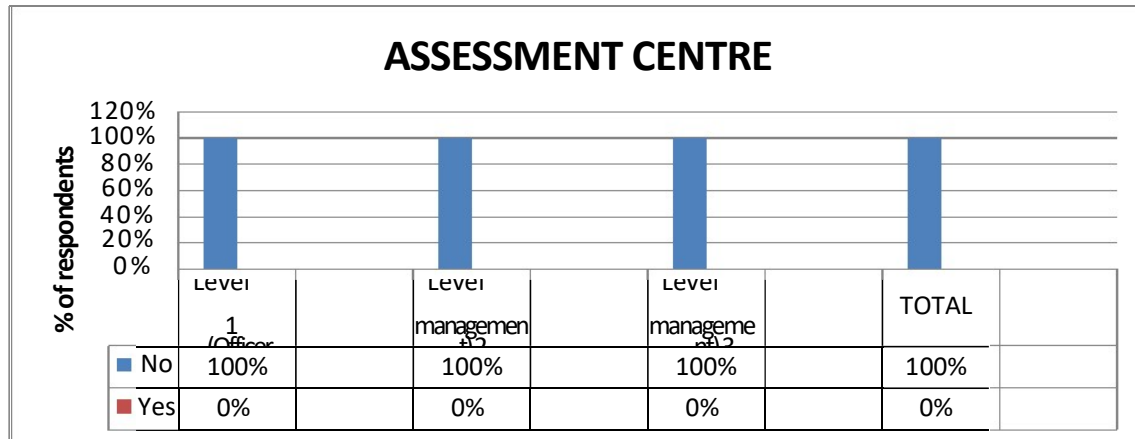
The Assessment Centre

The Assessment centre is a major selection method in other parts of the world (Tyson & York, 2000). In Nigeria, however, the assessment centre is not used as a selection tool at all. The probable explanation of this is the cost associated with assessment centers and the level of advancement and sophistication of the recruitment and selection practices in Nigeria. More recently, evidence has pointed to significant development in the selection process particularly in terms of its central focus and sophistication (Millmore, 2003). The time of this study, few organizations in Nigeria uses assessment centre as a selection technique despite its wide use in the developed world and good validity supported by various research studies.

Moreover, Transnational bank does not use this selection method as indicated in the responses in Fig. 4.11. Assessment centers would have afforded the bank the opportunity to observe the actual work behaviour of the candidates. Unlike other selection methods, assessment centers focus on potential and not achievements as it is not based on using past

Fig. 11: The use of assessment centre as a selection tool

Selection Criteria



Managers were asked during the interview process to indicate the level of importance they attached to different selection criteria (should due process be followed) on a likert scale ranging from 1(not important) to 5(very important). A person's ability to perform the technical requirement of the job and how well the person will “fit” the company values and ways of doing things were ranked as very important.

The respondents also ranked Q4 (an employment test in which the person needs to demonstrate the required skills). Personal interviews were also very important (Q3). The person's ability to get along well with others already working and a person's potential to do the job, even if the person does not perform up to expectation when they first start, the job is ranked as Q2 and having the right connection is ranked lowest as Q1.

Although, the CV is widely used as an application type especially for middle managers and senior managers, the use of internet is expected to be on the increase in the future. The interviews are predominantly used as a selection method for all the candidates of the organization. However, the number of interview hurdles varies with the level of employment. While the assessment centre is a major selection method in the developed economies, it is not practiced at all in Nigeria by the organization. However, ability and personality tests are used in Nigeria but they are paper based.

The findings also reveal that whilst technical requirements of the job are very important and ought to be the main yard stick for a person's qualification rationally there are other cultural influences impact and alter these processes.

This study reveals that having the right connection ranked lowest in the “should be” selection criteria and a person ability to perform the technical requirement was rated highly. This idea must have been borrowed from the developed world as Nigeria like other Africans use particularistic as opposed to universalistic criteria in making important HR decisions (Akinnusi, 1991). Essentially in Nigeria, having the right connection should rank very important amongst any set of selection criteria. Blunt and Popoola (1985) observed that the reason for the use particularistic behaviour in Africa is not farfetched as paid work is scarce. Due to the high rate of unemployment, the selection process is seen as a means of fulfilling one's obligation to kin and other personal contact. Some writers (Ovadjie & Ankomah, 2001; Kamoche, 1992) observed that due to the paternalistic nature of the African society, those in authority are expected to provide jobs for their kith and kin and these people become informant and stooge of their patron which also result in organization comprised of one or two ethnic group.

Recruitment and selection practices in Nigeria are determined by the level of economic development and national culture as explained previously. Recruitment through the use of the internet may not be widely applicable for recruiting the officer cadres. This is because of the very low internet usage in the country.

Additionally, although assessment centres have been identified as a global best practice for selection and are highly recommended, it may not be cost effective in Nigeria for junior officers'. However, to compensate for this lapse, the officers have to go through many more interviews in the process.

In essence, the recruitment and selection practice will eventually advance towards the modern practice of the developed world as the economic situation in Nigeria improves. For

instance, many local organizations will favour the use of internet recruitment and online application as the internet infrastructure improves. However, it is important to mention there has been a tremendous improvement in that sector in recent years and in a few years, internet and online application will become widely use as a recruitment methods in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The principal conclusion of this study is that word of mouth, direct contact, print media, recruitment agency are the recruitment methods adopted by the bank. Assessment centres are not used as a selection tool despite its wide use in the developed world and good validity supported by various research studies. This study also reveals that there is continued significance of traditional orientation to recruitment and selection in Nigeria. It reveals that there are some contextual variables that impose certain challenges to recruitment and selection. However, evidence reveals that in some cases competency and applicants' ability to perform the task override all other influences. To place this study within some relative framework, the result obtained were compared with previous studies in Africa particularly Nigeria. The study therefore concludes that, human resource management significantly influences recruitment and selection of transnational banks, Port Harcourt, Nigeria, and recommends that, management of Transnational Bank in Nigeria should focus on the cultural influences of recruitment and selection practices to ensure strategic fit.

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