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RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CHALLENGES IN NIGERIAN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS, CAN TRAINING HR STAFF CONTRIBUTE TO ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES?

MASTER'S THESIS

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"…I cannot even find the right words to stress the need for having the right staff but unfortunately, this aspect is often overlooked or neglected in our sector and this has to stop. We need to over emphasize the fact that CSOs cannot achieve their set objectives and targets without the presence of a key component – human capital and this is why we must eliminate all obstacles in the way at all costs…."

- ***Research Participant***

FOREWORD

The journey of writing a thesis is by no means an easy one, especially during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic which caught us all by surprise. Although, a bumpy ride, it was an experience well worth it as I learnt a lot about myself and a lot more about my topic. In approaching this thesis, I drew on my experience working in the civil society sector in Nigeria which has unfortunately not gotten the attention it deserves in HR literature and research. Being an under-researched area, it was important to me that I produce a meaningful, informative and relevant piece of work. For many, this will be the first time reading about the challenges that have plagued the hiring process in civil society organisations in Nigeria. An issue often times related to the weak leadership, history and economy of the country, which we find in this thesis is not entirely the case.

The following individuals have been instrumental to the successful completion of this thesis: first and foremost, the participants and the CSO capacity building organisation (dRPC), your willingness to lend your voice and expertise to this research from your first-hand experiences made all the difference. Secondly, I would like to thank my supervisor: Dr. Rik van Berkel for his unwavering support and patience (a lot of patience) throughout this process. Thank you for always guiding my wild thoughts and bringing me back to reality whenever I emailed with 'new' and 'unconventional' ideas on how I wanted to change the world with my thesis topic. Most importantly, thank you for always keeping an open mind and trying to understand my rationale behind this topic.

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Hana Annette Hashim
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ABSTRACT

In the last two decades, the role of civil society organisations has increased significantly in the global development community as these social groups have come to be relied on to deliver on goods and services required for national development. Unlike the private for-profit and government sectors, the third sector (Civil Society Sector) relies heavily on its people to deliver on goods and services through innovation and commitment. The reliance on people therefore makes it imperative for the CSO sector to adopt practices that develop and improve the HR function of recruitment and selection. However, this is not the case for CSOs in Nigeria as they are plagued with external challenges such as the high unemployment rates as well as internal organisational challenges that are inimical to the adopting practices to improve HR functions such as recruitment and selection. While this scenario exists within the Nigerian CSO space, in practice, the dearth of research on this specific area has made it almost impossible to gain deep insights on the issue in order to work towards finding a solution.

This thesis addressed the training needs of HR staff in Nigerian CSOs required to improve organisation performance adopting a qualitative method through interviews and using the AMO model. The (A) examined skills needed such as leadership, technological or proposal writing skills; the (M) looked at the question of why staff are motivated to address the challenge; and the (O) looked at the opportunities needed. For some participants opportunities were autonomy and the lack of interference from management and for others it was the simple opportunity to be trained.

Training emerged from interviews with participants even before it was proposed as a solution. This suggests that it could contribute to addressing the challenges as the skills identified could be met through training. With regard to motivation, the thesis found that ideal motivation centred around the success of the sector and the opportunity to attend trainings to develop new and already existing skills. The combination of these three components provides more insights on the possibility of training. However, as we found out this is only an indicative point as external challenges may not be easily addressed even with training as proven from the case study evaluation from those who were trained on recruitment and selection 2 years ago.

Keywords

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMO	Ability, Motivation, Opportunity
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CSOSI	Civil Society Organisation Sustainability Index
dRPC	development Research and Project Centre
HR	Human Resource
HRM	Human Resource Management
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NPS	Non-Profit Sector
R&S	Recruitment and Selection
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, the presence and role of civil society organisations (CSOs) has seen a significant increase in the development of several countries in Africa (Williamson & Rodd, 2016). This is mainly attributed to the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals and later Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the latter of which was launched in September 2015 (Dattler, 2016). The SDGs mapped out a key role for CSOs as a 'watchdog' of government's development programs and a complementary people orientated service delivery role in developing countries like Nigeria. (Dattler, 2016).

Nigeria! Often described as 'the giant of Africa' has the population of over 200 million people, making it the largest population and economy (GDP) in Africa (World Bank, 2020). Despite its large population, the demand for personnel in Nigerian organisation cannot be met as the supply is largely thought to be 'unqualified', which has implications for the CSO sector in Nigeria (Adisa et al., 2017; Ayoade, 2000; Yaro, 2014). The survival of this sector in Nigeria has become vital to both global donors and the community as they impact positively on the development the society and the overall country (Chaplowe & Tjega, 2007) . Therefore, the core resources for efficiency and organisational success in this sector lies within their human capital: their skill, experiences, knowledge and attitude which are all also crucial to achieving their mission (Akingbola, 2015; Brunt, 2016).

Against the background of a weak human capital base in Africa, all sectors - for-profit, governmental sector and the civil society sector are affected adversely by limited and ill-equipped human resources thereby impacting on CSO effectiveness (CSOSI, 2018). The process of recruitment and selection (R&S) to identify and engage talent as a fundamental HR practice encompasses all organisational practices and decisions which starts from the beginning of the employment process of any employee (Ahmad & Schroeder, 2002). It is therefore critical to achieving the organisation's strategic goal (Dessler 2005). Many experts have argued that the key to reaching and sustaining competitive advantage, is having the right people (Boxall, 1996 cited in Ahmed, 2013) as recruiting the right people is viewed as one of the crucial factors leading to organisational growth and success (Tanova, 2003). In addition, Tyson (2006) suggests that if the quality of recruitment and selection is poor, this leads to the inevitable failure of an organisation.

Given the context weak human resource capacity in Africa, capacity development for employees responsible for recruitment and selection is an important and significant function across all sectors - the CSO sector, public sector as well as the private sector (Brunt, 2016). Very few authors today would argue against the importance and impact of training in an organisation in any sector. The recent focus and attention on training is believed to be motivated by its potential for contributing to organisational sustainability and competitive advantage through human capital investment (McDowall & Saunders, 2010). In addition, several reports and studies demonstrate the effectiveness of training for HR staff in recruitment and selection practices in order to contribute to the success of the enterprise (Nnabuife et al., 2015). When conducted effectively, recruitment and selection are complementary processes which reduce employee turnover and enhance morale (Tiemo & Arubayi, 2012).

In view of the fact that CSOs paly an essential role in the development of countries in the global south like Nigeria (Brunt, 2016), it is therefore crucial that they invest in human capital capacity building programmes (von Eckardstein & Brandl, 2004). Although the CSO sector engages in various capacity building activities to strengthen the skills of technical staff such as project officers and managers, finance officers, HR staff receive little to no attention in developing their skills (Brunt, 2016; Chaplowe & Tjega, 2007). Not only does training HR staff lead to improved recruitment and selection practices, it also improve employee performance, engagement and commitment towards strategic organisational goals (Abrokwah et al., 2018).

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

As the CSO sector is heavily dependent on human capital for organisational success, arguably, more than any other sector (Brunt, 2016), it is paramount that the best suitable candidates are recruited. However, this sector continues to face challenges in the area of recruitment and selection (Chaplowe & Tjega, 2007). This factor is largely attributed to national/external factors in Nigeria as well as to the uniqueness of the sector per se. The absence of literature and data tailored to the CSO sector in Nigeria has therefore left a gap in establishing what these challenges are exactly. However, the evident lack of training for HR staff amongst CSOs in Nigeria has no doubt had an effect on the magnitude of recruitment and selection challenges

and the inability to address them. This renders the organisation, its success and its employees vulnerable to external and internal threats (Akingbola, 2015). With the CSOs use of capacity building for enhancing many skills of their employees, training is therefore proposed as a strategy for addressing these challenges.

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Against the background of the problem statement above, this thesis therefore aims to explore the challenges of recruitment and selection in the Nigerian CSO sector, how and if training of HR staff responsible for recruitment and selection can perhaps contribute to addressing the challenges. In addition, an added element to this point will be the evaluation of one of the few training programmes focusing on recruitment and selection for CSOs in Nigeria which took place two (2) years ago in Nigeria's capital- Abuja. This was organised by the development, Research and Project Centre (dRPC), one of the only civil society capacity building organisations in Nigeria. The aim of this is to draw more insights on what the possibilities are if HR staff were trained on the issues of R&S. Insights from both HR staff who have been trained in the area of R&S and those who have not been trained will be explored in order to further understand the impact training can have in addressing.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

The main question this thesis aims to answer is:

"can training contribute to addressing challenges of recruitment and selection faced by the civil society organisations in Nigeria?"

In order to answer this central research question, both theoretical and empirical sub-questions are formulated.

1.3.1 Theoretical Questions

- What does literature say about concept recruitment and selection, training and CSOs?
- What recruitment and selection challenges affecting Nigeria or CSOs are seen in literature?
- How can the AMO model be used to capture individual needs for performance outcomes?
- Based on literature, what skills do HR staff need with regard to recruitment?

- What are the recruitment and selection challenges faced by CSOs in Nigeria?
- What do HR staff responsible for recruitment and selection need or require in order to deal with these challenges?
- How does training contribute to meeting their needs in handling recruitment and selection challenges.

1.4 RESEARCH RELEVANCE

the scientific, social and practical relevance of this research are discussed below:

1.4.1 SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Despite the substantial quantum of research and existing literature on recruitment and selection in general, the topic of this thesis on recruitment and selection in Nigerian still remains underdeveloped and under-researched (Adisa et al., 2017; Fajana et al., 2011). This is particularly underdeveloped in the civil society community in the development sector as there is either limited existing published research/ literature or outdated information (Brunt, 2016). Although majority of the existing literature and studies in this area can be adapted to every sector and country as best practices, it usually applies to western countries and systems (Adisa et al., 2017). This is because countries like Nigeria and sectors like the third sector have peculiar systems and challenges unique to them which has often gone unnoticed in literature (Chaplowe & Tjega, 2007).

Exposure to the process of internal management which includes recruitment within these CSOs is also limited and to the extent literature exists, it almost always focuses on international NGOs which fund Nigerian CSOs and not the local (Nigerian) CSOs themselves and their organisational needs (Lewis, 2007 in Brunt, 2016) .The challenges of this practice is that there is limited research and empirical data available that explores R&S challenges in Nigeria as a whole or R&S challenges in CSOs across the global south (Brunt, 2016; Akingbola, 2015). The presence of this gap therefore serves as the starting point for this thesis as it aims to generate scientific and empirical knowledge on this under-researched and lagging area while also adding to the limited existing literature. In addition, many Nigerian researchers have warned of the negative effects of inadequate research on the country's infamous recruitment

procedures on the overall productivity of the country, having both short term and long term implications (Adisa et al., 2017; Chidi, 2013; Fajana et al., 2011; Robbins et al., 2009). This thesis also answers Fajana et al.'s (2011 pp.61) call made regarding the dearth of scientific research on HRM in Nigeria as they stated: "… this will help shape and develop new directional focus that will ensure an efficient and effective human resource practice in Nigeria.

An abundance of HRM literature exists on the impact of training on employee and organisational performance (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; McDowall & Saunders, 2010) which has been adopted by the CSO sector for building capacity. These capacity building or training programs have mainly been to address technical needs of employees to improve competences in hard skill such as project management, financial management, community engagement strategies, development communications, monitoring and evaluation (Abrokwah et al., 2017). However, the adaptation of the training concept has not been applied to address R&S challenges (Brunt, 2016) by meeting the needs of HR staff. For purposes of exploring training as a way of addressing R&S challenges faced by CSOs in Nigeria, this thesis uses Appelbaum et al.'s (2000) AMO framework as adapted by Boxall and Purcell (2016) to fully capture the needs of HR staff in order to access how effective training can be in meeting them. With this thesis, hopefully the civil society sector in Nigeria and in the global south will yield more curiosity and interest that will result in more scientific coverage.

1.4.2 SOCIETAL RELEVANCE

By definition, the primary role and existence of the CSO sector is to serve the community and protect the interest of citizens (Brunt, 2016). In Nigeria, this sector has played a strategic role in the development of the country since its involvement in the restoration of civil rule from the military regime in 1960 (CIVICUS, 2007). In addition, these CSOs have delivered more services and aid than the entire United Nations Organisations combined (Akingbola, 2015). As at 2000, US$5 billion per annum in international aid was only successful through NGOs alone in Africa (World Bank, 2001). Studies also show that many international development organisations like the European Commission have shifted their funding away from national governments in the global south and transferred it to CSOs:

> *"One remarkable fact is that while the EU represents 7% of the world population and 15% of world GDP, it represents half of the world's official development assistance*

(55%) and two thirds of assistance to CSOs based in developing countries (72%)"

(EU Engagement with CSOs, January 2020, pp.24).

This emerging phenomena of CSO presence in countries like Nigeria has been attributed to a change in narrative from 'charity' to 'empowerment' as countries in the global south are now seen as participatory members of the society rather than beneficiaries (Sen, 1999). This progression is the reason for the ongoing collaboration between international development organisations, donors, agencies and CSOs as they replace government drawbacks with their cooperative and decentralised approach to development (Mbaku, 1994). However, these international donors have expressed deep frustration with CSOs as they increasingly lack the ideal human capital to deliver projects (Brunt, 2016). Although donors complain of this inefficiency and lack of talent, Nigerian CSOs have still not been able to find solutions to this recruitment and selection challenge. One may assign this to the lack of research on the area or the inability of these CSOs to provide basic training to HR staff to further strengthen their capacity (Chaplowe & Tjega, 2007).

Given the contribution of this sector as seen in several studies, its survival is imperative to global donors and the community as they impact positively on the development the society. one of the main ways to ensure this is through the investment in capital like the HR staff who are the pioneers for organisational change and the recruitment and selection of the best candidates to further add value to this eminent sector. With this thesis, perhaps more light could be shed on this area for further improvement and overall success of the sector.

1.4.3 PRACTICAL RELEVANCE

A review of the four (4) leading CSO training centres supported by donor agencies for non-profits across the African continent reported that less than 2% of trainings target the HR functionaries with soft skills programs such as recruitment and selection courses (CSOSI, 2017). Following this review, the dRPC which is the only CSO capacity building organisation in Nigeria decided to run a pilot training focusing on these soft skills for CSO HR staff in 2018. A planned retraining in 2020 was meant to take place but was not possible as a result of the pandemic. Given that this thesis encompasses the relevant scopes from the 2018 training and evaluates it, the outcome of this thesis will provide the organisation more insight on the impact of their training and of training in general which has the potential of being useful for practice as they intend on expanding and continuing these trainings in the future as stated by the organisation's executive director.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter aims at exploring literature relevant to this thesis in order to distil key terms and draw out theories and concepts which offer handles to explain how training can contribute to addressing challenges of recruitment and selection in CSOs in Nigeria. First off, the key concepts of recruitment and selection, training and CSOs are explored in general terms. This is then followed by a detailed exploration of literature on these typologies as they apply to Nigeria. Thus, the second component will examine challenges of recruitment and selection in Nigeria and the challenges of CSOs. Thirdly, the AMO model will be introduced and examined for how it captures individual needs for performance outcomes; the (A) will explore the skills needed by HR staff in general and in relation to recruitment and selection, with the motivation and opportunities that can be created for HR staff through training to address skills and knowledge gap challenges. Finally, as this chapter provides context on what already exists in literature, expectations and a conceptual model are formulated based on these findings and scientific theory to which the empirical sub-questions follow. The results of which is confronted with the theoretical framework in the discussion section.

2.1 DEFINING KEY CONCEPTS

The key three (3) concepts of this thesis are defined below in detail.

2.1.1 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The process of recruitment and selection is recommended in HRM literature as a critical and foundational component of both traditional and modern HR (Argue, 2015). It is a widely accepted concept of HR practices which has a huge impact on the performance and outcome of an organisation (Armstrong, 2012). In addition, the success of any organisation is dependent on the quality of its employees engaged through an effective recruitment and selection process (Tyson, 2006) as it is designed to identify the best suitable personnel for an organisation (Ahmad & Schroeder, 2002). According to Taylor (2005), recruitment is the process that attracts applicants seeking a job within a hiring organisation, while selection is designed to reach and access candidates who will be well suited for the position (Gamage, 2014). However, despite the evidence pointing to the success attainable through recruitment and selection, it is still a HR practice many organisations and sectors struggle with, for differing reasons of context (Zinyemba, 2014).

The process of recruitment first starts with identifying the gap or position that needs filling and defining the requirements within a job description/specification so as to clearly state the type of applicants an organisation intends to attract. This is then advertised on platforms to reach prospective applicants, receiving applications and sifting through for suitable candidates who are then interviewed and tested before offered employment (Armstrong, 2012). These steps are put in place in order to attract and recruit the best suitable candidates for the position (Ibid.). Recruitment through newspaper adverts, recruitment agencies, career events etc. are often described as more 'traditional' (Stone et al., 2006) while online or e-recruitments are considered 'modern' (Tucker, 2012). This modern way of recruiting has become more popular given the digital age and the effectiveness and efficiency of it as it cuts down on cost for the organisation but brings in a stream of applicants (Cappelli, 2001). After the successful execution of the recruitment process, the selection process begins which is considered equally important if not more (Armstrong, 2012) as it is crucial for every organisation to carefully select applicants that fit the job or the organisation (Kristof, 1996). This process is described as 'Person-Environment Fit' (Caplan & Harrison, 1982), the failure to take this into consideration may well result in the employment of the wrong individual which then has a long term negative effect on the organisation (Adisa et al., 2017). Some of these negative effects include the cost of training, employee turnover and loss of organisational reputation. (Chidi, 2013).

2.1.2 TRAINING

The concept of 'training' is often used in connection with the term 'development'. However, their definitions vary as Jones et al., (2000) states that 'training' pays closer attention to the teachings and learnings of how high performance, sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness can be achieved. As opposed to 'development' which pays closer attention to the enhancement of skills and knowledge of an individual in preparation for future duties and challenges. However, training is administered with the sole intention of developing or enchaining skills required for increased individual performance and therefore overall organisational performance (Felstead et al., 2010). Although both the concept of training and development lead to long term organisational sustainability and higher organisational performance (Brunt, 2016).

As a practice applied to every sector and organisation, training can be executed in various ways which if done well should be tailored to the needs of the trainees and the organisation's strategic goal (Omar, 2014). Training is also needed for a various number of reasons, some of which Armstrong and Taylor (2014) explored as 'the justifications for training':

- When skill or knowledge cannot be obtained in an employee's working environment
- To meet new and evolving demands that cannot be obtained through experience
- To be acquainted with specialised or complex tasks that cannot be obtained through personal initiative
- To provide to individuals in the absence of a common need such as IT skills
- To develop skills of employees to avoid the inability to confront organisational challenges (Brunt, 2016).

In addition, Armstrong (2012) emphasises the need for effective training practices such as 'systemic training' which is described as training designed, organised and executed specifically to meet the needs identified and should be carried out in the following steps:

- Identify the need for training
- Determine the type of training that is required to meet the training need
- The training should be provided by experienced and specialised trainers
- A post training follow up should be carried out to evaluate the effectiveness.

2.1.3 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Civil society organisations or more recently known as 'third sector' organisations refers to organisations that are fundamentally designed as grassroots initiatives (United Nations, 2019). Contrary to the government or the public sector, known as the first sector or the for-profit private sector, known as the second sector, the third sector is not funded by government or created to maximise profit for its founders or members (Popowska & Lunski, 2014 in Brunt, 2016). However, it still has links to both the state and business sectors in which social development programs are carried out (Edwards & Sen 2000).

Edwards and Sen (2000) conceptualises CSOs as representing the 'public sphere' and focusing on the common good of a people. This often involves a shared enthusiasm to work side-by-side with individuals with different values, traditions, cultures, tolerance for diversity (Chaplowe and Tjega, 2007) and gender to achieve and pursue homogenous goals for the

promotion of a community's well-being .The fact that human effort and human talent in CSOs are instrumental to achieving development solutions can be linked to Barney's (1991) resource-based view of organisations which states that in order to achieve and sustain competitive advantage, the resources of an organisation must be "rare, valuable, inimitable and imperfectly mobile". This may be applied to the CSO sector as their source for competitive advantage is their human capital (Brunt, 2016).

Despite the important role to be carried out by CSOs in the development of the global south and in achieving global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there is limited literature on basic HR practices in the CSO sector. To the extent where such literature exist, it only emphasises the importance and the need for implementation of human resources practices within the third sector and not how to (von Eckardstein and Brandl, 2004). In addition, the *modus operandi* and *esprit de corp* in the civil society sector is one that ensures the advancement of some CSOs does not come at the cost of other CSOs as groups are expected to work together to transcend society's problems of the environment, equity and the social justice (Edwards & Sen, 2000). This 'inner value' of CSOs distinguishes them from the politics and limitless public funds in the public sector and the quest for profit and self-interest in the private sector (Ehrehburg, 1999).

2.2 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN NIGERIA

In Nigeria, it is estimated that approximately 500,000 CSOs exist with various expertise and focus on health, education, legislature, election, agriculture, gender, capacity building, governance etc (USAID, 2020). Organisational expressions of CSOs in Nigeria differ and are multidimensional in their development goals as they represent diverse and often times conflicting interests. In terms of the level of formalisation and registration status of Nigerian CSOs , range goes from loosely structured community based organisations; faith based groups; voluntary organisations; women's groups; labour unions; farmers' associations; to formally registered non-governmental organisations (NGOs); teachers associations; health professional associations; to micro-financing cooperative societies (Chaplowe and Tjega, 2007). These CSOs have contributed to the overall fight against corruption and their pressure on transparency has led to the recovery of about $1.73 billion in stolen assets by high level officials from bribery and favourable settlements in countries like Nigeria alone (USAID, 2020).

The literature on CSOs in Nigeria argues that employees working in the sector are the key factor of production for reaching and sustaining competitive advantage as this could either 'make or break' the organisation (Abrokwah et al., 2018). Lauwo and Otusanya, 2014 in Abrokwah et al., 2018 argue that this makes it paramount for investing in HR practices such as recruitment and selection. Akingbola (2015) notes that employees in this sector have a more strategic role to play as they are considered irreplaceable by either technology or additional financial resources. Studies which link CSO sustainability to HR issues in countries such as Nigeria, note that CSOs lack personnel, managerial and financial capacity building initiatives required to advance the work civil societies (USAID, 2020). In addition, trainings to develop soft skills related to human resource practice often fail to focus on people management in areas such as career path planning; supportive supervision techniques and talent management (Brunt, 2016).

2.3 TRAINING HR STAFF IN NIGERIAN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Training of HR functionaries for recruitment and selection stands out as a catalytic practice for ensuring there is in-house capacity to develop and expand the talent pool of organisations such as CSOs that are people oriented. However, research findings point to the fact that training is yet another undeveloped HR component that has been neglected by all sectors in Nigeria (Okafor, 2016). Although neglected, this mechanism continues to be recommended for HR personnel, managers and officers in charge of recruitment and selection processes as it is believed to have hidden potential and prospects for improving HRM practice in Nigeria (Fajana, 2011). Several studies, both scientific and empirical as well as HRM literature have all argued that through investing in HR personnel through training, they are more likely to perform (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Mallick (2019) highlighted the importance of training for not only qualified staff in order to decrease employee turnover and increase retention, but also of HR personnel as it is beneficial for organisations within the third sector to invest in developing the career development of all staff. Akingbola (2006) argues that this in turn will lead to recruitment and selection challenges being confronted before they even manifest. Ahmed's (2013) research points to the fact that management in CSOs also need to introduce trainings and development of skills for HR personnel and calls for the increase of HR dedicated budget. Batti, (2014) points to the risk of not training HR staff as studies show an inverse

association between employee turnover rates and training. Chaplowe and Tjega (2007) note that projects in Nigeria that help strengthen the capacity of CSOs often times ignore the need to also strengthen HR personnel focussing instead on other training programs to address gaps in hard technical skills such as;   project   management, financial management, community engagement strategies, development communications and monitoring and evaluation.

In summary, for any organisation to function effectively, it must have services, products, supply, funding or money. However, an essential factor often ignored is the human capital hired by skilled human resource personnel (Sultana et al., 2012 in Batti, 2014), this therefore becomes an approach and tactic for organisations to gain and sustain competitive advantage through enhancing the skills and ability of their employees. Simply leveraging on hiring the right employee is not sufficient enough for organisational sustainability, ensuring they are also well trained provides an added advantage for the reaching long term sustainability (Chaplowe & Tjega 2007).

2.4 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CHALLENGES

As a result of the absence in literature on the recruitment and selection challenges faced specifically by the CSO sector in Nigeria, the challenges faced by all sectors in Nigeria are explored and then the challenges unique to CSOs in the global south. This combination is looked at because both external or institutional and internal pressures exists within an organisation which shapes the HRM agenda and how organisations respond (Boon et al., 2009). The works of Adisa et al. (2017) is mainly used in the section within the Nigerian context while the works of Batti (2014) and Mallick (2019) are used in the under-researched context of the CSO sector.

Key challenges of recruitment and selections identified in the literature across the public and for-profit sectors in Nigeria include largely environmental such as:

Ethnic Categorisation

Nyambegera (2002) argues that the bureaucratic structure of work in Africa is heavily influenced by ethnoreligious and political issues. Such societies give attention to 'ethnic categorisation' which has an impact on the criteria governing job allocation as it becomes ethnically biased. While it is difficult to draw the conclusion that this challenge affects

recruitment processes in Nigeria assumptions can be made that ethnic preferences makes objective recruitment a difficult task in the country (Bohnet, 2016 cited in Adisa et al., 2017). For example, in a study by Yaro (2014) managers across all sectors in Nigeria admitted to having a preference for hiring individuals based on ethnic and religious affiliation. Within the Nigerian public sector, the 'Federal Character Principle' enshrined in the Nigerian Constitution to ensure equal representation in national public service institutions reflecting the language, ethnicity, religion, and geographic diversity of the country has inadvertently promoted recruitment based on ethno-religious and regional considerations in the public sector (Adamolekun et al., 1991). Although the issue of equality and representation is important in a developing country like Nigeria which has over 370 languages and 270 ethnic groups and history of civil war, Adisa et al. (2017) argue that this representation system places equality over excellence and competences and is harmful to organisational performance.

The Role of Age and Gender

 These ascriptive factors heavily influence the recruitment and selection process in Nigeria as many organisations employ based on values ascribed in the social structure. For example, respondents in a study by Adisa et al. (2017) admitted that organisations would rather hire a man for most roles and only (young and 'unmarried') females for certain jobs like marketing. The study found that in some situations, women were made to sign contracts promising not to get pregnant for the duration of their employment contract. In addition, the power structure which derives from age in traditional African social structure affects organisational culture and permeates into the recruitment process in Nigeria. As seniority and authority comes with age and male gender in many organisations in Nigeria, this automatically leads to the discrimination against young (and competent) and female candidates for a senior or skilled positions (Adisa et al., 2017).

Favouritism and Nepotism

Adisa's et al.'s (2017) study found a Nigerian recruitment and selection process characterised by internal and external favouritism and nepotism. Internal nepotism is defined as employing an individual because of who they know within the organisation and not because of their skills, knowledge, experience and overall competence for the job in question. External nepotism is defined as employing an individual based on the influences of the people they know in high positions within the society and usually outside the organisation such as faith or traditional

leaders or influential politicians. This therefore allows them access to job opportunities they are not qualified for or would have gotten without the intervention of the influential people they know (Okafor, 2016).

Corruption

Corruption in Nigeria is a significant factor as it is in many African countries. Its manifestation in HR practices such as the recruitment and selection process takes the form of bribery as individuals pay large sums to agencies in order to be pushed to the top of the list for a job interview or job opening that they may not be ideal for. Many organisations still place job vacancies and adverts for the sole purpose of conforming to employment laws and not to hire the right candidate as these jobs are awarded to the highest bidder or exchanged for sexual favours (Adisa et al., 2017).

Constraints of Resources

In Nigeria as in many African countries, the availability of resources differs across departments in organisations. Very often finances allocated to HR departments are inadequate resulting in a less efficient recruitment and selection processes. Technology also plays a role as contemporary Nigeria remains one of the few lower middle income countries in the world that suffers from inadequate electricity supply and internet facilities. This leads to in-person recruitment and selection processes where candidates appear in person with resumes in hand and accessible to make deals. This practice does not only slow down the process but allows for increased subjectivity in the process of recruitment (Adisa et al., 2017).

Unemployment and the Labour Market

Given Nigeria's double-digit unemployment rates, the labour market is characterised by large numbers of applications chasing few vacant positions. This situation puts much pressure on officers in charge of recruitment as applicants are prepared to subvert objective recruitment and selection systems in an effort to secure the job (Adisa et al., 2017). Additionally, the falling standard of education in Nigeria results in a situation where candidates are ill equipped for vacant positions. With legal restrictions to foreign hires and low in-country capacity many companies find themselves making compromises to hire unqualified staff. (Adisa et al., 2017).

Regarding challenges of the recruitment and selection process in the CSO sector in the global south, it is important to note that the key challenges distilled from the literature in the section below are derived from international organisations as the limited publications and research in this regard is hardly seen for local (Nigerian) CSOs.

Employee Retention

Mallick (2019) identifies employee retention as a challenge in the third sector, coming after the successful recruitment and selection process. Mallick (2019) argues that employee retention is as much a challenge as recruitment and selection as it needs to be taken into account during the selection stage which is often ignored by HR personnel leading to employee turnover. However, Batti (2014) argues that the nature of CSOs which is based on temporary projects and grants does not allow for prioritisation of capacity building and the investing of HR practices which contributes to low levels of retention. Mallick (2019) further discusses the volatility of the third sector as a result of the evolving nature of economic and political affairs of many third world countries leading to an inability of the sector to attract talent. This inability to attract talent poses a bigger challenge for CSOs as they are unable to sustain change within the community they function in.

Job Descriptions

A study conducted by Ahmed (2013) mentions the poorly written job descriptions as another recruitment and selection challenge in the third sector. Many CSOs were unable to update job descriptions in order to reflect the specific skills required for the job thus leading to an influx of unqualified candidates. Positions that require tests were also not clear and not program oriented. In some instances, job descriptions were not even included in job adverts (Adisa et al., 2017). Batti (2014) states that some CSOs find themselves hiring the wrong employee for as a result of poorly written job descriptions. Candidates with a background in accounting or engineering find themselves managing projects as program officers.

Inadequate HR Policies

As many CSOs especially at community level do not not have dedicated HR departments or experienced HR personnel, HR polices were found to not be in place or not be utilised where they existed. They were also found not to be in line with state mandated policies (Batti, 2014). As a result of these inadequate and unutilised HR policies, HR staff or a staff with delegated

HR responsibilities were found to be ill- equipped with the appropriate tools to carry out effective recruitment and selection process. In addition, many local CSOs in Nigeria delegate HR functions, by adding HR responsibilities to other employees. This in turn makes it difficult for all HR functions to be carried out effectively as most dedicated personnel either have no experience in HR or are not regularly trained, thus leading to poor performance in practices such as recruitment and selection

2.5 THE AMO THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The AMO model is put forward as it provides handles for examining the question of interest on skills for improved recruitment and selection practices for HR functionaries in Nigerian CSOs. The AMO model is a three level meta-analysis framework that provides an explanation on the linkage between HRM practices and performance. This model argues that the performance of an employee is a function of their ability, their motivation to perform and the opportunity they are accorded to perform (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Blumberg and Pringle, 1982; Boxall and Purcell, 2016; Guest, 1997). As performance is the goal for every organisation, this model implies that HR policies and practices are therefore put in place to enhance these three (3) components of an employee as the combination of them all leads to improved performance (Boselie et al., 2005). Although there is no explanation in literature that establishes a relationship between the combination of these three (3) components (Boxall & Purcell, 2016), there are however factors that are said to influence these components. This could be accumulated job experience (Frese & Zapf, 1993 in Boxall & Purcell, 2016), individual personality or attitude (Block and Pickl, 2014), organisational culture and style of leadership (Demortier et al.,2014).

According to Boxall and Purcell (2016) , individuals perform when they have a combination of all the three (3) components which is formulated as P= f(A,M,O)

- Ability (A): individuals can do the job because they have the necessary skills and knowledge needed to perform
- Motivation (M): individuals can do the job because they either want to, feel like it or have to perform
- Opportunity (O): individuals can do the job if they are provided with the support, structure or environment to perform

Figure 1: Boxall and Purcell's (2016) AMO model of Individual Performance
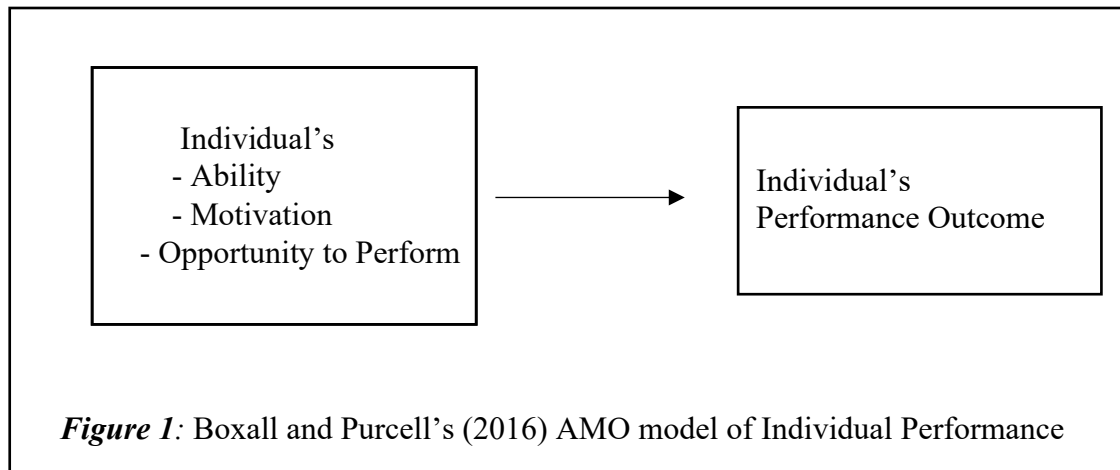
The three (3) components from this theoretical framework is applied to capture needs of HR staff based on literature for performance outcome which translated here is in addressing the recruitment and selection challenges they are faced with. The focus is thereby imbedded in the (A) which in this case explores the skills and knowledge HR staff need in general with regard to recruitment and selection. The (M) and (O) explore what motivates employees and what opportunities they need to perform Details are discussed below:

2.5.1 ABILITY (A)

In line with the concept of the CSO sector, this component also argues that human capital is deemed indispensable (Boxall & Purcell, 2016) while it also argues that performance cannot exist without attracting the ideal individuals with the required skill set for the job (*ibid*). HR practices in this component of the AMO model focuses on enhancing abilities or skills of an individual for performance outcome (Demortier et al.,2014). HR practices here are almost always related to training, development of skills and knowledge (Domortier et al., 2014; Kellner et al., 2019). The term 'skill' was referred initially to the characteristics of an individual (Norris, 1991). However, over time the term developed an additional dimension which was conceptualised by Prochno (2001) as the characteristics of both an individual and an organisation. The concept of skills began to have great importance as a result of organisational, economic and technological factors and was considered a resource of an individual and an organisation which leads to productivity and competitive advantage (Sousa, 2017). The development of skills is noted to be a 'strategic management tool' to manage the constantly evolving work environment such as technology and global reforms (Nyhan, 1998).

This, therefore demands flexible and adaptable HR professionals to develop and obtain new skills and abilities at the workplace (Sousa, 2017).

In practice, skills are part of a 'complex social system' which is the result of the way different segments relate to one another that influences the way they are developed (Vallas, 1990 in Grugulis, 2007).The role of HR staff in practice and in the work environment has been just as crucial as the concept of HRM in academia as seen in this citation: "Over time, the HR practitioner has taken on new roles and responsibilities in order to meet increasing expectations around the value-add of the Human Resource (HR) function and its legitimacy within the workplace. In order to take on new and adaptable roles, individuals working in HR need specific skills and competencies" (Girardi, 2014 cited in Mcdonnell & Sikander, 2017 pp. 83).

Human resource development skills are highlighted in organisational discourses as it considers employees an organisation's 'greatest asset' (Grugulis, 2007). This necessitates a continuance in the investing of these employees through skills development for meeting strategic organisational goals and targets (Ibid.). Unlike the public and for-profit (private) sectors, civil society organisations cannot replace investing in human resources (human capital) with investing in physical capital (Akingbola, 2006), as the core capabilities of CSOs lie within their human capital; their skills, behaviour and knowledge. Thus, the development of their skills is pivotal to achieving organisational success, sustainability and their goals within the community (Akingbola, 2015), making it a difficult factor to omit in the strategic plan of an organisation (Gruguli, 2007). According to Armstrong and Taylor (2014), HR staff play a strategic role in every organisation therefore requiring that they possess certain skills for the successful execution of their role. These skills include:

Problem Solving Skills

As problems whether internal or external are considered a regular occurrence within an organisation, this is a skill HR staff need in order to navigate the terrine of the workplace. Often times, problems within the organisation may become conflict orienting which requires a logical approach from HR (Armstrong and Taylor, 2014). This skill involves analysing, understanding an issue within the organisation, determining the cause and deciding on the best approach to tackle the problem to avoid its reoccurrence.

Interviewing Skills

In order to establish a candidate's fit to a position within an organisation, HR staff must be able to identify the skills, knowledge and ability of said candidate in an interview. This can be done in the following ways:- establishing good rapport with the candidate to put them at ease, questioning the candidate which is the key component of an interview, listening to the candidate so to evaluate the candidate, therefore implying that listening skills are imperative to the interviewing process as well, maintaining continuity by linking follow up questions to the candidate's last response and keeping control of the interview so the candidate does not go off topic or talk for too long (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014).

Technological Skills

The emergence of technology has become a key factor in HR service delivery today. This means HR staff have had to adjust according for positive organisational outcomes (Bradford et al., 2006). The use of HR software and technology has become an imperative skill for HR staff in order to collect and transform data into valuable information for the organisation of which may include applications for positions applied to (Lawler & Mohrman, 2003 in Bradford et al., 2006). Traditionally, one of the main roles of a HR staff is to identify the needs of the organisation and its employees, this can be amplified and hastened through the use of technology allowing for more needs to be met (*Ibid*.).

Job, Role and Competency Analysis Skill

One of the key functions of a HR staff is to analyse the job, roles, skill and competency which allows for them to formulate tailored role profiles, job descriptions and specifications as well as learning specifications (Armstrong and Taylor, 2014). These are of great importance to the successful recruitment and selection process of any organisation, as it reflects the organisation's needs to determine an applicant's suitability which further ensures that the organisation attracts the best fit for its needs and maintains their capabilities for the role.

Leadership Skills

Armstrong (2012) describes organisational leadership as the guiding, inspiring and influencing of employees or management. Many authors have argued the need for leadership skills amongst HR staff to be able to persuade or influence others into doing the right thing and to manage and navigate change within the organisation. Similar to Stogdill's (1950) explanation on leadership

which focused on influence for achieving strategic organisational goals, HR staff often find themselves driving, implementing and facilitating change within an organisation.

Conflict Management

Similar to the problem-solving skills, conflicts within an organisation are inevitable as organisations operate by adjusting and compromising one competitive element or the other. When the need for change or restructuring occurs, conflicts are more likely to arise as employees view change as either a challenge or a threat to resist. HR staff therefore need conflict management skills in order to maintain a conflict free working environment. Some of these skills include handling interpersonal or inter-group conflict through peaceful coexistence, compromising and problem solving (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014)

Political Skills

Political skills are defined by Treadway et al (2013, p.1530) as the ability to study and analyse individuals and situations within the organisation and convert that knowledge in to a "goal-directed influence over others". As defined by Kakabadse (1993 in Armstrong & Taylor, 2014), politics in an organisation is the process whereby an employee influences other people where they are not able to rely on authority. As employees join an organisation to achieve a common purpose, it is also likely that some employees will be motivated by self-interests and needs. For effective management and performance outcomes, HR staff who fit into this category must endeavour to merge their individual ambition for the good of the organisation as well as themselves (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). This skill recognises the possibility of 'getting the job done' by lobbying decision markers which may usually not be the 'best' or 'legitimate' way and often rationalised as the 'ends justifying the means' (Ibid.).

2.5.2 MOTIVATION (M)

This component explores the attitude of an employee as said employee's level of engagement is often used to gage their motivation (Boxall & Purcell, 2016). Kim et al. (2015 in Boxall & Purcell, 2016) expanded on this concept by defining (M) as the extent to which a person decides and desires to engage in a specific way and how their job and environment is designed which has a great impact on their motivation to perform. HR practices here promote the direct efforts of an employee to accomplish organisational goals as it provides them with an incentive to engage in high levels of performance (Dermortier et al., 2014). These practices are therefore

designed to leverage on an employee's knowledge, skills and abilities which often times organisations fail to provide (Ibid.). In this (M) component, the needs of an employee are taken into consideration by organisations as employees now are interested and invested in their own experiences, career growth and development. This suggests that for the strategic alignment between employees and their organisations for performance outcomes, it is imperative that the needs of these employees identified and met (Boxall & Purcell, 2016). These 'needs' are translated into HR practices that serve as incentives for employees which could either be extrinsic or intrinsic (Juan & Juan, 2016). The extrinsic motivators are reward driven which include individual or group performance based pay, recognition, job security, promotions, career development, work-life balance (Knies & Leisink, 2014). Although now often referred to as 'traditional and old fashioned', these motivators are well sorted out for by employees as people require an earning to survive which was described by Rose (2003 in Boxall & Purcell, 2016) as 'provisioning motive'. In contrast to the extrinsic motivators, empirical research finds few employees to be motivated by these practices. No doubt a factor which stems from the fact that employees find different aspects attractive in a job or organisation (Sterling & Boxall, 2013). Some individuals may only devote their time and effort to a job they feel passionate about regardless of the pay. The vocational interest of individuals also vary which describes differences influencing behaviour by the preference of a specific job or environment (van Iddekinge et al., 2011 in Boxall & Purcell, 2016). These preferences often lead to high retention rates as the jobs are well suited to the individuals values it attracts. It can be said that regardless of what an individual's vocational preference may be, jobs that leverage their developed and developing skills are favoured and evident in the concept of skill utilisation for job satisfaction and eventually performance outcome (O'Brien, 1982 in Boxall & Purcell, 2016). However, the complete absence of intrinsic motivators here may lead to high turnover rates even amongst employees with vocational interest (Boxall & Purcell, 2016).

2.5.3 OPPORTUNITY (O)

This component explores the circumstances created by an organisation that allow employees to perform (Juan & Juan, 2016). In this component, HR practices are aimed at empowering the employee for performance outcomes by delegating authority and responsibility down the organisation's line through self-managing teams; collective work practices (Demortier et al. 2014); decision making (Appelbaum et al., 2000); knowledge sharing; effective communication; and job advancement. An organisation's ability to provide employees with

these opportunities to participate suggests that it is investing in employees which in turn improves their feeling of belongingness and increases retention rates (Boxall & Purcell, 2016).

In summary, the vast corpus of literature on the AMO model, the HR practices for enhancing opportunity to promote performance outcomes have been divided into four (4) groups by Juan and Juan (2016). The first group being employee involvement. This aims at providing employees with opportunities that promote their participation in the decision making processes of the organisation (Boselie et al., 2005), problem solving and self-directed work teams (Armstrong et al., in Juan & Juan, 2016). The second being knowledge sharing which aims at providing employees with opportunities that promote the sharing of strategic organisational information. The third group is the design of the employee's jobs. This aims at providing employees with favourable working environment and conditions (Block & Pickl, 2014 in Juan & Juan, 2016). The fourth group relates to practices that promote employee autonomy as discussed by Lepak et al. (2006). Consequently, these groups in (O) also have an impact on the (A) and the (M) components. For example, in cases where organisations provide more opportunities to their employees to control their work environment and job by promoting autonomy, the skills (A) of the employee is put to good use thereby rendering them more intrinsically motivated (M) (Boxall & Purcell, 2016).

2.6 EXPECTATIONS AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Based on the literature and theory discussed above, it is expected that the recruitment and selection challenges faced by Nigerian CSOs will be a combination of the challenges experienced by all sectors in Nigeria as well as the challenges unique to the CSO sectors in the global south. As HR literature emphasises an employee's need for all three (3) components of the AMO model for performance outcomes, it is therefore adapted to fully capture the needs of HR staff to perform well in the area of recruitment and selection or in this case, to effectively address the challenges with focus on the (A) i.e. skills needed and complementary aspects of the (M) and (O). For (A), the expectation is that there will be an alignment between the skills needed by HR staff for address recruitment and challenge with the general skills HR staff need to execute their functionaries explored above. For (M), it is expected that HR staff will be more intrinsically motivated given the dynamics of the CSO sector as it is not profit driven or government affiliated (Akingbola, 2015). For (O), it is expected that not many HR staff will be

provided with the opportunity to utilise and develop their skills as literature explored found the absence of training for HR staff in Nigeria and in the CSO sector.

Therefore, it is expected that the combination of the AMO will positively influence training thereby needs of HR staff can be met through training as contributing to addressing recruitment and selection challenges. the link between the AMO model and the needs of HR staff for addressing recruitment and selection challenge is represented in the conceptual model below;
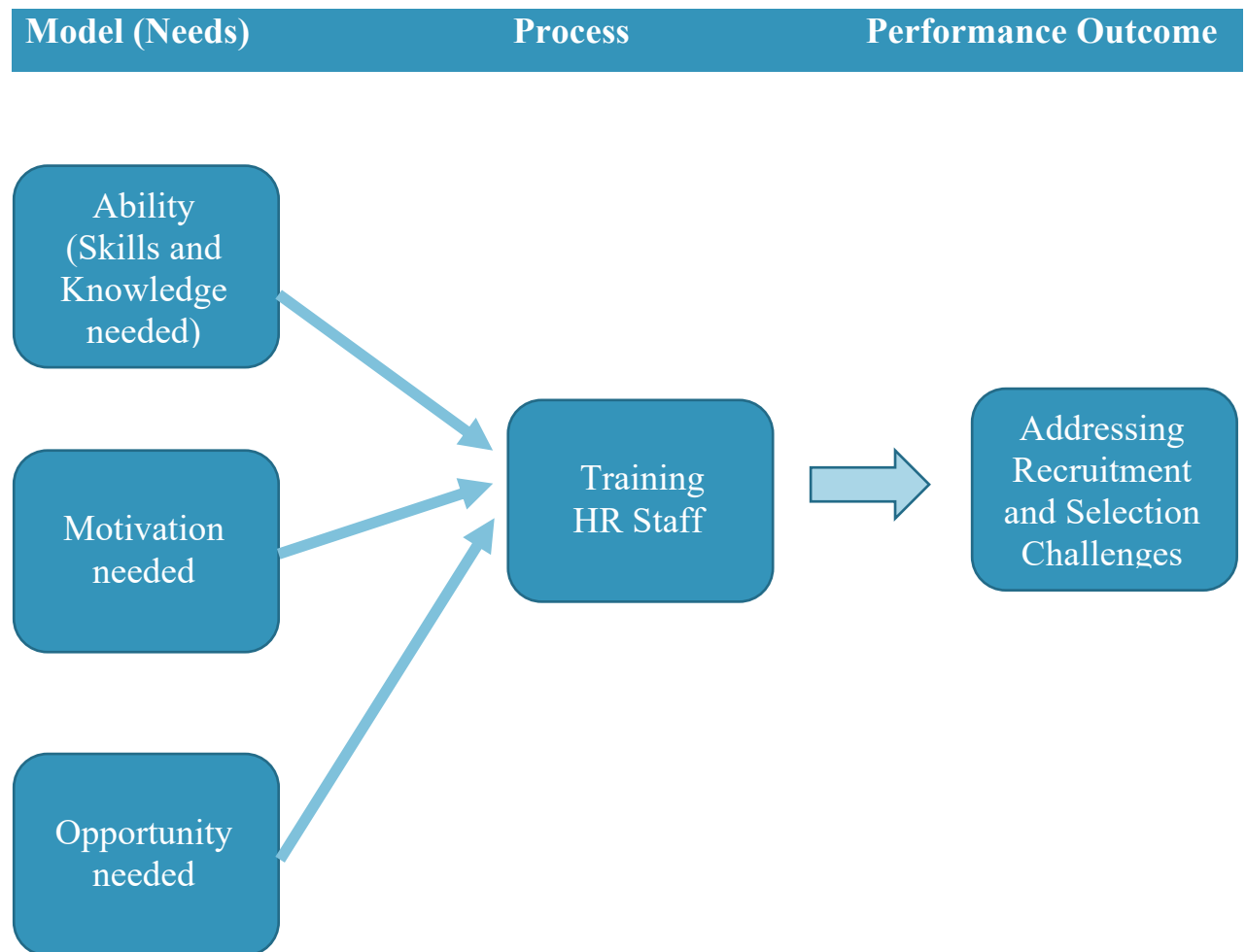
Model (Needs)	Process	Performance Outcome

Figure 2: Conceptual Model

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodological justifications of how data was collected and analysed in order to answer the research question of this thesis.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Given the objective of this thesis, which is to delve into the R&S challenges faced by Nigerian CSOs and how training through skill development of HR staff can contribute to addressing these challenges. The near absence in scientific works capturing the exact components of this thesis shapes the research design applied which is explorative in nature as it aims at investigating a gap in existing literature to provide tentative results (Boeije, 2010). As an exploratory design will be adopted, this thesis finds it necessary to explore the multiplicity of views on this challenge from HR staff in the CSOs sector in Nigeria. Therefore, a qualitative method of collecting data is used to explore the views reviewed. This method is designed to focus on the 'how' question (Newman and Benz, 1998) and allows for research gaps to be filled. In a real sense, this serves the fundamental aim of this thesis – to explore the dynamics of recruitment and selection within Nigerian CSOs and to examine how training of HR staff can contribute to addressing these challenges. In addition, a case study research approach is used in this thesis as half the in order to better understand the alignment of the findings. This approach is adopted because it involves a deep understanding of real life entities and a more comprehensive application to context which in this case is the Nigerian CSO sector (Saunders et al., 2007).

3.2 CONTEXT OF CASE STUDY

It is important to note that the approach of this thesis is not solely of a case study as it was adopted as an explorative method for generating ideas that is tested with other methods (Stokes, 2011). The case study used here serves as an extension of the thesis adding increased understanding to the extent to which training can contribute to addressing R&S challenges in the CSO sector in Nigeria. As one of the few training programmes focused on strengthen the competences of HR staff in the CSO space, the development Research and Project Centre (dRPC) conducted a 2-day pilot training workshop 29-30 October 2018. As the only civil society capacity building organisation in Nigeria that has existed for 25 years, the dRPC

organised this training to address challenges in the performance of other CSO. The training targeted ways of improving HRM strategies to contribute to CSO sustainability. Prior to the training, a needs assessment was conducted which pointed to the struggle of CSOs in the HR function or R&S.

A total of 26 participants attended the training and held positions of HR managers, HR administrative officers, directors, founding members and board of directors of several CSOs in Nigeria. The training took a participatory approach which meant that the methodology was interactive and participants were involved in sharing their concerns and experiences of working in HR and dealing with HR issues such as R&S. The training first started by exploring trainee knowledge of the ideal steps related to R&S and their practical. It was clear that majority of the trainees had not participated in such training in the past as many were not aware of the main aspects of R&S. The participatory method of learning was used as it encouraged conversations around sensitive topics especially in the area of organisational strategy and gender diversity. There were also bold and heated discussions around the recruitment of older workers, workers with different sexual orientation and workers with forms of disability. The positive outcome from this very sensitive discussion was that it got the participants thinking about their actions and their policies and practices, as this could lead to the exclusion of certain groups of people.

The challenge of employee retention was also raised as affecting the recruitment process from the beginning as most 'competent and skilled' employees 'job hopped' from one CSO to another. The participants were trained and made aware of how to manage performance and incentives as a developmental tool and also a reward tool to enhance employee retention and engagement leading to their overall sustainability of their organisation. The training on reward and incentivising staff focused on ensuring the competitiveness of pay especially for employees in hard to recruit roles or working in dangerous environments. The use of non-financial rewards especially affinity benefits was something trainees felt they would explore as this could aid the retention of the core employees and avoid them being poached by other organisations. This was a fear expressed by many trainees as they expressed how enraged they were that they invested in their employees by training them to become local experts and international NGOs swoop in and poach them. As a result of the positive feedback from the post-training assessment, it was decided that a follow-up training workshop would take place in late 2019 or early 2020 in order to revisit the main issues discussed and evaluate what/how the trainees have

contributed to addressing these challenges. However, this was not possible as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.3 RESEARCH PARTICIPANT SELECTION

Before participants were selected, an inclusion criteria was created by the researcher. This criteria required all participants to either have sole responsibility or major responsibility in the R&S process within their respective organisations, some participants must have attended the 2018 HR training workshop or any training focused on R&S within the last two (2) years, other participants should not have attended any HR or R&S training. The researcher selected both trained and untrained participants in order to weigh the significance of the research question and to determine if their responses, opinion and experiences varied on the topic in question.

The trained participants for this research were from the 2018 training workshop while the untrained were from other Nigerian CSOs. All participants (both trained and untrained) were contacted through the training organisation (dRPC) as they allowed the researcher to identify the desired CSOs for their participation. Given that this thesis sought to explore detailed knowledge and experiences from a variety of participants, *a purposive sampling* method was applied as the researcher carefully selected the participants for this study. The reason for this was because of the dynamics of the CSO sector in Nigeria, with several different types of CSOs such as community based, faith based, health advocacy, medical associations and others. A predetermined number of available participants were selected from eleven (11) CSO types. By using the purposive sampling method, it was expected that the groups selected were representative of the population of CSOs (Lavrakas, 2008). Nevertheless, this sampling method was not intended as a form of *generalisation* between the trained and untrained participants but rather, to find qualitative patterns. It was also an opportunity to ensure accurate information was collected on the topic as it focuses on a whole sector which has several categories.

Letters of invitations were sent via email to all participants which was accepted if the participant was already in a managerial role. However, another letter was sent and addressed the organisations and not the participant to seek permission for their participation to which some responded while a few did not. Table 2 shows the participant's demography.

INTERVIEW	POSITION	TYPE OF CSO	2018 HR TRAINING?	OTHER HR TRAINING?
1	Executive Director	Youth Accountability Organisation	YES	NO
2	Human Resource Administrative Officer	Health Advocacy Organisation	YES	YES
3	Director	Health Advocacy Organisation	YES	YES
4	Executive Director	Civil Society Capacity Building Organisation	NO	NO
5	Executive Director	Women's Advocacy Organisation	NO	NO
6	Resourcing (Talent Acquisition)	Health Advocacy Organisation	YES	YES
7	Management Team Lead	Environmental Change Organisation	NO	ONGOING
8	Coordinator	Community Based Organisation	NO	NO
9	Organisational Head	Faith Based Organisation	NO	NO
10	Human Resource Officer	Community Based Organisation	NO	YES
11	Program Manager	Reproductive Health Organisation	YES	YES
12	Chairman Technical Management Committee	Non-Governmental Organisation	YES	YES
13	Executive Director	Health Advocacy Organisation	YES	YES
14	National President	Medical Professional Association	NO	NO
15	Project Director	Non-Governmental Organisation	NO	NO
16	Project Director	Medical Professional Association	NO	NO

Table 1: List of Participants (Anonymised)

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

In order to collect empirical data to draw tentative conclusions on the topic of this thesis, *interviews* were conducted as it is one of the core methods for qualitative research. As opposed to the quantitative method, qualitative methods such as interviews allows for participants to verbally converse and interact with the researcher thereby generating more knowledge (Kvale, 2008). This method of collecting data allows for participants to feel part of the research and are therefore more motivated which is an added advantage with regard to 'ground-breaking' or sensitive topics (Cliffe, 2017). However, limitations do exist as often times noted, in cases where a researcher has personal contact or verbal conversations with a participant, data collected tends to be biased (Bryman, 2015).

Furthermore, the researcher used *semi-structured* interviews as this tool allowed for richer and deeper insights (Stokes, 2011) on the challenges faced and the how needs can be met through training. The same questions were asked to all participants with the exception of the last section (see appendix 3) which only applied to participants who attended the 2018 training workshop. The use of *semi-structured* interviews gave the participants the opportunity to elaborate on issues they felt either strongly about or passionate about which was seen quite often during the interviews. Given the exploratory nature of this thesis, the use of *unstructured* interviews would have been more ideal in theory as it allows for powerful, lengthy and descriptive conversations (Stokes, 2011). However, it is usually harder to analyse and in many cases, the main points are missed in the process as a result of bad analysis by the researcher (Fisher, 2010; Kvale, 2008). Therefore, the researcher made the strategic decision to use *semi-structured* interviews which had a combination of *open and closed questions*. Although *closed questions* are used in research to evoke specific and direct responses like 'yes' or 'no' answers (Stokes, 2011), the researcher only used a limited number of them. The researcher alos always followed these questions with *open questions* which allows for more elaborate and in-depth responses from participants (Bulmer, 2012). The blend of these questions asked by the researcher played a significant role in guiding the interviews, ensuing relevant and accurate data is collected to answer the research question.

All interviews took place between July 8th – 25th, 2020 and an average of 47mins was spent during the interviews which took place over virtual video calls via skype, zoom and MS teams

with the exception of one (1) which took place on a WhatsApp video call. Although the researcher contacted twelve (12) people from each group (trained and untrained), response rates were higher with the untrained group than the trained group. The training organisation (dRPC) made the researcher understand that majority of CSOs in Nigeria were not trained in the area of HR or R&S making it easier to find willing participants. Therefore, a total of nineteen (19) interviews were conducted, however only sixteen (16) interviews (9 untrained and 7 trained) were used in this study. Two (2) participants withdrew their consent to participate after the interview and the reason given was that management disapproved after initially given verbal approval to the participants. The third interview discarded was a pilot interview but was not used as the participant seemed to lose interest half way through the interview and exited the video call, the exact reason for this is still unknown to the researcher.

DESCRIPTION	NUMBER
Trained Participants Contacted	12
Untrained Participants Contacted	12
Trained Participants Interviewed	9
Untrained Participants Interviewed	10
Interviews Discarded	3
Interviews Transcribed and Analysed	16

Table 2: Interview Response Rates

3.4.1 INSTRUMENT

The interview guide consisted of 24-26 questions and participants (trained or untrained) answered the same questions with the exception of three (3) questions which only applied to trained participants. These questions were direct, brief and concise and were derived from the scientific literature in the previous chapter (theoretical framework). The questions asked were categorised as a direct reflection of the sub questions and the conceptual model, therefore making it easier to analyse and follow. Questions reflecting the (M) component of the AMO model was operationalised as if asked directly, participants may take offense which may affect

the quality of data collected (Elmir et al., 2009). This question was then presented to participants as;

" Do you feel the need to address these challenges and if so, why?" rather than " what motivates you to want to address these challenges?"

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Following the successful completion of each interview, video recordings were transcribed within 48 hours and a one page summary was forwarded to the participant for verification. Some of which responded by confirming the content while others thought it was unnecessary, although it was still sent regardless for quality assurances. Every word mentioned by both the participant and the researcher was transcribed, facial expressions and even expressive Nigerian slangs were all added where necessary. This detailed and accurate transcription was necessary for this thesis as poor transcribing techniques could lead to loss of pivotal information and expressions that have hidden meaning (McLellan et al., 2003 in Cliffe, 2017).

In order to make sense of these transcripts, a *thematic analysis* approach was adopted by the researcher. As a widely used and common technique of analysing qualitative data, this approach is strongly advocated for by Braun and Clark (2006, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2018). It is described as a flexible and diverse approach that aligns more closely to methodology than theory as it is not tied to any particular theoretical framework making it uncomplicated and easy to adapt (Braun & Clarke, 2014). It identifies, analyses and reports patterns as themes after data has been clustered under labels by the researcher (Stokes, 2011). The focus of this approach is not an analytical and generalised method but rather on a step-by-step process that begins from the interviewing stage and follows through to the transcribing stage (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Often times described as being 'too simplistic', this approach forces the researcher to make more 'active choices' by being involved and aware of the data being collected (Braun & Clarke, 2006). However, the *thematic analysis* provides limited organisation and description of data set which implies that the researcher has to manually create the connections and themes. This process may be complicated and may be subject to misinterpretation if the researcher is not able to fit in the right information into the supported theme which meant that active engagement was necessary for establishing useful abstractions (Cliffe, 2017). Although a challenge, this was not a factor that affected this study as research

questions, theoretical framework, expectations and interview questions were all set up to capture the exact information required therefore making the merging of information clear and concise for the researcher.

In using thematic analysis for the research, Glaser & Strauss's (1967 in Cliffe, 2017) *open code* was first used to break down information by reading over the transcripts many times which allowed the researcher to identify reoccurring concepts and themes. Each time an interview was transcribed, it was uploaded, read by the researcher and coded in line with the research questions using NVivo 12, a qualitative data analysis software application. Once every interview was coded and reread over and over again by the researcher, codes were merged into themes and sub themes and duplicated information was deleted. Although there was a constant re-coding and merging of themes throughout the entire process, it helped put things into perspective for the researcher on the interconnected nature of the study as many codes and subthemes seemed to be connected to one another. Finally, three main themes emerged and were extracted as a codebook (see appendix 4) which was in direct alignment with the sub questions of this thesis, data was interpreted, and reported in the results chapter and finally discussed in alignment with literature.

3.6 QUALITY OF RESEARCH

In this section, the quality of the data collected and the measures taken by the researcher to ensure its reliability and validity are discussed in detail.

3.6.1 RELIABILITY

Although it is not exactly possible to measure the reliability of a research instrument for qualitative methods, there are however ways to ensure reliability is elevated (Stokes, 2011). Standard techniques are adopted to check the level of consistency and accuracy in the instrument used in collecting data which, according to Boeije (2010) could be either external or internal. These internal reliabilities aim for objectivity and as stated by Bryman (2015), interviews where the researcher is in contact with the participant always has a tendency for bias. In order to eliminate the possibility of this occurring, the researcher sent all participants a summary of the interview session for their verification. In addition, the training organisation-dRPC was the intermediary between the researcher and all the participants (both trained and

untrained), this left minimal room for biases from the researcher. All video interviews were recorded and transcribed within 48 hours in order to preserve the accuracy of data as the researcher was still able to recall the session. Another technique of elevating the reliability in data collection is *repeatability* which is often difficult to achieve in semi structured to unstructured interviews (Stokes, 2011). The *purposive sampling* the researcher adopted in selecting participants also enabled repeatability as a representative of the main types of CSOs in Nigeria were interviewed which may suggest that these challenges and needs apply to others in the same sector and type.

3.6.2 VALIDITY

This concerns the accuracy of a method in capturing the research objectives and aims (Stokes, 2011) and could be either internal or external (Boejie, 2010). The internal validity involves the degree to which the methods adopted by the researcher allows for accurate results and conclusions of the intended topic (Cliffe, 2017). This internal validity was ensured by the researcher prior, during and after the interviews. Prior to collecting data, participants who attended the 2018 training workshop were sent the questions a day in advance to recall their memory as it occurred 2 years ago. This allowed for valid and accurate data collection as they were given the time to reflect on the questions. During the interviews, participants were informed that their involvement would be confidential therefore allowing them to feel more at ease and speak truthfully and freely without fear of retribution. This mostly applied to participants that were not in managerial positions. In addition, some questions asked by the researcher were operationalised to avoid offending participant, therefore allowing for impartial and honest responses. After the interviews, the researcher used the *member check* approach by sending interview summaries to participants ensuring credibility and validation. This approach elevated the internal validity of this research as it ensured that there were no unintentional biases from the researcher's interpretation (Boejie, 2010).

The external validity describes the degree of *generalisability* or *transferability* within the findings of a research (Boejie, 2010). According to Leung (2015), qualitative research is not usually attributed with generalisability as this type of research focuses on a specific phenomenon within a particular context. Although this research adopted approaches of generalisability which included the use of varying participants (trained and untrained), *purposive sampling* and other forms of data (case study), the under-researched nature of the

topic makes it difficult to successfully generalise (Leung, 2015). Therefore, it is only intended for search of qualitative patterns for tentative conclusions within the CSO sector in Nigeria. External validity also measures the degree to which participants represent the focus area being researched (Stokes, 2011). This was achieved as the researcher established an inclusion criteria before selecting participants which allowed for better representation as the participants chosen were at the forefront of the challenge therefore providing information based on their first hand experiences.

3.6.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

As with any research, ethical obligations, considerations and procedures are pivotal to the quality of data collected (Bryman, 2015). The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which aims at protecting the privacy of participants was adhered to by the researcher. Indicative of ethical soundness and reduced risk associated with research, consent was required from all participants prior to the interview (Taylor et al., 2015 in Cliffe, 2017). All participants were informed by both the researcher and the training organisation (dRPC) of the purpose of the study in writing. Statements of consents (see appendix 2) were sent to all participants for approval and e-signatures as all interviews took place virtually. The trainers who facilitated the 2018 training workshop were also informed of this study and their permission and consent for their picture and names to be used (see appendix 6) was confirmed. The training organisation (dRPC) was also asked for consent as detailed information of their tailored training and organisation's name was used.

The anonymity of all participants was ensured and all information from the interviews were kept confidential. For fear of retribution, some participants explicitly asked that this research or their participation is not linked back to them personally, their organisations, their managers or their funders. Although the positions and types of CSOs were included in this research, the researcher made sure that general terminologies were used and that participants were comfortable with their position and the their type of CSO made public. All data collected (recordings, transcripts and signed statements of consent) were uploaded on YoDa or OneDrive, a secure storage offered by Utrecht University which will be deleted by the researcher.

3.6.4 ROLE OF RESEARCHER

The researcher was involved in the process of this research from the beginning as she was one of the organisers of the 2018 training workshop, the researcher also conducted all interviews, transcribed and coded data. The researcher ensured methods were put in place to avoid intentional and unintentional biases. All participants were also made to feel comfortable and privacy policies upheld during this research as some expressed worry of retribution if their participation was discovered.

4. RESULTS

This chapter aims at reporting the data collected and analysed using the justified methods described in the previous chapter. An in-depth examination of the findings from the sixteen (16) interviews conducted aimed at answering the central question *'can training contribute to addressing challenges of recruitment and selection faced by the civil society organisations in Nigeria?'*.

The first theme this chapter reports on is the recruitment and selection challenges identified by the participants and the uniqueness of these challenges to the CSO sector in Nigeria. This is followed by the discussion on the needs to addressing these identified challenges and the final theme will report on the role of training in addressing these challenges. An evaluation of the knowledge and skills developed during the 2018 HR training workshop and how these contributed to addressing the recruitment and selection challenges is also reported in this theme. In addition, other factors that may hinder and contribute to addressing these challenges are also reported.

4.1 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CHALLENGES

The main theme in answering the central research question of this thesis was meant to first establish whether or not the CSO sector in Nigeria faced any challenges in the process of recruitment and selection and if so, what these challenges were. As one the inclusion criteria for selecting participants for this thesis, all participants either had sole responsibility or major responsibility in the process of hiring new employees within their respective organisations. These responsibilities ranged from identifying positions that needed to be filled, creating job descriptions, advertising the job on various outlets such as social media, newspapers and organisational website, shortlisting candidates, interviewing candidates, setting up panel interviews with line managers, head hunting, offering the candidate the job and integrating the new employee into the organisation. With this level of involvement in the process of hiring, the participants had a strong sense of the topic and its technicalities and all participants admitted to facing one form of challenge in recruiting or another. The challenges identified by participants are listed in the table below and discussed beneath.

Table 3: Summarised Challenges Identified

CHALLENGES	SELECTED QUOTES EXTRACTED	TYPE OF PARTICPANTS	POSITION OF PARTICIPANT
Donor Pressure	"..when donors give funding they expect you to work on their terms."	Untrained	Management
Gender Imbalance	"…it is hard to employ women because they are not applying and the ones that do apply do not stay long…"	Untrained	Management
Digitalisation	"…this new normal is the reality HR professionals have to face and we are in no position to realise this…"	Trained	HR
Limited Funding	"Our major challenge is obtaining funds for payment of recruited staff."	Trained & Untrained	Management
Low Retention	"We recruit them, train then and when they are well trained, they leave to another organisation that pays better…"	Trained & Untrained	Management and HR
Fake Resumes	"…applicants 'package' their curriculum vitae in a way that makes them irresistible,, only to discover later that the applicant do not really have the skills contained in the CV"	Trained & Untrained	Management and HR
Nature of the Labour Market	" …applicant might have submitted various applications in several organisations and when they are called to be offered the job, you find that they have taken up a job elsewhere."	Untrained	Management and HR
Nepotism	"…even before the interview they had already decided who they will give the position to…"	Trained & Untrained	Management and HR
Skill Gap	"Applicants are unemployable and few have knowledge of development work."	Trained & Untrained	Management and HR
Government Policies	"The state government of one of the key states we support made a policy that only the indigenes of the state should be recruited…"	Trained	HR
Unemployment	"The unemployment rate in this our country means the volume of applications are enormous and carefully reviewing the CVs for the most suitable candidates is quite daunting…"	Trained & Untrained	Management and HR

As CSOs, all participants interviewed received donor funding from either other local (Nigerian) CSOs, from bilateral or multilateral funding agencies, family foundations or from organisations that served as an intermediary between international development organisations and the local CSOs. As a result of this, participants mentioned that pressures were often put on them either directly or indirectly by donors to employ specific types of individuals who were female or in their words, 'socially-able'. This was because many donor representative tend to be females or wanted to see females on projects as a participant interpreted . Although some participants found this 'challenge' to be somewhat positive as they were called upon to manage a diverse workforce, it was still a perceived as a pressure. This was because they could not find competent females for the position and ended up having to choose between satisfying the donor or having a competent staff. Other participants stated that the pressure on them to employ specific candidates came from the intermediary organisations as they were the implementing partner of the international development organisations which employed locals to oversee grants within a country. The reluctance from the CSOs to meet the requests of the intermediaries or funders usually meant the loss of grants as one participant mentioned:

"we had a series of interference from the funders asking us to select a particular candidate or risk losing the funding and because we were really interested and it being our first funding, at the end of the day, we had to accept."

Many CSOs end up accepting these informal terms and settled for an incompetent staff which ended up affecting the overall performance of the organisation and the project.

GENDER IMBALANCE

For CSOs operating in the Northern part of Nigeria, a reoccurring challenge was the lack of females within the recruiting process. Similar to other parts of Nigeria, the conservative, traditional and religious nature of the North poses an issue for CSOs seeking to hire females because not many applied. When they did apply, not many stayed as they were pressured by family to leave or miss work and focus on starting or raising a family. This led to high rates of absenteeism and eventually dismissal amongst females in the CSO space. Other participants emphasised this challenge affecting their ability to execute projects as they relied on females

in many rural areas to educate women on family planning and sexual health matters which is still a sensitive topic in Nigeria today.

DIGITALISATION

The lack of complete digitalisation of HR processes was a challenge mentioned by participants in official HR positions. The expectation from their organisation to perform on a high level and the lack of resources to enable this process was described by participants as "frustrating and debilitating". The emergence of technology also demanded that they adjust for better outcomes which was not actualised. Participants expressed this view with regard to the screening of candidates as they were unable to do background checks and in many cases, are not able go through the volume of applications which poses an issue in the selection process. Another participant mentioned a current challenge that emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic as, they had to resort to online interviews which they were not prepared for as they lacked the resources to switch to complete digitalisation of the recruiting process.

LIMITED FUNDING

Both trained and untrained participants expressed the difficulty in securing grant funds as a challenge. Due to this constraint, CSOs could not afford to employ experienced and qualified employees and therefore depended on volunteers and part-time staff who were unable to do the job as a participant mentioned:

> "...those that have met the criteria most times wouldn't accept the salary we are willing to offer and afford, so we end up with candidates who do not meet the requirements"

The candidates with the experience and knowledge for the job may not accept the salary being offered and the unqualified recruits could not be trained as a result of limited funding. Other participants mentioned that even the candidates that were not qualified found themselves asking for a higher pay which left them in a difficult position.

LOW RETENTION

Both trained and untrained participants stated their struggle with low retention rates in the CSO sector which and when asked why, they mentioned the following reasons for its regularity:

Job Hopping

 Some participants mentioned that for a few candidates, their sole intention of being recruited was to be trained by the CSO and leave to another organisation which were often times international organisations for the better pay. Other participants added that many candidates use the opportunity as a stepping stone for other jobs or they apply with the notion that a lot of money can be made in this sector as international funding meant higher pay, as stated by another participant:

"... some even apply just for the good pay as many donor funded organisation like ours pay in foreign currency like dollars which is high when converted to our Nigerian Naira."

This misconception attracted unqualified candidates who have the wrong priorities for working in the CSO sector as another participant mentioned with immense frustration:

"...they do not possess the right values to operate within our organisation which leaves positions open for months and no suitable candidate to fill because they do not stay "

 Participants also mentioned the inflow of candidates who came into the sector temporarily as an alternative source pending any civil service job which tends to be more permanent and stable as opposed to uncertain nature of the CSO sector. The CSO sector functions on temporary contracts and employments that are dependent on projects and funding which could always end. This idea of desiring work in the public sector as opposed to the CSO sector is often times associated with development work being "low-status" as framed by a participant compared to being a government official who had "power and influence" as a participant stressed.

Conflict Areas

Participants from CSOs that function in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria face the challenge of employing and retaining employees as they are situated in a conflict zone. These areas are prone to terrorist attacks and kidnapping as a result of the emergence of the ***Boko Haram*** terrorist group that operates in most of the North-East. Organisations that focus on carrying interventions in these hard to reach areas often struggle to find candidates willing to apply for

such positions and the ones that do, often times leave in fear for their lives and safety. This led to the job position being vacant for a prolonged period of time.

FAKE RESUMES

The issue of 'fake' resumes being submitted by applicants was a challenge experienced by both trained and untrained participants. Applicants often hire consultants to "garnish and polish their resumes that makes them attractive and hard to resist" as participants framed it. When such applicants were shortlisted and invited for interviews, they are not able to defend the content of their resumes. During the screening process, falsified certificates were also presented by these applicants and for the ones that were not detected during the screening process, it became obvious when they were employed and could not perform basic tasks they 'claimed' they had the competencies for.

NATURE OF THE LABOUR MARKET

Some untrained participants commented that one of the major challenge they faced was during the short listing stage. As applicants tend to apply for several jobs at a time due to the nature of the labour market in Nigeria, jobs are limited and hard to get. This meant that when applicants were shortlisted, interviewed, tested and finally offered the job, they turn down the offer as they had accepted another offer with either a higher pay or some accept the offer letter to bargain a higher salary at their current or new workplace. This causes delays in filing positions and a "waste of time and resource we do not have" as a participant added with great annoyance and said:

"We just recently conducted an interview for the selection of technical officers and during that interview these are the major challenges we faced. The first technical officer we selected and recruited based on our format ended up disappointing us. He did not take up the job at the last minute."

NEPOTISM

The issue of nepotism was mentioned by majority of the participants, both trained and untrained as one of the major challenge facing the recruitment and selection process in the CSO sector and other sectors in Nigeria. They also added that this was the main reason CSOs could

not prosper as the sector is filled with unqualified personnel filling roles they are not worthy of. While this challenge was expressed by both participants in management and HR positions, their stance on the issue varied.

From participants in management positions, arguments on this challenge where never addressed directly towards their organisation but rather as a complaint regarding the way other CSOs recruited as they stated:

"Some directors of CSOs prefer to recruit their relation instead of the experienced personnel. They always state that; "Why should I employ someone while my own relation is not working?". This is a very big threat in the CSO space."

Another participant at management level admitted to recruiting family members while also recognising this as a challenge faced by the CSO sector as they stated:

"...there were some people that approached me, as a friend, and requested that I give jobs to their sons and daughters even if it is part time job. I responded to them that I also have 6 children who are graduates and still living in my house. So this is very common within CSO space as I ended up recruiting my own children."

On the contrary, a participant when asked of the challenge of nepotism stated that it did not exist and had no room in their organisation. This was supported by the fact that positions in the CSO sector required unique and specialised skills that not everyone had and therefore makes it impossible for external pressures to hire family and friends because many did not have the skill.

From participants in HR positions who all had training in the area of recruitment and selection, arguments on this challenge came from a place of frustration as a result of how management handled the issue of nepotism. They complained that candidates recruited were clearly not qualified but happened to be a friend or family member of someone at management level or on the board of directors in the organisation. Even as HR staff, they had no say in who was finally recruited as a participant mentioned:

"…the problem of hiring someone my boss asks me to hire is also an issue because sometimes they are not qualified but I do not have a say in it so we just wait until the boss

realises the person's incompetence."

They added that the issue was not employing family or friends as they knew this was inevitable and an issue every organisation faces in every country but that the issue was the hiring of unqualified people which seemed to be a constant reoccurrence. Another participant stated that often times, other more qualified candidates are invited for interviews and come with vast knowledge and experience which will save the organisation the cost of training, but management still rather hire an unqualified ward, relation or friend and spend resources they do not have training them.

SKILL GAP

Just like nepotism, another major challenge faced by majority of the participants was the gap in the skills of applicants. These applicants were labelled 'unemployable' by some participants as they did not possess basic skills required for any job like proper spelling which was often discovered during the testing stage of the recruitment process. As a result of these gaps in skill and knowledge of development work, many positions were left vacant for a prolonged period of time because there were no candidates with the necessary and relevant skills to fill it. This challenge was also linked to the skill set available in the labour market and the training individuals received which was often times not practical but very "bookish" as participants mentioned which stems from the system of education in the country.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

As all CSOs function within the society and have to abide by the policies set by the government, participants found some of these policies rather unfavourable. CSOs operating within states and not the capital often times face policies that affected their ability to recruit and execute the project accordingly. One of the policies imposed that affected the recruitment process stated that only indigenes of a particular state could be recruited by CSOs working in that area. This posed an issue as many applicants did not have the skills or experience to fill in the positions.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

All participants raised the challenge of unemployment in Nigeria which was said to be on an alarming rise. With the limited jobs available, unemployed family and friends were chosen over qualified non related candidates and CSOs began to run like family businesses that hire

children as a way of succession planning. Although there were several people applying due to the level of unemployment, many still lacked the skills to become suitable candidates. The influx of applications as a result of unemployment when positions were advertised also put a strain on the recruitment and selection process which made it harder to carefully review resumes and applications for the best suitable candidate. While some deliberately applied knowing they did not meet the requirements for the position, others applied with no intention of actually taking the job but to use the job offer to leverage a higher salary at their current place of employment. This challenge of "sorting and filtering the stockpiles" as participants framed it, led to the waste of time and resources and oftentimes desirable and suitable candidates are missed in the process.

4.1.1 UNIQUENESS OF CHALLENGES TO THE CSO SECTOR

All the challenges explained in detail above were identified by participants from the CSO sector. However, this did not mean all the challenges were unique to the CSO sector as many participants identified these challenges as issues faced by all sectors in Nigeria or were more prominent in the CSO sector as captured in the table below:

Challenge	All Sectors	CSO Sector
Donor Pressure		X
Gender Imbalance	X	
Digitalisation		X
Limited Funding		X
Low Retention		X
Fake Resumes	X	
Nature of the Labour Market	X	
Nepotism	X	
Skill Gap		X
Government Policies		X
Unemployment	X	

Table 4: **Challenges and Sectors Affected**

The challenges faced by all sectors as identified by the participants include the gap in skill which is a peculiar and common issue across sectors in Nigeria. However, the gap in skill and knowledge of development work is unique to the CSO as the sole purpose of this sector was development work. Challenges like fake resumes, the volume of applications as a result of high unemployment rates and the nature of the labour market are experienced by all sectors as they all function in the same society as mentioned by a participant:

" The challenges are ubiquitous among the CSOs and other sectors in Nigeria because we all hire the same way and function within the same labour market and economy."

Other challenge like digitalisation were also mentioned by participants to be seen across sectors but the extent to which it is considered a challenge affecting recruitment and selection depends on the sector. This may not necessarily be a challenge for the public sector in Nigeria as majority of civil servants do not go through an extensive or formal recruitment and selection process but rather, employment is secured based on nepotism and favouritism as a participant mentioned. Whereas in the CSO sector, participants mentioned that donors were beginning to request more transparent and digitalised ways of functioning which included transparent recruitment process and therefore staffing plans for current and prospective employees became a prerequisite for obtaining grants.

Challenges like donor pressure and limited funding were the challenges identified as unique to the CSO sector in Nigeria. However, not many participants agreed that this affected them the same way as the larger CSOs who got funding from international donors tend to have more autonomy and funds to execute projects and tackle these challenges than the smaller local NGOs as stated by a participants;

"I believe that bigger CSOs with a bigger brand as well as operational budget have a better approach to navigating the challenge than we do."

Participants from smaller CSOs stated that they found themselves in a more vulnerable position as they relied on volunteers who donated their time to the cause and often times had full time jobs elsewhere which meant a reduced level of commitment.

4.2 ADDRESSING RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CHALLENGES

This theme captured the needs of the participants for addressing the challenges they identified. In order to fully capture these needs, this theme was further divided into three (3) categories:

- the skills and knowledge needed to aid the process
- the need itself to address the challenge experienced
- the opportunities needed to implement or influence change

4.2.1 SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE NEEDED

As a way of addressing challenges experienced, participants identified the skills and knowledge they required. All participants either indicated the need for one skill or the other or the need to develop and improve on already existing skills and knowledge to aid the process of addressing the challenges. From their responses, six (6) skills emerged which deferred between the type of participants, their positions and the challenge they personally faced.

*Table 5:*Challenges and Skills Needed

CHALLENGES	SKILLS NEEDED BY PARTICIPANTS					
	HR and Recruitment Skill	Interviewing Skills	Leadership skills	Technological Skills	Proposal Writing Skills	Political Skills
Donor Pressure			X			X
Gender Imbalance						
Digitalisation				X		
Limited Funding					X	
Low Retention	X					
Fake Resumes	X	X				
Nature of the Labour Market						
Nepotism			X			
Skill Gap				X		
Government Policies						X
Unemployment						

HR and Recruitment Skills

This skill was proposed by untrained participants at management level who admitted to not having any knowledge in HR or in the process of recruitment and hence, did not know if their way of recruiting was the ideal way or the most efficient. Other aspects for HR training proposed were in employee satisfaction and engagement so as to reduce the low retention rates experienced in this sector. Other participants added that being trained in the basics of HR and recruitment will allow them to spot fake resumes and certificates presentenced by applicants during the interview stage and not until they employed the individual.

Interviewing Skills

This skill was proposed by untrained participants at management level as an already existing skill they felt needed developing. Participants stated that improving on this skill will allow them to gain more insight on the applicant being interviewed because "not everyone can be trusted" as a participant framed it. Other participants stated that this will also allow them to identify candidates with fake resumes before they make it through to the selection process.

Leadership Skills

This skill was proposed by both trained and untrained participants all at management level as an already existing skill they felt needed developing. Participants stated that improving this skill will help them make more informed and better decisions on organisational matters such as recruiting employees. This skill will help them "stand their ground" as a participant framed it when implementing donor partners put pressure on them to engage in biased recruitment. Another participant added that improving leadership skills may help CSO management understand what is at stake when they end up recruiting their unqualified family and friends in their organisation and how it also affects other CSOs.

Technological Skills

This skill was proposed by trained participants in HR positions who expressed that a well-crafted training program to capacitate them on using emerging technology and digital applications/software will allow them to work more efficiently. As stated by a participant, this

will help them manage data and go through the volume of applications and not miss qualified candidates in the process.

Proposal Writing Skills

This skill was proposed by untrained participants in management positions as an already existing skill they felt needed developing. Participants stated that they thought they had sufficient experience in proposal writing but that it had come to their attention that they needed a lot of improvement which showed in their inability to secure grants and funding. Other participants admitted to not knowing anything about proposal writing as they had never written one before because they always had project staff who were responsible for this function. However, now that they do not have funding for staff and have no projects, management staff are left with no choice but to learn this skill.

Political Skills

This was the only skill proposed by both trained and untrained participants in both management and HR positions as a skill they felt they all lacked and needed. Participants stressed the importance of such a skill in the CSO space in Nigeria as they are often faced with challenges that require lobbying government officials to amend policies. Another participant added that this skill is needed in navigating the pressures from donors.

4.2.2 THE MOTIVATION TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED

Questions asked here focused on why participants felt the need to address the challenges they faced. As all participants saw and felt the need to address these challenges, responses were centred around three (3) main points; human capital for organisational sustainability, organisational performance & productivity and personal experiences.

Human Capital for Organisational Sustainability

Majority of participants emphasised on the importance and the dependence on human capital for organisational sustainability in the CSO sector. They stressed that having the right people in their sector is paramount as it allows them to continue doing great work in their community as one participant stated with so much intensity:

"CSOs are an important component of what happens in our societies, our sector is very much a people orientated sector unlike other sectors and so, proper transparent and professional recruiting is the most vital aspect as it can make or break the organisation…"

The right employees were considered to be the "backbone" of the organisation as a participant framed it. Other participants at management level stressed that they could not head and manage the organisation and also implement projects all by themselves to the donor's satisfaction for continued funding and therefore required competent people to take over. Without these 'right' people or access to them, the CSO sector will seize to exist as participants stated:

"….the people are pertinently an absolute necessity for organisational success and sustainability in this field."

Organisational Performance and Productivity

Participants also reiterated the need to address these challenges for both better organisational and employee performance and productivity as this was already being affected. A participant complained that many CSOs are "fooling themselves" as they framed it by knowingly employing unqualified staff just because they were family and friends. This did not only affect the employer but also other CSOs as they often had to work together in achieving certain outcomes which failed. This was expressed by an angry participant who stated:

"…these challenges need to be addressed because these are real challenges we face and it is affecting our success rate."

Another participant warned that if these challenges were not addressed, inefficiency and ineffectiveness will be a regular feature in their organisation and sector which they simply could not afford as it will ultimately lead to diminished productivity levels. While a participant added that if these challenges were addressed they would lead to objectives being achieved which means satisfied donors, more good work and continued funding. However, other challenges affecting productivity and performance required "macro level interventions" as a participant framed it as they are caused by external factors that were out of their control.

Personal Experiences

The needs derived here came from frustrated and annoyed participants that had experienced the impact of these challenges and were determined to make a change as stated by a participant:

"...we are intentionally recruiting people that cannot do the job and that is why we are facing so many challenges across the country because we are not recruiting the right people at the right time. We recruit based on sentiment, relationships and may be incentives given to the recruiters and thus therefore, there is need to address the challenges across the country."

Others spoke of their personal experience when in the labour market and how they had been invited for several interviews and were never called back because either a family member or friend of the interviewer got the job. Another participant stated how organisations "run helter-skelter" as they framed it to find qualified employees when applying for a grant as detailed staffing plans were required as a prerequisite from donors.

4.2.4 OPPORTUNITIES NEEDED

In order to further access the needs for addressing the recruitment and selection challenges experienced, participants were asked about the opportunities they felt needed to be created or had been created for them to enable this process. Most participants were already well positioned within their role but lacked the skill to move forward or utilise their position to address the challenges as they mentioned:

"...there were opportunities that put me in a suitable position in addressing the challenges as I was at a senior level to pass down skills and implement changes but unfortunately, I did not and still do not have the skills."

"...this is an organisation with about 50 international and local NGOs and CSOs. As the chair on this platform, I can reach a lot of organisations to make a difference in the country."

"...as the director of my organisation, if I benefit from training then I have every opportunity to come back and develop my CSO.."

Others had the opportunity to address the challenge and saw no further opportunity that could be created for them as a participant stated:

"..I have already been given the opportunity to head my organisation which has allowed me to make an informed decision in selecting credible candidates for the job so far so I don't see what other opportunities could be provided for me."

Participants in HR positions stressed the need for reduced interference from management in order to properly execute their role in recruiting. A participant mentioned the need for the final selection to be done at the desk of the HR manager and not the board of directors or project advisory committee. The need for more responsibility and complete autonomy was also stated by a participant as they complained that they felt redundant in their position because they were not trusted to carry out "basic and objective" recruitment processes as they framed it. These two opportunities reoccurred amongst all HR participants as they passionately expressed that all they wanted was the chance to fully participate in implementing HR policies and project planning and as such, they will be able to better identify the best fit for the organisation.

Finally, another opportunity identified by all participants was the reskilling and upskilling of their already existing skills through training which further ensured the right candidates were recruited and the challenges "eradicated" as a participant framed it.

4.3 THE ROLE OF TRAINING IN ADDRESSING RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED

This theme captured the role of training in addressing the challenges of recruitment and selection experienced by participants as it delved into:
- whether or not their needs could be met through training
- the role of training in developing the skills and knowledge identified to address the challenges identified

Majority of the participants responded positively towards training being used as an approach to meeting the needs they identified for addressing the challenges they faced. Participants seemed shocked at this question as they assumed training was in fact the only way to meet the

different needs they identified. This was especially surprising for participants as the CSO sector relied on capacity building through training for almost every need, from challenges to execution of projects. Participants sternly expressed with certainty and confidence the use of training for addressing the challenges as they stated:

"...training is the basis of everything improvement in the CSO sector."

"It will in no small measure help but will completely eliminate it."

"Training is paramount and can be explained by the acronym KSA – knowledge, skills and attitude. It will give rise to knowledge, through knowledge skill (know how) are built and skills determine attitude you exhibit in doing your work and in response to issues..."

However, other participants mentioned that not all needs could be met through training as these needs would have to be complemented with experiences and practice;

"...to answer your question, yes the development of these skills by training can help address the issues but not all the skills can be taught."

This was stated with regard to HR and recruitment training as the participant argued that even if knowledge in HR was taught, the aspect of dealing with human beings differed as the 'one-size fits all' concept does not apply in the CSO sector. Furthermore, another participant added that even with all the training and experience, challenges could not be addressed if the candidate/applicant did not have the right attitude and enthusiasm for the job.

Participants stated that training could meet the needs they identified for addressing challenges experience as they anticipated the complete elimination of the internal challenges which may be a stepping stone for external interventions. Roles participants thought training would have on addressing their needs were as follows:

- The development of the right skill set required to carry out the function of recruitment to meet the objectives of the organisation while building capacity for effective performance

- The opportunity to learn and also network with peers in the sector for continuous share of

knowledge and experience as well as mutual support in resolving organisational HR issues which will in turn enhance organisational growth and motivation

- Capacity building trainings to develop skills in proposal writing giving the organisation the ability to bid competitively for available grants from donors that will provide funds to hire experienced staff

- The opportunity to step down skills developed through training to other smaller CSOs or partner organisations

- The skills to recruit motivated and creative staff that can enable the organisation create many things out of nothing

- Save the organisation a lot of money as the right and suitable employees will be hired and not unqualified persons

Trained participants in HR positions highlighted the need for hiring a HR and recruitment expert or consultant to train managers first in order to emphasise and stress the importance of HR and recruitment. They added that managers had to be made aware of these challenge, the importance of addressing these challenges and how they could be addressed as only managers had a say in major decisions within the organisation.

4.3.1 2018 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION TRAINING EVALUATION

In order to access how effective training could be in addressing recruitment and selection challenges, the seven (7) participants that attended the 2018 HR training were asked what skill or knowledge they might have picked up, how they applied it and if it addressed the recruitment and selection challenges they experienced.

Skill or Knowledge	Implementation	Challenge Addressed
- Oral and theoretical interviewing skills and Techniques.	Testing applicants during the recruitment process to establish their capabilities for the position applied for.	Skill Gap
- Understanding the labour market and inclusiveness of millennials in the CSO space.	Recruiting and offering younger employees mentorship programs	Skill Gap
- Importance of detailed job descriptions and adverts.	Developing job descriptions, clearer job expectations	Skill Gap
- Introduction to HR and the key elements from recruiting talent to employee separation (*"a concept I was not aware of"* as a participant framed it).	Greater insight on employee turnover in the CSO sector and finding ways to keep employees engaged and offering other incentives	Low Retention
- Aligning workforce planning and the organisational strategic goal.	More intentional in planning organisational workforce	Nepotism (somewhat)
- Value and Importance of HR in the CSO space for sustainability.	Recruiting a HR manager for the very first time	Overall improved and professionalised recruitment process
- Importance of gender equality and being an equal opportunity employer and an employer of choice.	Actively head hunting female to join the CSO space "by all means" Having other females on interviewing panels	Gender Imbalance

Table 6: 2018 HR Training Evaluation

Participants that attended the 2018 HR training which focused on the recruitment and selection for CSO sustainability mentioned an array of skills and knowledge learnt during the intense 2-day workshop. Some of these skills and knowledge led to the implementation of practices, policies and processes that either directly or indirectly addressed the challenges they experienced. Those that directly addressed the challenges identified in this thesis have been mentioned in table 7 above. However, a few of the trained participants stated that they still (to an extent) experienced these challenges which is why some of these participants felt they needed to develop on already existing skills and knowledge obtained during the 2018 training. Participants also mentioned how the training helped address misconceptions they had on the importance of HR as a participant in management position stated:

"One fallacy that I initially held was that pay was the only motivating factor to attract high value staff. Following the HR training, I have adapted other practises such as training activities to motivate and ensure that staff have a conducive working environment and are well appreciated for their enormous contribution to the success of this organisation…"

In some way, this was able to increase staff retention as the participant stated. Another participant added that their organisation adopted a formal interviewing process which included the line managers and in some cases their colleagues from other organisations that had expertise in the role they were recruiting for. This method allowed for the organisation to find ideal and suitable candidates that "contributed immensely" as the participant stated with pride and job. Trained participants in management position also expressed their enthusiasm in including and coaching younger and junior staff as they prepared them to succeed as leaders and managers in the CSO space which was initially not possible in this field.

When asked what factors could have better enabled the implementation of the skills and knowledge learnt from the training program, responses led back to the same points mentioned as opportunities needed to address challenges. These included:

- funding from donors
- autonomy from management
- no interference from management in the recruiting process
- reskilling and upskilling through training

Other new factors that emerged were:

- networking and sustained communication with other participants from the training program for shared knowledge and experiences
- adopting an objective panel during interviews
- lack of commitment from management, "it takes time to drum it into their ears" as a participant in HR position mentioned
- changes only being operationalised at senior management level and not mid-management level

However, when participants who did not attend the 2018 HR training program were asked what factors they thought could hinder their ability to address the challenges identified, participants from smaller CSOs mentioned:

- restrictive organisational policies
- lack of flexibility and resistance to change
- difference of opinion and techniques in recruitment
- budget and resource constraint from management which is not usually allocated to HR or personnel development

Finally, participants who attended the 2018 training program mentioned the following as recommendations for future training programs for improved outcomes at addressing the challenges identified.

- Sample policies and strategic HR plans from small, medium and large CSOs
- Follow up trainings to develop already acquired skills
- New resounding themes of HR advancements which include being technologically savvy
- Complete digitalisation of the entire recruiting process, from software to virtual assessments and interviews

  A training needs assessment prior to any training program so as to identify the gaps that exist and therefore structure the training to address those gaps.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter aims at first answering the three (3) empirical sub-question of this thesis from the findings reported in the previous chapter. Based on these answers, the central research question which asks: *"can training contribute to addressing challenges of recruitment and selection faced by the civil society organisations in Nigeria?"* is finally answered. The findings are then confronted with the expectations explored in the theoretical framework chapter. In addition, the implications for both practice and science are discusses followed by the limitations of this research and finally, recommendations for future research as well as for the training organisation are established.

5.1 SUB-QUESTION 1

What are the recruitment and selection challenges faced by CSOs in Nigeria?

Notably, many of the participating CSOs in this research did not have dedicated HR personnel or staff as for many, all HR decisions were made by management. In the findings of this research, only three (3) participants were in HR positions. Granting that this research did not focus on statistical generalisation, there was a noticeable difference in perspective from the participants based their position. This research still considered all participants 'HR staff' as they had sole or major responsibility of HR practices like recruitment and selection.

Being one of the main gaps this thesis aimed to fill and as the first step in answering the central research question, the R&S challenges faced by Nigerian CSOs were examined. From the responses of participants, both trained and untrained, eleven (11) challenges emerged which are discussed as either being internal or external challenges.

Internal Challenges

From the challenges identified in the findings, six (6) were considered unique to the CSO sector and included: pressures from donors, digitalisation, limited funding from donors, low retention, skill gap and government policies. These challenges were considered internal, meaning only affecting the CSO sectors in Nigeria and participants that mentioned these challenges were both trained and untrained which meant that there was no difference in opinion based on the participant's exposure to training. However, responses differed based on the participants

position. For instance, the challenge of digitalisation was raised by participants in official HR positions as a challenge affecting their personal level of efficiency in doing their job as HR practitioners. Other challenges such as donor pressures and limited funding were challenge that stemmed from funders, again, a factor peculiar to the CSO sector as they are solely reliant on funding for sustainability and survivability which comes from grants applied to. In addition, the challenge of low retention and high employee turnover was also a common theme as applicants come into the CSO sector for the wrong reasons (either with an expectation of salaries in foreign currency or to await employment in the public sector). Another reason for the low retention was linked to the missions of the CSO sectors as 'aiding and development' sectors which was not always an easy job like the posting of employees to conflict areas or Furthermore, the unfavourable government policies that affected the CSO sector was a challenge that could not be easily placed as there is no telling how and if it affects other CSOs.

External Challenges

The other five (5) challenges identified are distinguished as external challenges as thy affect all organisations in Nigeria which could not simply be ignored as they also affected the CSO sector. These included: gender imbalance, fake resumes, the nature of the labour market in Nigeria, nepotism and the high unemployment rates in the country. Responses here did not differ in terms of trained or untrained or on the position of the participants. As challenges that exist as a result of the systems and economic situation in the country. Many of these challenges were intertwined as they led to other challenges of R&S. For instance, the high unemployment rates in Nigeria meant that the volume of applications when a position was advertised was enormous thereby creating the problem for the recruiter to sift through all the applications for the best candidate. The lack of digitalisation only worsened the situation as it was time consuming sorting out the pile of applications. In addition, the nature of the Nigerian labour market made it difficult to recruit the best suitable candidate as many applicants lacked basic skills and knowledge of development work. This was explicitly attributed to the system of education in Nigeria that was unfortunately too 'bookish' and not practical. This may also explain why applicants resort to fake resumes in order to secure job opportunities they know they are not qualified for.

The challenge of nepotism was one that received mixed responses, even though both trained and untrained participants as well as participants in HR and managerial positions identified this

as a common challenge, opinions different based on their position. At first, this was seen as a challenge that affected every sector and could exist in any country, making it inevitable. However, it only became a challenge when unqualified friends and family members were employed especially in a sector where human capital is paramount for its success and sustainability which participants in HR positions emphasised on. For participants in managerial position, three (3) perspectives emerged. Some insisted the challenge of nepotism did not exist in their organisation, others did not think this was even a challenge at all while the rest admitted to it being a challenge but also engaging in nepotism as a result of the unemployment rates in Nigeria.. This difference in responses from the same group raised questions during the data collection phase which was if the participants that stated this not existing in their organisation where simply denying it or that this was genuinely not a challenge they faced themselves but a challenge that affected them if other CSOs engaged in nepotism. This suggests that if CSOs work together on collaborative projects and organisations did not have qualified personnel because they hired a family or friend, the challenge of nepotism affected them indirectly. Another question explored was if the these CSOs were just not able to speak openly about this issue or responses where indicative of the pressures to engage in nepotism as this challenge often had an element of pressure which came from either family or friends making it harder for HR staff to overcome.

5.2 SUB-QUESTION 2

What do HR staff responsible for recruitment and selection need or require in order to deal with these challenges?

As the second step towards answering the central research question, the needs of HR staff was captured using Appelbaum et al.'s (2001) AMO framework as adapted by Boxall and Purcell (2016). The abilities (A) HR staff needed in terms of skills and knowledge were noticeable in alignment with the challenges identified by participants, although some were more directly aligned than others. This was a surprising find as the participants themselves were prompted to explain how the skills they identified could solve their challenge. However,. this level of enthusiasm was mostly seen in the untrained managerial participants even though the trained managerial and HR participants agreed that these skills were needed. This was attributed to the fact that the trained participants felt they already possessed the skill but it needed development,

while others felt these were new skills they needed to learn. Basic skills in HR/recruitment, proposal writing and interviewing skills were raised by untrained participants which was somewhat unexpected as they held managerial roles in their organisations and these skills were thought to be elementary. Political and leadership skills were raised for further development as it was identified as already existing skills which they needed to make more informed decisions and also to navigate the CSO space to their advantage.

In order to capture the (M) component of the AMO model, questions were operationalised and asked in an indirect way which was presented as "do you feel the need to address these challenges and why". All points mentioned were linked to the overall performance of the organisation. The focus on human capital for sustainability within the CSO, productivity and employee/organisational performance and the good it will do in the community as a result was emphasised by participants. Another point mentioned was driven by personal experiences, some of which were as a result of failed recruitment practices while others were driven by their unpleasant experience of being unemployed and qualified which was as a result of the nepotism challenge.

The (O) component of the AMO model was automatically centred around training by all participants. Participants in managerial positions both trained and untrained felt they were already in a position to influence and implement change therefore having the opportunity to address the challenge would be having the skills needed through training. However, this opinion was not upheld by the participants in HR positions as the opportunities they needed was towards autonomy and the lack of interference from management in influencing the recruitment and selection process. As all participants here were trained, they felt they already had the skills needed but the opportunity to practice the skill is not given to them.

5.3 SUB-QUESTION 3

How does training contribute to meeting their needs in handling recruitment and selection challenges.

This question explored if the needs mentioned above could be met through training and its role in developing the skills. Positive responses were gotten on the proposition of training as

participants stirred in the direction of the training even before it was raised. Participants re-emphasised the use of training in the CSO sector as a form of capacity building to enhance skills, others thought the skills they identified could only be learnt through training. However, others mentioned that training alone could not meet their needs as other factors such as experience in the area of recruitment was just as important. With regard to the role training could have in addressing the challenges they faced, all participants stated how some skills even through training could not address the external challenges in the country. However, the internal challenges unique to the CSO sector being addressed through training had more positive responses.

5.4 CENTRAL RESEARCH QUESTION

Can training contribute to addressing challenges of recruitment and selection faced by the civil society organisations in Nigeria?

Based on the empirical findings of this research, it can therefore be concluded that: Yes, training can contribute to addressing challenges of recruitment and selection faced by Nigerian CSOs. However, only to a certain extent as internal challenges unique to the CSO sector are more realistically addressed when HR staff are trained than the external challenges. Another deduction from empirical findings is the fact that training alone cannot successfully contribute to addressing the challenges as other factors like experience plays a role in the effectiveness of training. Also, the position of the trainee is also key as it is seen that although HR 'staff' in managerial positions have the opportunity to influence change for addressing the challenges, they are also not experts in the area of HR and therefore their abilities are rather limited even with training. Whereas trainees that are HR staff who have more experiences and have the expertise are not given the opportunity to implement practices in the area of recruitment thereby restricting their ability to address the challenges.

Although the above conclusions were deducted from the empirical findings of this research, the 2018 HR training workshop was evaluated to see how those that have been trained have managed to address the recruitment and selection challenge within the last 2 years. In doing this, there was a near perfect alignment between the evaluation of the training workshop and the empirical findings. As the training workshop focused on the advance enhancement of HR

and recruitment skills, several other recruitment and selection challenges were addressed as a result, some of which included the gap in skill of development work, professionalising the process of recruiting and the challenge of low retention. This suggests that although training in specific skills are required, basic skills in HR and recruitment might be more beneficial to addressing several other challenges. Also, participants who attended the training noted that the skills learnt would have been put to more use if they had the opportunity which was stated as the lack of autonomy from management, the reskilling and upskilling to stay in touch with new techniques.

5.4.1 CONFRONTATION WITH LITERATURE

Based on the literature and the conceptual model, a number of expectations were derived. This section aims to confront those expectations with the empirical findings of this thesis. The first expectation was that the challenges faced by CSOs in Nigeria will be a combination of the challenges faced by all sectors in Nigeria and CSO sectors in the global south. This expectation is confirmed as the empirical findings found that the challenges faced by Nigerian CSOs was a mixture of external and internal challenges unique to the CSO sector with more of the internal challenges.

Secondly, the expectation that all three (3) components of the AMO model is needed to address the challenges is also confirmed as many participants stated they had the skill but did not have the opportunity to utilise the skill. This was also seen in the evaluation of the 2018 training as participants stated that opportunities like autonomy from management and the ability to make independent decisions would have increased their ability to utilise the skills they learnt during the training in 2018. In addition, the expectation that (M) will be intrinsic as a result of the sector is confirmed as participants were driven to address the challenges for organisational success and sustainability and not for monetary rewards were an individual is said to be extrinsically motivated. This was consistent with Boxall and Purcell's (2016) explanation of vocational interests . Furthermore, the expectation that (A) will be aligned with the skills seen in literature is somewhat confirmed as some of the skills seen in literature and in the empirical findings were political skills, interviewing skills, leadership skills and technological skills. Other skills that were seen in the empirical findings were tailored to the CSO sector like the proposal writing skill for better abilities in applying for grants which CSOs rely on for survivability.

In conclusion, the AMO model was able to capture the needs of HR as the conceptual model (see fig. 2) suggested that through needs identified using the AMO model, they can be met through training thereby leading to performance outcome which in this case was addressing recruitment and selection challenges.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

Although this research put measures in place to ensure high levels of reliability and validity, limitations still exist and is common with any research. Limitations for this research are both from a methodological and theoretical perspective. From a theoretical point of view, the near absence of literature or up to date findings on this topic made for a recognisable limitation. The two contexts used in this research which were the Nigerian context and the CSO context made it arduous to accurately explore existing literature and viewpoints on the issue at hand. This created the necessity to explore out of date literature, western literature that did not fit in to the context, write ups on international development organisations and their needs rather than that of local CSOs in Nigeria. Even though this absence in literature allowed for greater scientific relevance on this topic, conclusions are still rendered tentative as already existing literature on the issue is not available for more definitive conclusions. In addition, the amount of literature that had to be reviewed and explored as the lack of existing or relevant literature required the need to explore the topic in other contexts like the CSO challenge that applied to all countries in the global south. Although a significant amount of those challenges still applied to the Nigerian CSO sector, there might have been other factors which have not been necessarily captured. This made for a broader topic which is often times considered 'risky' in research (Stokes, 2011).

Another theoretical limitation is seen in the AMO model as it only goes as far as to look at the three (3) components and how the combination of all three (3) can lead to performance outcomes. However, as this model does not identify how these components relate to one another and even experts in this area have admitted that there are factors that can influence each component (Boselie et al., 2005), it was also evident in the findings of this research. Participants expressed how meeting the needs identified within the AMO model is not all that is needed. Experience in the area of HR and technical 'know-how' were factors raised for further consideration.

From a methodological perspective, the researcher's lack of experience in collecting data and analysing data using software made for a difficult start. This meant a significant amount of time was spent on self-learning through the process of analysing. Although the outcome was achieved to the researcher's satisfaction, there might have been information missed in the process which was even more likely as a thematic analysis was adopted. This is because it requires a certain level of experience or practice as even when thought of as a 'simplistic' form of data analysis, the researcher is often responsible for creating patterns, clustering information and categorising clusters in to themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Another limitation attributed to the methodology is the sample size. Although this is usually a limitation associated with quantitative method rather than qualitative, a topic with an intricate context like the CSO sector would have benefitted more from deductions of a larger sample size. In addition, the selective sourcing of participants through the training organisation might have allowed for limited insights gained. This is particularly so with the participants that were trained as this research only focused on the 2018 HR training workshop. Better initiatives to source participants that attended other HR or R&S trainings would have allowed for a variety of perspectives and insights, however, this would have made the research topic unduly broad and difficult to break down. Also, the lack of training for HR staff made it even harder to find other participants that attended other trainings.

Furthermore, the focus on the 2018 training workshop for understanding the extent to which training can contribute to addressing R&S challenges was only able to provide somewhat accurate information for HR and R&S training. As this training did not focus on all the other skills identified by participants and was only a training on recruitment and selection, it made it difficult to reach a conclusion (tentative or conclusive) on how training in other skills may turn out. In addition, evaluating a training for detailed insight that occurred 2 years ago could perhaps enabled inaccurate information being given. Relying on memory for scientific research is often thought off as risky (Stokes, 2011) as participants are more likely to falsify information to satisfy the researcher or to avoid admitting their inability to recall specific information. Although questions were sent a day in advance to trained participants, this might have only given them an opportunity to provide inaccurate information.

Another limitation was discovered during the interviews. As many of the participants were of a higher status in age and hierarchy, the researcher was cautious not to offend any participant by referring to them in a disrespectful manner. This meant that formal titles (Sir, Madam, Dr) and showing respect when a participant spoke had to be adopted. This often made it difficult if not impossible for the researcher to interrupt certain participants when they went off topic even though this was taken into consideration when the interview questions were created.

5.6 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The findings of this research has pointed to the necessity for training of HR staff for the overall improvement of the CSO sector as a major player in the development of Nigeria. It therefore negates that CSOs and donor agencies should set aside funds for training of functionaries with HR responsibilities in countries such as Nigeria. Moreover findings show the importance of undertaking practical follow-up studies to find out how new knowledge from training has been used and possible barriers to trained HR functionaries using new skills.

5.7 IMPLICATIONS FOR SCIENCE

The findings of this thesis challenges the science of HRM to expand beyond considering the relevance of recruitment and selection in for-profit business type organisations to the new and under-research domain of the non-profit sector where HRM supports service delivery vocation and not the profit motives.

5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Naturally, some of the recommendations here will be linked to the limitations discussed above. Firstly, there is a need to investigate and explore the reason why Nigerian CSOs do not engage in building the capacity of HR staff or in HR skills of persons carrying out HR functions. The abundance of literature on the lack of training for HR staff in the CSO sector in general and in Nigeria is worrying. Even though training and reskilling HR staff can contribute to addressing R&S challenges which is unequivocally recommended in this research, it may very well be just a 'recommendation', a redundant phenomenon for the books and not for practice as the grassroot issue has not be addressed. This is more so evident as donor agencies have complained of the lack of talent in the CSOs they fund but have not allocated resources for

their training whereas huge sums are allocated to training the more 'technical' staff (Brunt, 2016). This seems like a battle Nigerian CSOs are most likely not going to win. Brunt (2016) followed up by noting how these international development organisations spend millions of dollars in training and developing the capacity of their employees which does not exclude HR staff but refuse to give local CSOs the tools to elevate themselves in that regard. Although an argument arises here which is why should international development organisations give the resources to train HR staff when the challenges have more to do with the country and the external challenges which seem almost impossible to solve with training. As only just a speculation, the 'why' question needs to be further explored, 'why do Nigerian CSOs ignore capacity building for HR staff?'. However, before this can be disseminated by Nigerian CSOs, it has to transcend from the donors and international development organisations which asks another question needing further research ' why do international donor agencies refuse the allocation of resources to developing the HR function of CSOs in Nigeria (and the global south)?'

Another point recommended for future research is exploring mediators or moderators that may influence the outcome of training and its ability to contribute to addressing R&S challenges. As seen in the limitations above, experts in the AMO model have admitted that there are factors that can influence each component (Boselie et al., 2005). Based on the findings of this research, the position of the HR staff could be used as a mediator for future research. It was evident that the participants in this research who were in official HR positions were more experienced and knowledgeable in the aspects of HR but were not given the opportunity to utilise already existing skills or new skills. Therefore, the more autonomy given to HR staff, the more efficient training can be in addressing R&S challenges. In addition, this research found that participants at management level had the opportunity to influence and implement change and new practices. Therefore, the more HR training provided to individuals in management positions, the more likely it is to be addressed.

Another point recommended for future research is using Ulrich's HR roles to operationalise the motivators and opportunities needed by HR staff to address R&S challenges. As Ulrich et al.'s (2013) article aimed at creating a new narrative on the profession of HR, they argue that competencies of HR rely on self-perception which implies that they (HR) are best suited to access and express their needs for individual effectiveness and organisational performance. In

order to fully comprehend these self-perceived needs, one must understand the roles of HR in the first instant and the skills and knowledge needed which the Ulrich article discusses in detail. This will provide more insights on the needs identified by HR staff and aligning it with the roles by Ulrich therefore understanding the self-perceived role of HR staff for more tailored training recommendations.

Finally, since the findings in this research points at challenges only being able to address internal recruitment and selection challenges, there may be a need to revaluate the impact training has on the external challenges after internal challenges are resolved.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INVITATION LETTER FOR PARTICIPATION

Dear Madam/Sir,

INVITATION LETTER TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

My name is Hana, a Masters' student at Utrecht University, Netherlands. I am currently conducting my thesis research which is titled: ***Recruitment And Selection Challenges In Nigerian Civil Society Organisations: can training HR staff contribute to addressing these challeng**es*?

As the aim of my research is to explore the challenges faced by CSOs in Nigeria during the process of recruitment and selection, I am interested in your experiences as recruiters in this sector. My research also seeks to explore the contribution of training in addressing these challenges. As some of you may have attended the 2018 HRM Strategy for CSO Sustainability Training organised by dRPC and facilitated by myself, Dr Maycock and Mr Kawu, my research also explores the impact it had on addressing the challenges.

If you agree to take part in this research, your participation will be in form of a virtual interview via Zoom, Skype or MS Teams and would take no more than an hour. Questions asked will be strictly for research purposes. Your anonymity is also ensured and that of your organisation as no names or information linked to you will be stated in my research besides your position and your CSO type. If you require another letter from me addressed directly to your organisation for permission to volunteer in this research, I will be more than willing to send you one. Also, feel free to contact me if you or your organisation require any further information. If not, more details will follow shortly as well the consent form for your signature.

Respectfully,
Hana Annette Hashim
Researcher
Utrecht University, Netherlands
h.a.hashim@students.uu.nl

Universiteit Utrecht

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

For participation in Public Administration and Organisation Science graduation research tittle:

Recruitment And Selection Challenges In Nigerian Civil Society Organisations: can training HR staff contribute to addressing this challenge?

I have been informed about the research. I have read the written information. I have been able to ask questions about the research. I have had an opportunity to think about my participation in the research and it is completely voluntary. I am entitled to withdraw the consent I am granting at any time and to stop participating in the research without providing reasons.

I hereby consent to participating in the research:

Name:

Organisation:

Position:

Signature (your full name may be repeated in this section if there are difficulties in inserting an e-signature):

Date:

_____

The undersigned, responsible for the research, hereby declares that the person named above has been informed orally and in writing about the aforementioned research.

Name: **Hana Annette Hashim**   Position: **Researcher**   Date: **29/06/2020**

Introductory Questions

1- Does your organisation receive donor funded grants?

2- Is this CSO required to produce a staffing plan of human resources to donor agencies as a prerequisite for securing grants?

3- How did you obtain your job in this CSO? What was your experience of recruitment like?

4- Since joining this CSO how many trainings (internal or external) have you attended that was intended to strengthening your skills in HR?

5- In one sentence, can you kindly share your views on the importance of human resource management amongst CSOs in Nigeria?

6- Please describe your roles and responsibilities in the area of recruitment of new staff in this CSO?

Section A: Recruitment and Selection Challenges

7- In your view, do you face any challenges in the recruitment and selection process of hiring new employees?

8- If yes, can you kindly talk me through these challenges ?

9- If no, would you consider the issue nepotism, the unemployment rate and skill gap etc an issue that significantly poses a challenge to the process of effective and efficient recruitment and selection amongst CSOs in Nigeria?

10- Do you think these challenges are specific to your organisation or are they challenges faced by most CSOs or faced by organisations across all sectors in Nigeria ?

Section B: The Needs for Addressing Recruitment and Selection Challenges

11- Do you think there is a need to address these challenges (and why (not))?

12- If yes, what skills or knowledge would you need to be able to address these challenges?

13- Do you feel you already poses these skills or knowledge?

14- If yes, do you feel the development of these skills or knowledge can help in addressing the recruitment and selection challenges you mentioned earlier ?

15- In your view, what opportunities have been created or can be created for you by the CSO that puts you in a suitable position in addressing the challenges you face in the process of recruitment and selection?

Section C: The Role of Training in Addressing Recruitment and Selection Challenges

16- In your view, of what importance is the training and development of skills and knowledge for addressing recruitment and selection challenges?

17- In you view, can the skills or knowledge you mentioned earlier be developed through training programmes?

18- If yes, kindly talk me through what you how you think this can be done

Section D I: Insights on the Future

19- If an opportunity arises for a training program on HR, specifically in recruitment and selection, would you attend? Why?

20- Do you think there are any factors that may limit your ability to apply new techniques, skills, or knowledge on recruitment and selection that you would gain from any training workshop to your practical work situation?

21- Do you think there are factors that will enable your ability to apply new techniques, skills, knowledge on recruitment and selection that you would gain from any training workshop to your practical work situation?

Section D II: 2018 HR Training Evaluation (for participants who attended only)

22- What techniques, skills or knowledge related to the recruitment and selection do you recall learning from the 2018 training workshop?

23- After the training, which of the techniques, skills or knowledge were you able to apply or implement in your work in the CSO? And can you talk me through it?

24- How did the application or implementation of the techniques, skills or knowledge help you to address the problems of recruitment and selection?

25- If another opportunity arises for a training program on HR for CSO staff what recommendations do you have for the training team in addressing the topic of recruitment and selection?

Main Theme	Sub-theme 1	Sub-theme 2	File	Ref.
RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CHALLENGES			6	10
	Digitalisation		1	1
	Donor Pressure		2	3
	Fake Resumes		5	5
	Favouritism		2	3
	Gender Imbalance		1	1
	Government Policies		1	1
	Limited Funding		5	7
	Low Retention		7	9
	Nature of the Labour Market		1	2
	Nepotism		5	9
	Skill Gap		6	6
	Unemployment		4	4
		Volume of Applicants	4	4
	Challenges Faced By All Sectors		6	7
	Challenges Unique to the CSO Sector		10	11
NEEDS FOR ADDRESSING CHALLENGE			0	0
	Motivation to Address Challenge		3	4
		Human Capital for Sustainability	10	11
		Performance and Productivity	7	8
		Personal Experiences	4	5
	Skills and Knowledge Needed		8	9

		HR and Recruitment Training	8	10
		Interviewing Skills	1	1
		Leadership Skills	3	3
		Political Skills	4	4
		Proposal Writing Skills	2	2
		Technological Skills	3	3
	Opportunities Needed		1	2
		Autonomy	3	6
		Reduced Interference	3	3
		Opportunities from Management	4	4
		Linked to Training (Reskilling and Upskilling)	6	6
THE ROLE OF TRAINING			8	10
	Meeting Needs		9	11
	Cannot Meet Needs		1	2
	Can help in Addressing Challenge		9	15
	2018 Training Evaluation		0	0
		Skills and Knowledge Learnt	7	11
		Implementations	5	5
		Challenges Addressed	5	9
	Other Factors in Addressing Challenges		0	0
		Factors that may Enable	7	13
		Factors that may Hinder	9	11
	Future Training Recommendations		5	5

Human Resource Management Strategies for CSO Sustainability
DAY 1 & 2 AGENDA
Date: *29th- 30th October 2018*
Location: *dRPC-PAS CSO Training Centre. Abuja, Nigeria*

DAY 1

Time	Session
8:45 am - 9:00 am	Registration
9:00 am - 9:15 am	Welcome address
9:15 am - 10:00 am	Introductions, Expectations and Objectives of Training Workshop
10:00 am - 10:10 am	Introducing the Participatory Methodology of reflecting on local realities followed by introduction of best practices
10:10am – 11:00 am	Organizational culture and business environment of Civil society organizations implementing donor funded programs
11:00 am -11:30 am	**Tea-break**
11:30 am -12:30 noon	Introduction to HRM - Key elements of HRM from Recruiting Talent to Separation
1:30 pm – 2:15 pm	**Lunch**
2:15 pm - 2:45 pm	Participants' Reflections and Discussions on the advantages and disadvantages of open advertisement to recruit new staff, of reassigning current project staff, poaching other CSO staff; or co-opting members/volunteers when developing a staffing plan for a new donor project
2:45pm – 3:15pm	Best HRM practices in objective recruitment and in co-opting members/volunteers in non-profits
3:15pm – 3:35pm	Participants' Reflections and Discussions on effective techniques and strategies for providing supportive supervision to Program, M&E and Accounting staff for results in donor funded projects

Time	Session
3:35 pm - 3:50 pm	**Bio-Break**
3:50 pm - 4:15 pm	Best practices, effective techniques, holding difficult conversations and strategies for providing supportive supervision to Program, M&E and Accounting staff for results in donor funded projects
4:15 pm – 5:00 pm	Open discussions, Q&A session and CLOSING

DAY 2

Time	Session
9:00 am - 9:15 am	Recap
9:15 am - 9:35 am	Presentation and Feedback
9:35am – 9:55am	Best practices for Recruitment and Selection
9:55 am - 10:25 am	Participants' Reflections and Discussions on HRM Guiding Documents, Manuals and Record keeping in Nigerian CSOs
10:25 am - 10:55 am	Best practices in developing and applying - HRM Guiding Documents, Manuals and Record keeping for CSOs
10:55 am – 11:25 am	Participants' Reflections and Discussions on the utility of performance appraisals, the supervision process and difficult conversations in Nigerian CSOs
11:25 am – 11:55am	**Tea-break**
11:55 am -12:25 pm	Best practices on performance appraisals, the supervision process and difficult conversations in Nigerian CSOs
12:25 pm - 1:00 pm	Participants' Reflections and Discussions on developing a sustainable salary scale
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	**Lunch**
2:00 pm - 2:30 pm	Best practices on developing a sustainable salary scale for CSOs
2:30 pm – 3:30 pm	Group work: Developing Performance Appraisal tools
4:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Presentations, Feedback and Open discussions
4:30 pm - 5:30 pm	Q&A session, Group Photograph, Closing and Networking

left to right: Umar Kawu - Leadership and Management Development Consultant, Dr Eno Maycock - Human Resource Management and Reward Management International Consultant, Hana Hashim - Human Resource Administrative Officer, dRPC.

(dRPC - CSO Training Centre, 2018. Abuja, Nigeria)