



## Talent Acquisition in Non Government Organizations

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### ABSTRACT

*The time twists have made talent acquisition as a strategic alignment to bring congruence between people and purpose. Recruitment and selection process once carried out in isolation, now integrated with organization purpose and functions to yield better match between people, job and organization. The scarcity of and demand for talent have reframed the organizations' search to find talented people by adding 'talent attraction' and 'employer brand value' as prerequisite for successful talent acquisition. The present study aims to explore the talent acquisition challenges of NGOs. The study is based on the employee perception of the reasons to join NGO. The study is based on the primary data collected through structured questionnaire from the target population of full time paid employees working in registered large NGOs, active in the area of disability, women, children and rural development in Karnataka.*

**KEYWORDS : Talent acquisition, recruitment and selection, Non Government organization.**

### Introduction

Talent Acquisition is the first step towards organizations' talent management process that ensures the supply of adequate talent in terms of quality and quantity. Talent is principal corporate resource which will be both costly and difficult to find (Michaels, 2001). Talent acquisition is seen as strategic intervention to gain competitive advantage by integrating organization talent with organization mission. Since the performance of talented employees are the results that contributes to realize organizational objectives. Thus organization journey from current state to desired level solely relies on its employees. For this transformation organizations need employees who can bring difference through their performance. Finding those people and building organization on their ability is what a critical aspect of talent acquisition. The time twists have made talent acquisition as a strategic alignment to bring congruence between people and purpose. Recruitment and selection process once carried out in isolation, now integrated with organization purpose and functions to yield better match between people, job and organization. Recruitment is critical for not only sustaining competitive advantage but also for basic organizational survival (Taylor & collin, 2000).

The scarcity of and demand for talent have reframed the organizations' search to find talented people by adding 'talent attraction' and 'employer brand value' as prerequisite for successful talent acquisition. Globalization and technological revolution brought drastic change to the concept of competition. Organizations are keen to convert competition into the strength of competitive advantage by having talented employees who can add value to the organization. This created war for talent wherein many organizations went for quicker means to have talented employees by ways similar to poaching. Soon organizations realized that the means adopted may be instant but resulted in heavy loss and erosion of fair practice. Recruitment and selection should be flexible enough to appoint best talents who can realize the organization vision. Employer brand value is an essential element of talent attraction which will widen the pool of candidates paving to better selection. Good employer brand value can attract better candidates and thereby contribute to successful talent acquisition by creating more aspirants and wider selection. The need to develop talent and become employer of choice occupies central position in organizational system (Holland, Sheehan, & Cieri, 2007).

According to CIPD (2008) employer brand is a set of attributes and qualities –often intangible– that makes an organization distinctive, promises a kind of particular employment experience and appeals to those people who will thrive and perform to their best in its culture. The employer brand value is an out-

come of what organization speaks and acts. Employer brand is a key for talent attraction. An employer brand needs to speak to what individual can expect when they join an organization and it needs to help individual determine whether they are a good fit for the organization (Lawler 2008 page 68). Any false and exaggerative employer brand has serious implication of wrong person job fit, person organization fit. And in long run organization credibility and employee trust will be at danger. Thus the organization can attract better people by speaking and showing what it is actually. The employer brand building is not an isolated effort; instead it results from organization policies and practices. Thus talent attraction is created through employer brand which results from organization policy and practices relating to compensation, training and development, working condition, performance evaluation and promotion.

In the context of Non government organizations (NGOs), NGOs' nature of work is such that it inevitably has to heavily rely on its people for its programs. The success of the organization is measured in terms of its personalized services and its reach to targeted population. As it works for a cause, it needs those people to work with, who can understand and work for the cause and purpose of the organization. Paradoxically many NGOs "irrespective of their size, type, sector or profit orientation, experience human resource issues of one type or another" (Manimala & Bhati, 2010). NGOs always make point to their skill shortages, employee turnover which hampers their programmes. Many organizations are continuously prone to scant supply of specialists and professionally trained personnel (Lu). On the one edge NGOs face employee turnover, bearing serious impact on quality and continuity of programmes, on the other they find it difficult to fill the vacancies also. Further as noted by Manimala & Bhati "vacant positions may eventually be filled but with reduced chances of obtaining qualified candidates, additional costs for employee training and development and higher chance of service disruptions" (Manimala & Bhati, 2010). Many times lack of adequate talent and skill gaps in NGOs are attributed to the competition exerted from government sector and corporate sector which attracts talented people by offering better salary, benefits, career growth, job security so on and so forth. But this is not entirely true in the eve of the belief that employees are drawn to NGO sector by purpose rather than pay and perks. This dilemma exerts the basic question as to why people want to join NGO and work for it and what factors of employer brand attracts and retains the employees.

### Review of Literature

Various studies have revealed the importance of employer brand, recruitment and selection process in talent acquisition. Majority of the studies are found in manufacturing, information

technology and other business areas. The empirical research relating to talent acquisition in NGOs is very meager. Those which are empirical either lack sufficient statistical evidence or focus on talent acquisition without addressing the major aspect of talent attraction and employer brand.

The rise of concepts of “war for talent” and “better talent is worth fighting for” intensified the competition for talent acquisition. Especially hiring stars or key players was a major strategy for acquiring talent in many organizations. Groysberg, Nanda, & Nohria (2004) found that in majority of cases recruiting stars was a failure due to the fact that performance of stars declined drastically. This is because performance of a star is not only due to his individual competence but also due to organizational capability. Stars lack integration in unique informal system of the new organization that leads to declined performance. As such it is the integration or match between person and organization that becomes more important in talent acquisition rather than the tag of star. Organizations need serious and deliberate practice that assures talent for long term. In such scenario it is not just important to attract new prospective candidates, but to hold the present potential talent and develop plans for their retention. Talent acquisition is not only through recruitment and selection but through development by which organization acquires essential talent internally. Holland, Sheehan, & Cieri (2007) emphasised that even if there is an increased recognition of the prominence of recruitment and selection to attract better talent, there is less resource allocation towards its development which creates problems in keeping the attracted talent for considerably long period. This indicates the gap in employer brand image and actual employer brand in reality which was addressed by Coldwell, Billsberry, Meurs, & Marsh,

(2008). Corporate reputation (before joining) and corporate ethical value (after joining) perception of individual leads to misfit either with below expectation or with over expectation (Coldwell, Billsberry, Meurs, & Marsh, 2008). Murray conducted a survey of 395 executives which shows that ‘recruiting and retaining top talent is becoming harder’ due to high salary expectations, skill shortages, lack of career opportunities and mobility of labor (Murry, 2008). In an attempt to explore the challenges of work place in resource sector it was found by Hutching, Cieri, & Shea that the major challenges of attracting and retaining employees are due to skill shortage, turnover and aging staff. In resource sector talent attraction is difficult due to the negative image of the sector created through environmental activists. In an attempt to identify the factors that influence employer brand two major dimensions were noted by Srivastava & Bhatnagar (2010), the one with ‘What organization is as an employer’ and the other ‘what organization has for its employees’. Eight factors viz. caring organization, enabling organization, career growth, global exposure, credible and fair, flexible and ethical, product and service brand image, positive employer brand image. (Srivastava & Bhatnagar, 2010). Sokaro (2012) found that major means of talent attraction in banking sector are good working conditions of service, opportunity for career advancement core values of organization, and reward system

In the context of NGOs there is a dearth of research into the aspect of talent acquisition. A study conducted by Manimala and Bhati with case study approach, taking the examples of several NGOs in India addresses the issues relating to human resource management practices and strategies in social enterprises. The researchers observe skill shortages, difficulty in mobilizing the candidates for recruitment, problems involved in processing of application are the major issues relating to recruitment and selection of talented employees (Manimala & Bhati, 2010).

An exploration of personnel management practices in NGOs in Bangladesh with special reference to recruitment, selection, training, compensation and motivation was made by Khondaker Mizanur Rahman (2012). They stated that large NGOs are systematic in their recruitment practice. Researchers observed that there is uniformity among NGO jobs and their requirements. They advocate that there is growing professionalism in the sector. Another study also justifies that NGOs are employing

educated people that contradicts the idea that NGOs employ less educated people. NGO employees view induction program as important aspect which is lacking in the sector (Mutambara & Mutambara, 2012). A study of the recruitment and selection practice in BARC pointed out that though recruitment and selection is systematic there is lack of job specification, leading to mismatches (Ahmed, 2013).

The major studies in for-profit sector substantially uncover the issues relating to employer brand, recruitment and selection. But there is lack of research in NGO sector relating to this. Those studies which are identified in the NGO field relating to talent acquisition either lacks statistical evidence or fails to address talent attraction. Since talent attraction, in other words employer brand value plays a vital role in talent acquisition, the present study attempts to understand the talent attraction, as a pre requisite of successful talent acquisition. The study aims to explore the determinants of talent attraction in NGOs and factors influencing the talent attraction. Though Limited studies are found in the NGO field relating to talent acquisition, and they indicate that NGOs face problems relating to recruitment and selection especially due to weak talent attraction. In order to address this problem, NGOs need to analyze the situation from the root as to why people want to join NGO? As an employer brand, what organizational factors are responsible for individual's decision to work in NGO? How recruitment and selection is made in NGOs? All these research questions form a basis for the present study aiming to explore the talent acquisition challenges of NGOs. The study is based on the employee perception of the reasons to join NGO.

### Objectives of the study

The present study attempts to know the talent acquisition in NGOs, with special reference to talent attraction, recruitment and selection process. The study attempts to uncover the influence of demographic factors like gender, age and education level on talent attraction and tries to find out the reason for opting NGOs for working.

### The main objectives are

1. To examine the demographic factors influencing talent attraction
2. To explore the reasons for talent attraction
3. To examine the recruitment and selection practices in NGO

### The following are the hypotheses of the study

1. H0: There is no significant difference in talent attraction among male and female employees.  
H1: There is a significant difference in talent attraction among male and female employees.
2. H0: There is no significant difference in talent attraction across different age groups.  
H1: There is a significant difference in talent attraction across different age groups.
3. H0: Talent attraction does not differ among levels of education.  
H1: Talent attraction differs among levels of education

### Methodology

The present study is exploratory in nature. The study is based on the primary data collected through structured questionnaire from the target population of 863 full time paid employees working in registered large NGOs, active in the area of disability, women, children and rural development in Karnataka.

The questionnaire was designed to obtain demographic information and data on talent attraction, recruitment and selection. In addition to this a preliminary interview with senior staff members was used to get insight about the recruitment and selection practices of NGO.

The responses were entered and analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science 16. Data analysis was made with the help of statistical tools such as percentage, mean, t test and ANOVA.

### Instrument

Employee perception of the reason to join NGO is considered for measuring talent attraction. Talent attraction was measured with 9

questions on 5 point Likert's Scale ranging 1= strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Various individual and organizational factors were used to measure talent attraction based on the previous literature of employer brand. Organizational factors of salary, reputation, career growth, flexible working hours are considered for talent attraction. Willingness to work in NGO sector, unemployment, simply applied and got job were Individual factors of talent attraction. The Cronbach alpha value for reliability test for talent attraction found to be 0.57, indicating good reliability. 5 questions were designed on recruitment and selection to elicit information relating to job advertisements, information in organization's website, selection process, and chance of filling vacancy internally. The Cronbach's alpha value for this is 0.76 indicating high reliability.

Analysis and Discussion

In this section talent attraction across gender, age and education level are examined using t-test and ANOVA. The next section examines reasons to join NGO and finally recruitment and selection process will be examined.

- H0: There is no significant difference in talent attraction among male and female employees.  
H1: There is a significant difference in talent attraction among male and female employees.

Table 1: Talent attraction and Gender

|                   | Gender of the Employee | N   | Mean | S.D  | Levine's Test for Equality of Variances |      | t    | df  | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|-------------------|------------------------|-----|------|------|---|------|------|-----|-----------------|
|                   |                        |     |      |      | F                                       | Sig. |      |     |                 |
| Talent attraction | male                   | 407 | 1.97 | .182 | 2.038.                                  | .154 | .713 | 861 | .476            |
|                   | female                 | 456 | 1.96 | .205 |   |      |      |     |                 |

(Source: Field study)

An Independent sample t test was used to determine if there were differences in talent attraction between male and female. There are 407 male employees with mean 1.97 and standard deviation 0.182. The female employees are more than male employees. 456 female with mean 1.96and standard deviation 0.205. Levine's test indicates equality of variance assumed, since F value is 2.038, for the significance level of .154, which is more than the p value of 0.05. The t test value is 0.713 for 861 degree of freedom at 0.476 significance, which is greater than p value of 0.05. Therefore, we can conclude that there is no difference in talent attraction among male and female employees. Both male and female employees are drawn to the NGOs.

Talent attraction across different age groups was examined with the following Hypotheses.

- H0: There is no significant difference in talent attraction across different age groups.  
H1: There is a significant difference in talent attraction across different age groups.

There are 386 employees between age 20 and 30. 344 employees belong to 31 - 40 age groups, while 102 employees are between age 41 and 50 and there are 31 employees with age above 51. This indicates that the majority of the employees (85%) belong to young and middle age group (20-40). Though the ANOVA test performed to examine the talent attraction across various age groups is significant, the post hoc test among each age group was not at all significant for any of the group, as all p values were greater than 0.05. Thus we can conclude that the difference in attraction among various age groups is not significant and can be attributed to chance.

Table 2: Talent Attraction and employee Age

|                | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 151.207        | 3   | 50.402      | 2.632 | .049 |
| Within Groups  | 16452.107      | 859 | 19.153      |       |      |
| Total          | 16603.314      | 862 |             |       |      |

(Source: Field study)

In order to know the talent attraction among employees with different education levels the following hypothesis was tested.

- H0: Talent attraction does not differ among levels of education.  
H1: Talent attraction differs among levels of education.

The formal education levels in terms of qualification showed that there are 14 employees without formal education, 120 employees with SSLC and below.120 employees up to pre university education.81 employees hold diplomas, 280 employees with graduation, and 179 are post graduates, 3 employees have other than the mentioned educational qualifications. ANOVA results reveals that the talent attraction differs among levels of education, as p value of .006 is less than 0.05, but the post hoc test indicated the difference only among the levels below SSLC and post graduation. Thus it is found that the difference in talent attraction among all other education levels can be attributed to chance, except between SSLC & below and Post graduation.

Table 3: Talent Attraction and employee education level ANOVA

|                | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 345.806        | 6   | 57.634      | 3.035 | .006 |
| Within Groups  | 16257.509      | 856 | 18.992      |       |      |
| Total          | 16603.314      | 862 |             |       |      |

(Source: Field study)

Table 4: Reasons for joining NGO

| Reasons                                | Dis agreement | Agreement | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|--|---------------|-----------|------|--------------------|
| Like to work in NGO                    | 87            | 776 (90%) | 4.38 | 0.782              |
| Suitable qualification                 | 135           | 728 (84%) | 4.23 | 0.894              |
| Salary offered is good                 | 462 (53%)     | 401       | 3.42 | 1.049              |
| Organization reputation                | 66            | 797 (92%) | 4.52 | 0.714              |
| Career growth                          | 144           | 719 (83%) | 4.27 | 0.876              |
| Flexible working hours                 | 178           | 685 (79%) | 4.10 | 0.897              |
| Challenging job                        | 192           | 671 (78%) | 4.04 | 1.006              |
| Simply applied, got job                | 473 (55%)     | 390       | 3.06 | 1.417              |
| Got this job after long search for job | 482 (56%)     | 381       | 3.13 | 1.418              |

(Source: Field study) (N=863)

Table 4 shows the agreement and disagreement of the respondents for reasons to join NGO. These nine reasons can be categorized as 'personal reasons' and 'organizational' reasons for joining NGO. Like to work in NGO, suitable qualification, simply applied and got job and got this job after long search for job are personal reasons. Among these four personal reasons, like to work and qualification shows 'Choice to work' for NGO; simply applied and got job shows the entry

into NGO is by chance i.e., 'Chance to work' and got this job after a long search for job indicates 'compulsion' to join NGO. Thus personal reasons are mostly of choice, chance and compulsion to join NGO. Among these like to work and suitable qualification are the major reasons which makes it clear that people join NGO by choice.

The organizational factors like salary, organization reputation, career growth, challenging job and flexible working hours are the measures for talent attraction. Prominent organizational reason for talent attraction is organization reputation followed by career growth, flexible working hours and challenging job. It is to be noted that salary is not the major reason since 53% of the respondents disagree for the statement –salary offered is good.

**Table 5: Recruitment and Selection Process**

|                                    | N   | Mean | Std. Deviation | Mean difference | T test (2 tailed) |
|------------------------------------|-----|------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| advertising vacancy                | 863 | 3.49 | 1.1430         | -.506           | -13.017           |
| interesting information in Website | 863 | 3.82 | .976           | -.178           | -5.373            |
| systematic selection               | 863 | 3.76 | 1.024          | -.240           | -6.883            |
| selection of best                  | 863 | 3.91 | .876           | -.092           | -3.069            |
| internal recruitment               | 863 | 3.68 | 1.048          | -.317           | -8.899            |

(Source: Field study) (d.f.862, sig .000)

Table 5 shows the results of one sample t test for the recruitment and selection practice. It is observed that the mean difference for all recruitment and selection procedure is negative, indicating observed values are less than expected value. The mean value is less for advertising vacancy. This may result in limited pool of candidates for selection.

### Findings and suggestions

1. Talent attraction among male and female employees is equal. In other words both male and female employees are drawn to NGOs
2. Majority of the respondents belongs to young and middle age group, the difference in talent attraction among different age groups cannot be attributed to age, instead it is the chance factor.
3. Talent attraction among various education level is similar but except between SSLC below and post graduation.
4. Organization reputation is the prominent reason given by respondents for joining NGO followed by career growth, challenging job and flexible working hours.
5. The mean for actual and expected values in recruitment is different indicating that the practices are not up to the expectation.

### Suggestions

NGOs can be an employer of choice by creating a work environment that ensures and contributes for talent attraction. The data is evident of the fact that there are more female workers, so a co-operative, safe working condition facilitates to retain them. As there are more young and middle age group, and qualified persons, organization can tap the potency by suitable talent development and utilization. Recruitment and selection should be made in systematic way to assure better person job and organization fit. This can be achieved by advertising the vacancy and job requirements, adhering to system-

atic selection process, and providing orientation to employees. Organization reputation is to be maintained by being responsible and accountable to multiple stakeholders. The second important organizational reason is career growth that can be enhanced by utilizing and developing employee talent to obtain desired result. Participation in decision making, autonomy in work execution, encouraging team work, can be practiced to fulfill the aspirations of employees. This makes job more interesting and challenging, and thereby motivates employees. The individual willingness is the most important reason to join NGO, and salary is the less preferred reason, indicating service orientation rather than monetary expectation of the employees. Thus organization should understand that adherence to organizational values and commitment towards organization mission is the means through which employee expectation can be fulfilled resulting in employer brand value. Recruitment and selection practices should be properly planned and designed to obtain competent and suitable people. Advertising the vacancy, information about job requirements, creating interest for jobs in organization's website etc. will improve talent attraction and facilitate for better selection.

### Practical Implications:

As the organization reputation is the major reason for talent attraction, organizations need to maintain it by actually living and upholding to it. This not only enhances attraction and retention but also helps to solve the issues relating to talent shortages. Transparency in operation and accountability to all the stakeholders are the critical factors for organizational reputation. Window dressing and hidden agendas of few NGOs are posing threat to genuine players. Therefore organization reputation should be viewed as a real sense of trust building activity, which is the basic building block for NGO. Talent attraction should be envisaged as a means to attain better person-organization fit. "The organizations need to define what type of person will fit with the organization culture. A lot of that is value driven-not just what they are capable of doing, but what satisfies them" (Dale, 2005). This results in better selection and thereby minimizes talent crisis.

### Conclusion:

The present study is an attempt to discover the talent acquisition aspect of the NGOs to meet the HR challenges faced by them. The globalization and united effort of the whole world to deal with social problems have made the sector more dynamic and infused competition in the sector. NGOs are becoming more systematic and professional in their approach to address people issues. Talent acquisition will be successful by understanding talent attraction aspect and making recruitment and selection more systematic.

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