

A Comprehensive Study on Newer Trends in Recruitment Practices With Reference To Retail Industry

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Abstract- One of the most important part of hiring process is sourcing talents. It lays a foundation for the successful staffing as it will identify in advance the talent pool who eventually will turn out to be potential applicants. For any organization an effective sourcing drive improves the quality of applicant pool and also decreases the complexity of assessment and selection system since more candidates would be good. No doubt that recruitment is a great deal of preparation both from organization and applicant perspective. These organizations are certainly viewing it as a strategic arena to ensure that they are getting competent employees. The present study aims at exploring the new methods, sources and techniques for hiring employees in retail industry. For this purpose Human Resource managers associated with retail firms were interviewed to find out most preferred, prospective and effective methods to staff their organizations. The role of recruitment contributing other aspects of organizational effectiveness and the evolution of recruitment in nutshell is also discussed by reviewing the literature with respect to various similar industries.

Key words- Alternate recruitment, employee referrals, methods of recruitment, recruitment strategies, retail HR.

Introduction:

Recruitment is defined as a process of finding and attracting capable applicants for the employment. This process resumes with seeking new recruits and ends when their applications are submitted. The outcome is to form a pool of applicants from which potential new employees can be chosen. It is rightly said that recruitment is the first contact made by the company with the future would-be employee. Through this they become aware of the company more closely and also the nature of jobs that could be offered. There is a high competition in recruitment amongst organizations, since they compete for the same employee and for similar positions. When vacancies are more than the candidates suitable to fill the position in the job market candidates can have a better control over which organization they want to join. The moment organizations decide to enter new markets either for sustainability or operate in global market, it also mandates the adoption of cultural sensitivity and awareness. This added dimension of culture may require different methods of recruitment than those previously used like to determine whether if it is better to expatriate a current employee or hire staff in the country the firm is moving into. (Lenartowicz & Johnson, 2007).

India's retail industry is the world's fifth largest, and it is one of the country's fastest-growing industries, accounting for 14-15 percent of GDP. There are both structured and unorganised sectors in this category. The Indian retail industry has become one of the country's fastest-growing industries in recent years.

Many causes contributed to its expansion, including the rise of nuclear families, the expanding tendency of dual-income households, an increase in disposable income and customer demand, an increase in luxury item consumption, and an increase in the number of people working. The following are some of the most important sections in the retail industry: Apparel and apparel, Fashion & Lifestyle, Retail Food & Beverage, Pharmaceutical Retail, E-commerce or E-tailing. Majorly retail industry has few types as shown in figure 1.

Fig. 1 Types of Retail Industry

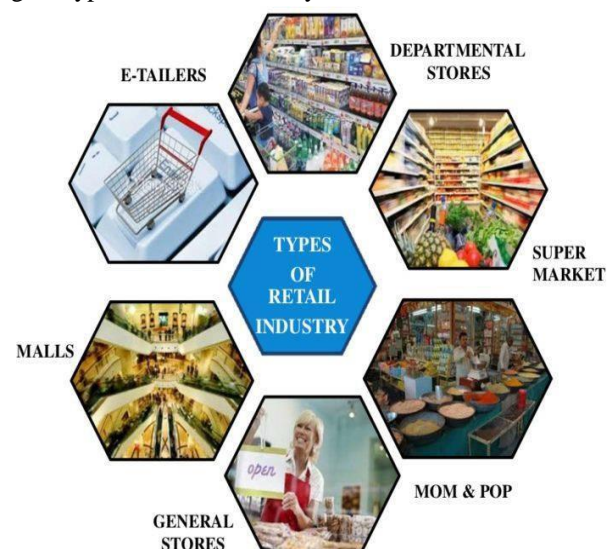


Image source : <https://harver.com/blog/retail-recruitment-strategy/>

This industry employs a wide range of individuals with varying levels of experience. Jobs in operations and supply chain management are available. Though operations and supply chain management roles are the industry's backbone, there are a variety of different job opportunities, ranging from sales executives and store managers to merchandise planners and purchasers. In this era of constant battle between online and brick-mortar stores there is also an evident fight between managing employees older ways adopting new platforms to do that. But ever changing market demands asks for a system in place to keep-up with the future workplace requirement.

Literature Review :

The specialist field of recruiting, as well as further screening and selecting procedures, has evolved as the general HRM has expanded to include more extents and themes. For example, from the 1950s to the 1980s, newspaper advertisements reached approximately 75% of candidates. Several web-based recruiting sites, such as careerbuilder.com and hotjobs.com, were developed before the end of the 1900s.; which opened the way for candidates searching online, there was an increase from 6% in 2002 to 96% in 2006 (Hebberd, 2017).

In a study conducted by Dr. Michael Mboya Muma et. al. it was found that there exists a positive relationship between human resourcing strategies and retention of employees in universities in Kenya. An impactful recruitment strategy assisted the universities in Kenya to attract, recruit and retain employees with the right skills, knowledge and abilities to give high job performance. Developed countries and developing countries face difficulties to recruit and retain their key employees. So retention is a key mandate to achieve their competitive edge. [Dr. Michael Mboya Muma, Dr. Joyce Nzulwa, et. al., 2019]. Organizations must consider the overall impact of using social media in their recruiting system on the company and its hiring strategy. As global competition heats up, an organization's entire efficiency is now defined by its ability to attract the best and brightest employees. (Thomas & Ray, 2000). Today the organizations started matching their strategies with recruitment policies, in fact recruitment is done on the basis of overall company strategies. And all the relevant recruitment strategies in the organization is aligned with the overall corporate strategies as shown in Exhibit 1

Exhibit1: Corporate strategies vis-à-vis recruitment strategies

Corporate strategies	Relevant Recruitment strategies
Sustainable growth	Centralized recruitment
Expansion Diversification	Decentralized recruitment
Entry of foreign Markets	Candidates with multi-skills
Mergers & Acquisitions	Candidates with multi-cultural backgrounds
Fast growth and change	Candidates with multi-skills and multi-cultural backgrounds
Low cost leadership	Outsourcing
Differentiation	Highly skilled and smart candidates
Super customer service	Candidates with intrapreneurial skills
	Candidates with positive attitude and emotional feelings

(Source: Adopted from Rao, P. Subba, 2009 Human Resource Management : Text and Cases)

Recruitment may become an expensive process, if it gets prolonged for a long period of time. That is why many of the organizations measure the recruitment costs to control the internal budget. Similarly time taken to hire an employee is also recorded, since it indicates how soon recruitment can respond to the business needs. In the process these organizations miss the greatest indicator of a successful recruitment i.e the quality of hire.

Traditional methods of recruitment face many restrictions like career level, geographical boundaries and other issues related with physical harnessing (Dhamija, 2012). The online recruitment method would have updated databases with many career levels, industries and regions. Also it has updated background information of the organization, job description and personnel specifications to prepare an advertisement to help the potential employee know that for which position are they applying and the details of the organization they are intending to work with (Midiwo, Mukulu, & Waititu 2015). Basic human capital acquisition entails employers successfully completing the process of recruiting and selecting prospective employees. Companies hunt for prospective employees who suit the organization's needs through complex recruitment and selection processes. (Ahmad & Schroeder, 2002).

All recruitment companies seek to supply employers with the most qualified personnel possible, relieving employers of the burden of identifying and interviewing job candidates. It is also said that such firms are simply interested in assisting corporations in filling openings, and that they may sometimes provide organisations with inappropriate staff in order to earn money. In the future, this may even damage agencies' reputation (Marysol & Randy, 2019) It is desirable that organization should hire employees with vast, relevant and appropriate levels of knowledge, skills and capabilities. Learning and development fundamentally aids an organization in the process of collective advancement through concerted expert and ethical replication and expedition of learning and knowledge that support business goals and develops an employees' potential, and respect and build on diversity (Mathis & Jackson, 2003).

In a study conducted by Joseph and Hazel to know the influence of recruitment, selection and talent development on the performance of civil servants in Kenya it was concluded that recruitment and Selection process that defines means of attracting and retaining employees, providing the same chances to all, irrespective of age, sex, race, creed, disability or marital status has a positive impact on performance of the civil servants. Further, it found that if recruitment and selection is based on professional and academic qualifications, recruiting highly skilled individuals then these employees could help the department attain its objectives. Using acceptable job selection methods at the department and presence of effective placement procedure in the organization positively affect the performance.

Objectives Of The Study:

1. To explore the reasons behind adopting newer methods of recruitment and selection in various industries.
2. To critically analyze the most preferred recruitment & selection practice in retail industry and discuss its relevance in the current scenario.
3. To recommend and suggest some of the feasible recruitment & selection methods to be embraced by the retail industry.

Recruitment Phases In Retail:

Recruitment team of any firm needs an inside out approach based on strong insights, full-proof research and implementation of expertise to tap the best talent for the firm. Perhaps they understand the importance of having a resourced manpower to accelerate growth of business and profits. Entire recruitment process entices certain phases to

result in having most appropriate candidate on the board as an employee. These phases are as below:



Planning Phase : This is the initiation phase where the HR team understands the position requirements and the appropriate utility of such a requirement so as to strengthen the search for potential candidates. This is followed by the further toiling to plan a strategy that may serve the needs. This planning is based on all potential difficulties as well as the mechanisms to address them. It's imperative to search for the ongoing trends in the market, competency levels present in market and also the parameters that need to be considered for the position. With the said blueprint next step is resumed i.e. R&D.

Research & Development Phase : This step necessitates a great deal of precision and inquisitiveness in order to find the appropriate competency levels based on skill, experience, stability, and performance. Using all search tools and techniques quality candidates are sought after, and to arrive on best pool of candidates, they are ranked on these parameters.

Preliminary Screening Phase: Once the parameters are set and the candidates are chosen, the HR team conducts preliminary screening, in which candidates are evaluated based on Key Result Areas (KRAs), Compensation Package, Job Title, Job Location, and other factors. The screening process is meticulously carried out in order to determine the candidate's competency.

Interview & Reference Check Phase : Once the preliminary screening and interview is over, candidature is validated through discreet reference check. After that, the candidate is sent to functional heads who can analyse the candidate's capability and potential directly. If functional heads provide good input, a formal reference check is conducted on the candidate's work ethics, performance, demeanour, and other basic facts to ensure a perfect person-organization match.

Closure Phase : The final stage of the procedure is bargaining and handholding. The pay package, joining date, and offer letter are all negotiated between the retailer and the candidate. Following that, the HR team must ensure proper placement and easy integration of the candidate into the company.

New Trends For Recruitment In Retail:

When applicants are flooding into the highly competitive job market, it's very challenging than ever before to select the

best among the pool, right tools & techniques can come to the rescue.

Customized Job advertisement

A great advertisement can work wonders at the recruitment front and get unbelievable results for the firm. Retailers are highlighting the underlying message through advertisement that it is rewarding to work with one's firm. The value proportion included at the time of seeking new candidates are such as opportunities for personal growth, professional advancement, special focus on teamwork, employee recognition, forward thinking management and many more to add.

Video interviewing

For retail jobs candidates generally apply from far flung areas, which become a costly affair to conduct the recruitment process. Video interviews are yet another way to assess the potential candidates on the qualification, other relevant skills and much more during the hiring process. Most of the time it is implemented as a preliminary interview, meaning thereby that, final selection of the candidate is not done until later in the process. Two types of video interviewing is used- one-way and live video interviews. One-way video- interviewing is asynchronous interview in which job candidates can record their responses to the interview questions anytime as per their convenience. They are also known as pre-recorded or on-demand video interviews since it does not require the interviewer to be present. A live video is a real time interview where the interviewer conducts face-to-face interview

Alternative workforce

There is a rapid growth in alternative workforce arrangement, in fact it's mainstreaming. Alternative workforce includes contract workers, freelancers, outsourced teams and also 'gig' workers. Most firms are capitalizing on such workforce, generally for the jobs which are transactional in nature and not strategic. Retail HR is buckling-up in this area, to manage and sustain in the market. Since such kind of workforce often pursue their passion and critical skill, it's a win- win situation for organization as well as the employee to reap benefit. This would ensure a high level of job satisfaction.

Passive job seekers

Passive job seekers are people who are currently employed and are not actively looking for jobs. Sometimes even after thousands of searches made right candidate is not found. A

strong employee referral program may boost up the search of passive job seekers for a retail firm. Employees could turn out to be the witnesses for an organization's great working environment, to motivate and refer the passive job seeker. Many businesses advertise on online radio stations since this is where their potential employees spend their time. It is used by retail organisations, particularly those with in-store Wi-Fi, to reach out to passive job candidates. Organizations employ a variety of methods to find passive job searchers, including television commercials, posters, and billboards.

Employee referrals

A proactive approach to source the talent is need of any candidate driven market. It goes without a second thought that referrals are the best source of quality candidates. Retail stores are often a tough workplace and employees have an in-depth

Understanding of the same. They have a better insight into the day-to-day operations which is communicated to the referred candidates so as to fit in the organizational culture and working style. Similarly new candidates go easy on the unrealistic expectations from the organization, which would prove to be mutually beneficial. Other benefits include the reduced time to hire and high applicant conversion rate, that seem to haunt any retail HR all the time.

Social Media

Technology can streamline the recruitment process. The firm's social channels are a great way to share the employer brand and job postings, at a large scale. All kind of job seekers nowadays utilize the social media and go through the company's profile before applying to the job. Companies now have access to more information about job candidates than ever before. Retail employees, too, are utilising their profiles on all social media networks whenever available. Employers can use relevant social media information in the selection of top qualified individuals, especially for specialised roles, if they want to adopt smart practises.

Employer review sites

Candidates prefer to have as much information as possible about a potential company before starting a job search or preparing for an interview. Basically employer review sites offer information on employee benefits and company culture,

reviews from current and past employees, about salaries and potential interview questions. It provide employees the opportunity to rate their job and their company across a variety of measures, usually according to a scale and/or percentage. It allows employees to rate their job and their organisation on a range of factors, usually using a scale and/or percentage system. Retail job seekers use review sites to gather objective, unbiased information about a company's work environment. Also, learn about the company's leadership, career opportunities, work-life balance, and contributions to current employees. Retail firms need to be cautious since company review sites can make or break their employer brand

Data driven practices

Data-driven recruitment enable the technologies and techniques used to analyze a large talent pool and identify the candidates having the proper skills and the right mindset to realize the organizational goals. As on date it came as a relief for the recruitment of middle level and above employees in few retail organizations. If the aim is to have the best talent of labor market to be on board, companies must start looking towards the latest data-driven HR technologies. Though not very popular among retail firms but surely data driven recruitment practices is the future. The rapid growth of HR advancements is providing companies with more data to identify talent that can improve the workforce productivity.

Conclusion:

Undoubtedly several sourcing strategies exist and firms are very proactive in identifying the apt job seekers. Organizations conditions the talents of their workforce by recruiting new staff with fresh talents or else by developing, training and educating existing staff. Only the right people can drive the success of the firm so effective recruitment and selection can achieve it and also align new staff with the strategic direction of the organization. The study concludes that recruiters in the HR department know that they can not use the same tactics to seek candidates from different groups of prospective and potential employees. Surely while recruiting different types of staff members, it is important to judge that which tactics work and which don't. It is the need for HR to fine-tune their current recruitment strategies, adopt new one's, continue to use those which have been effective and eliminate the redundant methods.

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