Vol. 3, No. 01, pp. 18-26

Journal of Organizational and
Human Resource Development Strategies
journal.iistr.org/index.php/OHDS
DOI: 10.56741/IISTR.ohds.002029

Effect of Recruitment and Selection Practices on Employee Performance

An Empirical Study of East Wollega Zone Finance Office, Oromia, Ethiopia

[1]Gudata Abara Chali*, [1]Lalisa Kenea Gamtessa
Corresponding Author: *gudataa@gmail.com
[1] Wallaga University, Oromia, Ethiopia
[2] Oromia General Auditor Bureau, Oromia, Ethiopia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history
Received 26 January 2026
Revised 10 February 2026
Accepted 15 February 2026

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of recruitment and selection practices on employee performance within the East Wollega Zone Finance Office. In the modern public sector landscape, the acquisition of skilled human capital is recognized as a primary source of competitive advantage. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach with an explanatory research design, the study conducted a census survey of 63 permanent employees, yielding a 95.2% response rate. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 23 through descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression. The empirical results reveal a strong positive correlation ($r=0.564$, $p<0.01$) between recruitment practices and performance. Regression analysis showed that the model explains 62.1% of the variance in employee performance ($R2=0.621$). Notably, the "Examination of HR Policies" emerged as the most significant predictor ($B=0.438$, $p<0.001$). Qualitative insights further indicated that while formal policies exist, there are gaps in transparency and feedback mechanisms. The study recommends that the zonal administration prioritize the modernization of recruitment criteria and institutionalize a merit-based selection framework to enhance public service delivery.

Keywords
East Wollega Zone
Employee Performance
Public Sector HRM
Recruitment and Selection

This is an open-access article under the CC–BY-SA license.

Introduction

Human resources are widely recognized as the most critical assets of any organization, as they provide the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and commitment required to achieve institutional objectives and sustain organizational performance [1]. In the public sector, the quality of human resources becomes even more decisive because organizational success is measured not by profit, but by the effectiveness, efficiency, and equity of service delivery to citizens. Consequently, recruitment and selection processes serve as the foundation upon which public sector performance is built, determining the caliber of personnel entrusted with policy implementation and public financial management [2],[3].

Recruitment represents the initial gateway through which potential employees enter an organization, while selection focuses on identifying the best fit between individual competencies and job requirements [4],[5]. A transparent and merit-based recruitment system ensures that organizations attract qualified candidates, whereas effective selection mechanisms align employee capabilities with organizational needs. In public administration, these processes are essential for building institutional capacity, enhancing accountability, and maintaining public trust [6],[7].

In Ethiopia, civil service reform initiatives have consistently emphasized recruitment and selection as central pillars of public sector transformation. These reforms aim to replace traditional patronage-based systems with meritocratic practices that promote professionalism and performance [8]. For regional public institutions such as the East Wollega Zone Finance Office, effective recruitment is particularly crucial, as the quality of human resources directly affects financial governance, budget execution, and the efficient utilization of public funds. Skilled and ethical finance professionals are instrumental in supporting regional development and ensuring compliance with public financial management regulations [9].

Despite the existence of formal recruitment policies, implementing consistent, merit-based systems remains a major challenge in many developing bureaucracies. Weak enforcement mechanisms, limited institutional capacity, and informal social networks often undermine recruitment integrity [4]. In such contexts, recruitment processes may be treated as procedural formalities rather than strategic tools for organizational improvement. As a result, underqualified or mismatched employees may be appointed, leading to reduced morale, limited innovation, and poor service outcomes [2].

Empirical evidence suggests that ineffective recruitment and selection practices contribute to high employee turnover, low job satisfaction, and declining organizational performance [10]. In the public sector, these weaknesses are particularly damaging because they constrain institutional learning and erode citizens' confidence in government services.

Studies conducted in countries such as Malaysia, Ghana, and Nigeria have demonstrated a positive relationship between recruitment quality and employee performance, highlighting the importance of transparent criteria, competency-based assessments, and standardized procedures [11],[12].

However, localized empirical research on recruitment and selection practices in the Ethiopian public sector remains limited, particularly in Western Oromia. Preliminary observations at the East Wollega Zone Finance Office indicate that although recruitment policies are clearly articulated, their implementation lacks sufficient rigor to attract and retain high-performing professionals. This study addresses this gap by examining how recruitment strategies and human resource policies influence employee performance within the finance office, thereby contributing context-specific evidence to the broader discourse on public sector human resource management in developing countries.

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods research approach that integrates descriptive and explanatory research designs to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between recruitment practices and employee performance. The descriptive design was used to capture existing recruitment procedures, human resource policies, and performance conditions within the organization, while the explanatory design facilitated the examination of causal relationships between recruitment-related variables and employee performance outcomes. The integration of quantitative and qualitative methods enhanced the depth and robustness of the analysis by allowing both statistical testing and contextual interpretation of findings.

The target population consisted of 63 permanent employees working at the East Wollega Zone Finance Office. Given the relatively small and accessible population size, a census method was adopted to ensure complete coverage of all eligible respondents. This approach eliminated sampling error and enhanced the representativeness of the data, thereby strengthening the validity of the study's conclusions.

Primary quantitative data were collected using structured questionnaires designed with five-point Likert-scale items to measure internal recruitment practices, external recruitment practices, human resource policy implementation, and employee performance. In addition, qualitative data were gathered through key informant interviews with senior officials to obtain deeper insights into recruitment processes and policy enforcement. Content validity of the research instruments was established through expert review, ensuring alignment with the study objectives. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with all constructs exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

For data analysis, multiple linear regression was employed to examine the effect of recruitment practices and human resource policies on employee performance. The empirical model was specified as:

$$Performance = \beta_0 + \beta_1(Internal\ Recruitment) + \beta_2(External\ Recruitment) + \beta_3(HR\ Policy) + \varepsilon. \quad (1)$$

This analytical approach enabled the study to quantify the relative contribution of each predictor while controlling for error variance.

Results and Discussion

A. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The results indicate that the workforce at the East Wollega Zone Finance Office is predominantly male, with 43 respondents (71.7%) identifying as male, while female employees accounted for 28.3% of the sample. This gender distribution reflects the broader staffing pattern commonly observed in public finance institutions.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n=60)

Category	Subcategory	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	43	71.67%
	Female	17	28.33%
Education	Degree	42	70.00%
	MA/MSc and above	11	18.33%
	Others	7	11.67%
Experience	>15 years	25	41.67%
	< 15 years	35	58.33%

Source: Survey Data (2025)

In terms of educational attainment, the respondents demonstrated a relatively high level of formal education. A total of 42 employees (70.0%) held a first degree, while 11 respondents (18.3%) possessed a Master's degree or higher qualification. This indicates that the majority of employees meet the academic requirements for professional public service roles. With respect to work experience, 25 respondents (41.7%) reported having more than 15 years of service, suggesting a workforce with substantial institutional knowledge and long-term exposure to public sector administrative practices. Overall, the demographic profile suggests that respondents were sufficiently qualified and experienced to provide reliable information regarding recruitment practices and employee performance.

B. Evaluation of Recruitment Practices

Descriptive statistics were used to assess employees' perceptions of recruitment and selection practices. The findings reveal variations across different dimensions of recruitment. Transparency of recruitment procedures recorded a moderate mean score of 2.68, indicating

that respondents perceived the recruitment process as only partially transparent. This suggests a need for clearer communication regarding selection criteria, evaluation procedures, and decision-making processes.

In contrast, job advertisement clarity received a relatively higher mean score of 3.12, implying that vacancy announcements were generally well publicized and clearly articulated. This result indicates that while the organization performs adequately in disseminating recruitment information, shortcomings remain in the execution and communication of internal recruitment procedures. The disparity between job advertisement clarity and recruitment transparency highlights a procedural gap between attracting applicants and managing the selection process.

C. Regression Analysis Results

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between recruitment-related variables and employee performance. The regression model was statistically significant and demonstrated strong predictive power ($R^2 = 0.621$, $F = 17.69$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that 62.1% of the variation in employee performance was explained by the independent variables included in the model.

Table 2. Multiple Regression Coefficients

Model Predictor	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig.
(Constant)	1.293	.423	-	3.054	.003
Examination of HR Policies	.438	.069	.637	6.348	.000
HR Policies Effectiveness	.084	.039	.181	2.125	.038
Recruitment/Selection Practices	.115	.136	.084	.846	.401

Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

As shown in Table 2, the examination of human resource policies emerged as the strongest predictor of employee performance ($\beta = 0.637$, $p < 0.001$). The unstandardized coefficient indicates that a one-unit increase in the rigor of HR policy examination leads to a 0.438-unit increase in employee performance, holding other variables constant. HR policy effectiveness also exhibited a statistically significant positive effect on performance ($\beta = 0.181$, $p = 0.038$).

In contrast, recruitment and selection practices did not show a statistically significant relationship with employee performance ($\beta = 0.084$, $p = 0.401$). This finding suggests that employee performance is influenced more by the quality and enforcement of HR policies than by recruitment activities alone. The results emphasize the central role of policy examination and implementation in shaping employee outcomes within the organization.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide important insights into the dynamics between recruitment practices, human resource (HR) policies, and employee performance in the East Wollega Zone Finance Office. Overall, the results indicate that while recruitment activities

remain essential, it is the strength, examination, and effective implementation of HR policies that play a more decisive role in shaping employee performance. This finding reinforces the argument that human resource management in the public sector must move beyond procedural compliance toward policy-driven performance management [2],[6].

The demographic profile of respondents reveals a workforce that is relatively well educated and experienced, with the majority holding at least a first degree and a substantial proportion possessing more than 15 years of service. Such characteristics suggest that employees have the cognitive and professional capacity to understand organizational policies and translate them into performance outcomes. Prior studies emphasize that experienced and educated public servants tend to respond more strongly to institutional rules and performance expectations than to recruitment-related incentives alone [10],[13]. This contextual factor helps explain why HR policy examination emerged as the most powerful predictor in the regression model.

The descriptive analysis of recruitment practices highlights a notable discrepancy between job advertisement clarity and recruitment transparency. While vacancies are generally well-advertised, the recruitment process itself is perceived as only moderately transparent. This finding aligns with existing literature on public sector recruitment in developing countries, where formal procedures are often well documented but inconsistently implemented [2],[4]. Lack of transparency can weaken employee trust and perceptions of fairness, which in turn may dilute the motivational impact of recruitment practices on long-term performance.

Regression results further demonstrate that the examination of HR policies is the strongest determinant of employee performance. This suggests that systematic evaluation, monitoring, and enforcement of HR policies create a stable institutional environment that guides employee behavior and performance standards. From an institutional theory perspective, clearly examined and enforced policies reduce ambiguity, align individual behavior with organizational objectives, and promote consistency across administrative units [14],[15]. In finance offices, where accuracy, accountability, and procedural compliance are critical, such policy rigor becomes particularly influential.

The significant effect of HR policy effectiveness reinforces this interpretation. Policies that are not only well-designed but also effectively implemented contribute positively to employee performance. This finding is consistent with prior research indicating that HR systems exert their strongest impact when employees perceive them as credible, fair, and consistently applied [2],[9]. In public sector organizations, effective HR policies can compensate for limitations in financial incentives by fostering role clarity, procedural justice, and professional discipline.

Interestingly, recruitment and selection practices did not exhibit a statistically significant relationship with employee performance in the regression model. This does not imply that recruitment is unimportant, but rather that its impact may be indirect or conditional upon subsequent HR management practices. Similar findings have been reported in public administration studies, where initial recruitment quality loses explanatory power when policy enforcement, supervision, and performance management mechanisms are weak or uneven [11],[15]. In this context, even well-recruited employees may underperform if organizational rules are inconsistently applied.

This result also supports human capital theory, which posits that the value of employee skills depends on how effectively organizations deploy and manage them [16]. Recruitment brings human capital into the organization, but HR policies determine whether that capital is developed, motivated, and retained. Without rigorous policy examination and enforcement, the potential benefits of merit-based recruitment may not fully materialize.

The findings have broader implications for public sector reform in Ethiopia. While civil service reforms have placed strong emphasis on recruitment transparency and merit-based hiring, this study suggests that equal attention must be given to post-recruitment governance mechanisms. Strengthening HR policy examination frameworks, internal audits, and performance appraisal systems may yield greater performance gains than recruitment reforms alone [9],[18].

Finally, the results contribute to the limited empirical literature on HRM practices in sub-national public institutions in Ethiopia. By demonstrating that policy examination and effectiveness outweigh recruitment practices in predicting employee performance, the study highlights the need for an integrated HRM approach that links recruitment with consistent policy enforcement. This insight is particularly relevant for regional finance offices, where institutional capacity and governance quality directly affect public financial management and service delivery outcomes [18],[19].

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the relationship between recruitment practices, human resource policies, and employee performance at the East Wollega Zone Finance Office. The findings indicate that while recruitment and selection remain essential entry mechanisms for acquiring qualified personnel, they do not independently exert a significant influence on employee performance. Instead, the rigor with which human resource policies are examined and effectively implemented emerged as the most influential determinant of performance. This suggests that employee outcomes in public sector organizations are shaped less by the act of recruitment itself and more by the institutional environment that governs employee behavior after appointment.

The results underscore the importance of policy-driven human resource management in the public sector. Clear, consistently enforced HR policies provide role clarity, enhance accountability, and create a stable organizational framework that supports sustained employee performance. In the context of finance offices, where procedural accuracy and compliance are critical, strengthening HR policy examination mechanisms is particularly vital.

Based on these conclusions, several recommendations are proposed. First, the East Wollega Zone Finance Office should strengthen internal mechanisms for the regular review and evaluation of HR policies to ensure consistent application across departments. Second, greater transparency should be introduced into recruitment and selection processes, particularly in communicating evaluation criteria and selection outcomes. Finally, management should integrate recruitment practices with post-recruitment performance management systems, including training, supervision, and appraisal, to fully realize the benefits of a merit-based civil service.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

References

[1] G. Dessler, *Human Resource Management*, 15th ed. Harlow, U.K.: Pearson Education, 2019.

[2] M. Armstrong and S. Taylor, *Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of People Management*. London, U.K.: Kogan Page Publishers, 2023.

[3] B. A. Johnson, J. D. Coggburn, and J. J. Llorens, "Artificial intelligence and public human resource management: Questions for research and practice," *Public Personnel Management*, vol. 51, no. 4, pp. 538–562, 2022.

[4] R. L. Mathis, J. H. Jackson, S. R. Valentine, and P. A. Meglich, *Human Resource Management*, 15th ed. Boston, MA, USA: Cengage Learning, 2016.

[5] S. Jamil, S. I. Zaman, Y. Kayikci, and S. A. Khan, "The role of green recruitment on organizational sustainability performance: A study within the context of green human resource management," *Sustainability*, vol. 15, no. 21, p. 15567, 2023.

[6] J. E. Pynes, *Human Resources Management for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*, 4th ed. San Francisco, CA, USA: Jossey-Bass, 2013.

[7] E. Knies, P. Boselie, J. Gould-Williams, and W. Vandenabeele, "Strategic human resource management and public sector performance: Context matters," *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, vol. 35, no. 14, pp. 2432–2444, 2024.

[8] J. Asseburg, C. Hommes, and D. Schmidt, "Civil service reform in developing countries: Challenges and prospects," *Public Administration and Development*, vol. 38, no. 4, pp. 193–205, 2018, doi: 10.1002/pad.1845.

[9] OECD, *Public Service Leadership and Capability: Strengthening the Human Resource Management System*. Paris, France: OECD Publishing, 2017, doi: 10.1787/9789264267493-en.

[10] P. Boxall and J. Purcell, *Strategy and Human Resource Management*, 4th ed. London, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

[11] J. K. Mensah, "Talent management and employee performance: A public sector perspective," *Public Organization Review*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 227–244, 2019, doi: 10.1007/s11115-018-0407-0.

[12] S. Desri, E. Sirait, T. S. Wibowo, M. E. A. Kusuma, and A. Ahmadun, "The effect of recruitment on employee performance with selection as a moderating variable," *Reslaj: Religion Education Social Laa Roiba Journal*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 2389–2397, 2024.

[13] F. Damanpour and M. Schneider, "Phases of the adoption of innovation in organizations: Effects of environment, organization, and top managers," *British Journal of Management*, vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 215–236, 2006, doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8551.2006.00498.x.
[14] B. Galleli and L. Amaral, "Bridging institutional theory and social and environmental efforts in management: A review and research agenda," *Journal of Management*, vol. 52, no. 1, pp. 42–93, 2026.
[15] W. R. Scott, *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests, and Identities*, 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA, USA: SAGE Publications, 2014.
[16] G. S. Becker, *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education*, 3rd ed. Chicago, IL, USA: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
[17] S. A. Asongu and N. M. Odhiambo, "Governance, ICT and inclusive human development in sub-Saharan Africa," *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, vol. 139, pp. 36–49, 2019, doi: 10.1016/j.techfore.2018.11.008.
[18] D. Miao, S. Gillani, H. S. M. Abbas, and H. Zhan, "Do institutional governance and state fragility affect institutional quality in Asian economies?," *Heliyon*, vol. 9, no. 4, 2023.
[19] J. L. Perry, A. Hondeghem, and L. R. Wise, "Revisiting the motivational bases of public service: Twenty years of research and an agenda for the future," *Public Administration Review*, vol. 70, no. 5, pp. 681–690, 2010, doi: 10.1111/j.1540-6210.2010.02196.x.
[20] R. Abaidoo and E. K. Agyapong, "Financial development and institutional quality among emerging economies," *Journal of Economics and Development*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 198–216, 2022.

Authors



Gudata Abara Chali is a researcher and assistant professor affiliated with the Department of Management at Wallaga University in Nekemte, Oromia, Ethiopia. He focuses his work on management topics with a particular emphasis on leadership styles and their impact on employee performance within Ethiopia's public sector. Based in Nekemte, he communicates research findings and collaborates with colleagues to advance understanding of how transformational leadership influences organizational outcomes in public institutions. (email: gudataa@gmail.com).



Lalisa Kenea Gamtessa is an auditor at the Oromia General Auditor Bureau, Ethiopia. His academic and professional work focuses on marketing management, organizational performance, and public sector accountability. He is particularly interested in strategic marketing, leadership, and service quality. He actively contributes to research that integrates theory and practice in marketing management and leadership studies. (email: lelisakeneagemtesa@gmail.com).