

Effect of Recruitment Processes on Employee Job Performance in Ebonyi State Civil Service: A Study of Selected Ministries.

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<i>Abstract</i>	<i>Journal of Policy and Development Studies (JPDS)</i>
<p><i>The relevance of recruitment processes on the job performance of employees in any organizations be it public or private sector cannot be overemphasized. Unfortunately, this all important aspect of organizational management are not often given much attention in many organizations especially in the public sector in Nigeria. It is in view of this fact that this paper becomes imperative to investigate the effect of recruitment processes on employee job performance in Ebonyi State Civil Service: A Study of selected ministries.. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Data for the study were collected with questionnaire instrument. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentage distribution tables while the hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient through SPSS. Findings of the study revealed; that recruitment need prediction has not affected optimum performance of staff of Ebonyi State Civil Service, that advertisement has no implication on the quality of service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service as most of the job vacancies are not aptly advertised, and that candidates screening has not affected Ebonyi State Civil Servants expertise in job duties to a very large extent. Based on the findings; it was recommended that Ebonyi state civil service should develop consistent quantitative and</i></p>	<p>Vol. 14. Issue 2 (2023) ISSN(p) 0189-5958 ISSN (e) 2814-1091 Home page https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jpds ARTICLE INFO: Keyword: Recruitment, Selection, Job Performance, Civil Service Article History Received 7th December 2023 Accepted: 6th January 2024 DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jpds.v14i2.9</p>

qualitative manpower needs assessment in its recruitment processes. This should be properly aligned with thorough job analysis and job description with clearly set objective to know the right calibre of candidates that would produce optimum job performance, that proper advertisements on recruitment into the Ebonyi State civil service should always be made to enable every applicant who is qualified to have equal opportunity to compete for positions based on merit and that Ebonyi State civil service should set up a panel of men and women of proven integrity that would screen applicants for positions across the various Ministries.

1. Introduction

Human resources are said to be inalienable assets of any organization since the personnel employed in an organization serve as the hub around which other resources can be properly utilized to achieve set goals. To this end, Manneh and Adesopo (2023) assert that these human resources should be available at all times when needed, in the right quantity, quality and of best fit. However, the availability of qualified and competent human resources does not happen by chance but through appropriate recruitment processes. Scholars argue that the assurance of continuous organizational growth depends on the ability to administer recruitment processes in such a manner that the best fit personnel for all the job categories are achieved. Recruitment is the overall process of identifying, sourcing, screening, shortlisting, and interviewing candidates for jobs within an organization. Chukwu and Onuoha (2022) described it as an integral aspect of human resource management in the civil service which entails the processes of searching for prospective employees and stimulating them to apply for jobs, so that candidates who best meet the established recruitment criteria can be employed to occupy the vacant positions. The emphasis is that employees are the lifeblood of any organization, especially the Nigerian civil service; therefore finding and attracting the best candidates possible is of utmost importance.

Historically, the Nigerian civil service derived its origin from colonial administration (Agba and Bello, 2023). The civil service is a collective term for a sector of government composed mainly of career civil servants employed based on professional expertise to perform the functions of government, whose appointment are permanent and not based on the tenure of office of political leader. Igbokwe-Ibeto and Agbodike (2017) describe it as a system of service with recruitment on merit, security of tenure and due recognition of service through timely promotion. This gives the nation a class of politically-neutral crop of skilled and industrious officials who form the backbone of Public Administration. Simply put, the civil service is an executive arm of government that implements the programmes and policies of government efficiently and effectively to enhance national development. The service is run by civil servants who are crops of technocrat at federal, state and local levels who assist government of the day with their wealth of knowledge and experience to carry out their legitimate business (Agbenoro, 2023).

Because the civil service is responsible for policy execution that brings about delivery of public goods and services; the caliber of civil servants can make or mar the government of any nation in the pursuit of core mandates. This is why adequate attention ought to be given to the crop of personnel recruited for the civil service that would perform those essential functions to drive socioeconomic development. Onwe, Abah and Nwokwu (2016) emphasize that in view of the need

for the civil service to be impartially selected, administratively competent, politically neutral and imbued with the spirit of service to the community, section 153(1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria vested in the federal and state civil service commission with the powers to employ persons to offices in the federal and state civil services and to dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding such offices. To avoid delay in the performance of the duties of the commission, section 170 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria empowers the commission to delegate any of its powers and functions as a regulatory authority of the federal/state civil service to line ministries and extra ministerial departments (Ayandele and Etim, 2020). Therefore, powers to recruit junior offices on posts graded GL 01-06 are delegated to ministries and extra ministerial departments just like in the Ebonyi state civil service. Ebonyi State civil service is managed by the state civil service commission as the service is made up of various ministries grouped in a manner consistent with specific mandates with the Permanent Secretaries as the administrative heads (Baribor, 2023).

Broad policy guidelines for the way in which Ebonyi state civil service have to deal with recruitment of personnel are done in terms of the legal framework applicable to the Civil Service Rules, in line with the provisions of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Civil Service Rules emphasizes uniformity, standardization and transparency in the recruitment of competent applicants. As reflected under Section 153-158 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the civil service is a service system with recruitment based on merit (i.e. qualification, competence, experience and technical skills), security of tenure and due recognition of service and work through timely promotion (Audu, Daniel and Tanze, 2023). Processes of recruiting personnel are often conducted based on series of steps which crucially begin with predicting the need for new employees based on the type of vacancies that exists to know the right calibre of candidates to attract (Oyadiran, Ishaq and Kola, 2023). Thus the first steps in the recruitment processes are job analysis and developing a job description. To this end, the Department of Establishment under the office of the Secretary to the State Government sends out call circular to each of the ministry, their departments, agencies or parastatals to determine what is needed; subject to the fact that there must be vacancies and adequate funds to pay those that are to be recruited. Hebert et al., (2019) called this first step the recruitment planning stage where the recruitment objectives are declared in terms of number of applicants needed, the quality and/or diversity of applicants with statement of the costs of filling the jobs. Consequently, this initial process set out the merit criteria to be met in terms of necessary skills and competencies, experience, education or other position-specific requirements.

The analysis determines whether candidates should be looked for internally, or hired from the outside; hence methods of recruitment could be internally or externally done such that the techniques of recruitment will be determined by the source of recruitment the organisation wishes to use. Jordan and Thomas (2023) emphasize that when the civil service decides on a policy of internal recruitment, the 'processes of recruitment' will include job postings within the organization to inform all existing employees and therefore allow open competition vis-à-vis a review of employee records that enables assigning of the jobs to the right fit employees. Whereas external recruitment processes would entail an advertisement or announcement to the general public through newspaper ads, labour unions, specialised journals and publications, professional organisations, educational institutions, public employment services, trade associations, and other internet resource that there are vacancies and that new hands will be welcomed (Gilbert and Ndubuisi, 2023). The job advertisement will require candidates to submit their resumes or curriculum vitae for screening. Accordingly, Ebonyi state civil service commission through the line ministries and extra ministerial departments reserves the right to recruit prospective candidates through appropriate processes and tools such as: interviews, resume screening, aptitude tests, and reference checks to get the appropriate candidates for the job (Baribor, 2023). In addition to performing reference checks, background checks are performed to validate the candidate's education or exonerate any felonious record; and those candidates that best meet the criteria,

including medical fitness are employed and moved to the onboarding process the ends the recruitment processes.

Oaya et al., (2019) aver that the management of the recruitment processes according to the civil service regulatory framework is meant to guarantee accountability. According to the Federal Civil Service Commission (2020, p. 14), the legal framework for recruitment into the civil service shall be underpinned by the following principles of “merit, fairness, equity, confidentiality, professionalism and human dignity”. Thus, all applicants who qualify are to be given equal opportunity to compete for appointment based on merit. Chukwuka and Onuoha, (2022) emphasized that the idea of the merit system as practiced in advanced Democracies pays greater emphasis on qualification, competence, experience and technical skills; whereby the civil service system operates with respect to rules and due processes that govern recruitment, advancement or promotion under conditions of political neutrality and equal opportunity. Against this backdrop, the argument is that the success of public policy execution for delivering public goods/services (which underscores employee job performance in the civil service) is dependent on due processes of recruitment. Employee job performance is regarded as an employee's ability to carry out work obligations/responsibilities effectively and efficiently. The implication would be that an organization ‘through their employees’ are achieving set goals/objectives at any point in their operations without wasting resources. Thus in modern public administration, the measures of performance for civil service employees are typically based on their commitment to what they do, quantity of work done, ‘quality’ in terms of how well they do their work, their job knowledge i.e. expertise in doing their job in line with the set standard of that field, and the timeliness in doing their jobs satisfactorily to meet targets (Jordan and Thomas, 2023).

This would imply that work rate, quality of service delivering, commitment to duty, procedural expertise and capability in achieving service delivery goals and objectives on time are job performance indicators for Ebonyi state civil service. The argument is that under-achievement or failure to meet service delivery expectations is as a result of failures in the workplace from hiring the wrong people. Scholars are of the opinion that recruitment should occur to put in place skilled and qualified workers who are the ‘best fit’ to perform at a high level and demonstrate commitment (Onwe et al., 2016). Herbert, Tim, Kammeyer and Mueller (2019) assert that the talent influence of a workforce will likely have substantial impact on job performance; that when needed personnel are recruited and managed accurately, it will likely translate to the level of performance expected from the civil servants. Therefore, the bone of contention is that recruitment has critical influence on employee job performance and service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service; hence this study.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The perceived problem of this study is that the bases for recruitment into the civil service seem to have largely deviated from the merit system. There is growing concern that Ebonyi state civil service recruitment is not based on the due processes with perceived dysfunctional effects on employee performance in service delivery. It appears most of the staff employed into Ebonyi state civil service over the years tends to be either not qualified for the jobs or their credentials were irrelevant to the position assigned to them. It is argued that recruitment into the ministries, departments and agencies are not based on proper planning by predicting the need for new employees in line with existing vacancies, to know the right calibre of candidates to attract. What appears to be the practice lately for internal recruitment is that job postings seems not be thrown open or made competitive by reviewing employees’ records to pick the best fit; rather it appears like a manipulated process due to political manipulation and personal aggrandizement (Baribor, 2023). For external recruitment, it looks like job vacancies are not announced or advertised as they ought to be done through the various forms of public announcement for all applicants who qualify to be given the opportunity to be hired. Moreover, it appears that candidates whether for internal or external recruitment are not properly screened or vetted to yield crop of personnel with expertise needed for the job. It therefore looks like the deviation from the right processes of recruitment is

exerting dysfunctional impact on the performance of Ebonyi state civil servants; creating a cog in the wheel of growth and development of the polity. In order to capture the problem more aptly, the following research questions were posed for thorough investigation:

1.2 Objectives of the Study

1. Examine how recruitment need prediction has affected performance of staff of Ebonyi State Civil Service.
2. Assess the implication of advertisement on the quality of service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service workforce.
3. Find out the extent to which candidates screening has affected Ebonyi State Civil Servants expertise in job duties.

2. Conceptual Review

This aspect of the paper reviews subthemes that are relevant to the study. These include; civil service, recruitment, the variables in the recruitment processes, the concept of employee job performance, and the indicators of employee job performance in the civil service.

The Civil Service

The civil service is defined as the administrative structure employed in civil capacity to fulfill government policies and programmes (Onwe et al., 2016). This can be viewed in terms of structures vis-à-vis the ministries, department etc or the human personnel permanent secretaries, ministers and higher administrative staff. On this note, Agba and Bello (2023) posit that the civil service denotes a group of people who are employed to perform the functions of government. According to Igbokwe-Ibeto and Agbodike (2017), it is described as government officials who are employed on professional expertise and whose appointment is permanent and not based on the tenure of office of political leader. Civil service represents the entire organization of employees of various ranks, talents and training in the services of government on permanent basis in all government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) employed to handle civil matters in a non-political capacity (Ayandele and Etim, 2020). To Nwoba and Nwokwu (2018), civil service is conceived as an administrative institution composed of career staff employed in civil capacity to assist government in formulation and implementation of approved public policies and programmes to meet the needs of the people. It is a body of men and women employed to ensure that policies and programmes of any government at any particular time are carried out (Audu et al., 2023). The foregoing implies that the civil service is a collective term for a sector of government composed mainly of career civil servants employed to execute governmental tasks. Erude, Igere and Princewill (2023) affirmed that they are executive arm of government personnel established based on professional expertise to perform the functions of government, whose appointment is permanent and not based on the tenure of office of political leader.

Solomon (2018) defined the civil service as the administrative bureaucracy of any country that is saddled with the responsibility of implementing and enforcing the policies and programmes of government. The civil service in Nigeria is supposed to be a vehicle by which government initiates, formulates and implements policies. In other words, it is the bureaucracy which regulates all aspects of the society (Eke, 2016). It therefore, means that for policy objectives of the state to be achieved, the civil service must be alive to its responsibilities. Thus, the attainment of good governance in any society depends on the effective and efficient provision of services for its citizens; whereby such service delivery is better performed by the civil service.

According to the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, section 318 (1), civil service refers to service of the federation (state) in a civil capacity, staff of the office of the President, (Governor), the Vice President, (Deputy Governor), a ministry or department of the

federation (State), assigned with the responsibility for any business of the government of the federation (state), (CFRN, 1999). It can therefore be deduced from the reviewed conceptualizations by scholars that the civil service is an executive arm of government that implements the programmes and policies of government efficiently and effectively to enhance national development. The service is run by civil servants who are crops of technocrat at federal, state and local level assisting government in policy formulation, advice and implementation that ensures services delivery to citizens in an efficient and effective manner. The civil service involves expert personnel employed by the government in a civil capacity with professional competences and profound job knowledge to assist any government that comes into power with their wealth of knowledge and experience to carry out their legitimate business (Onwe et al., 2016). Therefore it is the machinery of government through which policies and programmes are implemented.

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment is defined as the process of searching for prospective employees and stimulating them to apply for jobs in an organization (Omisoro and Okofu, 2019). Some scholars see recruitment as the overall process of identifying, sourcing, screening, shortlisting, and interviewing candidates for jobs within an organization (Onyeche and Deedam, 2023). The foregoing implies that the needed employees are searched for, identified and called upon to apply for jobs wherein they are screened and picked for the job. No wonder Abbas, Sayed and Othoman (2022) defined recruitment as a set of activities for an organization to catch the attention of job applicants that have the abilities needed to help the organization achieve its objectives and goals. Udeh, Konateh and Duramany-Lakkoh (2023) depict recruitment as a decision of human resource management planning regarding the number of employees needed, when they are needed, as well as the criteria for what they are needed in an organisation. It is therefore the crucial function of human resource management in acquiring staff, and it is considered a positive function that aims to attract a large pool of qualified candidates to apply for available job vacancies. Hamza, Othman and Gardi (2021) consider recruitment as a process by which talented individuals can be allowed to get entry into an organisation and with the time tenured training, the rationality of such type of recruitments can be testified and verified.

Similarly Abbasi, Tahir, Abbas, and Shabir (2020) see it as a process in which the different types of desirable candidates who are in search of a suitable type of job can be allowed for entry to the said organisation for gaining a talents pool of employees and gaining a competitive edge in the said market dynamics. Moreover, Udeh et al., (2023) maintain that in this era of increased globalization and rapidly changing population and governance environment, organizational success depends largely on recruiting and retaining high-quality individuals whose contribution will add a considerable value to the employing organisation or institution. Avail to say that the overall objective of recruitment is to assess the most qualified applicants from the data of applicable applicants for a said job in a particular domain. In other words, recruitment is all about making sure that qualified people are available to meet the job needs of an organization.

Armstrong (1978) cited in Manneh and adesopo (2023, p. 12) had noted that recruitment is not just an ordinary exercises, rather it hinges on “systematic processes of obtaining at minimum cost, the number and quality of staff required to satisfy the manpower needs of organizations”. Ngobe, Diri and Baridam (2023) clearly pinpointed that recruitment is about discovering and hiring the best qualified candidate whether from inside or the process of locating and attracting individuals from outside to fill job vacancies. The above evidence thus allows us to understand that recruitment can be internally done or externally done; whichever way the organization deems fit. Thus an organization has certain processes they follow and use different methods so that they can have a cost-effective approach for sustainable high performance.

Variables in the Recruitment Processes

In the views of Armstrong (1978) cited in Manneh and adesopo (2023, p. 12), out to be meticulous as a “systematic processes of obtaining at minimum cost, the number and quality of staff required

to satisfy the manpower needs of organizations”. Therefore implying that certain methodical steps have to be followed in the processes such as: manpower need assessment and job analysis for the examination of the requirements for filling the vacancy (particularly in relation to job specifications; then consideration of the source of suitable candidates; drafting job advertisements and selecting media and other suitable to announce them; assessing appropriate salary levels for employees and arranging interviews and other aspects of screening.

1. Recruitment Need Prediction via Job Analysis: Scholars are of the opinion that the core processes of recruiting personnel are often conducted based on series of steps which crucially begin with predicting the need for new employees based on the type of vacancies that exists to know the right calibre of candidates to attract (Ayandele and Etim, 2020). Hebert et al., (2019) called this first step, the recruitment planning stage where the recruitment objectives are declared in terms of number of applicants needed, the quality and/or diversity of applicants with statement of the costs of filling the jobs. Thus the first step in the recruitment processes is job analysis; an initial process of obtaining and evaluating information about the contents and required qualifications of tasks, as well as the setting in which they are accomplished. The course of action in this domain is undertaken by departments and Human Resources beneath Building and Construction Values (Abbas et al., 2023).

2. The Position Requirement Depiction via Job Description: Gilbert and Ndubuisi (2023) describe this step as crucial aspect of the recruitment processes whereby a written document explains the tasks to be completed as well as the capabilities, experience, and competencies required to complete them. Each employment includes a description that specifies the position's responsibilities, requirements, decision-making, connections, monitoring received/exercised, and influence. Special physical or patient care needs are included in the descriptions if needed. The descriptions set out the merit criteria to be met in terms of necessary skills and competencies, experience, education or other position-specific requirements. Igbokwe-Ibeto and Agbodike (2017) aver that the analysis will help determine whether candidates should be looked for internally, or hired from the outside; hence methods of recruitment could be internally or externally done such that the techniques of recruitment will be determined by the source of recruitment the organisation wishes to use.

3. Job Postings and Advertisements: Jordan and Thomas (2023) emphasize that when the civil service decides on a policy of internal recruitment, the ‘processes of recruitment’ will include job postings within the organization to inform all existing employees and therefore allow open competition vis-à-vis a review of employee records that enables assigning of the jobs to chosen employees. Whereas external recruitment processes would entail an advertisement or announcement to the general public through newspaper ads, labour unions, specialised journals and publications, professional organisations, educational institutions, public employment services, trade associations, and other internet resource that there are vacancies and that new hands will be welcomed. Onyeche and Deedam (2023) posit that the advertisement is generally developed in such a manner that it could trigger the responsiveness of different types of individuals in the concerned process. Consequently, the job advertisement will require candidates to submit their resumes or curriculum vitae for screening.

4. Screening of Candidates Resumes for Shortlisting: This aspect of the recruitment processes is frequently referred to as the first step towards shortlisting of candidates. Once the recruitment attraction process is done and submissions are gathered, this phase examines all submissions received by the deadline. Those who do not satisfy the advertising criteria are instantaneously disregarded throughout this phase; however, Ngobe et al., (2023) pointed out, selection panels must be careful not to favour any applicants against others. Their choices should be influenced by shortlisting criteria developed in response to the job parameters provided in the advertisement. They must also make sure that enough time is set up for the selection of candidates.

5. Assessments for Sieving out the best Candidates: Accordingly, Ebonyi state civil service commission through the line ministries and extra ministerial departments reserves the right to

recruit prospective candidates through appropriate processes of interviews and aptitude tests, to get the appropriate candidates for the job (Baribor, 2023). Tests and interviews are commonly used in the recruitment process for positions when a large number of candidates are expected; Hamza et al., (2023) emphasize that it is not feasible to rely just on examination results or indications of experience to predict future performance. Abbas et al., (2023) aver that intellectual exams are exceptionally beneficial in situations when the level of intelligence is a key factor but there are no other reliable ways to measure it. Aptitude and accomplishment tests are particularly useful for jobs that need specific and measurable skills, such as the IT staff that require knowledge of computer programming.

6 Medical and Physical Test: Onyeche and Deedam (2023) express that the most common form of recruitment assessment processes that prospective employees are subjected to is a medical examination. However, only those applicants who require the physical capability to do their duties are submitted to a medical examination, often known as pre-placement medical examinations. According to Ngobe et al., (2023), the purpose of a medical assessment, which is one of the most recent phases in the selection process, is to guarantee that a candidate's health is enough to satisfy the employment requirements. It also serves as a benchmark for comparing and interpreting future medical evaluations.

Medical examination in the selection process has its drawbacks in that it takes time and might be costly. Nonetheless Abbas et al., (2023) argue that there are 4 reasons to undertake a medical and physical examination other than ascertaining whether or not the candidate met the employment's physical requirements is to (a) determine the candidate's medical limitations in terms of placement; (b) keep track of the candidate's health and establish a benchmark for future healthcare and indemnity claims; (c) decrease absenteeism, sick leave, and accidents; (d) and identify communicable illnesses that both the candidate and the organization are unaware of.

7. Background/Reference Checks: Upon passing the aforementioned processes successfully and the applications are approved, the prospects are typically requested to give the names and contact information of people who can serve as references (Onyeche and Deedam, 2023). Reference checks are usually performed over the phone and are used to verify the information given by the candidate. Although most references are apprehensive to respond to particular questions, a background check can be utilized to gather as much information as feasible that will be used in deciding whether or not to approve the applicants. References, therefore, provide the organization with information into how other people see the candidate's main skills (Udeh et al., 2023). In addition to performing medical fitness check, Ebonyi state civil service commission through the line ministries and extra ministerial departments reserves the right to carry out reference and background checks to validate the candidate's education or exonerate any felonious record; and those candidates that best meet the criteria, including medical fitness are employed and moved to the onboarding process that ends the recruitment processes (Baribor, 2023).

Employee Job Performance

Employee job performance is defined as the job-related tasks that are required of a worker and how successfully those activities are carried out (Manneh and Adeposo, 2023). Avail to say that employee job performance indicates an individual worker's achievement after putting forth required effort into the tasks that make up his or her job. Employee performance is regarded as an employee's ability to carry out work obligations/responsibilities effectively and efficiently. The implication would be that an organization 'through their employees' are achieving set goals/objectives at any point in their operations without wasting resources. Thus in modern public administration, the measures of performance for civil service employees are typically based on their commitment to what they do, quantity of work done, 'quality' in terms of how well they do their work, their job knowledge i.e. expertise in doing their job in line with the set standard of that field, and the timeliness in doing their jobs satisfactorily to meet targets (Jordan and Thomas, 2023).

Coming from a more elaborate angle, Avram and Rus (2017) conceptualized employee job performance as a workers' total performance in achieving what he/she is expected to achieve in tasks, abiding by the procedure and time requirements of the organization. In other words, employee job performance is about what a worker is able to achieve in terms of what was expected, doing them timely and following set standards or due process to meet set targets. Davidescu et al., (2020) posit that it symbolizes the broad belief of an employee about their conduct of official duties and contributions towards the achievement of the organization. Oaya et al., (2019) aver that it is a result of work, goal setting, measurement and assessment which allows employees to know what is expected of them.

Performance refers to the degree of achievement of the mission at work place that builds up an employee job; hence different researchers have different thoughts about performance. Mostly, researchers used the term performance to express the range of measurements of transactional efficiency and input and output efficiency. According to Agba and Bello (2023), job performance refers to the degree of the achievement of objectives or the potentially possible accomplishment regarding the important characteristics of an organization for the relevant stakeholders. Hamza et al., (2023) posit that the term "performance" is the level/degree of goal achievement of an organization/department rather than of individuals.

Performance is also described as the outcome of assigned tasks carried out by an employee; such that it involves the willingness of employees to achieve new aspects of their job (Erude et al., 2023). Suffice to say that employee job performance can equally be captioned from the behaviour of an employee, which aligns with the norms and values of the organization. On this note, Said, Ahmad, Zahari and Salelleh (2015) explained performance from the contextual performance. They argue that employees with higher contextual performance are more committed and satisfied with their job compared to those with low contextual performance. This indicates that commitment and job satisfaction are orchestrators of contextual performance. Performance of workers will improve when workers are dedicated and satisfied.

Jordan and Thomas (2023) are simply of the opinion that performance means how well an employee or worker carries out his or her duties, which can be assessed quantitatively or qualitatively. Thus in modern public administration, the measures of performance for civil service employees are typically based on their commitment to what they do, quantity of work done, 'quality' in terms of how well they do their work, their job knowledge i.e. expertise in doing their job in line with the set standard of that field, and the timeliness in doing their jobs satisfactorily to meet targets. From a similar perspective but on a broader implication, Oyadiran et al., (2023) practically see employee job performance as the measure of how well a nation's resources are utilized for accomplishing a set of results reaching the highest level of performance with the least expenditure of resources. They categorically defined it as a measure of overall productive efficiency and effectiveness of individual organization.

Thus it can be confidently argue that performance and productivity are the extent to which resources at the disposal of any organization are properly deployed and used towards achievement of organizational objection. Erude et al., (2023) further posit that employee job performance is the capacity of a situation where an individual or organization produces maximum results with available human, financial and material resources to achieve set organizational objectives. Avail to say that efficiency and effectiveness are also critical indices of performance in public or civil service organizations, while profitability, efficiency and effectiveness are the indices of performance in business organizations.

Indicators of Employee Job Performance

Scholars are of the opinion that the performance of a worker cannot be assessed arbitrarily as there are indicators for assessing employee job performance (Jordan and Thomas, 2023). These indicators vary based on the perception of scholars. The most common indicators are quantity or rate of work

done within a predetermine period, quality of work or service delivery, job knowledge or technical expertise in doing their job in line with the set standard of that field, timeliness in doing their jobs satisfactorily to meet targets, creativity (use of initiatives to resolve problems); co-operation (readiness to co-operate with co-workers); dependability (attendance, task completion and commitment) and personal quality (integrity, leadership, hospitality and personality); most of which are explained within the concept of efficiency and effectiveness (Avram and Rus, 2017).

1. Quality of work done: This can also be referred to as quality service delivery, which simply denotes the value of work delivered by an individual, team, or workforce and this can include the quality of task completion, interactions and deliverables (John, 2017). Kimberlee (2018) argues that higher quality establishes the value of any employee performing a specific job. The University of Washington (2018) listed some of the evaluations indicating quality of work done by employees as: accuracy, thoroughness, competence, productivity level, time management, and ability to meet deadlines. For ability, it is widely held that human beings are differently gifted with dissimilar abilities for diverse purposes. John (2017) pinpoints that those well-built and strong individuals are believed to be able to perform well and better when it comes to activities requiring energy than; so also an intelligent person is expected to excel more in critical-thinking works and meet deadlines than those who somehow are dull or less brainy.

2. Job Knowledge: This refers to the expertise in doing their job in line with the set standard of that field. Erude et al., (2023) aver that in the civil service, this performance indicator brings into view the argument regarding skill, which is a major expertise needed for civil servants to technically do their jobs. However, the emphasis is that both skills and competence are necessities of job knowledge for achieving optimum job performance (Olaniyi, Akindele, Oladejo and Asa, 2021). Moreover, technological know-how is very crucial to for employees, which is described by scholars as a major determinant of employee job performance (Aja et al., 2022). They opine that the technology adaptation in a workplace goes a long way in influencing job performance vis-à-vis employees' achievement of optimum service delivery in contemporary times as obsolete equipment do retard performance and slow down works; while non-functional machineries are also capable of adversely affecting the rate and quantities of turned out outputs. The argument is that organizational progress even in government ministries and departments is dependent on adoption of sophisticated machineries and innovative approaches in carrying out the daily operations of an organisation.

3. Employee Commitment: George, Allen, Mackenzie (2013) see employee commitment as the degree to which an employee identifies with the organization and wants to continue actively participating in it. Parfyonova (2012) defines commitment using a multidimensional approach and consider it to have affective, continuance and normative perspectives. The affective dimension of commitment refers to an emotional attachment to and involvement with an organisation; continuance commitment denotes the perceived costs of leaving an organisation; and normative commitment refers to the felt responsibility to support and remain a member of an organisation. Thus it can be deduced from the conceptualization of employee commitment above, that employee commitment is a bond between the employee and the organisation such that the employee wants to continue serving the organisation and to help it achieve its objectives. Others have characterized it as just how content an individual is with his or her job; whether he or she prefers the employment or not (Aziz, Othman, Gardi and Ahmed, 2021). Heskett (2017) avers that employee commitment is integral for sustainable sound growth of an organization. It is necessary for every organization to have full level of its employee commitment in order to have outstanding performance on long term basis. Employee commitment according to Wulandari (2019) is a strong acceptance by the individual of the purposes and values of the organization and the individual has a strong desire to remain in the organization and perform assigned duties wholeheartedly.

4. Level of timeliness in performing tasks satisfactorily: Timeliness is the characteristics of promptness or punctuality in getting things done appropriately (Ion and Criveanu, 2016). According to George (2018) punctuality is that quality or habit of adhering to an appointed time;

as Lionel (2012) also states that punctuality is the quality or state of being punctual, especially, adherence to the exact time of an agreement. Anna (2017) asserts that punctuality is the characteristics of being able to complete a required task or fulfil an obligation before, or at a previously designated time. Lionel (2012) enumerated the impact which punctuality would have on workplace as: mastery of work, integrity, high value of people, and value for oneself. In other words, an employee's aptness in performing defined tasks that produces or delivers goods or services of public requirements is an indication of the level of productivity.

5. Resourcefulness/Creativity: Resourcefulness is defined as an employee's ability to find efficient and innovative ways to overcome challenges in getting assigned tasks done (Ion and Criveanu, 2016). Kimberlee (2018) affirms that being resourceful likewise involves optimization of resources to create meaningful or better services. The emphasis is that the ability of an employee to creatively adapt and solve problems further increases the chances of enhanced or optimum performance. However, the outcome is said to be dependent on organisational environment, in terms of whether or not, or to the level at which an enabling environment is created to enable employees to be apt and resourceful in performing their duties/tasks. Suffice to argue that motivational factors would impact on employee's resourcefulness in performing defined tasks in terms of adaptability, coordination, creativity, initiative, persistence and resilience in overcoming challenges (Dahkoul, 2018). Nonetheless, Lisa (2014) maintains that the performance of employee is not confined to outcomes of tasks but also extend to attitudes and achievements; hence outlining six yardsticks to assess the performance of workers:

- a. **Ability to meet goals:** This measures when workers actualize pre-established goods assigned to them within a specific period.
- b. **Team work:** This measures the participation of workers in team-work or group work. It also based on willingness to learn from co-workers, active participation in group assignment, contributing to ideas and meeting stated performance indicators.
- c. **Job Skill:** The ability of an employee to meet the standard skill for effective completion of job tasks. Job skills vary according to position.
- d. **Interpersonal Relationship:** This refers to how well an employee interacts with his or her fellow workers, customers and management. It also centers on written and verbal skills
- e. **Decision-making skill:** This measure how an employee fares in making decisions during an assessment period. This also focuses on whether employees consult management before making decision or relies on his or her judgment.
- f. **Work habit:** This centres on time management, meeting deadlines, punctuality and reliability. Accordingly, work habit equally assesses if an employee consistently and effectively perform his or her job.

Civil Service Recruitment Processes in Nigeria

The process of attracting an effective workforce is divided into 4 steps, whereby the first centers on predicting the need for new employees based on the type of existing vacancies. According to Hebert et al., (2019), this first step is the recruitment planning stage whereby the recruitment objectives are declared in terms of number of applicants needed, the quality and/or diversity of applicants with statement of the costs of filling the jobs. The second step is the recruitment; which step 1 will actually determine if the recruitment method can be internal i.e. promoting already staff from within, or employee transfers or job rotation.

On the other hand, it could be external whereby the vacancies are announced through employment agencies, recruitment consultants, employee referrals, advertisements in the media, government agencies, targeting schools and colleges, using them to communicate with potential applicants. Then the third step of selection applicants from the pool of reviewed applicant's those believed to be the best fit; finally welcoming the new employees into the organization as the fourth step (Oaya et al., 2019).

Section 153(1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria vested in the federal and state civil service commission with the powers to employ persons to offices in the federal and

state civil services and to dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding such offices. To avoid delay in the performance of the duties of the commission, section 170 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria empowers the commission to delegate any of its powers and functions as a regulatory authority of the federal/state civil service to line ministries and extra ministerial departments (Ayandele and Etim, 2020). Therefore, powers to recruit junior offices on posts graded GL 01-06 are delegated to ministries and extra ministerial departments just like in the Ebonyi state civil service.

Ebonyi State civil service is managed by the state civil service commission as the service is made up of various ministries grouped in a manner consistent with specific mandates with the Permanent Secretaries as the administrative heads (Baribor, 2023). Broad policy guidelines for the way in which Ebonyi state civil service have to deal with recruitment of personnel are done in terms of the legal framework applicable to the Civil Service Rules, in line with the provisions of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Civil Service Rules emphasizes uniformity, standardization and transparency in the recruitment of competent applicants. As reflected under Section 153-158 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the civil service is a *service* system with *recruitment* based on *merit* (i.e. qualification, competence, experience and technical skills), security of tenure and due recognition of *service* and *work* through timely promotion.

Performance of the Civil Service in Ebonyi State and Nigeria at Large

The Nigerian Government as well as Ebonyi State Government in particular has always been concerned with the low performance of the civil service sector. In recent times, the civil service has been riddle with inefficiency, corruption, ineffectiveness, mismanagement, shoddiness, inertia, routine, poor responsiveness, conflicts, sectionalism, incompetence and low productivity, (Eke, 2016). The Nigerian Civil Service has been characterized by poor performance and inability to translate government policies and programmes to reality (Ngobe et al., 2023). The perennial problem with Civil Service is the difficulty in measuring efficiency and improving productivity. Since most of the outputs have no independently measurable value, tracking changes in the cost per unit value of output is complex. As a result, the performance of civil service has been a major concern to policy makers and researchers as well (Mohammed and Sirajo, 2015).

Scholars aver that this is because despite all measures put in place to arrest the performance failure in the civil service, it seems, has defied all approaches towards tackling the problem of inefficiency and capacity collapse (Pillah, 2023; Garba and Jirji, 2018). These are forms of set-backs that affect performance and create room for ineffectiveness in the civil service. Overcoming these weaknesses is crucial to effective civil service performance. Available evidence such as infrastructural decay, mismanagement, poor service delivery (electricity supply, water supply, petroleum distribution, etc. shows that the performance of the civil service in virtually all tiers of government and in extra-ministerial departments in Nigeria has remained very abysmal, hence, the present state of underdevelopment (Ngobe et al., 2023).

Issues of Contestation in Civil Service Recruitment

Broad policy guidelines to deal with recruitment, selection and placement of public personnel are based on legal framework applicable to the Nigerian public service, namely: The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Public Service Rules (Omisore and Okofu, 2019). The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria recognizes that the public service is a system of *service* with *recruitment* on *merit* (i.e. qualification, competence, experience and technical skills), There is growing concern that the civil service recruitment is not based on the due processes with perceived dysfunctional effects on employee performance in service delivery (Ibeto and Agbodike, 2017).

The perceived problem is that the bases for recruitment into the civil service seem to have largely deviated from the merit system. It appears there is disregard for due processes, as most of the staff

employed into Ebony State Civil Service over the years tends to be either not qualified for the jobs or their credentials were irrelevant to the position assigned to them (Oyadiran et al., 2023). Most scholars have expressed utter displeasure on the recruitment dilemma and unanimously attribute it to abuse of the merit principle (Udeh et al., 2023; Dueze and Chibuzor, 2020). They argue that the political godfathers have practically hijacked the entire processes with their influence peddling. Consequently, politician's polarizations have spilled into civil service recruitments in Nigeria. There are arguments that politicians may influence the recruitment and selection process by referring their candidates for vacant positions irrespective of whether their candidate is competent or not (Dueze and Chibuzo, 2020). Sometimes, the human resource manager may comply due to the fear of losing their jobs. This eventually leads to recruiting staff that are in most cases incompetent. Studies have shown that any organization to achieve its objectives it must have people with proven competence (Ngobe et al., 2023). It was on the realization of the need for competence in organizations that made Max Weber the greatest exponent of bureaucracy to state that candidates for positions in organizations must be selected on the basis of technical qualifications.

Onyeche and Deedam (2023) insinuate that in the case of Nigeria, recruitment and selection are based purely on sentimental reasons. They argue that agencies responsible for recruitment in Nigeria should try as much as possible to ensure that no unlawful discrimination occurs in the recruitment and selection process on the grounds of sex, race and religion or belief. Misrepresentation of qualifications (fake qualifications) Misrepresentation can occur during a selection process when an eloquent communicator can get the job only to be realized later that he is incapable or does not have the right qualifications or experience. Relevant qualifications for the job are not often used during the selection process to screen and short list the candidates (Udeh et al., 2023). Besides, what appears to be the practice lately for internal recruitment is that job postings seems not be thrown open or made competitive by reviewing employees' records to pick the best fit; rather it appears like a manipulated process due to political manipulation and personal aggrandizement (Baribor, 2023). Externally, job vacancies seem not to be announced or advertised as they ought to be done through advertisements and other forms of public announcement for all applicants who qualify to be given the opportunity to be hired. Moreover, it appears that candidates whether for internal or external recruitment are not properly screened or vetted to yield crop of personnel with expertise needed for the job. It therefore looks like the deviation from the right processes of recruitment exerts dysfunctional impact the performance of Ebonyi state civil service; creating a cog in the wheel of growth and development of the polity (Ngobe et al., 2023).

2.1 Empirical Review

Different scholars have carried out studied that are related to the present study. Some of the studies are reviewed hereunder;

Udeh et al., (2023) carried out a study on "Cost and Administrative Effectiveness of Recruitment and Selection Practices in Nigeria Public Service Delivery: A Case of Ebonyi State Public Sector Organizations". The broad objective of study was to examine the role of recruitment and selection practices in public service delivery focusing on the perspectives of the Ebonyi State public sector organizations. Specifically they examined the recruitment and selection practices and structures so as to assess the effect of recruitment and selection on public service delivery; investigated public recruitment and selection strategies and assessed the challenges affecting effective public recruitment practices. The study adopted an exploratory case study research design which used qualitative and quantitative data collected through interviews and questionnaires on a sample size 40 public servants. The findings revealed that MDAs have a structured recruitment and selection system to recruit and select personnel for public service; however that serious challenges inhibit the recruitment and selection procedures to conflict with the requirement of ethic representativeness. The study recommended that recruitment and selection is a key component of

human resource management and thus should be taken seriously as a building block of national development and success.

Baribor (2023) conducted a research on “Politics of Recruitment and Human Resource Management (HRM) in Ebonyi State Civil Service, 2015-2021”. The broad objective of the study was to examine the politicization problem of human resource management in terms of recruitment, selection, placement, compensation and promotion in Ebonyi State Civil Service. The study adopted the descriptive survey design, anchored on Elite Theory; and on a sample size of 382, self-structured questionnaires were administered on staff of selected ministries. Descriptive statistics and t-test was used to test the null hypotheses. The study revealed that recruitment practices based on political patronage have created performance redundancy problems in Ebonyi State Civil Service; and thus recommended that recruitment, selection compensation, and promotion in Human Resource Management in Ebonyi State should be done without compromise in order to encourage maximum output from the civil servants.

Ngobe et al (2023) studied the “Challenges of Recruitment in Nigerian Civil Service” with the major aim to understand the challenges of recruitment and selection in Nigerian organisations. The study adopted the descriptive research design based on qualitative data, wherein 21 senior civil service personnel across the south-south were interviewed to determine the challenges in securing a better equipped workforce. Findings revealed that the recruitment process in Nigeria organization are faced with several challenges of nepotism and favoritism, misrepresentation of qualifications, politicians influence peddling and bribery and corruption that consequently affect the civil service effectiveness. Data pinpointed influence peddling by politicians has spilled into recruitments in Nigeria; revealing that politicians are influencing the recruitment and selection process by referring their candidates for vacant positions irrespective of whether their candidate is competent or not. The study recommended for government to actually reform the recruitment practices and retrace its steps back to a merit system.

Onyeche and Deemdam (2023) carried out a study on “Recruitment and Selection Processes in Public Service Organizations: Rivers State Experience” with the major objective of examining recruitment and selection processes in public service organizations to determine the problems caused by poor recruitment and selection processes. Mixed method was utilized with survey research design whereby the population of the study comprised 1,979 from Rivers State public organization. The sample size got was 399, on whom questionnaires were administered while descriptive statistics were used to interpret data. Findings of this study revealed among others that: the public sector organizations are bedeviled by political and ethnic appointments. That because governance has been privatized, recruitment and selection processes in public service organizations is currently personalized and mired by irregularities with job postings and unfair approaches. The study recommended among others that: job trafficking that is gradually becoming a norm in the recruitment and selection processes into the Nigerian public service should receive a serious and urgent sanction. There should be a body and a law empowering such body to investigate and prosecute every recruitment malpractice.

Gilbert and Ndubuisi (2023) researched on “Evaluation of Recruitment Practice and Employee Job Commitment in Nigeria: A study of Yenagoa Local Government Council of Bayelsa State”. The study had the broad of objective to examine the relationship between recruitment practice and employee commitment in Yenagoa Local Government Council of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The study adopted survey research design using modified standardized structured questionnaire to elicit data. The population was obtained from Yenagoa Local Government Council (LGC) during field survey. Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient was used to test the formulated hypothesis on the platform of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21.0. The finding revealed a positive significant relationship between recruitment practice and employee performance commitment in Yenagoa Local Government Council of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. However, that recruitment screenings based purely on sentimental reasons instead of standard

practices. The study recommended that the council needs to foster an ideal recruitment practice to forestall counter-productive work behaviour.

Igwe and Utebor (2023) researched on the “Perceived Influences of Office Recruitment Ergonomics on the Job Performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State”. The main objective of the study was to examine the perceived influences of office ergonomics on the job performance of Ebonyi State ministries staff. Descriptive research design was adopted with a population 86 confidential secretaries across the Ministries. Data got via structured questionnaire were analyzed using mean and standard deviation, while t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The results of the study revealed that most of the secretaries were recruited based on ‘man-know-man’ bases in neglect of the right principles with negative implications for proper conduct in the work environment; exerting dysfunctional impact on job performance. It was recommended that management should not ignore the right principles of staff engagement.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This paper adopts the Systems Theory propounded by Ludwig von Bertalanffy, a biologist by profession who had presented the concept of general systems thinking in 1928. This theory put forth the premise that organizations, like living organisms are made up of numerous component subsystems that must work together in harmony for the larger system to succeed (Jones, 2023). Von Bertalanffy argued that a system is considered by the connections and collaborations of its components and the non-linearity of these connections and collaborations. Within the context of this study, it is argued that the Civil Service is a system with interrelated parts of Ministries, Departments and Agencies that require reliable staff for each parts and the entire system to function well. Thus, recruitment is an integral part of human resource management in the civil service (Chukwu and Onuoha, 2022). In the figure presented below, the Systems Theory describes the human resource management systems as a combination of subsystems or functions, which are consistent and related to each other and these sub-systems.

This theory is relevant to this study given that Ebonyi State civil service ought to be an open system which receives input from the environment in the form of candidates that are identified and brought in to serve. Jones (2023) clearly notes that the interaction with the environment is the hallmark and feature of open systems; but the emphasis here is that the system gives back outputs based on the kind of inputs it receives. In other words, the performance of the civil service is dependent on the inputs (caliber of candidates) that are allowed into the civil service through the recruitment processes. Suffice to say that ‘when it’s garbage in, it will invariably be garbage out’, significant in driving the point that incorrect or poor quality input (as personnel) will produce faulty output (as civil service employee job performance). Performance by the civil service is a function, which acquires capable human resources from its environment. Therefore systems theory is an ideal approach to understanding, managing and planning civil service workforce. If the right recruitment decisions are made in line with the due processes, the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) then acquires the needed caliber of manpower to develop and deliver quality services. But if the recruitment decision is manipulated as suspected in Ebonyi state and Nigeria civil service at large, then services outputs will be dysfunctional if not completely poor.

It therefore behooves on the Commission and various Stakeholders to allow the system interact accordingly with the external environment by importing the right people from the environment via the complete recruitment processes, which starts from needs prediction to advertisement for the job till the interviews, selection and orientation of the manpower resources are complete. Scholars have underscored that the quality of a work place is determined by the quality of its employees to a great extent (Udeh et al., 2023; Ngobe et al., 2023; Erude et al., 2023; Hamza et al., 2021). All these recruitment processes are therefore important because any anomaly or faulty move with one will invariably affect one another and the entire system as a whole. This is why the Systems theory reiterates that organizational success relies on synergy, interrelations and interdependence between

different subsystems. As this study to help solve the perceived problem of recruitment and employee job performance, the Systems theory can provide a fresh perspective for approaching employee-recruitment initiatives absolutely from no-sentimental or politically-manipulated grounds, knowing fully well that whatever we feed the system as inputs are what we get as outputs. This theoretical construction should therefore enable the executives/administrators in Ebonyi State and Nigeria to understand the importance of their caliber of employees when fixing them in the various positions as vital parts in the organization.

3. Methodology

This paper adopted the descriptive survey research design, which is considered suitable for the study since it gives a researcher the opportunity to observe what happens to variables without any attempt at manipulating them. The study area is Ebonyi State Civil Service which comprise of 26 ministries. Out of the 26 ministries, 17 ministries were selected for the study to enable the researcher to manage the population size of the study which is very large and complex. Population of study comprised of 1,404 staff of the state civil service. A sample size of 399 was determined using Taro Yameni's statistical formula. Data for the study were collected using questionnaire instrument which was rated in five (5) point Likert scale of Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Undecided (U), Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA). The data collected was analyzed using frequency distribution tables. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to test the hypotheses formulated for the study.

4. Results

Out of the Three Hundred and Ninety Nine (399) copies of the questionnaire distributed for the study, only Three Hundred and Forty Nine (349) representing 87.46% were successfully filled and returned while the remaining 50 copies representing 12.54% were either not returned or voided because of mutilations. The analysis of the paper was therefore based on the 349 returned copies of the questionnaire instruments.

Test of Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were tested as follows;

- Ho₁: Recruitment need prediction has not affected performance of staff of Ebonyi State Civil Service.
- Ho₂: Advertisement has no implication on the quality of service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service workforce.
- Ho₃: Candidates screening has not affected Ebonyi State Civil Servants expertise in job duties to a very large extent.

Table 1: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Needs Prediction	Advertisement	Candidates Screening	Employee Job Performance
N		349	349	349	349
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	3.900	3.593	3.831	3.811
	Std. Deviation	.4469	.5975	.4943	.4957
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.434	.334	.413	.414
	Positive	.357	.258	.315	.306
	Negative	-.434	-.334	-.413	-.414
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.434	.334	.413	.414
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.000 ^c	.000 ^c	.000 ^c	.000 ^c

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Table 1 above presents One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test which was used to examine the normality of data in concomitance with hypotheses assessment. Thus for the purpose of data

normality, null hypothesis is to ensure residual are normally dispersed. When significance level is above < 0.05 , it means that residuals are normally dispersed across the data. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test value for recruitment needs prediction is (.434; $p < 0.05$); the value for advertisement and job postings is (.334; $p < 0.05$); that of candidate screening is (.413; $p < 0.05$) and on the dependent variable i.e. employee job performance is (.414; $p < 0.05$). The results reveal that all null hypotheses formulated and the data collected and analyzed for the purpose of this research is normally distributed and fulfill main assumption for regression analysis.

Table 2: Regression Analysis

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.705 ^a	.503	.511	.4664

a. Predictors: (Constant), Needs Prediction, Advertisement and Candidates Screening.

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Table 2 above presents the model summary for the regression analysis; whereby the two values in the model summary are 'R' which represents the correlation with a value of .707^a, an indication of strong linear correlation. R² indicates how much of total variance explained by independent variables (Needs Prediction, Advertisement and Candidates Screening) on the dependent variable (Employee Job Performance). The value of R² is .503, indicating that 50.3% variation in the dependent variable is accounted for by the independent variables.

Table 3: Multivariate Statistics Analysis

Normality Test

	N	Mean	Descriptive Statistics			Percentiles		
			Std. Deviation	Min	Max	25th	50th (Median)	75 th
Needs Prediction	349	3.900	.4469	3.0	5.0	4.000	4.000	4.000
Advertisement	349	3.593	.5975	2.0	5.0	3.000	4.000	4.000
Candidates Screening	349	3.831	.4943	3.0	5.0	4.000	4.000	4.000
Employee Job Performance	349	3.811	.4957	3.0	5.0	4.000	4.000	4.000

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Table 3 above presents multivariate statistics analysis which further indicate that all of the equations, taken together, are statistically significant.

Table 4: ANOVA^a Analysis

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	54.503	3	18.168	9.681	.000 ^b
Residual	85.015	345	.246		
Total	85.519	348			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Job Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Needs Prediction, Advertisement and Candidates Screening.

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Table above reveals the Anova^a test on the effect of Recruitment Processes via Needs Prediction, Advertisement and Candidates Screening. ANOVA test represents analysis of variance which describes how well the value of R² measures the fitness of regression model.

Revealed in the sig. column of the ANOVA table, is an indication that regression model predicts dependent variable (i.e. Employee Job Performance in Ebonyi State Civil Service) is significant at (F= 9.357; $p < 0.000$). This goes to show that generally, the dependent variable significantly rely

on the independent variables (i.e. Recruitment Processes of Needs Prediction, Advertisement and Candidates Screening).

Table 5 Coefficients^a Analysis

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.468	.327		10.594	.000
	Needs Prediction	.703	.460	.503	.506	.090
	Advertisement	.629	.345	.035	.641	.050
	Candidates Screening	.766	.454	.066	1.215	.020

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Job Performance

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Table 5 above presents regression coefficients analysis used to ascertain whether or not the independent variables significantly contribute towards dependent variables. According to the coefficient table, Equation 'A' is constant in the regression and Y is dependent variable (i.e. rural community development), β indicates coefficient of variable, 'e' is error term, whereas X_1 , X_2 represents independent variables i.e. Recruitment Processes of Needs Prediction, Advertisement and Candidates Screening.

Therefore: $Y = \alpha + \beta X_1 + \beta X_2 + e$ Equation-A

Where ($\beta = .703$, $P < .090$); ($\beta = .629$, $P < .050$); ($\beta = .766$, $P < .020$)

The value of Recruitment Needs Prediction Processes on performance is ($\beta = .703$, $P < .090$), this implies a very strong positive correlation such that as needs prediction goes down or is not upheld, performance goes down. The value of Advertisement on Quality Service delivery is ($\beta = .629$, $P < .050$), implying a relatively moderate correlation between the variables. Also, Candidates Screening has positive correlation with expertise in job duties at ($\beta = .766$, $P > .020$).

Table 6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis

		Correlations			
		Needs Prediction	Advertisement	Candidates Screening	Employee Job Performance
Needs Prediction	Pearson Correlation	1			
Advertisement	Pearson Correlation	.630	1		
Candidates Screening	Pearson Correlation	.705*	.608	1	
Employee Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.805	.704	.609	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Table 6 above presents application of correlation analysis in this study was to test the inter-variable correlation as well as the direction and strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Correlation coefficient ranges between +1 to -1 indicating that the values of a coefficient may be positive or negative. Where it is negative (-1), the implication is that there is negative relationship between two variables. The criteria suggest that if the coefficient value is (less than or equal) ≤ 0.3 it is weak correlation, if the value is (less than or equal) ≤ 0.5 it is moderate correlation, and where it is (equal or greater than) ≥ 0.7 it is a strong correlation.

Decision Rule

The decision rule for the application of Pearson correlation in testing of hypotheses suggests that the null hypothesis (H_0) should be rejected if at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom, the computed t-value is greater than the critical t-value. On the hand, if at 0.05 level of significance

and degree of freedom, the computed t-value is less than the critical t-value, the null hypothesis (H_0) should be accepted.

Hypothesis One

H_{01} : Recruitment need prediction has not affected performance of staff of Ebonyi State Civil Service.

The Person Product Moment Correlation Analysis result presented in the Table 30 above reveals (0.805) largely positive correlation between recruitment needs prediction and the performance of staff of Ebonyi state civil service. At 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom, the calculated t-value of (0.805) was lesser than the critical t-value of 0.878339. The critical table value 0.878339 was obtained from the Pearson Correlation critical value statistical table at (n-2). Hence, the study accepted the null hypothesis (H_{01}) that Recruitment need prediction has not affected performance of staff of Ebonyi State Civil Service. The computation suggests that the correlation is positive and significant, which goes to show that as the independent variable (needs prediction) goes down, the dependent variable of performance goes down as well; and vice versa.

Hypothesis Two

H_{02} Advertisement has no implication on the quality of service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service workforce.

Also in table 30, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis result revealed (0.704) a strong positive correlation advertisement and the quality of service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service workforce. At 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom, the calculated t-value of (0.704) is lesser than the critical t-value of 0.878339 at (n-2). Therefore, the study accepts the null hypothesis (H_{02}) that advertisement has no implication on the quality of service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service workforce. Nonetheless, the computation suggests that the correlation is positive and very significant.

Hypothesis Three

H_{03} : Candidates screening has not affected Ebonyi State Civil Servants expertise in job duties to a significant extent.

Table 30 Person Correlation Analysis result presentation revealed 0.609 moderate positive correlation between candidates screening and the expertise of employees in their job duties. At 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom, the calculated t-value of 0.609 was lesser than the critical t-value of 0.878339 at (n-2). Therefore, the study accepts the Null Hypothesis (H_{01}) that candidates screening have not affected Ebonyi State Civil Servants expertise in job duties to a very large extent; and though the correlation is moderate, it is very significant.

Table 7: Hypotheses Summary

Hypotheses	Statement	Decision
H_{01}	Recruitment need prediction has not affected performance of staff of Ebonyi State Civil Service.	Accepted
H_{02}	Advertisement has no implication on the quality of service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service workforce.	Accepted
H_{03}	Candidates screening has not affected Ebonyi State Civil Servants expertise in job duties to a very large extent.	Accepted

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Discussion

This paper sought to examine the effects of recruitment processes on employee job performance in Ebonyi State Civil Service using seventeen (17) selected Ministries as focal point. As previously mentioned, a total of Three Hundred and Ninety Nine (399) copies of questionnaire were administered on the respondents, out of which only Three Hundred and Forty Nine (349) representing 87.46% were successfully filled and returned, hence used for the analysis. Data generated from the survey were analyzed and findings there from were presented in chapter four

(4) of this study. Accordingly, the discussions of findings in this paper were based on data analyzed.

How Recruitment Need Prediction has affected Performance of Staff of Ebonyi State Civil Service

As evident in the analyzed data gathered from our survey, majority of the respondents with over 70% affirmed that recruitment in their ministry doesn't begin with thorough prediction of recruitment needs to know the right calibre of candidates to attract that are performing tasks at high level. The findings resound with those of Udeh et al., (2023) in their study on "Cost and Administrative Effectiveness of Recruitment Practices in Nigeria Public Service Delivery: A Case of Ebonyi State Public Sector Organizations". Their findings revealed that though the MDAs have a structured recruitment and selection system to recruit and select personnel for public service; however that serious challenges inhibit the right recruitment procedures to conflict with the requirement of ethic representativeness. Otherstudiessuch as Audu et al., (2023); Ngobe et al., (2023); Chukwu and Onuoha (2022); Onwe et al., (2016)have also expressed utter displeasure on the recruitment dilemma and unanimously attribute the poor effect on performance to the abuse of the merit principle.

In the course of our field investigation, respondents opinion were practically divided that their ministry proactively declares recruitment objectives clearly to ensure only the right kind of applicants needed to deliver set targets are searched for; but more number of the respondents affirmed irregularities with needs prediction and clear alignment of recruitment objectives. These findings agree with those ofNgobe et al., (2023) when they researched on the "Challenges of Recruitment and Selection in Nigerian Civil Service" and discovered that deviation from the right processes of recruitment exerts dysfunctional impact on the performance of Ebonyi state civil service; creating a cog in the wheel of growth and development of the polity.

As evident from our analyzed data, majority (75.3%) of the respondents admitted that defining whether to recruit internally or externally through job analysis has not equipped Ebonyi state civil service with staff committed to success. Similarly, when Chukwu and Onuoha (2022) carried out a study on "Recruitment Methods and Employee Performance in Public Institutions in Rivers State" Findings revealed the existence of significant relationship between the dimensions of recruitment methods; and that the method deployed per time in recruiting workforce consequently affects their performance.

More than 50% of the respondents aligned with the questionnaire item that adequate attention is not given to the crop of personnel recruited for the civil service that would perform those essential functions to drive optimum performance. Dueze and Chibuzo (2020) studied "Effect of Politicization of Recruitment of Employees on Service Delivery in the Enugu State Civil Service" which identified inefficiency resulting from appointment of unqualified and incompetent staff, low productivity resulting from appointment of incompetent party stalwarts. Baribor (2023) conducted a research on "Politics of Recruitment and Human Resource Management (HRM) in Ebonyi State Civil Service, 2015-2021" The study revealed that recruitment practices based on political patronage have created performance redundancy problems in Ebonyi State Civil Service.

We discovered that recruitment need prediction has not affected optimum performance of staff of Ebonyi State Civil Service. When we tested the null hypothesis (H_{01}) which stated that "Recruitment need prediction has not affected performance of staff of Ebonyi State Civil Service" using the Pearson Correlation Analysis, under a general decision rule at 5% level of significance and 95% level of confidence; (0.805) largely positive correlation between recruitment needs prediction and the performance of staff of Ebonyi state civil service was found. At 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom, the calculated t-value of (0.805) was lesser than the critical t-

value of 0.878339. The critical table value 0.878339 was obtained from the Pearson Correlation critical value statistical table at (n-2).

The study therefore accepted the null hypothesis (H_01) that recruitment need prediction has not affected performance of staff of Ebonyi State Civil Service. However, the computation suggested that the correlation is positive and significant, which goes to show that as the independent variable (needs prediction) goes down, the dependent variable of performance goes down as well; and vice versa. The result corroborates the findings of Manneh and Adesopo (2023) on the “Effect of the Recruitment and Selection Methods on employee performance in public service institutions” and found that the relationship between performance and recruitment methods is inverse and not statistically significant; while selection methods and employee performance was found to be positively related.

The Implication of Advertisement on the Quality of Service Delivery of Ebonyi State Civil Service Workforce

Over 65% of the responses from our field survey attested that advertisement has no implication on the quality of service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service workforce. When Onyeche and Deemdum (2023) carried out a study on “Recruitment and Selection Processes in Public Service Organizations: Rivers State Experience” They found that because governance has been privatized, recruitment and selection processes in public service organizations is currently personalized and mired by irregularities with job postings and unfair approaches. Responses further revealed that most of the job vacancies are not aptly advertised and all applicants who qualify are not given the chance to be hired to ensure quality services are delivered.

The findings agree with those of Ngobe et al., (2023) on the “Challenges of Recruitment and Selection in Nigerian Civil Service” whereby data pinpointed influence peddling by politicians has spilled into recruitments in Nigeria; revealing that politicians are influencing the recruitment and selection process by referring their candidates for vacant positions irrespective of whether their candidate is competent or not. Our respondents mostly indicated that job postings aren’t done internally to inform all existing employees, allowing fair competition that assigns jobs to best fit performing employees, which resound with the findings of Baribor (2023) on “Politics and Human Resource Management (HRM) in Ebonyi State Civil Service, 2015-2021”. They discovered that the internal recruitment job appointments are not exercised transparently and competitively by reviewing employees’ records to pick the best fit; rather a manipulated process due to political manipulation and personal aggrandizement.

Our field survey recorded a near unanimous opinion that services of Ebonyi state ministries are of lesser quality as politicians influence recruitment by referring their candidates for vacant positions irrespective of capability to serve. Ngobe et al (2023) research on “Challenges of Recruitment and Selection in Nigerian Civil Service” had also discovered that the recruitment processes in Nigeria civil service are faced with several challenges of nepotism and favoritism, misrepresentation of qualifications, politicians influence peddling and bribery and corruption that consequently affect the civil service effectiveness. Most of our respondents affirmed that the civil service system does not operate with respect to rules and due processes for advertisement and proper sourcing of talents; thus exerting dysfunctional effect on quality service delivery.

Onwe et al., (2016) in their study titled “Politics of Recruitment and Selection in the Nigerian Civil Service: An Ebonyi State Experience” had revealed that politics is a regular feature in the Nigerian Civil Service recruitment exercise and that its effects are the bane of the public service delivery vis-à-vis corruption, inefficiency, low productivity, indiscipline etc. When the null hypothesis (H_02) which stated that “Advertisement has no implication on the quality of service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service workforce” was tested using the Pearson Correlation Analysis, under a general decision rule at 5% level of significance and 95% level of confidence; result revealed

(0.704) strong positive correlation advertisement and the quality of service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service workforce. At 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom, the calculated t-value of (0.704) is lesser than the critical t-value of 0.878339 at (n-2). Therefore, the study accepts the null hypothesis (H_{02}) that advertisement has no implication on the quality of service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service workforce. Nonetheless, the computation suggests that the correlation is positive and very significant.

The Extent to Which Candidates Screening has affected Ebonyi State Civil Servants Expertise in Job Duties

We discovered that there is no proper review of employee records in the ministries which to a significant extent affects assigning of job vacancies to employees with job knowledge to excel. Igwe and Utebor (2023) in their research on the “Perceived Influences of Office Recruitment Ergonomics on the Job Performance of Confidential Secretaries in Government Ministries in Ebonyi State” had found that most of the secretaries in the MDAs were recruited based on ‘man-know-man’ bases in neglect of the right principles with negative implications for proper conduct in the work environment; exerting dysfunctional impact on job performance. Our field survey further revealed that relevant qualifications are not used during the screening process to evaluate and shortlist candidates with expertise in doing their job in accordance with set standards.

The foregoing findings corroborate those of Oyadiran et al., (2023) on “Effects of Recruitment Processes on Performance in Nigerian Public Organisations” which found that there is positively significance effect of recruitment and selection process on organization performance. However, evidences pinpointed that the suitable and qualified candidates are denied positions in line with political or ethnic affiliation, thus affecting job knowledge and productivity. In the course of our investigation, responses indicated that besides interviews, reference and background checks are not exercised to validate candidate's education or exonerate any felonious record to secure those that best meet expert criteria. When Erude et al., (2023) researched on “Bureaucratic Recruitment Features and Job Performance in Nigeria: A Study of Delta State Civil Service”, the problem of age falsification was found as the common practice to manipulate eligibility for a job, which is a major bane in the civil service.

The study further revealed that they are more of over aged civil servants, an anomaly which is affecting expertise level to a significant extent. Our survey further recorded a near unanimous opinion that there is disregard for thorough screening as credentials of applicants are misappropriated and irrelevant to the position assigned to them. These findings resound with those of Audu et al., (2023) on “Recruitment Corruption and Its Effect on Nigeria Civil Service: An Analysis of Ministry of Finance, which revealed that corruption and financial incentive consideration has made civil servants to lose their principles including the merit standard in recruitment and selection. Majority of our respondents affirmed that candidates screening has not affected Ebonyi State Civil Servants expertise in job duties to a very large extent.

When we tested the null hypothesis (H_{03}) using the Pearson Correlation Analysis, under a general decision rule at 5% level of significance and 95% level of confidence; result revealed 0.609 moderate positive Correlation between candidates screening and the expertise of employees in their job duties. At 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom, the calculated t-value of 0.609 was lesser than the critical t-value of 0.878339 at (n-2). The Null Hypothesis (H_{03}) that “Candidates screening have not affected Ebonyi State Civil Servants expertise in job duties to a very large extent” was accepted. However, the correlation was significant and the result corroborates those of Gilbert and Ndubuisi (2023) on “Evaluation of Recruitment Practice and Employee Job Commitment in Nigeria” which revealed a positive significant relationship between recruitment practice and employee performance commitment. However, that recruitment and selection are based purely on sentimental reasons instead of standard practices.

5. Summary of Findings

Arising from the data collected analyzed in line with the specific objectives of the study, the following findings were made;

1. That recruitment need prediction has not affected optimum performance of staff of Ebonyi State Civil Service.
2. That advertisement has no implication on the quality of service delivery of Ebonyi state civil service as most of the job vacancies are not aptly advertised.
3. And that candidates screening has not affected Ebonyi State Civil Servants expertise in job duties to a very large extent;

5.1 Conclusion

Effectively, this study has been able to investigate the effects of recruitment processes on employee job performance in Ebonyi State Civil Service using selected Ministries as focal point. By looking at this topic through the descriptive survey lens, this study was able to appraise the situation so far with recruitment needs prediction, advertisement, and candidates screening which are some of the core processes of recruitment in the civil service. There's no gainsaying the fact that it is through the system of recruitment that knowledgeable, competent and qualified personnel are being sort and offered jobs as indicated in the civil service rule book and policy guidelines; however the findings of this study leave no doubt that the actual practice of the recruitment processes is utopia. This study concludes that the anomalies can be corrected and a lot can still be achieved if the recruiters follow and maintain the due processes; making sure that merit is considered as number one priority devoid of political manipulation, personal favours, falsehood and any form of vices. This study therefore proffered some plausible recommendations and hope that the political and administrative authorities in Nigeria will endeavour to put the suggestions into actual practice to address the menace.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Ebonyi state civil service should develop consistent quantitative and qualitative manpower needs assessment in its recruitment processes. This should be properly aligned with thorough job analysis and job description with clearly set objective to know the right calibre of candidates that would produce optimum job performance.
2. Adequate advertisements on recruitment into the Ebonyi State civil service should always be made to enable every applicant who is qualified to have equal opportunity to compete for positions based on merit.
3. Ebonyi State civil service should set up a panel of men and women of proven integrity that would screen applicants for positions across the various Ministries.

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