

INFLUENCE OF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN THE NIGERIAN BANKING SECTOR: A HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Effective recruitment and selection practices remain critical to employee performance, particularly in the Nigerian banking sector where competence, service quality and operational efficiency jointly determine organisational success. Many banking institutions nevertheless continue to experience difficulties associated with mismatch between employee and job, weak workforce planning, and recruitment processes that do not adequately align capability with role requirements. This study examined the effect of recruitment and selection practices on employee task performance among selected deposit money banks in Nigeria, with particular attention to three dimensions: identifying the need for employees, defining job requirements and qualifications, and developing job descriptions and specifications. A survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 220 employees drawn from ten listed deposit money banks, and a census was taken because the population was of manageable size. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered electronically and measured on five point scales. The instrument demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach alpha coefficients ranging from 0.80 to 0.87 and an overall value of 0.86. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and multiple regression. All three recruitment dimensions correlated positively and significantly with task performance, the strongest being job requirements and qualifications ($r = 0.714, p < 0.01$). The regression results showed that each dimension exerted a positive and significant effect: job requirements and qualifications ($\beta = 0.354, p < 0.001$), identifying the need for employees ($\beta = 0.286, p < 0.001$) and job descriptions and specifications ($\beta = 0.241, p = 0.001$). The model explained 61.2 percent of the variance in task performance, $F(3, 216) = 113.426, p < 0.001$. The ordering of the three coefficients is itself informative, indicating that the specification of what a role requires matters more than either the anticipation of the vacancy or the documentation of the duties attached to it. The study concludes that recruitment quality is established principally at the point where role criteria are defined, and recommends that banks invest in rigorous job analysis and criterion based selection rather than in procedural elaboration elsewhere in the hiring cycle.

Keywords: recruitment practices; selection practices; employee task performance; job requirements; job descriptions; person job fit; Nigerian banking sector

1. Introduction

The capacity of an organisation to attract, select and retain people with appropriate skills, knowledge and disposition bears directly on its performance and durability. In service industries the link is especially tight, because the service itself is largely produced by employees at the point of contact with the customer and cannot be separated from the people delivering it.

Recruitment is the process of identifying manpower needs, attracting potential applicants and encouraging qualified individuals to apply for available positions. Selection is the subsequent process of assessing those applicants against defined criteria and choosing among them. The two are conventionally treated as a single human resource function, but they rest on different logics: recruitment governs the composition of the applicant pool, while selection governs the decision rule applied to it. A failure at either stage produces the same observable outcome, namely an employee poorly matched to the role, which is why diagnosis requires that the stages be examined separately.

This study decomposes recruitment and selection practice into three dimensions. The first is **identifying the need for employees**, which involves assessing existing workforce capacity, determining skill shortages and anticipating future requirements. Done well, it ensures that hiring responds to a demonstrated gap rather than to the departure of a particular individual. The second is **defining job requirements and qualifications**, which specifies the educational background, professional experience, technical competence and behavioural attributes a role demands. This is the stage at which the criteria governing selection are established. The third is **developing job descriptions and specifications**, which records duties, reporting relationships and performance standards, and communicates them to the appointee.

Employee task performance, the outcome examined here, refers to the degree to which employees successfully carry out activities directly associated with their formal responsibilities. In banking this is observable through accuracy in transaction processing, adherence to regulatory and internal control requirements, speed of service delivery and quality of customer interaction. Task performance is distinguished from contextual performance, which concerns discretionary behaviours that support the wider organisational environment; the present study is confined to the former because it is the component most directly determined by the match between person and role.

Despite the acknowledged importance of these practices, Nigerian banking institutions continue to report difficulties with employee and job mismatch, weak workforce planning and recruitment processes that do not consistently align capability with requirement. The consequences are operational rather than merely administrative: mismatch raises error rates, lengthens the period before an appointee becomes productive, and increases turnover with its attendant replacement costs.

This study therefore examines the effect of recruitment and selection practices on employee task performance in the Nigerian banking sector. It addresses three research questions:

- (i) To what extent does identifying the need for employees influence task performance among employees in the Nigerian banking sector?
- (j) How does defining job requirements and qualifications influence task performance among employees in the Nigerian banking sector?
- (k) What is the influence of developing job descriptions and specifications on task performance among employees in the Nigerian banking sector?

The contribution lies in the decomposition. Treating recruitment as a single construct yields an aggregate association but no guidance on where within the hiring cycle managerial effort returns most. By estimating the three dimensions jointly the study identifies which stage carries the greatest weight, which is the question a practitioner actually faces when allocating limited human resource capacity.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Recruitment and Selection Practices

Recruitment and selection are foundational human resource activities because they determine the quality of human capital entering an organisation. Every subsequent intervention, whether training, appraisal or incentive design, operates on the material that recruitment supplies. This gives recruitment a logical priority: later functions can improve performance at the margin, but they cannot fully compensate for an appointment that was wrong at the outset.

Identifying the need for employees is the initial stage. It allows an organisation to establish existing manpower gaps and the categories of skill required to close them. Where this stage is weak, recruitment becomes reactive and tends to reproduce the outgoing post holder rather than meeting the need that currently exists.

Defining job requirements and qualifications establishes the criteria applicants must satisfy. This stage converts an organisational need into an assessable standard, and in doing so determines what selection is able to discriminate on. Criteria that are vague or inherited from an earlier role specification permit selection decisions to drift towards whatever is easily observed, such as paper credentials or interview fluency, rather than what the role requires.

Developing job descriptions and specifications provides both employer and appointee with an explicit statement of duties, responsibilities and performance standards. Its contribution is principally to role clarity after appointment, which reduces ambiguity and supports accurate self direction.

2.2 Employee Task Performance

Employee task performance reflects the degree to which employees meet the responsibilities formally assigned to them. In banking it encompasses transaction accuracy, compliance with control procedures, responsiveness to customers and efficiency in service delivery. Performance in this sense is jointly determined by ability, motivation and opportunity, of which recruitment and selection directly determine the first and indirectly shape the third by placing people in roles where their ability can be exercised.

Recent developments in the sector have raised the salience of the recruitment stage. Banking has become markedly more technology intensive, with digital channels, automated processing and data driven risk assessment altering the competences a branch or operations role requires. Recruitment criteria formulated for an earlier generation of banking work will select capably for a job that no longer exists.

2.3 Empirical Review

A body of evidence links recruitment practice to employee outcomes. Amani (2022) reported that structured recruitment and selection practices were associated with improved employee performance across organisational settings, while Musa, Ibrahim and Yusuf (2025) found comparable relationships among Nigerian deposit money banks and supplied the model specification adopted here. Chukwuma (2021) examined job design in deposit money banks in Abuja and found that role clarity contributed materially to performance, a finding consistent with the third dimension examined in this study.

The broader person and job fit literature provides converging evidence. Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson (2005), in a meta analysis of fit research, reported that person job fit was among the stronger correlates of job performance and satisfaction, which supplies quantitative support for the theoretical claim that matching capability to requirement is consequential rather than merely administratively tidy.

What this literature does not establish is the relative weight of the separate stages of the recruitment cycle. Studies typically report an aggregate effect of recruitment practice, leaving open the question of whether the decisive stage is the anticipation of need, the specification of criteria, or the documentation of duties. The present study addresses that question directly.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Person Job Fit Theory (Edwards, 1991), which explains the degree of compatibility between the characteristics of an employee and the demands of a role. Three assumptions of the theory bear on the present analysis.

First, employees perform better when their abilities correspond to job requirements, because every role imposes a particular profile of demands and performance depends on the correspondence between that profile and the capability of the post holder. Second, fit is a relational property rather than an attribute of either party, so that a capable employee in an unsuitable role and a suitable role filled by an underqualified employee produce the same deficit. Third, accurate job analysis provides the foundation for effective recruitment and selection, since organisations cannot select for requirements they have not specified.

The third assumption is the one the present study is best placed to test, and it generates a directional expectation: if fit depends on accurate specification of requirements, then defining job requirements and qualifications should carry greater weight than the other two dimensions. This expectation is examined against the regression results in Section 4.

The theory is not without limitation. Fit is difficult to measure because job demands and employee capabilities are not always readily quantified, and different organisations operate different conceptions of what a given role requires. The theory also tends to treat the job as fixed, whereas in practice roles are frequently reshaped around the strengths of the people occupying them, particularly in smaller units.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design, Population and Sampling

A survey research design was adopted. The design is appropriate because the study seeks to establish the direction and magnitude of relationships among variables as they occur, without manipulation. The population comprised 220 employees drawn from ten listed deposit money banks in Nigeria. Because the population was of manageable size, a census was taken rather than a sample, so that all 220 members participated. A census removes sampling error entirely and is preferable to sampling wherever the population is small enough to enumerate.

3.2 Instrument and Reliability

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered electronically. All constructs were measured using five item scales anchored on five point agreement formats. Internal consistency was assessed through Cronbach alpha, reported in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability of the research instrument

Variable	Number of items	Cronbach alpha
Identifying the need for employees (INE)	5	0.82
Job requirements and qualifications (JRQ)	5	0.85
Job descriptions and specifications (JDS)	5	0.80
Employee task performance (TP)	5	0.87
Overall reliability	20	0.86

Note. Source: authors' analysis, SPSS version 17.0.

All scales exceeded the conventional threshold of 0.70, with coefficients between 0.80 and 0.87 and an overall value of 0.86 across the twenty items. The instrument is therefore sufficiently reliable to support the inferential analysis that follows.

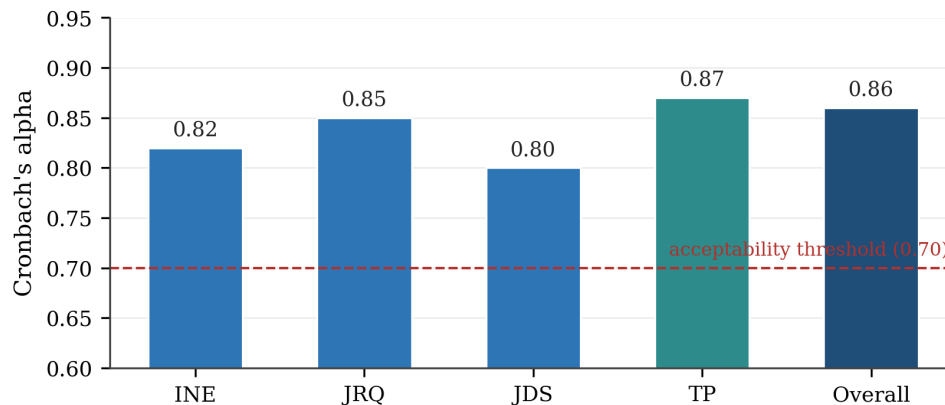


Figure 1: Cronbach alpha coefficients for each measurement scale against the conventional acceptability threshold of 0.70. All four scales and the overall instrument exceed the threshold comfortably.

3.3 Model Specification

Following Musa, Ibrahim and Yusuf (2025), employee task performance is specified as a function of the three recruitment and selection dimensions:

$$TP = f(INE, JRQ, JDS) \quad (1)$$

The estimable econometric form is

$$TP_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 INE_i + \beta_2 JRQ_i + \beta_3 JDS_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (2)$$

where TP denotes employee task performance, INE identifying the need for employees, JRQ job requirements and qualifications and JDS job descriptions and specifications for respondent i ; β_0 is the constant, β_1 to β_3 are the coefficients of the explanatory variables and ε_i is the stochastic error term. The coefficients are interpreted as the change in task performance associated with a one unit change in each recruitment dimension, holding the other two constant, which is the property that permits the relative weight of the three stages to be compared.

The proportion of variance accounted for is given by

$$R^2 = 1 - (\sum_i (TP_i - TP_{\text{mean}})^2) / (\sum_i (TP_i - TP_{\text{mean}})^2) \quad (3)$$

Analysis was conducted in SPSS version 17.0 using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and ordinary least squares multiple regression.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 reports descriptive statistics for the 220 respondents. All four constructs recorded means above 4.00 on the five point scale, indicating broad agreement that the practices examined are present in the participating banks and that respondents regard their own task performance favourably.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std. deviation
Identifying the need for employees (INE)	220	4.18	2.40	5.00	0.62
Job requirements and qualifications (JRQ)	220	4.25	2.60	5.00	0.58
Job descriptions and specifications (JDS)	220	4.12	2.20	5.00	0.66

Variable	Obs	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std. deviation
Employee task performance (TP)	220	4.30	2.80	5.00	0.55
Overall	220	4.21	2.50	5.00	0.60

Note. Source: authors' analysis, SPSS version 17.0.

Job requirements and qualifications recorded the highest mean among the three recruitment dimensions at 4.25 with a standard deviation of 0.58, which indicates that respondents regard the specification of role criteria as the dimension most consistently observed in practice. Job descriptions and specifications recorded the lowest at 4.12 with the widest dispersion at 0.66, suggesting that documentation practice varies more between institutions than does criterion setting. Task performance recorded the highest mean overall at 4.30 with the narrowest dispersion at 0.55.

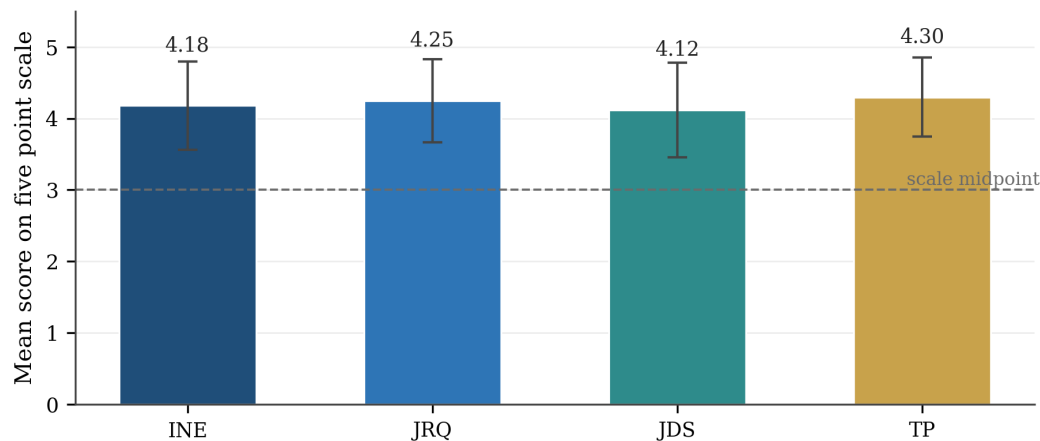


Figure 2: Mean scores with standard deviation bars for the three recruitment dimensions and employee task performance. All constructs lie well above the scale midpoint, and job descriptions and specifications shows the widest dispersion.

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 3 reports the correlation matrix. All three recruitment dimensions correlate positively and significantly with employee task performance at the one percent level. Job requirements and qualifications shows the strongest association with task performance ($r = 0.714$), followed by identifying the need for employees ($r = 0.672$) and job descriptions and specifications ($r = 0.641$).

Table 3: Correlation matrix

Variable	INE	JRQ	JDS	TP
INE	1.000			
JRQ	0.624**	1.000		
JDS	0.581**	0.653**	1.000	
TP	0.672**	0.714**	0.641**	1.000

Note. ** correlation significant at the 0.01 level, two tailed. $N = 220$. Source: authors' analysis, SPSS version 17.0.

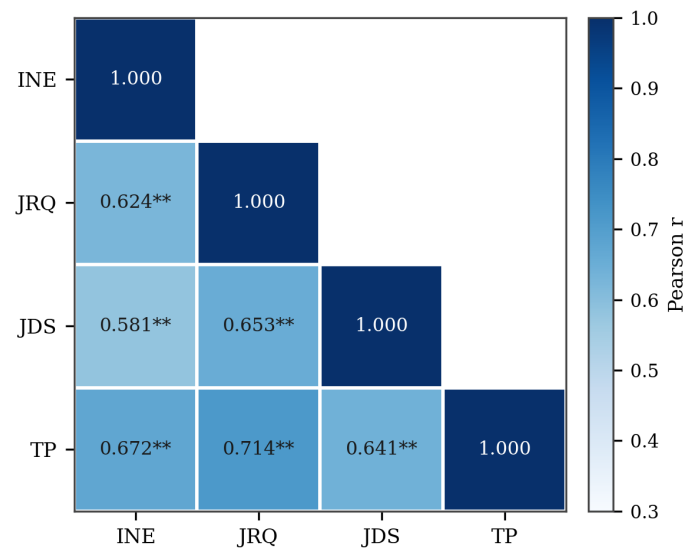


Figure 3: Correlation matrix of study variables. Shading intensity reflects the magnitude of the coefficient. Inter predictor correlations between 0.581 and 0.653 are moderate, indicating that the three recruitment dimensions are related but separable.

The inter predictor correlations, ranging from 0.581 to 0.653, warrant comment. They are substantial enough to confirm that the three dimensions form part of a common recruitment practice, which is theoretically expected, but modest enough to indicate that they are not interchangeable. Banks that specify requirements carefully do not automatically document duties carefully. This separability is what makes the decomposition analytically worthwhile.

4.3 Regression Analysis

Table 4 reports the multiple regression results. All three recruitment dimensions exert positive and statistically significant effects on employee task performance.

Table 4: Multiple regression analysis

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard error	<i>t</i> value	Sig. (<i>p</i> value)
Constant	0.842	0.214	3.935	0.000
Identifying the need for employees (INE)	0.286	0.071	4.028	0.000
Job requirements and qualifications (JRQ)	0.354	0.076	4.658	0.000
Job descriptions and specifications (JDS)	0.241	0.069	3.493	0.001
R^2	0.612			
Adjusted R^2	0.607			
<i>F</i> statistic	113.426			0.000

Note. Dependent variable: employee task performance. *N* = 220. Source: authors' analysis, SPSS version 17.0.

Job requirements and qualifications recorded the largest coefficient ($\beta = 0.354$, $t = 4.658$, $p < 0.001$), followed by identifying the need for employees ($\beta = 0.286$, $t = 4.028$, $p < 0.001$) and job descriptions and specifications ($\beta = 0.241$, $t = 3.493$, $p = 0.001$). The constant was also significant. The model explained 61.2 percent of the variation in employee task performance, with an adjusted value of 60.7 percent, and the overall model was significant, $F(3, 216) = 113.426$, $p < 0.001$. The small difference between the unadjusted and adjusted coefficients of determination indicates that the explanatory power is not an artefact of the number of predictors.

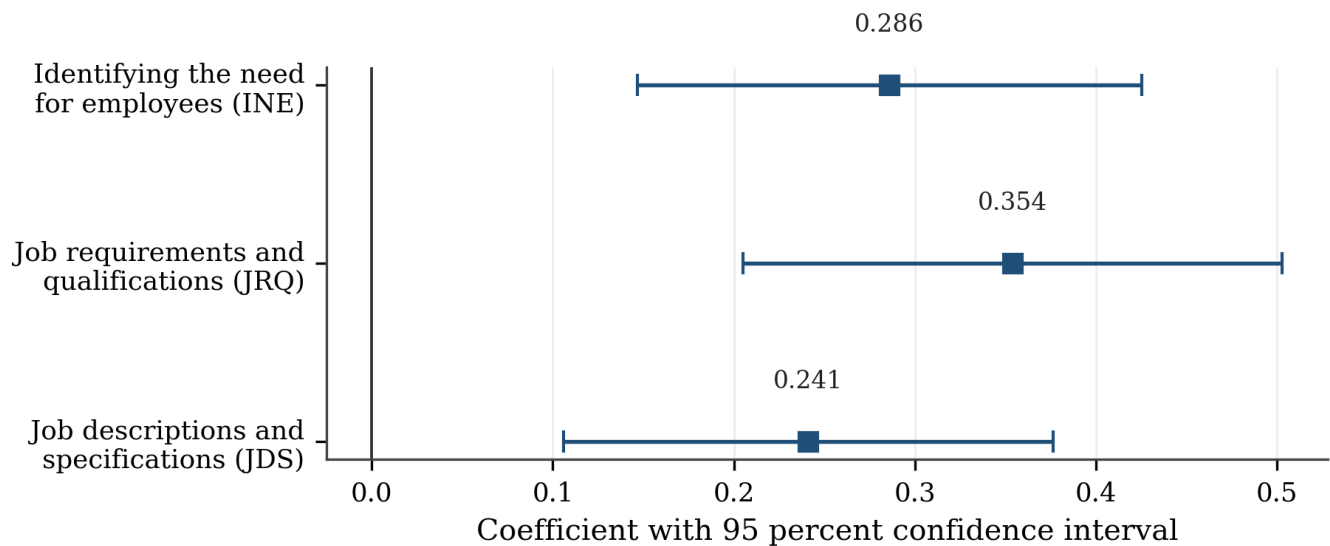


Figure 4: Regression coefficients with 95 percent confidence intervals. No interval approaches zero, and the ordering places job requirements and qualifications first and job descriptions and specifications last.

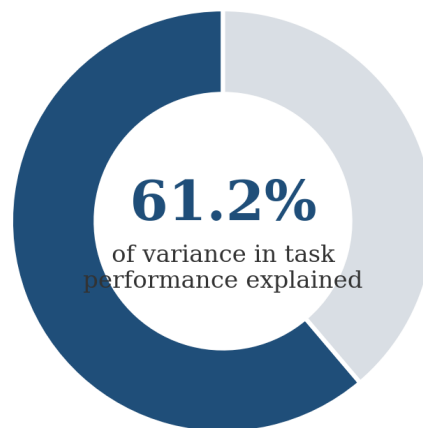


Figure 5: Proportion of variance in employee task performance explained by the three recruitment and selection dimensions jointly.

5. Discussion of Findings

5.1 The Primacy of Requirement Definition

The central result is not simply that all three dimensions matter, which was expected, but the order in which they matter. Defining job requirements and qualifications carries the largest coefficient, and does so on both the correlational and the regression evidence. This is the pattern Person Job Fit Theory predicts. Edwards (1991) holds that performance depends on correspondence between capability and demand, and correspondence can only be engineered where demand has been articulated. A recruitment process that anticipates a vacancy accurately but specifies its requirements loosely will fill the post promptly with a candidate selected against criteria that do not discriminate on what the role needs.

The finding also carries a practical implication that runs against common practice. Much managerial attention in recruitment is directed at the later stages of the cycle, notably interviewing and assessment, on the assumption that these are where discrimination between candidates occurs. The present evidence suggests the decisive work happens earlier. Assessment can only discriminate along dimensions the criteria specify; improving interview technique while leaving requirements vague improves the precision with which the wrong attributes are measured.

5.2 Workforce Planning and the Anticipation of Need

Identifying the need for employees recorded the second largest effect ($\beta = 0.286$). The result indicates that banks which assess staffing requirements systematically before recruiting achieve better subsequent task performance than those which recruit reactively. The mechanism is plausible and operates through two channels. Anticipated vacancies permit a longer search and therefore a wider applicant pool, and planned recruitment allows the requirement to be defined against current operational need

rather than inherited from the departing post holder. The finding is consistent with Sulaimon et al. (2021), who reported comparable relationships between workforce planning and performance outcomes.

5.3 Role Clarity and Its Limits

Job descriptions and specifications recorded the smallest though still significant effect ($\beta = 0.241$). Documentation contributes to performance by reducing role ambiguity: employees who understand what is expected of them complete assigned tasks more accurately and with less duplication. Chukwuma (2021) reported similar effects for job design in Abuja deposit money banks.

That this dimension ranks third is nevertheless worth dwelling on, because job descriptions are the most visible and most readily audited element of recruitment practice and consequently attract disproportionate compliance attention. The present evidence suggests documentation is necessary but subordinate. A precise description of duties does not compensate for an appointee selected against the wrong criteria; it merely records with clarity what that appointee will struggle to do. The ordering of the three coefficients therefore maps onto a logical sequence in which the earlier decisions constrain the value obtainable from the later ones.

5.4 Explanatory Power and Contrary Evidence

The three dimensions jointly explain 61.2 percent of variance in task performance. For a model of individual performance, where ability, motivation, supervision and workplace conditions all contribute, this is a substantial share and indicates that the recruitment stage exerts a first order influence on how employees subsequently perform. The residual 38.8 percent is appropriately read as the combined contribution of post appointment factors, which is where training, appraisal and supervisory quality operate.

Contrary evidence should be acknowledged. Not all studies report uniformly positive effects of formalised recruitment practice. Where recruitment technology has been introduced without adequate validation of the underlying criteria, improvements in process efficiency have not translated into performance gains, and in some reported cases algorithmic screening has reproduced existing selection biases at greater speed. This qualification is consistent with the present findings rather than contrary to them: both point to criterion quality, not process sophistication, as the operative variable.

5.5 Limitations

Several limitations qualify the findings. Task performance was self reported by the same respondents who assessed recruitment practice, which raises the possibility of common method variance and may inflate the observed associations; supervisor rated performance or objective productivity data would provide a stronger test. The census covered 220 employees across ten listed deposit money banks, so the findings generalise to the listed segment of the sector rather than to microfinance, merchant or non listed institutions. The design is cross sectional, so the direction of causation cannot be established definitively, and it is possible that high performing employees recall recruitment processes more favourably. Finally, the study examined task performance only, leaving the contextual and adaptive components of performance unexamined, and these may respond differently to recruitment practice.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the effect of recruitment and selection practices on employee task performance among selected deposit money banks in Nigeria. All three dimensions examined exerted positive and significant effects, and together they explained 61.2 percent of the variation in task performance. The ordering of effects placed the definition of job requirements and qualifications first, the identification of staffing need second and the development of job descriptions third.

The study concludes that recruitment quality is determined principally at the point where role criteria are specified. Banks that assess their manpower needs accurately, define requirements precisely and document responsibilities clearly obtain employees better matched to their roles, and that match is reflected in measurable task performance. Where criteria are imprecise, later stages of the recruitment cycle cannot recover what has been lost.

On that basis the following recommendations are made.

1. **Invest in job analysis before advertising.** Banks should require that role criteria be derived from current job analysis rather than carried forward from previous vacancy notices, since this is the dimension with the largest estimated effect on subsequent performance.
2. **Strengthen workforce planning.** Management should conduct regular assessment of staffing needs in advance of vacancies arising, which permits wider search and allows requirements to reflect current operational demands.
3. **Select against defined criteria.** Selection decisions should be scored explicitly against the specified requirements rather than formed holistically at interview, so that the investment in criterion definition is carried through to the decision itself.
4. **Review job descriptions periodically.** Descriptions and specifications should be updated to reflect technological change and evolving operational demands, since documentation written for a superseded version of a role contributes little to clarity.

5. **Validate any automated screening against performance outcomes.** Where digital or algorithmic tools are introduced, their criteria should be validated against realised performance before being relied upon, so that process efficiency is not purchased at the cost of selection quality.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest relating to the research, authorship or publication of this article.

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Authors Contributions

Abiodun Ojo: conceptualisation, methodology, questionnaire development, data collection, data analysis and drafting of the manuscript. **Peter Ugbedeajo Nelson:** conceptualisation, supervision, methodology validation, review and editing, final approval of the manuscript.

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