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Evaluating The Impact of Selection on Employee Performance in Public Higher Education Institution in Kabul

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Abstract

The selection process is a critical function of human resource management that significantly influences employee performance by ensuring that qualified and competent individuals are appointed to appropriate positions. This study examines the impact of selection processes on employee performance in public higher education institutions in Kabul, Afghanistan. A quantitative research approach employing descriptive and explanatory research designs was adopted. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 30 teaching staff members from Kabul University, Kabul Education University, and Kabul Polytechnic University using purposive sampling. Data were analyzed using SPSS, applying descriptive statistics, Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis, Pearson correlation, and linear regression techniques. The findings revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between the selection process and employee performance ($r = 0.713$, $p < 0.001$). Regression analysis further indicated that the selection process explained 50.8% of the variance in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.508$), demonstrating its significant predictive effect. The study concludes that systematic, transparent, and competency-based selection practices substantially enhance teaching effectiveness, productivity, and professional commitment among academic staff. It recommends that public higher education institutions strengthen merit-based recruitment systems by adopting standardized screening procedures, structured interviews, competency-based assessments, and transparent evaluation mechanisms to improve institutional performance and support the sustainable development of higher education in Afghanistan.

Keywords: Selection Process, Employee Performance, Human Resource Management, Higher Education, Afghanistan

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ارزیابی تأثیر فرآیندهای گزینش بر عملکرد کارکنان در نهادهای تحصیلات عالی دولتی در کابل

سید حسن آقا همتا[۱]*، سوبهاشینی سریواتسا*[۲]

چکیده

فرآیند گزینش یکی از مهم‌ترین وظایف مدیریت منابع انسانی است که نقش اساسی در جذب افراد شایسته و ارتقای عملکرد کارکنان ایفا می‌کند. با وجود اهمیت این موضوع، نهادهای تحصیلات عالی دولتی افغانستان، به‌ویژه در شهر کابل، همچنان با چالش‌هایی مانند نبود شفافیت، عدم استفاده از روش‌های علمی و معیاری، و ضعف در ارزیابی شایستگی متقاضیان روبه‌رو هستند. هدف این تحقیق، بررسی تأثیر فرآیندهای گزینش بر عملکرد کارکنان در نهادهای تحصیلات عالی دولتی شهر کابل است. این تحقیق با استفاده از رویکرد کمی و طرح تحقیق توصیفی–تبیینی انجام شده است. داده‌ها از طریق پرسشنامه ساختاریافته از ۳۰ تن از اعضای کادر علمی پوهنتون کابل، پوهنتون تعلیم و تربیه کابل و پوهنتون پولی‌تخنیک کابل به روش نمونه‌گیری هدفمند گردآوری و با استفاده از نرم‌افزار SPSS از طریق آمار توصیفی، ضریب همبستگی پیرسون و رگرسیون خطی تحلیل گردید. یافته‌ها نشان داد که میان فرآیند گزینش و عملکرد کارکنان رابطه مثبت و معناداری وجود دارد ($r=0.713$، $p<0.001$) و فرآیند گزینش توانسته است ۵۰.۸ درصد از تغییرات عملکرد کارکنان را تبیین نماید ($R^2=0.508$). نتایج تحقیق نشان می‌دهد که به‌کارگیری شیوه‌های گزینش نظام‌مند، شفاف و مبتنی بر شایستگی می‌تواند به بهبود اثربخشی تدریس، افزایش بهره‌وری و ارتقای تعهد حرفه‌ای کارکنان علمی منجر شود. از این‌رو، تقویت نظام‌های استخدام و گزینش مبتنی بر شایستگی، استفاده از مصاحبه‌های ساختاریافته، ارزیابی‌های عینی و معیارهای شفاف، برای ارتقای کیفیت و اثربخشی نهادهای تحصیلات عالی افغانستان ضروری است.

کلیدواژه‌ها: فرآیند گزینش، عملکرد کارکنان، مدیریت منابع انسانی، تحصیلات عالی، افغانستان

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1. Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) is widely recognized as a strategic function that contributes to organizational effectiveness by ensuring that competent employees are recruited, developed, and retained. Among HRM practices, the selection process is particularly important because it determines whether organizations appoint individuals whose knowledge, skills, and abilities match job requirements. An effective selection process not only improves employee performance but also enhances organizational productivity, service quality, and long-term institutional success.

In higher education institutions, academic staff play a vital role in achieving institutional goals through teaching, research, and community service. Therefore, transparent, fair, and competency-based selection procedures are essential for recruiting qualified lecturers and improving educational quality. However, recruitment and selection practices in many developing countries, including Afghanistan, continue to face challenges such as limited transparency, inconsistent selection criteria, and insufficient reliance on merit-based assessment, which may adversely affect employee performance and institutional effectiveness.

Previous studies conducted in different countries have consistently reported a positive relationship between selection practices and employee performance. Nevertheless, most of these studies have been undertaken in business organizations or public institutions outside Afghanistan. Empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of selection processes within Afghanistan's public higher education sector remains limited. Furthermore, few studies have specifically examined how selection practices influence the performance of academic staff in public universities in Kabul.

Addressing this research gap, the present study investigates the impact of the selection process on employee performance in public higher education institutions in Kabul, Afghanistan. Specifically, it examines whether transparent and competency-based selection practices contribute to improved employee performance among academic staff. The findings are expected to provide empirical evidence

for university administrators, policymakers, and human resource practitioners to strengthen merit-based recruitment systems and improve the quality and effectiveness of higher education institutions in Afghanistan.

1.1 Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between the selection process and employee performance in public higher education institutions in Kabul?
2. How do the components of the selection process (screening, testing, and structured interviews) affect employee performance?

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

- To examine the relationship between the selection process and employee performance.
- To evaluate the impact of screening, testing, and structured interviews on employee performance.

1.3 Research Hypotheses

H_0: Selection process has no significant impact on employee performance.
H_1: Selection process has a significant positive impact on employee performance.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in two major theories in Human Resource Management: Human Capital Theory and Person–Job Fit Theory. These theories provide a strong conceptual foundation for understanding how effective selection processes influence employee performance.

Human Capital Theory, originally developed by Becker (1964), emphasizes that employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities are valuable assets that contribute to organizational performance. According to this theory, organizations that invest in selecting and developing competent individuals are more likely to achieve higher productivity and efficiency. In the context of higher education,

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teaching staff represent critical human capital, as their competencies directly affect teaching quality, research output, and institutional success.

Person–Job Fit Theory, on the other hand, focuses on the alignment between an individual's capabilities and the requirements of a specific job. This theory suggests that when employees' skills, knowledge, and abilities match the demands of their roles, they are more likely to perform effectively and experience higher job satisfaction. A proper fit between the individual and the job reduces turnover, increases motivation, and enhances overall performance.

Both theories highlight the importance of selecting the right individuals for the right positions. They emphasize that effective selection processes are essential for ensuring that organizations recruit employees who possess the necessary competencies and are well-suited to their roles.

Application of the Theory

The application of Human Capital Theory and Person–Job Fit Theory in this study is highly relevant to the research problem. The selection process, which includes screening, testing, and structured interviews, serves as a mechanism for identifying and selecting individuals with the required competencies and qualifications.

Screening helps to ensure that candidates meet the minimum educational and professional requirements. Testing provides objective measures of candidates' abilities and skills, while structured interviews assess their behavioral and professional competencies. Together, these methods contribute to selecting individuals who possess strong human capital and are well-matched to their job roles.

In the context of public higher education institutions in Kabul, applying these theories helps explain how structured and merit-based selection processes can lead to improved employee performance. When universities adopt systematic selection procedures, they are more likely to recruit qualified teaching staff who can deliver effective

instruction, contribute to research, and support institutional development.

Therefore, this study uses these theoretical perspectives to explain the relationship between selection processes and employee performance. The theories justify the assumption that better selection practices lead to improved performance outcomes, which is empirically tested in this research.

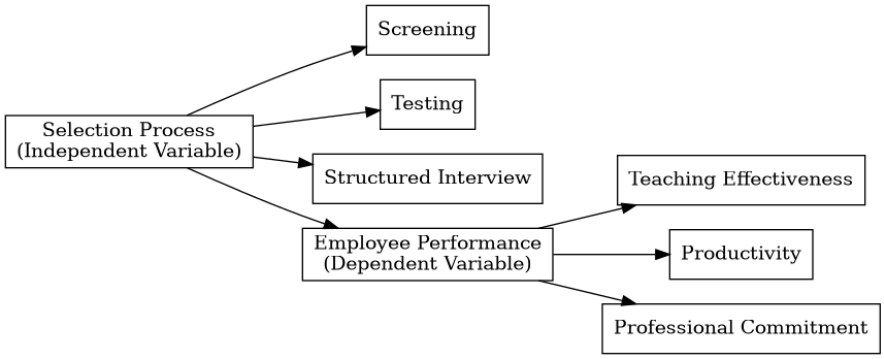


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study (Becker, 1964)

3. Review of the Literature

The selection process is a fundamental component of Human Resource Management (HRM) and plays a crucial role in ensuring that organizations recruit competent and suitable employees. According to Dessler (2020), the selection process involves a series of steps through which organizations identify and choose candidates who best meet job requirements. These steps typically include screening applications, conducting tests, and holding structured interviews. Effective selection practices are essential for minimizing hiring errors and enhancing employee performance. Similarly, Armstrong (2021) emphasized that a systematic and competency-based selection process improves the alignment between employee capabilities and organizational needs.

Screening is often the first stage of the selection process, where applicants are evaluated based on their qualifications and experience. This step helps organizations shortlist candidates who meet the minimum job criteria. Testing, which may include aptitude tests, subject knowledge assessments, or psychological evaluations, provides

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objective data about candidates' abilities and skills (Noe et al., 2020). Structured interviews, on the other hand, are widely regarded as one of the most reliable selection tools, as they ensure consistency and fairness in evaluating candidates (Gatewood et al., 2016). When these methods are applied in a structured and transparent manner, they significantly improve the quality of hiring decisions.

Employee performance is another critical concept in HRM and is often defined as the extent to which employees effectively perform their job duties and contribute to organizational goals. In the context of higher education, teaching staff performance is typically measured in terms of teaching effectiveness, productivity, and professional commitment. According to Robbins and Judge (2017), employee performance is influenced by multiple factors, including skills, motivation, and organizational support. In academic institutions, the quality of teaching staff directly impacts student learning outcomes and institutional reputation.

A growing body of literature suggests a strong relationship between selection processes and employee performance. Studies have shown that organizations that adopt structured and merit-based selection practices tend to achieve higher levels of employee effectiveness and productivity (Ployhart, 2006). Furthermore, Schmidt and Hunter (1998) found that cognitive ability tests and structured interviews are among the most valid predictors of job performance. In the context of higher education, effective selection practices ensure that institutions recruit qualified lecturers who can deliver high-quality teaching and contribute to academic excellence.

Despite extensive research in developed countries, there is limited empirical evidence on the impact of selection processes on employee performance in developing countries, particularly in Afghanistan. Most existing studies have focused on corporate sectors or non-educational settings, leaving a gap in understanding how HRM practices influence teaching staff performance in public universities. This gap highlights the need for context-specific research that examines the effectiveness of

selection processes in improving employee performance within higher education institutions in Kabul.

Recent studies conducted in developing countries have further emphasized the importance of effective selection processes in improving employee performance. Khan, Khan, and Ahmed (2022) examined recruitment and selection practices in higher education institutions and found that structured selection methods significantly contributed to employee productivity, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Their study highlighted that transparent recruitment procedures and competency-based assessments improve the quality of hiring decisions and reduce the likelihood of employee-job mismatch.

Similarly, research conducted in South Asian countries, including India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, has demonstrated a positive relationship between selection practices and employee performance. Studies have reported that organizations utilizing merit-based recruitment systems, structured interviews, and objective testing mechanisms are more successful in attracting qualified employees and achieving higher levels of organizational effectiveness. These findings suggest that effective selection procedures are particularly important in developing countries where institutions often face challenges related to transparency, accountability, and resource constraints.

Within the Afghan context, Human Resource Management practices have received increasing attention in recent years. However, most studies have focused on general HRM challenges, organizational development, leadership, and employee motivation rather than selection processes. Existing evidence suggests that public institutions in Afghanistan continue to face challenges related to transparency, consistency, and merit-based recruitment practices. In the higher education sector, ensuring fair and competency-based selection procedures is essential for attracting qualified academic staff capable of improving teaching quality, research productivity, and institutional performance. Despite the growing importance of this issue, empirical research examining the relationship between selection processes and employee performance in Afghan public universities remains limited.

Recent studies conducted in South Asia and other developing countries have consistently reported a positive relationship between selection practices and employee performance. Yousaf, Khan, and Hussain (2024) found that

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transparent recruitment and selection procedures significantly improve employee effectiveness and organizational trust in public sector organizations. Similarly, Sharma and Gupta (2022) reported that competency-based selection methods contribute to higher employee productivity and institutional performance in higher education institutions. In the Afghan context, public organizations continue to face challenges related to merit-based recruitment, transparency, and standardization of human resource practices. Although empirical studies on selection processes in Afghan universities remain limited, existing evidence suggests that improving recruitment and selection systems is essential for enhancing institutional effectiveness and service quality. Therefore, further investigation into selection practices within Afghan public universities is both relevant and necessary.

3.1 Recent Empirical Literature

Recent empirical studies consistently demonstrate that effective recruitment and selection practices play a significant role in improving employee performance across both public and private organizations. In Pakistan, (Wiley Online Library) found that systematic recruitment and selection practices contribute to organizational growth by ensuring that qualified employees are appointed to appropriate positions. Their study emphasized that structured recruitment systems strengthen employee performance and organizational effectiveness.

Similarly, a study conducted in higher education institutions in Pakistan reported that effective recruitment and selection practices positively influence organizational performance through the appointment of competent academic and administrative staff. The authors recommended adopting transparent and merit-based recruitment procedures to improve institutional outcomes.

In India, recent research by Neeraj and Saxena (2025) showed that strategic employee selection, including structured interviews and employment tests, has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Their findings highlighted that competency-based selection practices improve organizational productivity and employee effectiveness.

Evidence from Bangladesh also supports the importance of scientific selection methods. Research examining employee assessment techniques found that cognitive ability tests, personality assessments, and job knowledge tests significantly improve employee productivity and performance, whereas relying solely on résumés or cover letters has little effect on subsequent job performance.

Within Afghanistan, research on human resource management has highlighted persistent challenges in recruitment and selection practices. A recent review by Omari and Barakzai (2025) concluded that recruitment decisions in many Afghan organizations are still influenced by political, social, and regional considerations rather than objective merit-based criteria, thereby reducing organizational effectiveness and limiting the implementation of modern human resource management principles.

Additional evidence from Afghanistan indicates that effective human resource practices significantly enhance employee performance in higher education institutions. A study conducted among university lecturers at Nangarhar University found that promotion and training positively affect employee performance, emphasizing the importance of merit-based human resource policies for improving academic productivity.

Research conducted in Kabul's higher education sector further demonstrated that sound organizational management practices contribute positively to employee performance. Diversity management practices, for example, were found to improve employee outcomes in universities, suggesting that comprehensive human resource strategies are essential for institutional success.

Beyond individual empirical studies, recent systematic literature reviews have consistently concluded that recruitment and selection practices are among the strongest predictors of organizational and employee performance. Modern selection approaches that incorporate structured interviews, competency-based assessments, digital recruitment tools, and objective evaluation methods improve both the quality of hiring decisions and long-term organizational performance.

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Despite this growing body of evidence, a significant research gap remains. Most previous studies have focused on private organizations, commercial enterprises, or higher education institutions outside Afghanistan. Empirical research examining how the selection process influences the performance of academic staff in public higher education institutions in Kabul is still limited. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by investigating the relationship between the selection process and employee performance in public universities in Kabul, Afghanistan, providing evidence to support more transparent, competency-based, and merit-oriented recruitment policies.

Research Gap

Although previous studies conducted in developing countries have established a positive relationship between recruitment and selection practices and employee performance, empirical evidence from Afghanistan remains extremely limited. Most existing studies have focused on general human resource management issues, organizational development, leadership, and employee motivation rather than examining the specific impact of selection processes on employee performance in higher education institutions. Furthermore, little attention has been given to public universities in Afghanistan, where recruitment practices often face challenges related to transparency, standardization, and competency-based assessment. Therefore, this study addresses an important gap in the literature by investigating how selection processes influence employee performance among academic staff in public higher education institutions in Kabul.

4. Research Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research approach to examine the impact of selection processes on the performance of teaching staff in public higher education institutions in Kabul, Afghanistan. A descriptive and empirical research design was employed to systematically collect and analyze data, enabling the identification of patterns and relationships between selection practices and employee performance.

4.1 Research Design and Approach

The study is based on a descriptive and explanatory research design. The descriptive aspect focuses on describing respondent characteristics and study variables, while the explanatory aspect examines the relationship between the selection process and employee performance. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because it allows the use of statistical techniques to test hypotheses objectively.

4.2 Population and Sample

The target population consists of teaching staff employed in public higher education institutions in Kabul. Due to time and resource limitations, a sample of 30 teaching staff members was selected from three public universities:

- Kabul University
- Kabul Education University
- Kabul Polytechnic University

These respondents were considered appropriate because they are directly involved in academic work and familiar with institutional selection processes.

One important limitation of this study is the relatively small sample size of 30 respondents. While the sample provided sufficient data to identify statistically significant relationships, it may limit the generalizability of the findings to all public higher education institutions in Afghanistan. Therefore, the results should be interpreted as preliminary evidence rather than definitive conclusions for the entire higher education sector.

4.3 Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents. This non-probability sampling method enabled the researcher to select participants based on their relevance to the research objectives, specifically, teaching staff with knowledge of recruitment and selection practices.

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Although the sample size was relatively small, it was considered appropriate for this exploratory study because access to academic staff in public higher education institutions was limited. The findings provide valuable preliminary evidence regarding the relationship between the selection process and employee performance and establish a foundation for future studies involving larger and more representative samples.

4.4 Data Collection Method

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The questionnaire included closed-ended items measured on a Likert scale to assess:

- Selection Process (screening, testing, structured interview)
- Employee Performance (teaching effectiveness, productivity, professional commitment)

The online format ensured efficient distribution and easy data collection.

4.5 Reliability of Instrument

The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to assess internal consistency.

- Selection Process: $\alpha = 0.904$
- Employee Performance: $\alpha = 0.913$

These values indicate excellent reliability, confirming that the instrument is highly consistent and suitable for analysis.

4.6 Instrument Validity

The questionnaire was developed based on an extensive review of the relevant literature and previously validated measurement scales. To ensure content validity, the instrument was reviewed by experts in human resource management and research methodology, who evaluated the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the questionnaire items. Their feedback was incorporated before data collection. Although construct validity through exploratory factor analysis was not conducted because of the relatively small sample size, the questionnaire

demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, as evidenced by the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients.

5. Data Analysis and Finding

5.1 Descriptive Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	30	100
	Female	0	0
Age	20–30 years	6	20
	31–40 years	19	63.3
	41–50 years	5	16.7
Educational Qualification	Bachelor's Degree	3	10
	Master's Degree	23	76.7
	PhD	4	13.3
Work Experience	Less than 5 years	10	33.3
	5–10 years	10	33.3
	10–15 years	9	30
	15+ years	1	3.3
University	Kabul Education University	11	36.7
	Kabul University	10	33.3
	Kabul Polytechnic University	9	30

The demographic characteristics of the respondents were analyzed using frequency and percentage distribution, as these measures are suitable for categorical data. A total of 30 respondents participated in the study. The findings show that all respondents were male, indicating a lack of gender diversity within the sample. In terms of age, the majority of respondents were between 31 and 40 years, followed by

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those aged 20 to 30 and 41 to 50, suggesting that most participants are in the mid-career stage. Regarding educational qualifications, most respondents held a Master's degree, while a smaller proportion possessed a PhD or a Bachelor's degree, indicating a highly educated sample. Work experience was relatively evenly distributed across categories, with most respondents having less than 10 years of experience. The respondents were also fairly distributed across institutions, including Kabul Education University, Kabul University, and Kabul Polytechnic University, indicating balanced institutional representation.

5.2 Reliability Analysis

Table 2: Reliability Analysis of the Research Variables Using Cronbach's Alpha

Variable	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Selection Process	15	**0.904**
Employee Performance	15	**0.913**

Reliability analysis was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales used in the study. Cronbach's Alpha values for both the selection process and employee performance variables were found to be above 0.90. These results indicate excellent reliability, confirming that the questionnaire items are highly consistent and suitable for further statistical analysis.

5.3 Pearson Correlation

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Between Selection Process and Employee Performance

Variables	Selection Process	Employee Performance
Selection Process	1	**0.713**
Employee Performance	**0.713**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	—	**0.000**
N	30	30

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the selection process and employee performance. The results revealed a strong positive correlation between the two variables ($r(28) = 0.713$, $p <$

0.001). This indicates that improvements in the selection process are significantly associated with higher levels of employee performance.

Null Hypothesis (H_0): Rejected

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): Accepted

5.4 Linear Regression Analysis

Model Summary

Table 4: Linear Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.713	0.508	0.490	0.35

The model summary indicates that the correlation coefficient ($R = 0.713$) reflects a strong positive relationship between the selection process and employee performance. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.508$) reveals that approximately 50.8% of the variance in employee performance is explained by the selection process. The adjusted R^2 value (0.490) confirms the model's stability after adjusting for sample size. The standard error of the estimate (0.35) indicates a relatively low prediction error, suggesting the model provides a good fit to the data.

5.5 ANOVA

Table 5: ANOVA Results for the Regression Model

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3.45	1	3.45	28.87	0.000
Residual	3.34	28	0.12		
Total	6.79	29			

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The ANOVA results indicate that the regression model is statistically significant, as evidenced by the F-value (F = 28.87) and the corresponding p-value ($p < 0.001$). This confirms that the selection process significantly predicts employee performance. The residual value represents the unexplained variation in employee performance, indicating that although the selection process accounts for a substantial portion of the variance, other factors not included in the model also contribute to it.

5.6 Coefficients

Table 6: Regression Coefficients for Predicting Employee Performance

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t	Sig.
Constant	1.12	0.32	—	3.50	0.002
Selection Process	0.78	0.15	0.713	5.37	0.000

The regression coefficients indicate that the selection process has a significant positive impact on employee performance. The unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.78) suggests that a one-unit increase in the selection process is associated with a 0.78-unit increase in employee performance. The standardised coefficient ($\beta = 0.713$) indicates a strong effect size, while the t-value ($t = 5.37$) and significance level ($p < 0.001$) confirm that the relationship is statistically significant. The results of the linear regression analysis demonstrate that the selection process is a significant predictor of employee performance in public higher education institutions. The model explains 50.8% of the variance in employee performance, indicating that structured and transparent selection procedures play a crucial role in enhancing employee effectiveness. However, the presence of residual variance suggests that additional factors, such as organizational environment, motivation, and experience, may also influence employee performance.

Null Hypothesis (H_0): Rejected

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): Accepted

6. Discussion

The findings of this study revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between the selection process and employee performance in public higher education institutions in Kabul, Afghanistan ($r = 0.713$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, the regression analysis demonstrated that the selection process explained 50.8% of the variance in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.508$), indicating that effective selection practices are important predictors of employee effectiveness in higher education institutions. These findings suggest that systematic and transparent selection procedures contribute significantly to improving teaching effectiveness, productivity, and professional commitment among academic staff.

The results indicate that universities that implement structured screening procedures, objective testing methods, and standardized interviews are more likely to recruit qualified individuals whose competencies align with institutional requirements. Consequently, employees selected through rigorous and merit-based procedures are better positioned to perform their duties effectively and contribute to the achievement of institutional goals. This finding highlights the critical role of recruitment and selection practices in ensuring the quality and effectiveness of human resources within higher education institutions.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research in the field of Human Resource Management. Schmidt and Hunter (1998) identified structured interviews and cognitive ability tests as among the most reliable predictors of job performance. Similarly, Dessler (2020) and Armstrong (2021) emphasized that competency-based selection systems improve recruitment quality and contribute positively to employee effectiveness. The current findings support these conclusions by demonstrating that structured selection practices significantly influence employee performance within the context of public higher education institutions in Afghanistan.

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The findings are also aligned with more recent studies conducted in developing countries. Khan, Khan, and Ahmed (2022) reported that transparent and structured recruitment procedures positively influence employee productivity, organizational commitment, and job performance in higher education institutions. Likewise, Sharma and Gupta (2022) found that effective recruitment and selection practices contribute significantly to employee effectiveness and institutional performance. Furthermore, Yousaf, Khan, and Hussain (2024) concluded that transparent recruitment procedures enhance employee trust, organizational commitment, and overall performance in public sector organizations. The consistency of the present findings with these studies strengthens the argument that effective selection processes play a critical role in improving employee performance across different organizational and national contexts.

From an Afghan perspective, empirical studies examining the relationship between selection processes and employee performance remain limited, particularly within public higher education institutions. Most existing studies in Afghanistan have focused on broader issues of human resource management, organizational development, leadership, and employee motivation. Therefore, this study contributes valuable empirical evidence to an underexplored area of research. The findings suggest that challenges commonly observed in Afghan public institutions, including limited transparency, inconsistent recruitment procedures, and insufficient competency-based assessment mechanisms, may negatively affect employee performance. Strengthening merit-based and structured selection systems can therefore serve as an effective strategy for improving academic staff quality and institutional effectiveness within the higher education sector.

The findings also provide strong support for Human Capital Theory and Person–Job Fit Theory, which served as the theoretical foundation of this study. Human Capital Theory argues that employees' knowledge, skills, and competencies represent valuable organizational assets that directly contribute to organizational performance. The

positive relationship identified in this study suggests that effective selection processes enable universities to recruit individuals with stronger human capital, resulting in improved performance outcomes. Similarly, Person–Job Fit Theory proposes that employee performance improves when individual capabilities match job requirements. The findings support this theoretical perspective by demonstrating that systematic selection procedures facilitate the recruitment of candidates whose qualifications, skills, and competencies align with the demands of academic positions.

From a practical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of strengthening recruitment and selection systems in public higher education institutions in Afghanistan. Universities should prioritize competency-based recruitment practices, structured interviews, teaching demonstrations, and objective assessment methods to ensure that the most qualified candidates are selected. In addition, transparent recruitment procedures and standardized evaluation criteria can enhance fairness, accountability, and public trust in recruitment decisions. By adopting these practices, universities can improve teaching quality, research productivity, and overall institutional performance.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The study was conducted using a relatively small sample of 30 teaching staff members from three public universities in Kabul, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study focused exclusively on academic staff and did not include administrative personnel. Future research should include larger samples from multiple provinces of Afghanistan and examine additional factors influencing employee performance, such as organizational culture, leadership style, employee motivation, and professional development opportunities. Such studies would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of employee performance within Afghan higher education institutions.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the sample size was limited to 30 teaching staff members from

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three public universities in Kabul, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Second, the study employed purposive sampling, which may limit the representativeness of the sample. Third, employee performance may also be influenced by other organizational factors such as leadership style, motivation, organizational culture, and training opportunities, which were not included in the current model. Future studies are encouraged to use larger and more diverse samples, apply probability sampling techniques, incorporate additional explanatory variables, and employ advanced statistical techniques such as multiple regression and structural equation modeling to provide a more comprehensive understanding of employee performance in higher education institutions.

7. Conclusion

This study examined the impact of selection processes on employee performance in public higher education institutions in Kabul, Afghanistan. The findings revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between selection processes and employee performance. The Pearson correlation analysis indicated a significant association between the two variables ($r = 0.713$, $p < 0.001$), while the regression analysis demonstrated that selection processes explained 50.8% of the variation in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.508$). These findings confirm that effective selection practices play a critical role in enhancing employee effectiveness within higher education institutions.

The study found that key components of the selection process, including screening, testing, and structured interviews, contribute significantly to improving teaching effectiveness, productivity, and professional commitment among academic staff. The results suggest that universities that adopt systematic and competency-based selection procedures are more likely to recruit qualified individuals who possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for academic positions.

The findings support Human Capital Theory and Person–Job Fit Theory by demonstrating that recruiting individuals with appropriate qualifications and competencies leads to improved performance outcomes. The study also contributes to the limited body of empirical

literature on human resource management practices in Afghan public higher education institutions and provides evidence that effective recruitment and selection systems can strengthen institutional performance.

From a practical perspective, the study highlights the urgent need for public universities and the Ministry of Higher Education to strengthen recruitment and selection systems through standardized procedures, competency-based assessments, structured interviews, teaching demonstrations, and transparent evaluation mechanisms. Such measures can improve the quality of academic staff, enhance teaching and research performance, and support the long-term development of higher education institutions in Afghanistan.

Overall, the study concludes that improving the quality, transparency, and fairness of selection processes is not only a human resource management priority but also a strategic requirement for strengthening academic excellence and institutional effectiveness in Afghanistan's public higher education sector.

8. Research Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study employed a relatively small sample size of 30 academic staff members drawn from three public higher education institutions in Kabul. Consequently, the findings should be generalized with caution. Second, purposive sampling was used because of accessibility and the availability of respondents; therefore, the sample may not fully represent all public higher education institutions in Afghanistan. Third, the study focused solely on the selection process as the independent variable and did not include other organizational factors such as leadership style, organizational culture, employee motivation, or job satisfaction, which may also influence employee performance. Finally, although the questionnaire demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency through Cronbach's Alpha, construct validity was not examined using factor analysis due to the limited sample size. Future studies are encouraged to employ

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larger probability samples and more advanced analytical techniques to improve the generalizability of the findings.

9. Practical Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for policymakers, university administrators, and human resource practitioners in Afghanistan:

1. Public higher education institutions should establish standardized and transparent selection procedures that clearly define the criteria for screening, testing, and interviewing applicants. Standardization can improve consistency, fairness, and accountability in recruitment decisions.
2. The Ministry of Higher Education should develop a unified recruitment and selection policy for public universities to ensure that all appointments are based on merit, qualifications, competencies, and professional experience.
3. Universities should strengthen competency-based selection practices by evaluating candidates not only on their academic qualifications but also on their teaching skills, research capabilities, communication skills, and professional competencies.
4. Structured interviews should be mandatory for all academic recruitment processes. Interview panels should use standardized questions and scoring systems to minimize bias and improve objectivity in candidate assessment.
5. Public universities should incorporate teaching demonstrations and subject-specific examinations as part of the selection process. These methods can provide a more accurate assessment of candidates' ability to perform academic responsibilities effectively.
6. Regular training programs should be organized for members of recruitment and selection committees to improve their knowledge of modern recruitment practices, competency-based assessment methods, and ethical decision-making.
7. Universities should gradually adopt digital recruitment systems for advertising vacancies, receiving applications, screening candidates,

and maintaining recruitment records. Digital systems can increase transparency and provide equal access to applicants from different regions of Afghanistan.

8. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be established to assess the effectiveness of recruitment and selection practices. Periodic reviews can help identify weaknesses in the selection process and support continuous improvement.
9. Greater emphasis should be placed on transparency throughout the recruitment process by publicly announcing vacancies, clearly communicating selection criteria, and documenting recruitment decisions. Such measures can strengthen trust and confidence in university recruitment systems.
10. University administrators should regularly evaluate the performance of newly recruited academic staff and use the results to improve future selection practices. Linking recruitment outcomes with employee performance can help institutions make more effective hiring decisions and enhance overall organizational performance.

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