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Human Resource Management Functions and employee performance in the banking sector in south Sudan. A case study of Ecobank South Sudan Ltd.

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Abstract

Background:
This study examined the relationship between human resource management (HRM) functions and employee performance at Ecobank South Sudan Ltd.

Methodology:
A correlational research design was adopted using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were collected from 73 respondents selected from a target population of 89 employees through purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Questionnaires and interview guides were used as the main data collection instruments. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically.

Results:
The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between recruitment and employee performance ($r = 0.685$, $p < 0.05$), with recruitment explaining 46.9% of the variation in employee performance. Training was also positively associated with employee performance ($r = 0.558$, $p < 0.05$), accounting for 31.1% of the variation in performance. Similarly, talent management demonstrated a strong positive relationship with employee performance ($r = 0.621$, $p < 0.05$), explaining 38.5% of the variation in employee performance. The study further established that effective recruitment practices, relevant employee training, and robust talent management strategies contribute significantly to improved employee productivity, innovation, and organizational effectiveness.

Conclusion:
The study concluded that HRM functions are critical determinants of employee performance at Ecobank South Sudan. Strengthening recruitment systems, aligning training programs with employee needs, and improving talent identification and retention mechanisms are essential for enhancing organizational performance.

Recommendation:
The study recommends that Ecobank South Sudan strengthen its employer branding to attract top talent, conduct regular training needs assessments to improve the relevance of training programs, and develop comprehensive talent management and succession planning frameworks to retain high-performing employees and sustain organizational growth.

Keywords: *Human resource, management functions, employee performance, banking sector, Eco Bank, South Sudan*.
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Background of the study
Human Resource Management (HRM) in South Sudan's banking sector encompasses the practices used to recruit, develop, manage, and retain staff to support banking operations and regulatory compliance. The sector is young, with the Central Bank of South Sudan (CBSS) established in 2011 under the Bank of South Sudan Act. Since then, HRM functions have evolved from basic personnel administration toward structured systems covering recruitment, training, performance management, compensation, and compliance. CBSS reinforces this shift through fit-and-proper requirements and governance standards for licensed banks. The core HRM functions relevant to banking performance include:

Recruitment and Selection: Banks seek to balance localization targets with the limited pool of locally trained banking professionals. The World Bank's 2023 project with CBSS highlighted institutional capacity constraints and the need to strengthen enforcement and supervisory functions, which requires skilled staff recruited through formal processes.

Training and Development: Continuous training is critical due to rapid changes in digital banking and compliance requirements. CBSS's 2023–2027 strategic plan targets a

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30% increase in electronic money usage, driving demand for staff training in digital and mobile money operations.

Performance Management: Performance appraisal systems are used to set targets, assess output, and link results to promotions or rewards. Where appraisal is systematic, it improves accountability and service delivery. The IMF's 2024 review noted mixed performance on quantitative targets, partly due to institutional capacity gaps, underscoring the need for stronger performance management in the sector.

Compensation and Retention: Competitive compensation is constrained by the economic environment and competition from NGOs and international organizations. The World Bank also supports institutional strengthening of the Financial Intelligence Unit to meet AML/CFT standards, which requires retaining trained compliance personnel.

Employee Relations and Compliance: CBSS's 2025 directive on mobile money mandates that businesses accept electronic payments, with penalties for non-compliance. This regulatory environment increases the compliance burden on bank staff and raises the importance of effective employee relations and training.

Employee performance in this context is reflected in productivity, service quality, compliance adherence, and retention rates. Strong HRM functions improve employee competence and motivation, which translates into better customer service, lower operational errors, and stronger compliance. In South Sudan, macroeconomic volatility and evolving regulations place greater emphasis on HRM as a tool for building organizational resilience. Banks that align HRM practices with business strategy and regulatory expectations are better positioned to sustain employee performance and contribute to financial sector stability.

The management of people at work has existed since organized labor began, but its formalization as a distinct function emerged during the Industrial Revolution of the late 18th and 19th centuries. Prior to this period, employment relationships were largely informal, governed by apprenticeship, guild systems, and direct supervision by owners. The rapid expansion of factories created problems of absenteeism, labor turnover, poor working conditions, and low productivity that could not be handled through ad-hoc supervision alone.

The early 20th century saw the emergence of personnel administration, focused on record-keeping, payroll, hiring, and compliance with emerging labor laws. Scholars such as Frederick Taylor (1911) introduced Scientific Management, which emphasized task specialization, time-and-motion studies, and incentive pay to maximize worker output. Taylor's work treated employees as instruments of production, and performance was measured almost exclusively through efficiency metrics. While criticized for dehumanizing labor, Scientific Management laid the foundation for systematic job design and performance measurement that remain relevant in HRM today.

The Hawthorne Studies conducted by Elton Mayo and colleagues between 1924 and 1932 shifted attention to the social and psychological aspects of work. The studies demonstrated that employee performance was influenced by group dynamics, supervision style, and employee attitudes, not just physical working conditions. This gave rise to the Human Relations Movement, which positioned employee welfare and morale as drivers of productivity.

After World War II, the complexity of organizations and the growth of labor unions led to the professionalization of personnel management. Functions such as recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and compensation became standardized. The 1950s and 1960s saw the rise of human capital theory, with economists like Gary Becker (1964) and Theodore Shultz (1961) arguing that investments in education, training, and health improved worker productivity and national economic growth. This perspective reframed employees as assets rather than costs.

During this period, performance appraisal systems became widespread as tools for linking pay to output. Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y (1960) further influenced HRM by highlighting how managerial assumptions about workers shaped motivation and performance outcomes. Organizations began to adopt structured training programs, career planning, and formal grievance procedures.

From the 2000s onward, globalization, technological change, and knowledge-based competition intensified the link between HRM and performance. Functions such as talent management, competency-based recruitment, 360-degree appraisals, and performance-linked pay became standard in multinational firms and banks. The rise of data analytics introduced evidence-based HRM, where employee performance data informed decisions on training, promotion, and retention.

In the banking sector, regulatory requirements and customer service demands made HRM critical for compliance, risk management, and service quality. Research in Sub-Saharan Africa shows that training, performance appraisal, and reward systems significantly influence employee productivity in commercial banks. However, context matters: political instability, weak labor markets, and limited institutional capacity in countries like South Sudan constrain the implementation of best-practice HRM.

In modern banks, these functions are interrelated. For example, Ecobank Group's HR strategy emphasizes competency-based recruitment, continuous learning, and performance-driven rewards to maintain competitiveness across African markets. The historical trajectory shows that organizations that treat HRM as a strategic function achieve higher levels of employee engagement, operational efficiency, and financial performance.

Human capital constraints are a central challenge across both public and private institutions in South Sudan. The African Development Bank notes that the country faces significant gaps in education, health, and workforce development, which undermine productivity and institutional effectiveness. Recognizing this, the World Bank approved a $15 million grant in September 2024 to

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strengthen civil service human resource management, introduce competency-based frameworks, and build a performance-based culture in the public sector. The project aims to improve the government's ability to attract and retain qualified staff and to establish systems for performance management. African Development Bank. (2024).

In the banking sector, human resource management is further complicated by an uncertain working environment, skills mismatches, and high staff turnover. A 2020 study of banking employees in South Sudan found that job resources such as training, supportive supervision, and clear performance systems positively influence employee work engagement, while job demands and environmental uncertainty negatively moderate that relationship. This suggests that effective HRM functions are critical for sustaining motivation and performance, even under unstable conditions. Maxwell, A., & Majer, C. G. (2024).

The shift toward digital payroll and human resource management information systems is also reshaping HRM practice. In May 2025, the Ministry of Finance directed all civil servants to open personal bank accounts to enable biometric payroll integration and reduce salary payment delays. For commercial banks, this policy increases transaction volumes and service demands, placing greater pressure on staff competence, efficiency, and customer service quality. Kenyi, T. E., & John, L. B. (2020).

Ecobank South Sudan Ltd. operates as part of the pan-African Ecobank Transnational Incorporated group, which has standardized HRM practices across 33 African countries. The group emphasizes talent development as a core strategy. In 2020, Ecobank delivered 1,800 training programs reaching 100% of staff, covering areas such as customer experience, risk management, compliance, cybersecurity, and leadership development. The bank's performance and talent management system is used to identify high-potential employees for accelerated development, with departmental heads, managers, and early-career staff targeted for different levels of leadership training. At the affiliate level, the Head of Human Resources is responsible for recruitment, succession planning, training, compensation, performance management, and employee relations, all aligned with the Ecobank Performance Management framework. Ecobank Group. (2020).

Given this context, the study of HRM functions and employee performance at Ecobank South Sudan Ltd. is both timely and relevant. The bank operates under Ecobank's group-wide HRM standards while facing local constraints related to economic instability, skills gaps, and regulatory changes. Understanding how recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and compensation practices influence employee performance can provide actionable insights for Ecobank and for the wider banking sector in South Sudan. Strengthening these functions is critical not only for individual bank performance but also for building a more resilient financial sector capable of supporting economic recovery and private sector growth. African Development Bank. (2024)

Employee performance refers to the extent to which an employee accomplishes assigned tasks, meets set targets, and contributes to organizational goals. In banking, performance is measured through indicators such as customer service quality, transaction accuracy, sales targets achieved, compliance with regulations, and teamwork. Given the regulatory and customer-facing nature of banking, both technical competence and behavioural conduct are critical.

Ecobank South Sudan operates in a volatile economic and regulatory environment. Effective HRM functions are essential to attract qualified staff, reduce turnover, ensure compliance with CBSS regulations, and maintain service standards. By applying the RBV, Human Capital Theory, AMO framework, and Social Exchange Theory, this study examines how specific HRM functions at Ecobank influence employee performance outcomes. This theoretical background provides the lens for analyzing how recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and compensation at Ecobank South Sudan contribute to employee productivity, efficiency, and organizational effectiveness.

Human Resource Management (HRM) refers to the strategic and systematic management of people within an organization to achieve organizational goals. HRM encompasses a set of interrelated functions that influence how employees are attracted, developed, motivated, and retained. In this study, HRM functions are conceptualized as the independent variables and include: Recruitment and Selection: The process of identifying, attracting, and hiring qualified individuals to fill vacant positions. Effective recruitment ensures a match between job requirements and employee competencies. Training and Development: Systematic programs designed to enhance employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities for current and future roles. Training improves technical competence, while development prepares employees for higher responsibilities. Performance Appraisal: A formal process of evaluating employee performance against set standards and providing feedback. It informs decisions on promotions, training needs, and rewards. Compensation and Benefits: Financial and non-financial rewards provided to employees in exchange for their work. Well-designed compensation systems influence motivation, satisfaction, and retention. Employee Performance is the dependent variable and refers to the extent to which employees accomplish assigned tasks, meet performance targets, and contribute to organizational objectives. In the banking sector, performance is measured through indicators such as service delivery speed, accuracy of transactions, customer satisfaction, sales targets achieved, adherence to compliance standards, and teamwork. Conceptual Linkages. The relationship between HRM functions and employee performance is explained through the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) Framework. The framework posits that employee performance is a

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function of: Ability: Enhanced through recruitment and selection, and training and development. Hiring qualified staff and investing in their skills increases their capacity to perform. Motivation: Driven by compensation, recognition, and career progression. Fair and competitive reward systems encourage employees to exert greater effort. Opportunity: Created through performance appraisal and feedback mechanisms that allow employees to participate, receive guidance, and align their work with organizational goals.
Therefore, the conceptual background of this study is that effective execution of HRM functions creates the ability, motivation, and opportunity for employees to perform at higher levels, which in turn enhances the overall performance of Ecobank South Sudan Ltd.
It's against this background that researchers carried out the research to establish the relationship between Human resource practises and employee performance in the banking sector of South Sudan using Eco Bank as a case study.

Methodology

Research design

This study adopts a correlational research design to examine the relationship between human resource management functions and employee performance at Eco Bank South Sudan.

Population of Study

The study was carried out on a population of 89 subjects in ECO Bank, consisting of Human Resource managers, line managers, supervisors, banking officers, and other staff. This population was chosen based on the relevant experiences they possess in Human resource functions and performance of the banking sector in South Sudan.

Sample size and selection

The sample size included 73 respondents based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sampling guidelines. Table 1 shows the summary of the sample size of the respondents and the sampling techniques and instruments that were used in the study.

Table 1: Sample size of the respondents

Population category	Accessible population	Sample size (dh 0.82)	Sampling Techniques
Human resource manager	1	1	Purposive
Line managers	20	16	Purposive
Supervisors	22	18	Simple random
Banking officers	22	18	Simple random
Others; customers & support staff	25	20	Simple random
Total	**89**	**73**	

Source: *Eco Bank South Sudan Ltd Archive*

Sampling techniques and procedures

The researcher used purposive and Simple sampling. While purposive sampling was used to select respondents who are most knowledgeable and experienced in Human resource practices in ECO Bank.

Data collection method

The researcher ensured that both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. There are different methods of data collection, but this study used the survey method using the questionnaire, interviews, and documentary review approaches.

Questionnaire Survey method

The questionnaire was used based on the fact that variables could not be observed, such as views, opinions, perceptions, and feelings of the respondents on human resource practices and employee performance of banks (Amin, 2005).

Interview method

The interviews were structured to comprise a set of issues on which the researcher wished to draw data, and the same questions were posed to the respondents using a guide to conduct the interview.

Data Collection Instruments

The researcher used a questionnaire, interview schedule, and document checklist for data collection.
Self-Administered Questionnaire. A uniform self-administered closed-ended questionnaire encompassing background information, Human resource functions, and

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employee performance was developed and used. The choice of the questionnaire was based on the basis that the respondents could read and write the answers, that the respondents possessed the information to answer the questions or items, and were willing to answer the questions honestly. The questionnaires can be used to collect a vast amount of data from a large sample in a short time and at a low cost (Amin, 2005).

Interview Guide

Face-to-face discussions on questions posed with the line managers and supervisors were conducted, of which the researcher recorded the responses on Human Resource functions and employee performance in ECO Bank South Sudan.

Data collection procedure

A cover letter was obtained from the Team University. In addition, permission to conduct the study was sought from the management of ECO Bank to authorize the study. Anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents were maintained by not asking the respondents to write their names on the questionnaires. The covering letter from Team University was used during the data collection process. The data collected was edited, coded, and later entered into SPSS for analysis.

Validity and reliability

Pre-testing was conducted to establish the reliability and validity of the study instrument.
The study questionnaire was pilot tested on a sample of 15 members of staff in ECO Bank South Sudan.

Validity of the study instrument

The validity of the instrument was tested using the Content Validity Index (CVI) using expert judgment, taking only variable scoring above 0.70 accepted for Social Sciences (Amin, 2005). The CVI was measured using the formula:

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Number of items declared valid}}{\text{Total number of items}}$$

Table 2: Content Validity Index Results

Variable	Total No of items	Number valid items of	CVI
Recruitment	9	7	0.78
Training	10	8	0.80
Talent management	07	05	0.71
Employee performance	15	11	0.73

Source: Expert Judgments

Table 2 shows that recruitment factors yielded a CVI of 0.78, Training factors yielded 0.80, talent management factors yielded a CVI of 0.71, while Employee performance yielded a CVI of 0.73. Since all variables yielded a CVI above 0.70, accepted for social sciences, it was concluded that the instrument had good validity. Thus, consistently measured what it was supposed to measure.

Reliability of the study instrument

The internal consistency (reliability) of the instrument was measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, taking only variables with an alpha coefficient value of more than 0.70 accepted for social research (Amin, 2005), generated from SPSS.

Table 3: Reliability results

Variable	Total No of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Recruitment	9	0.71
Training	10	0.86
Talent management	7	0.72
Employee performance	15	0.70

Source: Primary data

Table 3 shows that recruitment factors yielded a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.71, while training factors yielded a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.86, Talent management yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.72, and employee performance yielded an alpha value of 0.70. Since all variables yielded alpha values above 0.70, accepted for the social sciences, it was concluded that the instrument was reliable in measuring Human resource practices and employee performance.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, and correlation analysis to show the relationships. On the other hand, regression analysis was used to show the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Pearson's

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correlation coefficients and significance were used to identify the significance levels to test the hypotheses at the 99 and 95 confidence levels in the correlation analysis. A correlation coefficient of between 0 and 0.30 shall imply a weak correlation, 0.31 and 0.60 suggest a moderate relationship, while a correlation between 0.61 and 80 suggests a high relationship, and 0.81 to 0.99 suggests a very high relationship. The adjusted R^2, t values, beta, and significance values were used to measure the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variables in the regression analysis. Closed-ended responses were coded and entered into the SPSS program, which was used to analyze the data using frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, and correlation analysis to show the relationships. On the other hand, regression analysis was used to show the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The descriptive method was used to analyze background information about respondents. Correlation analysis was used to establish the relationships between different variables of the study.

The correlation technique is used to analyze the degree of relationship between two variables. There are various types of correlations that are normally used; the choice of which type depends on whether the variables are discrete or continuous or whether the scale of measurement is nominal or ordinal (Mugenda &Mugenda, 1999).

Since the researcher wanted to find out the magnitude of the relationship between the different types of variables under study, the correlation coefficient was used to give direction on how the variables are related in order to draw meanings and be able to give conclusions. If the correlation coefficient is +ve it means there is a positive relationship between the two variables, and a relationship means that the two variables being measured are inversely related (Kothari, 2004).

Qualitative Analysis

The researcher used interview guides with key personnel in the hospital to give detailed information drawn from the variables of the study to help supplement the quantitative data.

Qualitative data analysis involved the identification and transcription of the qualitative findings into themes. The themes on each of the variables used were then coded, sorted, and aligned to the research objectives, from which lessons learnt on human resource functions and employee performance attributes were deduced for reporting in a narrative form.

Measurement of variables

The variables were measured by operationally defining human resource functions and employee performance. These were then channeled into observable and measurable elements to enable the development of an index of the concept using a five-point Likert scale, namely**:** 5-Strongly agree; 4- Agree; 3- Not sure; 2- Disagree; 1- Strongly disagree, which were used to measure both the independent and dependent variables.

Results

Response rate

This study is anticipated to get responses from 89 respondents from the bank. However, only 73 respondents took part in the study. This, therefore, gave a response rate of 82%. This is a high response rate considering the nature of the study. As such, it is appropriate for purposes of generalizing to the population of the study.

Gender of Respondents

The results of gender show that 54% of the employees were male and 46% while of employees were female. Thus, the majority of the respondents in the study were male, which coincides with the number of employees in the population of interest. Figure 4.1 shows the gender distribution of the employees in Eco Bank branches. It can be concluded that the organization has almost an equal number of men and women in the bank, which represents gender balance. It can also be concluded that the organization considers employing more men than women due to the nature of the bank, where the employees work long hours for job delivery in the bank.

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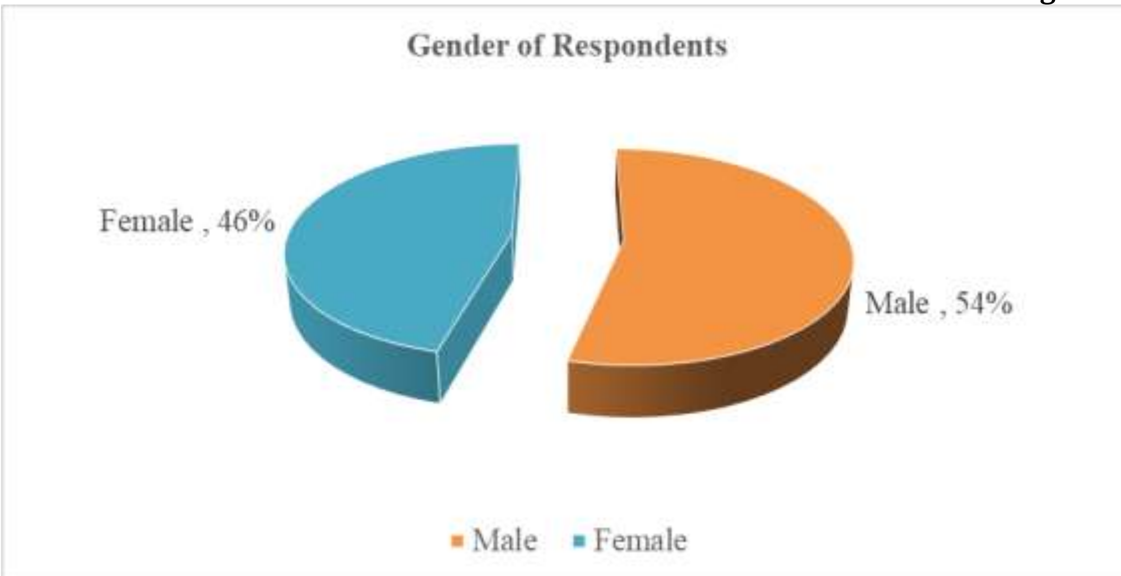

Figure1 : Gender of Respondents

Age of Respondents

The results reveal that 25% of the respondents were aged 25 years and below, 19% were aged 26-30 years, 21% were aged 31-35 years, 24% were aged 36-40 years, and 11% were aged above 41 years of age. The research shows that most of the staff in the industry were below 40 years old. Figure 4.2 indicates the distribution of respondents by age. The findings on the age showed that there are at least well-distributed employees in terms of age. From the findings, it can be concluded that employees in the bank consist of both young and older employees, which brings on board those who have enough experience in the workplace.

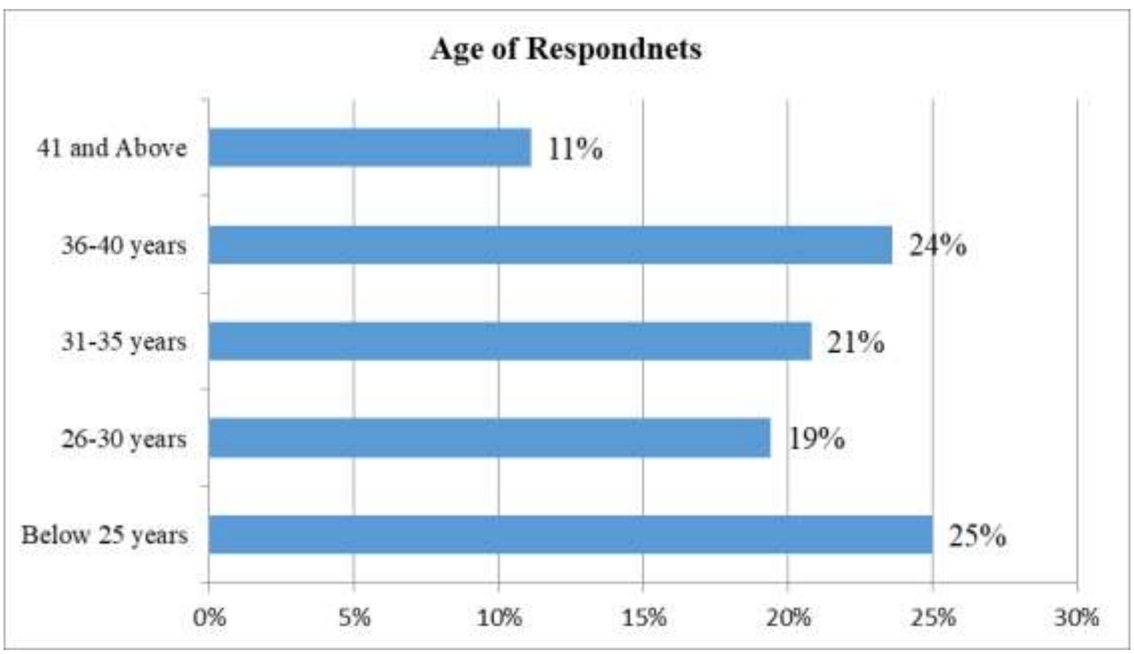

Figure 2: Age of Respondents

Working Experience

The results of the study on work experience indicated that employees who had experience of between 0-1 year was 29%, between 2-4 years was 33% in, which represented the majority, between 5-7 years was 17%, between 8-10 years was represented by 13%, and above 10 years was 8%. The findings of the study in Figure 4.3 show the work experience of employees at Eco Bank. It can be deduced that employees

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were able to give enough information regarding the motivation of the employees within the bank.

Figure 3: Working Experience

Departments within the Bank

The study sought to establish the department in which the respondents were working at Eco Bank, where they indicated that 25% of employees were branch managers, 8% marketing, 13% finance, 8% human resources, 25% back office, and 21% were interns. Most of the respondents were from the bank's back office and branch managers. The distributions of employees were fairly distributed, considering the study applied the use of a stratified sampling technique to pick respondents from each of the strata as indicated in Figure 4.4.

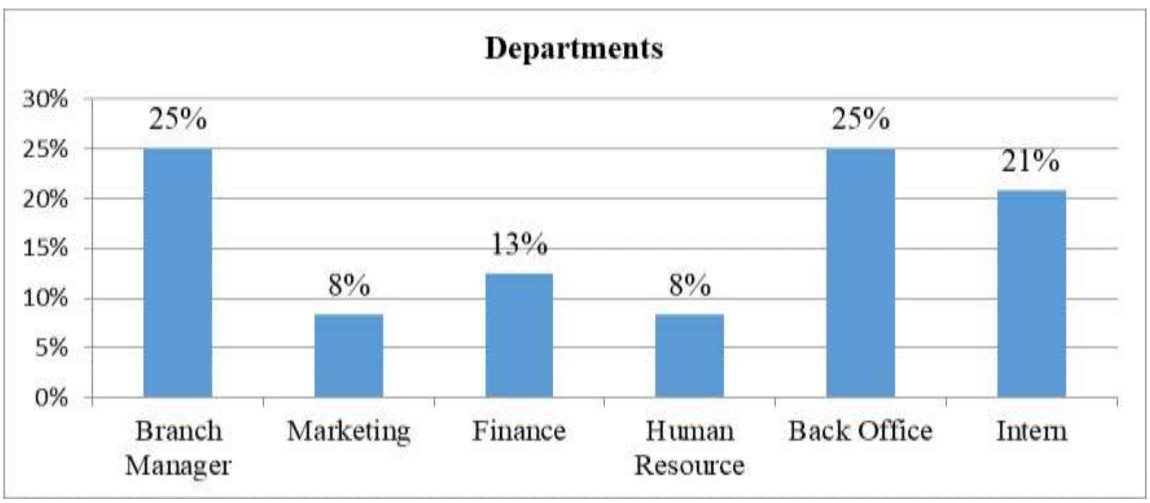

Figure 4: Departments of the Bank.

Recruitment and Employee Performance

Results showed the majority of employees cemented at Ecobank agreed that the bank uses non-monetary recognition at a mean (M =4.20, SD =0.40), and the bank uses recognition to motivate employees (M =4.17, SD =0.45). Ecobank uses flexible working hours to reward employees (M = 4.16, SD =0.46). Employees receive recognition for excellent performance (M =4.15, SD =0.50), and the bank policy helps in retaining its high-performing employees (M = 4.13, SD =0.48). Ecobank supervisors recognize employees for a job well done, and the bank uses training as motivation (M = 4.12, SD =0.63), and that recognition is a cost-effective tool to motivate employees in the bank (M = 4.01, SD =0.61).

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Table 4: Descriptive statistics on Recruitment

Recruitment	Mean	S.D
1. Eco Bank South Sudan's recruitment process effectively identifies candidates with the required skills and qualifications	3.87	1.24
2. The recruitment process at Eco Bank South Sudan is fair and transparent.	1.77	1.14
3. Newly recruited employees at Eco Bank South Sudan are adequately oriented to their roles and responsibilities	3.94	1.09
4. Employees recruited by Eco Bank South Sudan fit well with the organization's culture.	3.83	1.32
5. The recruitment process at Eco Bank South Sudan attracts top talent in the industry	1.87	1.19
6. Eco Bank South Sudan's recruitment practices have contributed to improved employee performance.	3.59	1.31
The bank's recruitment team effectively assesses candidates' competencies and fit	3.45	1.43
Eco Bank South Sudan's employer brand attracts high-performing candidates.	3.98	1.36
Effective recruitment practices at Eco Bank South Sudan led to increased employee retention	3.32	1.28

Source: Primary Data

From Table 4, top talent have the lowest mean scores (1.77 and 1.87), indicating areas for improvement. Statements 3 (Adequate orientation) and 8 (Employer brand attracts high performers) have the highest mean scores (3.94 and 3.98), indicating strengths in these areas. Statements 2 (Fair and transparent process) and 5 (Attracts. The standard deviations suggest moderate to high variability in responses. The recruitment process seems effective in identifying skills and qualifications (Statement 1: 3.87) and orienting new employees (Statement 3: 3.94), but struggles with attracting top talent (Statement 5: 1.87). There's room for improvement in assessing candidate competencies (Statement 7: 3.45) and retaining employees (Statement 9: 3.32).

One interviewee had this to say: *"I think our recruitment process is pretty solid when it comes to identifying the right skills and qualifications for the job. We've got a good system in place for that. Where we struggle, honestly, is in attracting the top talent in the industry. We're not really seen as the go-to bank in South Sudan, so it's hard to compete with bigger players. And sometimes I feel like our process can be a bit opaque - candidates don't always know where they stand. But once we do hire someone, we do a great job of orienting them and getting them up to speed. Our employer brand is actually pretty strong, which helps us attract decent candidates, but I'd love to see us do more to retain our high performers."*

In an interview with the HR Manager, she had this to say *''I think we're on the right track with our recruitment process, especially in terms of identifying the skills we need. Our orientation program is also a highlight - we do a great job of getting new hires up to speed. The challenge for us is really about standing out in the market and attracting the best of the best. We're up against bigger banks and multinationals, so it's tough to compete for top talent. Internally, I also think we could improve communication during the recruitment process - sometimes candidates are left hanging, which isn't great for our reputation. On the plus side, our employer brand is getting stronger, and people do seem to like working here. Now, if we could just figure out how to keep our high performers engaged and reduce turnover..."*

Correlation between Recruitment and Employee Performance

To determine both the significance of the relationship between the variables and the degree of their association, a correlation analysis was performed. The first correlation was done to establish the extent to which recruitment affects employee performance in. The findings in Table 4 show that the relationship between the two variables was significant ($r = 0.685$, $p < 0.05$). However, the coefficient of correlation from Pearson's product-moment indicated that the relationship between the variables was strong and positive.

Table 5: Correlation between Recruitment and Employee Performance

		Performance	Recruitment
Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.685**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	73	73
Recruitment	Pearson Correlation	.685**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

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N	73	73

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

One supervisor had this to comment during the interview, *"We've seen a clear link between how we recruit people and how they perform once they're on board. Our data shows a strong positive correlation - the better we recruit, the better they perform. It's made us realize that investing in our recruitment process isn't just about filling positions, it's about driving performance and ultimately, our success as a bank. We're looking at ways to strengthen our recruitment strategies even further."*

Regression between Recruitment and Employee Performance

Regression analysis was conducted to determine how the dependent and independent variables related to each other and their level of significance. Table 5 shows the model summary of the results. From the results, there was a high relationship between the dependent and independent variables, as the coefficient of determination, where r, was (r = 0.469). The R-square shows that the recruitment used in the study accounted for 46.9% of the variance in employee performance.

Table 6: Model Summary for Recruitment
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.685[a]	.469	.462	2.77554

a. Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment
b. This statement reflects the regression analysis:
c. R = 0.685, indicating a moderate to strong relationship.
d. R Square = 0.469, meaning 46.9% of the variation in employee performance is explained by recruitment.
e. Adjusted R Square = 0.462, adjusting for predictors.

Table 7: ANOVA for Recruitment
ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	476.620	1	476.620	61.869	.000[b]
	Residual	539.255	100	7.704		
	Total	1015.875	73			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment.

The ANOVA table 8 shows that the regression model is statistically significant (Sig. = .000), indicating that the model is a good fit for the data. The F-statistic is 61.869, which is significant at the 0. The regression model explains a significant portion of the variance in Performance (F (1, 100) = 61.869, p < 0.001). The p-value (.000) indicates that the relationship between Recruitment and Performance is statistically significant.

Training and employee performance

Training was the dependent variable under the indicators of training needs assessment, training program design, training delivery and training evaluation maternal mortality ration, measured using 10 items scored on five-point Likert scale ranging from (5) for strongly agree (4) for agree, (3) for not sure (2) for disagree (1) for strongly disagree and the finding are presented below using mean and standard deviation statistics.

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Table 8: Mean and standard deviation results for Training and employee performance.

Training	Mean	S.D
Training programs at Eco Bank South Sudan have improved employees' ability to perform their job tasks effectively.	2.6	1.28
Employees at Eco Bank South Sudan receive regular training that enhances their skills and knowledge	2.10	1.23
The training provided by Eco Bank South Sudan is relevant to employees' current roles and responsibilities.	2.13	1.17
Eco Bank South Sudan's training programs have led to improved job performance among employees.	3.61	0.89
Employees are satisfied with the training opportunities provided by Eco Bank South Sudan.	4.00	0.83
Training at Eco Bank South Sudan has contributed to increased employee productivity.	2.23	1.23
Eco Bank South Sudan's training programs address the specific needs of employees	1.96	1.13
Employees are able to apply the skills and knowledge gained from training to their work.	3.74	0.70
Employees are able to apply the skills and knowledge gained from training to their work.	1.91	1.22
Eco Bank South Sudan's investment in training has yielded positive returns in terms of employee performance.	1.87	1.18

Source: Primary data

Table 10 Shows that Employees are satisfied with training opportunities (Statement 3: 4.00). Training has improved job performance (Statement 2: 3.61), and employees can apply skills and knowledge (Statement 6: 3.74). However, training relevance (Statement 1: 2.13) and addressing specific needs (Statement 5: 1.96) score lower, indicating areas for improvement. The bank's investment in training hasn't yielded strong positive returns in terms of employee performance (Statement 8: 1.87).

A line manager had this to say: *"While our employees seem to appreciate the training opportunities we provide, I'm concerned that we're not quite hitting the mark in terms of relevance and addressing specific needs. We've got some great training programs, but if they're not translating into improved productivity and performance, then we need to take a closer look. It's telling that our employees rate training satisfaction highly, but the impact on job performance and productivity isn't as strong. Let's refocus our training efforts to make sure we're equipping our people with the skills they need to excel in their roles."*

One human resource officer commented, *"I think we're doing okay with training, but let's be real - we're not seeing the returns we should be. Our people are telling us they're happy with the training, but when it comes to applying it on the job, there's a gap. We need to get better at identifying the specific skills and knowledge our teams need and tailor our training accordingly. It's not just about ticking a box; it's about driving real performance improvements. Let's make our training count."*

Correlation between Training and Employee Performance

The study also sought to establish if employees' performance and training had a significant relationship in Eco Bank. Table 11, which shows the results obtained from the correlation analysis, indicates that there existed a significant relationship ($r = 0.558$, $p < 0.05$), which also indicates that the variables had a moderate positive correlation. This finding implies that the bank had put considerable emphasis on training, though not strongly reflected in employee performance.

Table 9: Correlation between Training and Employee Performance

		Performance	Training
Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.558**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	73	73
Training	Pearson Correlation	.558**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	73	73

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Supervisor credit activities, had this to say, '*'This tells me that when we invest in training, we're likely to see a tangible impact on how our employees perform. It's not a surprise, but it's good to have the data to back it up. Now, let's*

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leverage this insight to make informed decisions about our training budget and focus on delivering high-impact programs that drive real results."

Regression between Job Design and Employee Performance

The use of regression analysis was to determine how the dependent and independent variables related to each other and their level of significance. Table 12 shows the model summary of the results. From the results, there was a moderate relationship between the dependent and independent variables, as the coefficient of determination, r, was (r = 0.558. The R-squared shows that the training used in the study accounted for 31.1% of the variance in employee performance.

Table 10: Regression Model Summary for Training

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.558[a]	.311	.300	2.39244

a. Predictors: (Constant), Training.

Table 13: ANOVA
A

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	615.211	1	615.211	107.483	.000[b]
	Residual	400.664	100	5.724		
	Total	1015.875	73			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Training

Table 13 shows the analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for the regression model. From the table, the F-statistic was significant since the p-value falls below the 0.05 level of significance (F = 107.483, p = 0.000). This means that the model was fit to test the relationship between training and employee performance.

Table 11: Coefficient Analysis between training and Employee Performance Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	11.125	3.204		3.473	.001
	Training	.750	.104	.778	10.367	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Table 14 shows the coefficient analysis for the independent variables in the study. As shown, the study reveals that training had a positive and moderate effect on employee performance (β = .750, p = .000). This means that an improvement in Training leads to an improvement in employee performance and vice versa. Therefore, the resulting regression model is Employee Performance = 11.125 + 0.750 Training.

Talent management and employee performance

The third objective of the study was to assess the relationship between Talent Management and employee performance in Eco Bank South Sudan. Talent management factors were conceptualized to include talent acquisition, talent development, talent retention, and succession planning and measured using 6 items scored on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from (5) for strongly agree, (4) for agree, (3) for not sure (2) for disagree (1) for strongly disagree and the finding are presented below using mean and standard deviation statistics.

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Table 12: Mean and Standard Deviation Results for Talent Management Results

Talent management	Mean	S.D
1. Eco Bank South Sudan has a clear talent management strategy that aligns with its business objectives	3.87	1.24
2. The bank identifies and develops high-potential employees effectively.	1.77	1.14
3. Talent management practices at Eco Bank South Sudan contribute to improved employee performance.	3.94	1.09
4. Employees at Eco Bank South Sudan have opportunities for career growth and development.	3.83	1.32
5. The bank's talent management approach focuses on retaining key talent	1.87	1.19
6. Eco Bank South Sudan provides regular feedback and coaching to employees to enhance performance.	3.59	1.31
7. Talent management at Eco Bank South Sudan is a key driver of innovation and competitiveness.	4.12	1.39
8. The bank's succession planning ensures continuity and leadership development.	3.41	1.29
9. Eco Bank South Sudan's talent management practices enhance employee engagement and commitment.	3.12	1.24
Effective talent management at Eco Bank South Sudan leads to improved business outcomes.	3.61	1.27

Source: Primary Data

From Table 15, Talent management contributes to innovation and competitiveness (Statement 7: 4.12). Improves employee performance (Statement 3: 3.94). Clear talent management strategy (Statement 1: 3.87). However, identifying and developing high-potential employees (Statement 2: 1.77) and focusing on retaining key talent (Statement 5: 1.87). showed respondents did not agree with the effect of talent management on employee performance. This was in line with one interviewee who said,

"*Our talent management strategy is clearly driving innovation and competitiveness, which is great to see. We're doing some things right, like providing opportunities for career growth and improving employee performance. But let's be honest, we're struggling to identify and develop our high-potential employees, and retaining key talent is a challenge. If we don't fix this, we risk losing our best people and stalling our growth. It's time to refocus on building a pipeline of future leaders and making sure our top performers know they're valued."*

One line manager had this to say,

"I think our talent management strategy is hitting the mark in some areas, like driving innovation and improving performance. The mean scores are solid, and it's clear we're doing something right. But let's dig into the weak spots - identifying and developing high-potential employees and retaining key talent. To me, that says we're not doing enough to nurture our future leaders. We need to flip this around and make talent development a priority, or risk losing our best people and stalling our growth."

Correlation between Talent Management and Employee Performance

The study also sought to establish if employees' performance and talent management had a significant relationship in Eco Bank. Table 16, which shows the results obtained from the correlation analysis, indicates that there existed a significant relationship ($r = 0.621$, $p< 0.05$), which also indicates that the variables had a strong positive correlation. This finding implies that the bank had put considerable emphasis on talent management, and it was being strongly reflected in employee performance.

Table 13: Correlation between Talent Management and Employee Performance

		Performance	Talent management
Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.621**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	73	73
Talent management	Pearson Correlation	.621**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	73	73

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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"*Our data shows a strong correlation between talent management and employee performance. What this tells me is that our talent management practices are having a tangible impact on how our people perform. It's not just a soft benefit - it's a hard business driver. If we get talent management right, we can drive performance up. Let's leverage this insight to double down on our talent strategies and make sure we're investing in the right places to keep our people engaged and performing at their best." Manager credit.*

Regression Analysis between Talent Management and Employee Performance

The use of regression analysis with the aim of determining how the dependent and independent variables relate to each other and their level of significance. This was also aimed at determining the extent to which the dependent variable was influenced by each independent variable to determine the level of significance of each variable. Table 4.18 shows the model summary of the results. From the results, there was a high relationship between the dependent and independent variables, as the coefficient of determination, r, was (r = 0.385. The R-square shows that talent management used in the study accounted for 38.5% of the variance in employee performance.

Table 14: Model Summary for talent management.
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.621[a]	.385	.376	2.98686

a. Predictors: (Constant), talent management

Table 15: ANOVA between talent management and Employee Performance
ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	391.380	1	391.380	43.870	.000[b]
	Residual	624.495	73	8.921		
	Total	1015.875	74			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), talent management

Table 4.19 presents the analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for the regression model. From the table, the F-statistic was significant since the p-value falls below the 0.05 level of significance (F = 43.870, p = 0.000). This means that the model was fit to test the relationship between talent management and employee performance.

Table 16: Coefficient Analysis for talent management.
Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	16.378	4.217		3.884	.000
	Talent management	.915	.138	.621	6.623	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

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Table 20 shows the coefficient analysis for the independent variables in the study. As shown, the study reveals that talent management had a positive and significant effect on employee performance (β = 0.915, p = .000). This means that an improvement in talent management leads to an improvement in employee performance and vice versa. Therefore, the resulting model is Employee Performance = 16.378 + 0.915 talent management.

Employee performance at Eco Bank.

Employee performance was the dependent variable under the indicators of Revenue growth, retention rates, and productivity measured using items scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from (5) for strongly agree, (4) for agree, (3) for not sure, (2) for disagree, and (1) for strongly disagree and the finding are presented below using mean and standard deviation statistics.

Table 17: Mean and standard deviation results for Employee performance at Eco Bank.

	Mean	S.D
Productivity		
Employees at Eco Bank are productive and efficient in their roles, meeting targets and goals.	3.74	0.70
Eco Bank's focus on employee performance improves overall productivity and efficiency.	1.91	1.22
High-performing employees at Eco Bank are more likely to achieve productivity goals.	1.87	1.18
The productivity of employees is linked to incentives	3.61	0.89
Service Quality		
The employees of this bank consistently provide accurate and error-free services	4.00	0.83
Bank employees respond promptly to customer requests and complaints	2.23	1.23
The knowledge and courtesy of bank employees make customers feel confident and secure	1.96	1.13
Employees show understanding and give individual attention to customers	2.90	1.02
Customer satisfaction		
I am satisfied with the service I receive from the bank's employees.	2.74	0.70
Bank employees consistently meet my expectations when handling transactions and inquiries.	2.61	1.22
When I have an issue, employees resolve it quickly and fairly.	1.97	1.08
Based on my interaction with employees, I would recommend this bank to others.	1.63	0.87

Source: Primary data

The results in Table 4.15 indicate that respondents perceive employee productivity and reliability at Eco Bank as relatively high, but overall service quality and customer satisfaction remain low to moderate.

Productivity: Respondents rated "employees are productive and efficient in meeting targets" highly (M = 3.74, SD = 0.70), suggesting that individual performance against set goals is achieved. Similarly, productivity was strongly linked to incentives (M = 3.61, SD = 0.89). However, respondents disagreed that the bank's focus on employee performance improves overall productivity (M = 1.91, SD = 1.22) and that high-performing employees consistently achieve productivity goals (M = 1.87, SD = 1.18). This indicates that while employees meet targets, current HR practices are not perceived as effective in enhancing overall efficiency.

Service Quality: Reliability emerged as the strongest dimension, with respondents agreeing that employees provide accurate and error-free services (M = 4.00, SD = 0.83). Conversely, responsiveness (M = 2.23, SD = 1.23) and empathy (M = 1.96, SD = 1.02) were rated low, reflecting slow response to customer requests and limited individual attention. Assurance was rated moderate (M = 2.90, SD = 1.13), indicating partial confidence in employees' knowledge and courtesy.

Customer Satisfaction: Overall satisfaction was moderate (M = 2.74, SD = 0.70), and expectations in transaction handling were just met (M = 2.61, SD = 1.22). However, complaint resolution was rated low (M = 1.97, SD = 1.08), and willingness to recommend the bank was very low (M = 1.63, SD = 0.87). This suggests that despite accuracy in service delivery, weak responsiveness and empathy undermine customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Summary: The findings reveal a transactional service environment where employees perform routine tasks accurately but fall short in interpersonal and responsive behaviors. The disconnect between perceived individual productivity and the ineffectiveness of HR functions implies that incentives drive output, but service-oriented performance requires further management intervention.

Interviewee statements to back up the findings

Productivity

"We meet our daily targets, but that's because of the pressure and bonuses. If you remove incentives, most people slow down."

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Supports the high mean for productivity linked to incentives, and the low mean for HR focus on improving productivity. *"Yes, I hit my numbers every month, but I don't see how the training or appraisals here help me do it better."*
This explains why "focus on employee performance improves productivity" scored low.

On Service Quality

"The tellers rarely make mistakes with my money. That part is fine. But if I ask a question, you can wait 10 minutes for an answer. "This Matches high reliability (M=4.00) and low responsiveness (M=2.23*). "They are polite, but it feels routine. Nobody asks why I came or tries to help beyond the counter."* Reflects low empathy (M=1.96) and moderate assurance (M=2.90).

On Customer Satisfaction

"I'm okay with the service for basic transactions, but when there's a problem, it takes too long to resolve. That's why I don't tell others to join. "This Aligns with moderate satisfaction (M=2.74), low complaint resolution (M=1.97), and very low recommendation (M=1.63*). "I stay with Eco Bank because it's close, not because the staff makes me feel valued. If another bank is faster, I'll leave."* Shows that satisfaction is conditional and not driven by employee performance.

Correlation Tests Human resource functions and employee performance

The study found a relatively strong positive correlation coefficient between Human resource functions and employee performance at Eco Bank, as shown by the correlation value of 0.773, and the significance value was 0.06, which is more than 0.05.

Correlation between Human resource functions and Employee performance

Variable		Employee Performance	Human resource functions
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.773**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.06
	N	73	73
Human resource functions	Pearson Correlation	.773**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.06	
	N	73	73

Regression test between Human Resource functions and employee performance.

The regression equation obtained was Y = 4.279 + 0.544
Test regression results in the table above showed that the adjusted R-squared value for the regression of Human resource functions and employee performance is 0.095, which means that motivation explains 9.5% of the variation in employee performance at Eco Bank. From the ANOVA results, the F calculated (11.647) was greater than the F critical (3.94), and also the P value (0.000) was less than 0.05, which indicates that the model significantly predicts the outcome of the relationship between Human resource functions and employee performance at Eco bank.

Table 18: Human resource functions and Employee performance

(a) Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.323[a]	.104	.095	.42000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Human resource functions

(b) ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.

1 Regression 2.054 1 2.054 11.647 .001[b] Residual 17.640 100 .176
Total 19.695 73

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

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Discussion

Recruitment and employee performance at ECO Bank

The study's findings on recruitment and employee performance at Eco Bank South Sudan reveal a mixed picture. While the recruitment process is effective in identifying skills and qualifications (Mean = 2.47), the bank struggles to attract top talent (Mean = 1.87). This suggests that the recruitment strategies may not be robust enough to compete with other employers in the market. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2023), staffing practice refers to a company's decision regarding where to find employees, how to select them, and the mix of employee skills and statuses.

The study's findings indicate that Eco Bank's recruitment process is effective in selecting candidates with the required skills, but the bank's ability to attract top talent is a concern. The literature emphasizes the importance of employer branding and recruitment marketing in attracting and retaining talent (Gartner, 2026). The study's findings suggest that Eco Bank may need to enhance its employer brand to attract top talent. Phillips and Gully (2024) highlight the importance of strategic staffing in achieving organizational goals.

The study's findings indicate that Eco Bank's recruitment process is aligned with its goals, but the bank may need to revisit its recruitment strategies to attract better talent. The study's findings also suggest that the recruitment process has a positive impact on employee performance (correlation coefficient = 0.469). This is consistent with the literature, which suggests that effective recruitment practices can lead to improved employee performance (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2023).

Training and Employee Performance at Eco Bank.

The study's findings on training and employee performance at Eco Bank South Sudan reveal a mixed picture. While employees appreciate the training opportunities provided, they feel that the training isn't entirely relevant to their current roles and responsibilities (Mean = 2.13). Additionally, the bank's investment in training hasn't yielded strong positive returns in terms of employee performance (Mean = 1.87).

This suggests that the training programs may not be effectively addressing the specific needs of employees, a concern echoed in the literature. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2023), training is most effective when it's systematically aligned with organizational goals, creating a "line of sight" between individual learning and corporate outcomes.

The study's findings support this notion, highlighting the need for Eco Bank to refocus its training efforts to make them more relevant and impactful. The Ability, Motivation, and Opportunity (AMO) framework also provides insight into the study's findings. Training acts as a critical intervention for boosting employee "Ability" (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2023).

However, the study suggests that Eco Bank's training programs may not be fully leveraging this opportunity, as employees don't feel that the training is entirely relevant to their roles. The literature emphasizes the importance of continuous learning and digital upskilling in maintaining performance in volatile markets (Noe, 2023). Given South Sudan's leapfrogging digital economy, it's essential for Eco Bank to prioritize training that addresses the specific skills gaps in its workforce.

Talent management and employee performance at ECO Bank

The study's findings indicate that talent management at Eco Bank South Sudan drives innovation and competitiveness, but identifying and developing high-potential employees and retaining key talent are challenges. The correlation analysis shows a strong positive relationship between talent management and employee performance (correlation coefficient = 0.385), consistent with the literature.

According to Armstrong and Taylor (2023), talent management creates a "line of sight" between individual goals and corporate strategy, driving performance. The study's findings support this notion, highlighting the importance of talent management in driving employee performance.

Phillips and Gully (2024) emphasize the importance of strategic talent management in achieving organizational goals. The study's findings indicate that Eco Bank's talent management practices are effective in driving innovation and competitiveness, but may need to be revisited to address challenges in identifying and developing high-potential employees and retaining key talent.

The study's findings on the impact of human resource functions on employee performance at Eco Bank South Sudan reveal a mixed picture. The recruitment process is effective in identifying skills and qualifications, but struggles to attract top talent. Training opportunities are appreciated, but relevance and addressing specific needs are lacking. Talent management drives innovation and competitiveness, but identifying and developing high-potential employees and retaining key talent.

The study's findings support the literature, highlighting the importance of talent management in driving employee performance. However, the study also reveals challenges specific to Eco Bank South Sudan, such as identifying and developing high-potential employees and retaining key talent.

Human resource functions and employee performance at Eco Bank.

The study's findings on the impact of human resource functions on employee performance at Eco Bank South Sudan reveal a mixed picture. The recruitment process is effective in identifying skills and qualifications, but

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struggles to attract top talent. Training opportunities are appreciated, but relevance and addressing specific needs are lacking. Talent management drives innovation and competitiveness, but identifying and developing high-potential employees and retaining key talent are challenges. The correlation analysis shows strong positive relationships between recruitment, training, talent management, and employee performance, consistent with the literature (Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2023; Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). Regression analysis indicates that recruitment, training, and talent management explain 46.9%, 31.1%, and 38.5% of the variance in employee performance, respectively.

Employee performance is average, with strengths in contributing to new business opportunities and retention rates. The bank's focus on performance isn't strongly linked to productivity. The study's findings support the literature, highlighting the importance of HR functions in driving employee performance. However, the study also reveals challenges specific to Eco Bank South Sudan, such as attracting top talent and addressing specific training needs.

Conclusion of findings

Recruitment and employee performance at Eco Bank.

The study on recruitment and employee performance at Eco Bank South Sudan reveals a mixed picture. The recruitment process is effective in identifying skills and qualifications, indicating that the bank has a robust selection process in place. However, the bank struggles to attract top talent, suggesting that its recruitment strategies may not be competitive enough to lure high-performing candidates. This is a concern, as attracting and retaining top talent is crucial for driving innovation and competitiveness in the banking sector.

To improve recruitment and employee performance, Eco Bank South Sudan may need to revisit its recruitment strategies to make them more competitive and attractive to top talent. This could involve enhancing the employer brand, offering competitive salaries and benefits, and providing opportunities for growth and development. By addressing these challenges, the bank can improve its recruitment outcomes and drive employee performance, ultimately contributing to its overall success and competitiveness in the market.

Training and Employee Performance at Eco Bank.

The study on training and employee performance at Eco Bank South Sudan reveals a mixed picture. While employees appreciate the training opportunities provided, they feel that the training isn't entirely relevant to their current roles and responsibilities. This suggests that the bank's training programs may not be effectively addressing the specific needs of employees, a concern that is echoed in the literature (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). The bank's investment in training hasn't yielded strong positive returns in terms of employee performance, indicating that the training may not be having the desired impact.

Talent management and employee performance at Eco Bank.

The study on talent management and employee performance at Eco Bank South Sudan reveals that talent management drives innovation and competitiveness, but identifying and developing high-potential employees and retaining key talent are challenges. This suggests that the bank's talent management practices are effective in driving innovation, but may not be robust enough to identify and develop future leaders.

The correlation analysis shows a strong positive relationship between talent management and employee performance, indicating that effective talent management practices are linked to improved employee performance. This is consistent with the literature, which suggests that talent management is a critical driver of employee performance (Phillips & Gully, 2024). The regression analysis reveals that talent management explains 38.5% of the variance in employee performance, highlighting the importance of talent management in driving performance.

To improve talent management and employee performance, Eco Bank South Sudan may need to revisit its talent management practices to make them more effective in identifying and developing high-potential employees and retaining key talent. This could involve developing a more robust talent management framework, providing opportunities for growth and development, and offering competitive compensation and benefits packages. By addressing these challenges, the bank can improve its talent management outcomes and drive employee performance, ultimately contributing to its overall success and competitiveness in the market.

Recommendations

To achieve the desired employee performance, the researcher makes the following recommendations based on the study findings, discussion, and conclusions.

Recruitment and employee performance

Enhance Employer Brand: Eco Bank should enhance its employer brand to attract top talent. This can be done by showcasing the bank's culture, values, and career development opportunities on social media and other platforms.

Competitive Recruitment Packages: The bank should offer competitive salaries and benefits to attract high-performing candidates.

Improve Recruitment Process: The recruitment process should be streamlined to reduce time-to-hire and improve the candidate experience.

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Talent management and employee performance

Develop a Talent Management Framework: Eco Bank should develop a robust talent management framework to identify, develop, and retain high-potential employees.
Succession Planning: The bank should develop a succession plan to ensure that key roles are filled with competent candidates.
Leadership Development: Eco Bank should invest in leadership development programs to develop future leaders.
Employee Engagement: The bank should prioritize employee engagement to improve retention and performance.

List of Abbreviations

AMO	Ability, Motivation, Opportunity theory
BOSS	Bank of South Sudan
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
ESOPs	Employee Stock Ownership Plans
HPWS	High Performance Work Systems
HRM	Human Resources Management
US	United States of America
UK	United Kingdom
RBV	Resource-Based View theory
SHRM	Strategic Human Resources Management
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author Contributions

Bosco Kilama Marino conceived the study, developed the research proposal, conducted the literature review, designed the research instruments, collected and analyzed the data, interpreted the findings, and prepared the final dissertation manuscript. The author takes full responsibility for the content of this research.

Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Access to the data is subject to ethical considerations and confidentiality agreements made with the study participants and Ecobank South Sudan Ltd.

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval to conduct this study was obtained from Team University through the School of Postgraduate Studies and Research. Permission to carry out the study was also obtained from the management of Ecobank South Sudan Ltd before data collection commenced. Participants were assured of confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation throughout the study.

Informed consent

Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before their involvement in the study. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the research, their right to decline participation or withdraw at any stage without penalty, and the measures taken to ensure confidentiality of the information provided.

Author Biography

Bosco Kilama Marino is a Human Resource Management professional and graduate student at Team University pursuing a Master of Science in Human Resource Management. His academic and professional interests include human resource management, employee performance, organizational development, talent management, and workforce productivity. His research focuses on the role of strategic human resource functions in enhancing organizational performance, particularly within the banking sector in South Sudan.

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