

# Review of: "Determinants of Employee Recruitment in Sidama National Regional State, Ethiopia"

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In this study, the authors collect data on recruitment and selection practices by administering a survey to government employees in Hawassa City, Ethiopia. To the authors' credit, they use a random (stratified) sample. They then regress a measure of recruitment/selection on recruitment/selection practices. They conclude that recruitment/selection practices affect recruitment and selection.

The primary issues with this study are that it lacks a sharp research question and that it does not adequately discuss what is actually being estimated by the one regression table. The nature of the dependent variable ("recruitment and selection practice") is not made clear. The authors spend much time discussing the theory around recruitment concepts, but they do not describe how their dependent variable is constructed or what it is actually measuring. In Table 2 they simply reveal that the dependent variable is an index consisting of six items. In general, using a vague index as a dependent variable is not a good idea, as doing so makes it difficult to understand what outcome is actually being assessed.

The independent variables are problematic as well. For example, the first independent variable is a five-item measure (not defined) of "vacancy advertisement." Demonstrating that vacancy advertisements are highly correlated with some measure of hiring is not an informative finding. Other independent variables, such as "selection test," are potentially more interesting. However, it's not clear what "selection test" is predicting. One could imagine using a variety of dependent variables to answer interesting questions about selection tests and other recruitment/selection practices. These dependent variables could include: a binary indicator for whether a candidate was hired at all, a measure of time-to-hire, or a measure of the quality or productivity of the hired worker. In these cases, the research question would be: does using a selection test affect hiring success, time, or quality? However, this is not what the authors do. Instead, they regress the unclear recruitment/selection index on the index for selection test (along with the other selection practices and conclude: "the selection test has an effect on recruitment and selection" (p.22). The authors do not shed light on either the nature or the size of this effect.

There is also an issue regarding survey design. In addition to the fact that it is not clear what recruitment/selection outcomes are actually being measured, it is not clear which hires are being measured. Are the survey respondents answering questions about all hires since they began working at the organization? All hires in the last year? The most recent hire? We do not know. Also, it is not clear who exactly the respondents to the survey are. Do they have hiring authority? Are they in charge of recruitment practices?

The idea of administering a random survey to determine which selection practices result in better hiring outcomes is a worthy goal. However, the authors of this study need to re-design and sharpen their research questions in to accomplish this research aim.