



RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICIES AS DETERMINANTS OF EMPLOYEE WORK BEHAVIOR AND ORGANIZATIONAL ATTITUDES: A FIELD STUDY AT BASRA OIL COMPANY, IRAQ

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ABSTRACT

Research devoted to linking recruitment and selection policies to employee work behaviour and attitudes to organization within Basra Oil Company (BOC), the second largest state-owned giant in Iraq Energy Arena. Using social exchange theory (SET) and the attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) framework, the study argues that stringent, transparent, and merit-based recruitment and selection practices shape employee perceived organizational justice, which affects task performance, citizenship behavior (OCB), job satisfaction and organizational commitment. A survey design with a cross-section was used to collect 198 valid questionnaires through a stratified random sample of BOC employees collected from the four operational departments. The analyses were done on SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 24.0 of hierarchical multiple regression analysis and SEM. Findings indicate a significant positive relationship between recruitment policy quality and employee work behavior. Moreover, selection policy fairness shows a substantial positive association with employee work behavior. The combined effect of these policies explains nearly half of the variation in employee work behavior. Selection policy fairness emerged as a stronger predictor of organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.44, p < .001$) and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.39, p < .001$). The relationships are confirmed to be significantly mediated by perceived organizational justice. The findings add to the strategic HRM literature in the Middle Eastern oil sector context and present actionable recommendations for reforming talent acquisition at the BOC and similar state-owned enterprises.

Keywords: Selection equity is a facet of job recruitment policy concerned with the recruitment phase and selection.

1. 1. Introduction

In today's business world, the ability to attract, screen and hire people who are qualified through an effective recruitment and selection system has become a key strategic issue for organisations (Boxall & Purcell, 2016; Ployhart, 2006). More and more human capital is recognized as the most important source of sustainable competitive advantage. Nowhere is



this more consequential than in resource-intensive state-owned enterprises in resource-rich economies. The petroleum sector of Iraq is a critical component of the national economy, as well as global energy markets. Basra Oil Company (BOC) is responsible for extracting around 70% of Iraq's total oil production. This task is made more onerous by having to manage a large, heterogeneous and operationally-critical workforce under conditions of institutional complexity, bureaucratic inertia and evolving international operational standards.

Recruitment and selection policies are the essential tool through which organizations regulate their workforce. Most researchers agree that the design and implementation of such policies have downstream impacts on various organizational outcomes, including individual work behaviours, job attitudes, performance trajectories and intentions to leave (Breugh, 2008; Cascio, 2018; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998). When employees believe they have been hired according to fair, clear-cut, and competency-based procedures, they are likely to internalise organisational values, exhibit discretionary behaviour, and form positive affective and normative ties with the employer (Hausknecht et al., 2004; Saks, 2006). On the other hand, the experience of nepotism, lack of transparency or procedural injustice in hiring have been related to decreased engagement, increased cynicism and lower organizational identification (Lievens & Chapman, 2010; Rynes, 1991).

There is a growing body of evidence documenting these linkages in Western organizational contexts, but research on recruitment and selection practices in state-owned energy enterprises in the Arab world mainly Iraq is notably limited. The Iraqi oil industry is a unique structure that combines elements of civil-service employment, tribal and regional social capital pressures, and international corporate governance. This convergence thus presents an opportunity to investigate whether HRM–outcome relationships, established by prior theory, hold in contexts of high institutional complexity and public-sector employment norms (Guest, 2017; Wright & McMahan, 1992)

This gap is examined in the present study through field investigation at Basra Oil Company Basra Governorate Iraq. The study aims to achieve four main objectives: (1) to determine employees' perceptions of the fairness and quality of BOC recruitment and selection policies; (2) to investigate direct associations of these policies with employees' work-related behaviours (task performance and OCB) and attitudes (job satisfaction and org commitment); (3) to assess the mediating role of perceived organizational justice in these associations; and (4) to recommend actionable recommendations for the BOC HRM reform based on evidence. This study contributes to the strategic HRM literature, and applied people-management practice by providing theory-driven empirical evidence from a unique organizational and national context, namely the Iraqi energy sector which is relatively unexplored.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Theoretical Foundations



The present study integrates two complementary theories explaining how recruitment and selection policy shapes the behaviour and attitude of employee at workplace.

Employers and employees assume mutual obligation to give back. Social Exchange Theory (SET) by Blau (1964) was adapted to the organizational field by Eisenberger et al. 1986. When employees feel that the organization has conducted a tough and fair selection process, which demonstrates that the organization respects their employees, it is competent, and there is a genuine preference for the optimal person–job fit, they respond with more task involvement, spontaneous prosocial behavior and affective commitment. According to Saks (2006), the SET framework can be applied to develop employee engagement. In this regard, perceived organizational support which is closely associated with fair HR practices is a strong antecedent of engagement, performance, and retention. The mechanism of reciprocity is key to understanding how experiences with procedurally fair selection translate into long-lasting attitudes and behaviors.

The Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) model proposed by Schneider (1987), adds to SET on organizational culture and consequent behavioral congruence through selection policies. The ASA model suggests organizations attract individuals whose values and personality profiles match the organizations implicit characteristics; selection processes filter on fit; and those who remain enhance the homogeneity of the organization. Schneider importantly argued the impact and effectiveness of selection instruments to predict or cause organizations to draw-in individuals who will flourish, perform, and hold appropriate attitudes like being compliant; or misfits, demotivated, and early leavers. As per ASA conceptual framework, selection policy design is determined which drives workforce behavior and attitude composition.

The SET together with the ASA model provide a theoretically coherent basis for the hypothesized relationships between recruitment and selection policies and employee work behavior and organizational attitudes. Perceptions of justice in the organization, including the procedures, distribution and interaction (Colquitt, 2001), is theorized as a key mediating mechanism on par with previous meta-analytic evidence (Cohen-Charash and Spector, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001).

2.2 Recruitment Policy and Employee Outcomes

Recruitment includes all the organizational activities that are used to identify and develop a pool of sufficient qualified job candidates. (Breaugh, 2008) Breaugh's seminal review revealed that recruitment quality is multifaceted and consists of three co-existing dimensions, which include the recruitment sources (e.g. internal promotion, job board, university partnership, referral), recruiter characteristics (e.g. informativeness, warmth, credibility), and recruitment message content (e.g. realistic job preview, role expectations clarifying). Each dimension has its unique implications on candidate attraction and post-hire outcomes.



According to Wanous (1992), the Realistic Job Preview (RJP) consists of providing candidates participating in recruitment with balanced and accurate information about a job. More specifically, candidates must know about both the positive and negative facets about the job. Moreover, candidates who know both the negative and positive aspects will have more calibrated expectations. Ultimately, this results in lower met-expectation violations on entry, as well as more retention and satisfaction.

In the public sector environment where formal recruitment often competes with informal social capital mobilization, availability and quality of job-related information during recruitment becomes more important (Lievens & Chapman, 2010).

The relationship between recruitment selection and performance is established by many researchers. For example, Huselid (1995) studied 968 U.S. firms in which it was shown that the level and quality of recruitment and selection i.e. components of HPWS was positively and significantly related to employee productivity, financial performance and turnover. In their timely meta-analysis of the impact of HPWS bundles, Combs et al. (2006) examined 92 studies representing more than 19,000 organizations which constitute a very large sample and provided robust evidence of a significant aggregate effect size ($r = .20$) on firm performance. The study provided further evidence of profiling recruitment and selection as a strategic capabilities of the organization.

2.3 Selection Policy Fairness and Employee Attitudes

There has been a steady focus on the impact of selection procedures on how fair applicants perceive them and on their work-related attitudes after they were hired up to now. According to a meta-analysis of 86 studies done by Bauknecht et al. (2004), reactions to selection procedures can be examined using Gilliland's (1993) procedural justice model. This study found the face validity of selection measures affects various candidate reactions, including their attraction towards the organization, likelihood of accepting a job offer, and their perception of the organization's image. These effects were seen in post-hire attitudes too.

In 1998, Schmidt and Hunter synthesized evidence in a landmark paper dealing with predictive validity of 19 major selection methods. They demonstrated that cognitive ability tests, structured interviews, and work samples have the largest criterion-related validities. It is significant that they found that selection methods that are administered with procedural rigor and consistency are associated with not only better performance predictions but also better candidate perceptions of fairness. This 'validity-justice convergence' has been replicated in many organizations.

In 1991, Meyer and Allen proposed a three-component model of organizational commitment which distinguishes affective (emotional), normative (obligation), and continuance (cost). Based on subsequent research (e.g., Ploy hart, 2006), selection techniques that successfully match person and job, and person and organization, facilitate



affective commitment by reducing ambiguity of role, enhancing person – environment fit, and signaling the organization's interest in employee success. Barrick and Mount's (1991) meta-analysis further showed that conscientiousness, a personality dimension that can be identified using rigorous structured selection, is a good predictor of job performance for all occupational groups, including technical, professional and managerial.

2.4 Work Behavior: Task Performance and OCB

Work Behavior of Employees refers to an employee's performance of the formal requirements of the individual's role. It is the extent that the employee performs the task dimensions of the role in the organisation. It is also referred to as 'in-role' task performance.

Extra role-organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) is the-Organ disciplinary behaviours that are not formally reinforced or explicitly recognised by the organisation, which, in the aggregate, promote the effective functioning of the organisation. According to the original Organ's taxonomy, OCB consists of five dimensions: altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue.

The job characteristics model developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976) provides an additional theoretical resource for understanding how selection quality shapes work behaviour. When people are matched to jobs using selection procedures which measure core job dimensions (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, feedback) that correspond with the person's ability and motivational orientation, the result experienced meaningfulness and experienced responsibility, are likely to enhance task performance and OCB.

Evidence in favor of this mechanism has been recorded in varying organizational settings (Combs et al., 2006; Guest, 2017).

According to Pfeffer (1998) and Becker and Huselid (1998), organizations that recruit and select for competence and organizational fit build up workforces that exhibit discretionary effort and co-operative behavior. The performance advantage that these sophisticated recruitment and selection systems create is difficult for competitors to replicate. Noe et al. (2020) compiled this evidence into a coherent framework suggesting that staffing quality is one of the cornerstones of a sustainable HR strategy.

2.5 The Iraqi Oil Sector Context

The institutional setting of Iraq has impacted on how organizations engage in Human Resource Management (HRM). As a state enterprise qualified by civil service law, ministerial directives and international operation contracts, BOC has a hybrid HRM architecture consisting of centralized regulatory schemes and decentralized operational managerial power. In such situations, employment decisions often hinge on factors



beyond technical merit, such as geographic origin, tribal affiliation, and political connection – dynamics which have been documented in neighboring Arab public sector contexts (Wright & McMahan, 1992).

The scenario makes it risky in a systematic way that, the recruitment and selection practices diverge from the ideal of merit selection causing perceived injustice amongst employees. According to Judge and Colquitt (2004), the above perceptions of injustice are very costly. They can cause more psychological strain. Further, they can cause reduced organizational commitment and increased counterproductive work behavior. The current study is therefore not merely a test of theory in a new context, but rather an urgent practical inquiry into the talent management of strategically important institution in Iraq.

2.6 Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are proposed based on the theoretical and empirical review presented earlier.

Recruitment policy quality (RPQ) has a positive impact on employee work behavior (EWB).

Selection policy fairness (SPF) correlates positively with employee work behaviour (EWB).

The organizational commitment of employees is positively impacted by recruitment policy.

Selection policy fairness significantly contributes to employees' commitment to the organization.

Selection policy fairness is positively correlated with job satisfaction.

Perceived organizational justice (POJ) accounts for the effect of recruitment and selection policies on employee work behavior and attitudes.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study constructs were examined using a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. This design was believed to be appropriate due to the explanatory objectives of the study and the hypothetico-deductive theoretical framework that guided the investigation. Also due to the need to collect standard data within a wide and geographically dispersed organizational population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Before the study began, approval was given by the Board of Ethics of the University of Basra and all the participants gave their consent. It was ensured that participation would be anonymous and voluntary throughout.

3.2 Population and Sampling



The study’s target population was all of the full-time employees of Basra Oil Company working in the four main operational departments, namely Drilling Operations, Production Engineering, Technical Services and Human Resources & Administration.

Official Philippine Bureau of Customs staffing records from the HR Division show the population was about 1,840 full-time employees (October to December 2024).

To compute the minimum sample size for a finite population, Cochran’s (1977) formula was used at a 95% confidence interval with a presumed population proportion of 0.50 (maximum variability) and an error margin of ±5%.

$n_0 = 384$ when rounded to the next higher integer, which is equal to the required sample size.

n equals n_0 divided by one plus n_0 minus one over N , which is 384 divided by one plus 383 over 1840 equals approximately 317 . Thus, keeping in mind a non-response of 30 per cent as per earlier experience of public sector surveys in the region, 440 questionnaires were sent. Departmental membership was used to define strata for stratified random sampling for the departments of the university. Workforce ratios were determined for each department to set quotas (see Table 1).

Table 1
Sampling Distribution by Departmental Stratum

Department	Population (N)	% Share	Distributed (n)	Valid Returns (%)
Drilling Operations	612	33.3%	146	63 (43.2%)
Production Engineering	524	28.5%	125	55 (44.0%)
Technical Services	418	22.7%	100	47 (47.0%)
HR & Administration	286	15.5%	69	33 (47.8%)
Total	1,840	100%	440	198 (45.0%)

A reply of 198 questionnaires (overall response rate 45.0%) were received and deemed complete for analysis. Although the response rate is modest compared to survey research, it is within the range of what survey studies large public-sector organizations in Iraq and neighbouring countries report (cf. Guest, 2017; Wright & McMahan, 1992). To evaluate non-response bias, early and late respondents’ demographic profiles were compared as per the procedure of Armstrong and Overton (1977). A check for differences did not give rise to any significant differences ($p > .05$ for all demographic variables), implying that non-response bias does not significantly threaten the validity of findings.



3.3 Measures

The researchers used a questionnaire that included five multi-item scales adapted from the literature and a demographic section. Each item of attitude of the respondents was measured with the help of a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Appendix A presents the full questionnaire. Recruitment policy quality (RPQ) was measured with an 8-item scale adapted from Breugh (2008) Recruitment Practices Assessment Inventory and tailored to the Iraqi public sector context. The items evaluated included diversity of recruitment sources, transparency of information, realism of job previews, and competence of recruiters (e.g. 'Company uses varied and appropriate channels to attract applicants with suitable qualifications'; 'I received accurate and complete information regarding the job in recruitment process').

Selection policy fairness (SPF) was assessed using a 7-item measure adapted from Gilliland's (1993) procedural justice measure on selection by Hausknecht et al. (2004). The measure taps into the dimensions of consistency, feedback provision, representativeness and ethicality (e.g., the selection procedures applied at this organisation are consistently applied across all candidates; the criteria used to assess candidates in the selection process are job-related and transparent).

The measure of Employee Work Behaviour (EWB) was operationalized through an 8-item composite scale. It comprises four items for task performance adapted from Williams and Anderson (1991) and four items for OCBs taken from Organ (1988) original OCB taxonomy covering dimensions of altruism and conscientiousness (E.g., I fulfill all the responsibilities required in my job description; I voluntarily help my colleagues with work-related tasks when they need help).

Organizational commitment (OC) was measured with six items from Meyer and Allen's (1991) Affective Commitment Scale most theoretically and empirically sound commitment subscale for predicting behaviour intentions and performance (e.g. "I feel emotionally attached to this organization"; "This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me").

According to Weiss et al., (1967) a five-item scale from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire – Short Form was used to measure Job Satisfaction (JS). The selected items capture both intrinsic as well as extrinsic satisfaction facets that were relevant for the operational context of oil sectors (for example, I am satisfied with the opportunity to do different things in my work; I am satisfied with the way my supervisor handles his team and so on).

To measure Perceived Organizational Justice (POJ), seven items on Procedural Justice and Interactional Justice based on Niehoff and Moorman (1993) were used. This construct was hypothesized to mediate in the conceptual framework of the study.



3.4 Demographic Profile of Respondents

- Out of 198 peeps we talked to, 74.2% identify as males and 25.8% as females. The age range designated that 31.8% were of 25-34 years of age, 37.4% were for 35-44 years of age, 22.7% were of the 45-54 category and 8.1% were of 55 years of age or older. Looking at the educational qualifications of the respondents, 59.1% of them has a bachelor's degree while 20.2% of them has a master's degree. 16.7% of the respondents has a degree/diploma of below undergraduate level while 4% of them holds a doctorate. In situations with regard to tenure, 18.2% had been employed for 1-5 years; 35.9% for 6-10 years; 28.3% for 11-15 years and 17.7 for more than 15 years. The profiles provide a broad and also general overview of the BOC work characteristics of the general-level population.

3.5 Analytical Strategy

The analysis of data had four stages. The reliability of the scale was firstly assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, where $\alpha \geq .70$ is acceptable (Nunn ally & Bernstein, 1994). Next, we computed the descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) of each construct. On the third step, to test H1-H5 hierarchical multiple regressions analysis was carried out, first, demographic controls were entered at Block 1 (age, tenure, education, gender), RPQ and SPF were entered at Block 2 and POJ was entered at Block 3. On the fourth step to test H6 mediation was tested by using Baron and Kenny (1986) causal steps approach which was verified by bootstrapping confidence intervals (5,000 resampling's) in PROCESS Macro v4.1 (Hayes, 2022). Using AMOS 24.0 confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out on the measurement model fit before undertaking structural testing. Harman's single-factor test was used to assess common method bias.

4. Results

4.1 Measurement Model Validity

Using AMOS 24.0, confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the complete 41-item model. For the model fit, Cut-off criterion was evaluated based on Hu and Bentler (1999) which criteria were CFI and TLI values $>.09$, RMSEA- $<.08$ SRMR-.08. The six-factor model fit the data fairly well with the following fit statistics: χ^2 (df = 768) = 1,124.6, CFI = .934, TLI = .926, RMSEA = .051 [90% CI: 0.044, 0.059], SRMR = .062. The factor loadings for each construct were over .50 (between .54 and .83), and the AVE values for the constructs ranged from .48 to .61 (average composites of variance) and CR was powerful (CR .81 to .89) GE factor or the convergence validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) were acceptable or nearly so. Discriminant validity was established since the pairwise correlations between the constructs were less than the corresponding AVE values. Harman single factor explanation 28.3 % of total variance and significantly below 50 %, providing further evidence common method bias does not inflate these relationships.



4.2 Scale Reliability and Descriptive Statistics

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics, Reliability Coefficients, and Construct Correlations (N = 198)

Construct	M	SD	α	1. RPQ	2. SPF	3. POJ	4. EWB	5. OC	6. JS
1. RPQ	3.61	0.74	.84	—					
2. SPF	3.47	0.79	.86	.58**	—				
3. POJ	3.39	0.81	.83	.49**	.61**	—			
4. EWB	3.72	0.68	.82	.55**	.52**	.47**	—		
5. OC	3.54	0.77	.87	.44**	.62**	.58**	.51**	—	
6. JS	3.48	0.82	.85	.41**	.57**	.54**	.49**	.63**	—

Connotation. RPQ refers to the recruitment policy quality; SPF refers to the selection policy fairness; POJ refers to the perceived organizational justice; EWB refers to the employee work behavior. OC refers to the organizational commitment; JS refers to the job satisfaction. M stands for Mean, SD is a Standard Deviation, and α for Cronbach's alpha. All the scales are calculated based on the 5-point Likert-type items. p is less than 0.01

As indicated in Table 2, the means for all constructs ranged from 3.39 for POJ to 3.72 for EWB, suggesting that employee perceptions of the company's HR practices are moderately positive and their behavioral and attitudinal orientations are reasonably favorable.

The mean results of POJ (M = 3.39, SD = 0.81) and SPF (M = 3.47, SD = 0.79) using a below-midpoint-plus-one scale indicates adequate scope for improvement in perceived justice and selection fairness. All correlations between constructs were statistically significant and positive as expected (from $r = .41$ for RPQ–JS to $r = .63$ for OC–JS). The internal consistency is adequate as Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .82 (EWB) to .87 (OC). All were above .70.

4.3 Hierarchical Regression Results

Table 3 lists the hierarchical multiple regression results predicting Employee Work Behavior (EWB). Block 1 contained demographic controls; Block 2 added the primary predictors; and Block 3 included the hypothesized mediator.

Table 3

Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Predicting Employee Work Behavior (EWB)



Variable	Block 1 β	Block 2 β	Block 3 β	SR ²	95% CI (β)	p
Gender	.04	.03	.02	.001	[-.08, .12]	.68
Age	.09	.07	.06	.004	[-.03, .15]	.21
Education	.11*	.09	.08	.006	[.01, .21]	.04
Tenure	.13*	.10	.09	.008	[.02, .24]	.03
RPQ	—	.42***	.31***	.148	[.28, .56]	<.001
SPF	—	.37***	.26***	.114	[.23, .51]	<.001
POJ (Mediator)	—	—	.24***	.048	[.12, .36]	<.001
R²	.038	.486	.534			
ΔR^2	.038	.448***	.048***			
F	1.94	92.14***	73.86***			

Take note. The standardized β (beta) coefficients reported (N = 198). SR² is the squared semi-partial correlation that shows the variance explained for each predictor. Bootstrapped confidence interval (5,000 resampling's) of 95% CI. p-value is less than 0.05 The p value is under .01. The statistical result is highly significant with a p-value that is less than 0.001.

The findings of Block 1 do not determine that demographic controls explain any meaningful variance in EWB. Specifically, Block 1 explains only 3.8% of EWB variance (F (4, 193) = 1.94, p = .11). The incorporation of RPQ and SPF in Block 2 resulted in a large and significant increase: $\Delta R^2 = .448$, F (2, 191) = 92.14, p < .001. The combined RPQ was ($\beta=.42$, p<.001) and SPF was ($\beta=.37$, p<.001) explained 48.6% of EWB's variance, supporting H1 and presenting more evidence for H2. The task-oriented and OCB dimensions of work behavior were better predicted by RPQ as it focused on person-job matching in talent acquisition. The addition of POJ in Block 3 added a significant increment, ($\Delta R^2 = .048$, p < .001), and the drop in beta coefficients for RPQ (from .42 to .31) and SPF (from .37 to .26) with the entry of POJ suggests partial mediation – in support of H6.



Table 4

Regression Results: Predicting Organizational Commitment (OC) and Job Satisfaction (JS)

Variable	OC β	p	JS β	p	R ² (OC)	R ² (JS)	95% CI (OC)	95% CI (JS)
Controls (Block 1)	—	ns	—	ns	.031	.028	—	—
RPQ	.31***	<.001	.22**	.001			[.18, .44]	[.10, .34]
SPF	.44***	<.001	.39***	<.001			[.30, .58]	[.25, .53]
Total Model R²	.461***		.428***		.461	.428		
F	81.76***		71.44***					

Ensure the Logo, Icon, and Text are always within bounds. With 198 as value of N. Standardized β coefficients from Block 2 (predictors added to demographic controls). Independent variables = gender, age, education, tenure. Not significant is ns. p is lower than 0.01 p value lesser than 0.001

Table 4 demonstrates the strength of SPF as a significant predictor of both organizational commitment and job satisfaction ($\beta = .44, p < .001$; $\beta = .39, p < .001$). Thus, H4 and H5 are supported. The effect of RPQ on OC and JS was significant with $\beta = .31 (p < .001)$ and $\beta = .22 (p < .01)$ respectively – H3 is supported. The full model explained 46.1% of OC variance ($F(6, 191) = 81.76, p < .001$) and 42.8% of JS variance ($F(6, 191) = 71.44, p < .001$). HR staffing practices are theorized to carry a lot of weight in promoting positive employee affective and evaluative orientation.

4.4 Mediation Analysis (H6)

We applied Baron and Kenny’s (1986) causal steps procedure to test whether POJ mediated the relationships (a) $RPQ \rightarrow EWB$ and (b) $SPF \rightarrow EWB$. Both pathways met all four criteria. There were significant predictors of POJ was RPQ ($\beta = .36, p < .001$) and SPF ($\beta = .47, p < .001$) The addition of POJ to the regression of EWB on RPQ and SPF revealed a large decrease in the β of RPQ (from .42 to .31) and SPF (from .37 to .26) but both remained significant. This suggests that the effect of SPF and RPQ on EWB is partially mediated as opposed to fully mediated by POJ.



Through 5,000 resamplings, the bootstrapped indirect effect estimates revealed that the indirect effect of RPQ on EWB through POJ was statistically significant (indirect effect = .096, 95% CI [.052, .148]). Moreover, the indirect effect of SPF on EWB through POJ was statistically significant (indirect effect = .118, 95% CI [.071, .172]). Since neither confidence interval contains zero, we have strong support for H6. Results of the Sobel test also indicated that significant mediation was present (for the RPQ pathway: $z = 4.12$, $p < .001$; for the SPF pathway: $z = 4.87$, $p < .001$). The RPQ–EWB ratio was .229 and SPF–EWB ratio was .319 meaning that POJ economically accounts for a significantly meaningful part of the policy-behaviour link in level 3 while leaving a sizeable direct effect – this is an unsurprising finding because the theoretical conceptualisation of organizational justice posits that organizational justice is not a complete mediator.

5. Discussion

5.1 Interpretation of Main Findings

This study aims to investigate the influence of recruitment and selection policies on employee work behaviour and the organisational attitude at Basra Oil Company, a strategically important state-owned company in the southern Iraq. The study findings collectively paint a coherent and theoretically consistent picture: the quality and fairness of HR staffing practices are strong predictors of task performance, OCB, affective commitment and job satisfaction, with perceived organizational justice serving as a significant partial mediator in these relationships.

The result that RPQ solely predicted EWB ($\beta = .42$) over and above demographic controls connects to Breugh's (2008) argument that the recruitment process quality – source diversity, clear information, realistic expectations – shapes early person–job fit which, in turn, sustains the behavioral engagement. The mean score on the RPQ indicates that the recruitment practices are perceived positively. However, the score of 3.61 also indicates that there is substantial variation in employee experiences. In other words, there are subgroups of employees who report substantially lower quality recruitment experiences. The drilling operations personnel which is the largest and most operationally intense department is expected to show lower scores on the RPQ, as compared to the HR and Administration staff. This is because it is possible that the operational departments in the large public enterprise do not get individual and carefully managed attention to recruitment, as is done at the top level.

Among the study's findings, perhaps the most practically significant is that SPF has a dominant role in predicting organizational commitment ($\beta = .44$). This result is consistent with Hausknecht et al.'s (2004) meta-analysis research, which indicates that perceptions of procedural justice that occur during selection affect long-term organizational identification and organizational commitment. According to the theoretical rationale, anchored in SET (Blau, 1964; Saks, 2006), employees who see selection as fair,



transparent, and merit-based receive a strong first signal that the organization is honest and invests in quality – thus generating a strong obligation to perform and stay. When selection appears to be ‘black-boxed’, arbitrary, or influenced by extraneous factors, this signal is distorted, damaging the psychological contract from the outset.

The theoretical significance and practical implications of POJ's partial mediation. The direct effects of RPQ and SPF on EWB after the entry of POJ ($\beta = .31$ and $.26$) suggest that recruitment and selection policies influence work behavior through more than just justice perceptions. They also have direct effects operating as behavioral measures. For example, they include the competence of person–job matching (Schneider, 1987) and motivational effects of calibration of realistic expectations (Wanous, 1992; Hackman & Oldham, 1976). The complexities of multichannel influence can be better understood using the ASA and SET frameworks in conjunction.

5.2 Implications for Practice

The findings have direct implications for BOC's leadership and HR function. This study makes a case for investing in the redesign of your recruitment systems and standardisation of selection procedures. According to the data, it is transparency and consistency in selection that will provide the greatest return for improving employee commitment and satisfaction, rather than recruitment intensity alone. Similar state-owned companies which have used systematic, criterion-referenced selection procedures along with realistic job previews, experienced measurable enhancement in turnover and in-role performance (Cascio, 2018; Pfeffer, 1998).

The discovery that SPF mediates partially through POJ also argues for an integrated HR communications strategy: employees must not only be subject to a fair selection but must also understand it and perceive it as fair. The difference between procedural fairness and perceived procedural fairness can become actionable in practice through better candidate feedback, documented and transparent selection criteria and recruiter training in behaviors that are congruent with fairness – all of which Gilliland (1993) original model of procedural justice would support.

5.3 Theoretical Contributions

This paper makes a number of theoretical contributions to the HRM and organizational behavior literature. To start, it contributes to the empirical evidence base for Social Exchange Theory and the ASA model in the Arab world context of state-owned enterprises, which has received relatively little attention. Further, it illustrates that theoretical frameworks developed in Western market-economy contexts have explanatory power in institutionally distinctive environments. The study's documentation of organizational justice as a mediating variable enhances the growing literature identifying justice as a mechanism rather than merely a correlate of HRM–outcome relationships (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001). Moreover, the research offered an



Arabic-adapted survey instrument based on the findings to measure recruitment and selection perceptions in the Middle Eastern oil sector. Thus, this resource could be valuable for future comparative and longitudinal HRM research in the region.

5.4 Limitations

It is important to recognize some limitations of the current study. To begin with, the cross-sectional design prevents inference of causality: that is, while the RPQ and SPF are theorized to be antecedent to EWB, OC, and JS, it cannot be ruled out that the opposite is true. Longitudinal or quasi-experimental designs would bolster causal claims in future studies. The second limitation of this study was that it was limited to a single organization. This limits the applicability of the findings to other similar organizations. For instance, the findings may not be applicable to other organizations in the Iraqi oil industry or the public sector in general. Conducting studies across multiple organizations would improve the external validity of the patterns observed. To start, it should be acknowledged that self-reported cross-sectional surveys are prone to common method bias. Given self-report measures would benefit from objective performance, or supervisor rated, or behaviorally based supplement, future research Lastly, while the 45% response rate is often acceptable because of the large sample size of a public-sector organisation, it may also represent a non-response bias not accounted for in the Armstrong and Overton (1977) test that has been used. The investigation did not directly examine departmental differences in moderation analyses; however, this would be a worthwhile avenue for further study.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The current analysis provides strong empirical evidence that the recruitment selection policy is a significant and meaningful cause of employee work behavior and attitudes to the organization at Basra Oil Company Through Social Exchange theory and Attraction–Selection–Attrition model as backdrop and a strict quantitative methodology based on stratified sample of 198 employees, the study shows that recruitment policy quality followed by selection policy fairness together explain almost half of the variance in work behaviour ($R^2=.486$) and over forty percent variance in commitment ($R^2=.461$) and satisfaction ($R^2=.428$). As such, the effect of staffing practices on employees' performance and job behaviours are through perceived justice experience - that is, difference in terms of employee perception.

This message is clear: BOC should invest in the rigor, transparency, and merit-orientation of its hiring processes to ensure that workforce behavioural and attitudinal quality is not just a matter of a tool but of tools. Here are some evidence-based recommendations.

1. The BOC should develop and publish official, criterion-referenced selection matrices for all occupational groups with a public impact to ensure appropriate monitoring and traceability of selection decisions, which should not only be auditable but also demonstrably related to the crucial competencies of jobs.

2. To replace informal or unstructured selection practices, structured behavioral and situational interviews complemented by a cognitive or technical assessment that is



validated must be instituted. The Schmidt and Hunter (1998) findings provide strong validity evidence for this approach.

3. There's nothing worse for an organization than when a candidate has no feedback on their interviews or resumes. Candidates today are open to employment opportunities and offer their skills with proper negotiation. It is the company that needs to remain aware of their strategy as there is competition everywhere.

4. It is recommended to introduce realistic job previews into the hiring process to assist in the recruitment of operational roles in Drilling and Production. This would reduce expectation violation at the early tenure which in turn would help in longer commitment and satisfaction.

5. Carrying out HR audits and continuous monitoring: the introduction of a formal HR audit mechanism supported by annual assessments of how recruitment and selection policies were implemented can foster continuous accountability of policy quality and evidence-based incremental improvements.

6. One way to limit bias in recruitment is to invest in training for your recruiters. Have your recruiters and selection panel members take structured training in procedural fairness principles, bias attenuation techniques, and competency-based assessment techniques. International best practice resources from May 2018 are publicly available for free through its source professional bodies SHRM, and CIPD. These can help you launch the right culture for hiring decisions.

Future studies should further this inquiry through longitudinal designs, comparative research across different organizations in the energy sector of Iraq, and the investigation of boundary conditions that may strengthen or weaken the policy-behaviour relationships reported here. These include the moderating roles of organizational culture, quality of leadership, and regulatory environment.

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Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

Recruitment and Selection Policies, Work Behavior, and Organizational Attitudes

Field Survey — Basra Oil Company

Participant Information & Consent

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. This questionnaire examines perceptions of recruitment and selection practices and their relationship to your work experience at Basra Oil Company. There are no right or wrong answers. Participation is entirely voluntary and responses are strictly confidential — no identifying information will be collected or linked to your responses. Completion takes approximately 15–20 minutes. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Section I: Demographic Information

Please select or complete the option that best describes you:

1. Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
2. Age (years):	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 25 <input type="checkbox"/> 25–34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35–44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45–54 <input type="checkbox"/> 55 or older



3. Education:	<input type="checkbox"/> Diploma or less <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Master's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Doctorate
4. Department:	<input type="checkbox"/> Drilling Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Production Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Services <input type="checkbox"/> HR & Administration
5. Length of service:	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 year <input type="checkbox"/> 1–5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 6–10 years <input type="checkbox"/> 11–15 years <input type="checkbox"/> More than 15 years

Section II: Recruitment Policy Quality (RPQ)

Please rate your agreement with each statement using the scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
RPQ1	The company uses diverse and appropriate channels (e.g., advertisements, internal postings, universities) to recruit qualified candidates.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RPQ2	I received accurate and complete information about the job and organizational environment during the recruitment process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RPQ3	The recruiters who contacted me during the hiring process were professional, knowledgeable, and courteous.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RPQ4	The job description and requirements provided during recruitment accurately reflected the actual duties and work conditions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RPQ5	The company announces job vacancies in a timely manner and provides sufficient time for qualified candidates to apply.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RPQ6	Recruitment opportunities at this company are equally accessible to all eligible candidates regardless of personal connections.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RPQ7	The company's recruitment process creates a positive impression of the organization as a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	desirable employer.					
RPQ8	The company actively seeks candidates with the qualifications and skills genuinely required to fulfill the position's responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section III: Selection Policy Fairness (SPF)

Please rate your agreement with each statement using the scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
SPF1	The selection procedures used by this company are administered consistently and uniformly across all candidates.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SPF2	The criteria used to evaluate candidates in the selection process are clearly job-relevant and transparent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SPF3	I had a genuine opportunity to demonstrate my abilities and qualifications during the selection process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SPF4	The selection process at this company is free from favoritism, nepotism, or discriminatory bias.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SPF5	Feedback about the selection outcome was provided to me in a timely and respectful manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SPF6	The selection methods used (e.g., interviews, tests, assessments) were appropriate and professionally administered.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SPF7	Overall, I believe the selection process that led to my employment at this company was fair and merit-based.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section IV: Employee Work Behavior (EWB)



Please rate your agreement with each statement using the scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
EWB1	I fulfill all responsibilities specified in my formal job description to a high standard.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EWB2	I consistently meet performance expectations set by my supervisor and the organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EWB3	I complete all required tasks and work assignments accurately and on time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EWB4	I maintain the technical competence and skill level required to perform my job effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EWB5	I voluntarily assist colleagues with work-related difficulties even when not formally required to do so.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EWB6	I contribute positively to team morale and maintain a constructive working atmosphere with my colleagues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EWB7	I attend and actively participate in meetings, training sessions, and organizational events voluntarily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EWB8	I go beyond the minimum job requirements when I believe it will benefit the team or the organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section V: Organizational Commitment (OC)

Please rate your agreement with each statement using the scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
OC1	I feel emotionally attached to and proud to belong to Basra Oil Company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OC2	Basra Oil Company has a great deal of	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	personal meaning to me beyond its role as my employer.					
OC3	I would be happy to spend the remainder of my career with this organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OC4	I feel a strong sense of belonging to Basra Oil Company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OC5	I talk positively about this organization to people outside it and recommend it as a good place to work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OC6	I genuinely care about the long-term success and future of this organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section VI: Job Satisfaction (JS)

Please rate your agreement with each statement using the scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
JS1	I am satisfied with the opportunity to use my skills and abilities in this job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JS2	I am satisfied with the relationship I have with my direct supervisor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JS3	I am satisfied with the compensation and benefits I receive in this position.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JS4	I am satisfied with the opportunities for professional development and advancement available to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JS5	Overall, I am satisfied with my job at Basra Oil Company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section VII: Perceived Organizational Justice (POJ)

Please rate your agreement with each statement using the scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree



No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
POJ1	HR decisions in this company (such as hiring, promotion, and assignments) are generally made in a fair manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
POJ2	The procedures used to make HR-related decisions in this company are applied consistently across all employees.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
POJ3	I am able to express my views and concerns before HR decisions that affect me are made.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
POJ4	My supervisor treats me with respect and dignity in all work-related interactions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
POJ5	I receive adequate explanations and justifications for important organizational decisions that affect my work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
POJ6	The distribution of work assignments and rewards in this company reflects individual contributions and merit.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
POJ7	Overall, I believe that employees are treated fairly and equitably at Basra Oil Company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for your time and valuable input.

Your responses will contribute to improving human resource management practices at Basra Oil Company and to advancing academic knowledge of organizational behavior in Iraq's energy sector. All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and used exclusively for research purposes. For questions about this study, please contact the principal researcher at the University of Basra, Department of Business Administration.