



School of Commerce

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
AND ECONOMICS, SCHOOL OF COMMERCE**

Title:

Assessment of Strategic Human Resource Management practices

- The case of Ethiopian Postal Service Enterprise

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**A Thesis Submitted to School of Commerce in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts in Human Resource
Management**

Addis Ababa University School of commerce Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare herewith that this research work is an original work which belongs to me. It has not been submitted earlier partially or in whole at any university for a degree and that the materials used as sources for the study have been dully acknowledged.

Name _____

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Approval

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This is to certify that Assessment of Strategic Human Resource Management' Practices: The case of Ethiopian Postal Service Enterprise thesis is prepared by the researcher - Tadesse Gebremariam. It is submitted in partial completion for the need for the Degree Master of Arts in Human Resource Management in conformity with the rules of the University. It met the level regarding to its novelty and superiority.

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Acronyms

EPS - Ethiopian Postal Services

HRM - Human Resource Management

HR - Human Resource

SHRM - Strategic Human Resource Management

SPP

ABSTRACT

A primary objective of this study is to evaluate strategic human resources management (SHRM) practices concerning recruitment and hiring, training, and development. Participants in the study were line managers of the Main Post Office located at the Ethiopian Postal Service, Addis Ababa Region Post Office, and Arada Zone Post Office. The sample population for the present study was 100 line managers of the postal services and out of the 80 line managers were selected for the sample size to collect primary data through questionnaires and interviews. The sample design of the study was a stratified sampling method. Quantitative data was analysed by employing descriptive statistical instruments. The study recommends that the EPSE work more for devolving HR manager's responsibilities to line-manager, the integration of Business Strategy and Organizational strategy, and set of internally consistent policies and practices that ensure the Post Office's human capital which contributes to the achievement of its business objectives. The significant findings are that transitioning to lean manufacturing should be complemented by well-designed HR practices and devolving HR by recognizing line manager's value and forming partnerships. The primary recommendation is that the postal service needs more in-depth research to understand the different ways in which HRM responsibilities are devolved to line managers, especially in periods of organizational change.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

The first chapter of this study introduces the research purpose and the general approach that will be taken to address the research problem. The purpose of the study, the scope of the research questions, the significance of the study, and the organization of the study constitute the background of the study.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) is defined as the planning processes for deploying human resources to meet an organization's goals (Wright, P.M., McMahan, G.C., and McWilliams, A., 1994).

SHRM refers to people management philosophies which are aimed at maximizing the value of people in order to sustain strategic advantage. It gives businesses the tools to improve performance and make people more valuable. Using this tool, companies can better meet the needs of their employees and promote company goals at the same time.

Thinkers and practitioners of management in the twenty-first century believe that human capital resources can enhance an organization's performance. The quality of the organization's human resources determines its performance and success. No matter how much money and advanced technology an organization has, if its employees are not capable, motivated, and high-performing, it will not be able to maintain its high-performance level. Moreover, effective use, maintenance, and management of physical and capital resources are dependent on people; the quality of an organization's employees plays a critical role in achieving competitive advantage.

A key characteristic of strategic HRM is connectivity. Human resources strategies are generally incorporated vertically with business strategies and horizontally with other departments (for example, finance and marketing). The purpose of HR strategies is to contribute to the business strategy of an organization using a strategic HRM approach. There are qualitative differences between HRM and SHRM as the mere existence of SHRM demonstrates. Human Resources Management and Human Resources Management are qualitatively different. As such, this notion is understood as the link between the organization's top management and employees, and the overall environment in which they operate.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Human resources are at the heart of organizational success; hence people make everything for the organization's profitability. SHRM aligns human resource functions to core business goals. This research aims to assess an organization's HRM strategy integration with corporate strategy. Strategic HRM is composed of three concepts: resource-based perspective, strategic fit, and strategic flexibility.

Managers understand that their organizational objectives are met when employees enjoy what they are doing and have job security. However, incorporating an appropriate function for attracting, retaining, and managing the organization's human resources in line with its corporate business strategy is in disarray.

(Gollan PJ, Kalfa S., and Xu Y., 2015) have investigated Cochlear, a medical device manufacturer based in Sydney, Australia. Hence, they affirmed that their paper had significant implications for further research and practice. The researchers proposed that their research on Cochlear highlights "the need for companies to develop coherent and integrated policies, systems and processes that complement and reinforce each other and they are aligned with the company's strategic direction" (Gollan PJ, Kalfa S., and Xu Y. 2015). They added that their case study suggests "manufacturers should invest heavily in their workforce and develop teamwork system while adopting operational requirements of limited practices". They require to be carried out more in-depth research to understand how HRM responsibilities should be devolved to line managers.

This paper do not agree with the idea of recognizing line manager's value and forming partnerships through well-designed HR practices and devolving HR. Rather, it believes that this relationship is often infested with conflicts and other obstacles. It is also evident that the HR-line managers' disagreement on the extent of HR devolution is rooted in the differences they have in their perception of several other factors, including organizational support, individual capacity and age of line managers. Thereby, a perceptual discrepancy is likely to occur between these two parties on the extent of HR devolutions, which may eventually lead to poor performance (Beeck, Wynen & Hondeghem, 2015).

1.3 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study will address the following questions based on its discussion of the above:-

1. What level of integration does the HR strategy have with the business strategy?
2. To what extent the different HRM activities are consistent with one another?
3. What is the scope of HR responsibility assigned to the Line Manager?
4. How do employees' commitments enhance an enterprise's dynamism?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

1.4.1 General Objective

This study seeks to analyse the integration of HR and business strategy critically, whether HRM practices are in Consistency with one another, the devolution of HR responsibilities to line managers, and employees' commitment to their employers within the context of Ethiopian post services Enterprise (EPSE).

1.4.2 The Specific Objectives

The study has the following goals in particular:-

1. Assess the degree to which HR and business strategies are integrated.
2. Analyse whether HRM practices adhere to one another.
3. Identify how the HRM system involves and devolved responsibilities are shared between HR managers and line managers.
4. Foresee the extent of different levels of commitment that the business receives from its employees.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to summarize literature on the assessment of SHRM practices, to encourage additional research on the subject, and to provide organizations with a comprehensive overview of the extent to which SHRM practices can contribute to organizational productivity, profitability, competitive advantage, and development. Hence, the study is believed to be most important to the Ethiopian Postal Service Enterprise in order to improve its organizational strategy.

By understanding the effect of human resource strategies on employee performance, management will be able to identify areas where improvements can be made. As part of this plan, ESPE's management will enhance the development of effective and efficient human resource strategies that will heighten their employees' performance.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Ethiopian Postal Services consisted of four core processes, namely:- Letter Services, Parcel reception and delivery Services, Financial Business, and Express Mail Service (EMS), and five departments- Human Resource Management; Marketing, Finance, Planning and Information Technology. However, the study was restricted to evaluating the four core processes and five departments that have served the society for over 125 years. It was for this reason that SHRM's practices supported long-term business goals and outcomes. Additionally, it emphasizes long-term goals for human resources programs. Human resource managers need to identify key areas of HR related to employee motivation and productivity that can be implemented over the longer term for long-term success.

1.7 POTENTIAL LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study will encounter the following limitations and constraints: limited availability and access to documents related to HR and SHRM practices of the Postal Enterprise due to confidentiality as well as hesitation manifested among the respondents to complete the questionnaire with due care and return on time. Some interviewees will also have a time constraint, and survey respondents may be busy with office works. However, with the help of the support letter I have obtained from the university and the support of some acquaint in the postal service, the study will be carried out to collect both the primary and secondary data.

1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Five chapters comprise this research. In the first chapter of the book there is an introduction, which discusses the concept, scope, significance, limitations, and organization of the study. There is also a problem statement, research questions, and objectives of the study. The second chapter comprises the literature review, which discusses SHRM concepts, the integration of business and HR strategy, consistency of HRM practices, devolution of HR to line managers, employee commitment, why SHRM, and the conceptual framework. Methodology and Research Design are the subjects of chapter three. The fourth chapter is all data analysis of the research and the fifth chapter consists summary, conclusion, and recommendation.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 THEORETICAL REVIEW AND FRAMEWORK

Two different sets of literature make up SHRM's literary framework. As a first step, the project endeavours to identify and comprehend those characteristics of an organization that have been thought to be determinants of its performance. Identifying causal links between components and assessing their effects on the organization and its employees' attitudes, behaviours, and skills is part of this task. It is generally intended to find out what effect or impact measurements (processes, structures, etc.) initiated by consultants are having due to other factors. Organizational performance is generally positively impacted by both of these indicators. Therefore, they deserve recognition. A second type of SHRM literature, which is not as well developed but also important, is affiliated with this prescriptive literature but stands apart. By contrast, it focuses on concepts underlying prevalent practices rather than strategies for enhancing organizational efficiency, such as capacity-building. In the notion of strategic human resource management, one may consider it a 'discursive formation' and that when advocates speak about SHRM, they speak of a set of interconnected propositions. As summarized by Lengnick Hall (1999), strategic HRM writers have addressed many topics over the last two decades. Some examples of such HRM reactions can be found in strategies that align human resources with strategic or organizational conditions (Lengnick-Hall, M.L., & Lengnick-Hall, C.A., 1999). The strategic management of human resources is a multidimensional process with multiple outcomes. In addition, this type of writing emphasizes the HR department's expanding role in an organization's success, as well as the ties (integration) between business strategy and HR.

Strategic Human Resource Management implies how HRM is critical to an organization's performance. Effective human resource management is required for effective strategic management. Hence, in order to attain exceptional organizational performance, businesses must carefully develop strategies and manage human resources. The human capital practise describes the type of strategy that a company must use to reach higher levels of performance, as well as the pattern that must be followed to maintain strategic human resource management (SHRM). The developing subject of SHRM offers unique and insightful variations in terms of perspectives and methodologies. A sustained effort is necessary to unravel the mysteries of SHRM, which holds the promise of being a powerful tool for managing human resources in the face of today's fast-paced transitions.

2.2 INTEGRATION OF SHRM

A strategy is a plan or pattern that caused an organization's main objectives, policies, and actions to be converted into a cohesive whole (Quinn, 1981). Bhatia and Wallace (2007) look at strategy as a description of the direction an organization wants to go and what it wants to become, drawing on strategic management literature (Bhatia, R. and Wallace, P., 2007).

It's important to remember that business and HR concerns influence each other, which in turn drives corporate and business unit strategies while thinking about how to combine business and HR strategies. It's also worth noting that, in order to develop these ties, change tactics must be integrated with changes in both the external and internal contexts. Fit may exist at one point in time, but as circumstances change, fit may become obsolete. Excessive adherence to the status quo will stifle the flexibility of approach required in stormy situations. The 'temporal' aspect in obtaining fit is identified by (Gratton, 1999).

An additional factor that makes excellent vertical fit to become problematic is that the business strategy may not be well defined - it could be in an emergent or evolving state. This would imply that the HR strategy would have nothing to work with.

The concept of establishing a rigorous link may be challenging to achieve. Most businesses have intents that serve as strategies, even if they are ill-formed and subject to change. One approach suggested by Cooke and Armstrong (1990) is to find a way of quantifying the additional resources required by HR overall and at the level of each element of HR strategy, as well as measuring and comparing the marginal return on investment in each element (Cooke, R., and Armstrong, M., 1990). Nonetheless, it is unlikely that this strategy would be feasible.

2.3 DEVOLVEMENT OF HR RESPONSIBILITIES TO LINE MANAGER

HR can initiate new policies and practices, but the line manager is primarily responsible for implementing them, which Armstrong puts as "HR proposes but the line disposes of" (Armstrong, 2016). Similarly, Purcell and Hutchinson (2006) argue that front-line managers "bring HR policies to life" (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2006). If line managers are not disposed favourably towards what HR wants them to do, they will not do it or, if compelled to, they will be half-hearted about it (ibid).

According to Floyd and Woolridge (1997), line managers should actively participate in both the 'thinking' and 'doing' of strategy. They can synthesize data on developing concerns, such as internal or external developments, as well as events and trends that are essential to the company. Line managers, they believe, can champion alternatives by imagining opportunities that are not part of the organization's existing strategic concept. They can also support more extreme efforts to drive change that was not planned for in the organization's strategic plan (Floyd, S.W., and Woolridge B., 1997).

If line managers are given authority and responsibility, given the opportunity to experiment, and, most crucially, included in strategic decision-making, they can perform the duties. Currie and Procter (2001) note that HR strategies should ideally be made up of broad concepts that can be contextualized at the local level. This motivates middle managers to expand on these broad ideas while considering unique operational settings and figuring out how to fulfil best those concepts (Currie G. and Procter S., 2001).

It is vital to involve front-line managers in strategic planning activities as members of cross-functional project teams and provide them with the appropriate training and development in order to promote their role as 'strategic partners'. As Barnett and Burgelman point out, putting HR strategy into action will almost certainly be a process of "negotiate devolution" with line managers and other stakeholders (Barnett W.P. and Burgelman, R.A., 1996).

Today, regardless of functional specialization, every manager is on the front lines of people management (Kulik, C.T., and Perry, E., 2004). At a bare minimum, line managers conduct performance reviews, make promotion decisions, and communicate terminations (McGovern, P., Gratton, L., Hope-Hailey, V., Stiles, P. and Truss, C., 1997). Nevertheless, some organizations go even further and are actively engaged in 'devolving' to the line activities previously exclusive HR specialists. Among these tasks there are recruitment, career planning, occupational health and safety compliance, and establishment and maintenance of organizational culture. HR responsibilities are increasingly being devolved from HR managers to line managers, a growing and global trend (Larsen, H.H. and Brewster, C., 2003).

It has far-reaching implications for the role of line managers, personnel professionals, and an organization's ability to establish and implement people

management policies across the entire organization (Hall and Torrington, 1998). Devolved organizations face a significant risk: they commit the 'care and feeding' of their most important assets (their staff) to managers who may have had little or no professional HR training (Kulik, C.T., and Perry, E., 2004). These day-to-day HR practices significantly impact the organization's bottom line performance indicators (Huselid, M.A., 1995; Becker, B.E. and Huselid, M.A., 1998).

2.4 HOW HRM ACTIVITIES ARE CONSISTENT WITH EACH OTHER

HRM is thus regarded as strategic due to its alignment with business strategy and internal consistency (Boxall, P., 1996). Human resource policies in an organization must be consistent with one another. The organization's strategy is the primary contingency factor. It is also known as the best-fit approach. Vertical integration of business and HR strategies can be perceived as the best fit. A tight fit can produce a positive outcome, having kept the strategy, structure, and HR dimensions in direct alignment. The concept of fit implies rigidity and inflexibility.

The term 'best practise' refers to the relationship between 'sets' of good HR practices and organizational performance, primarily defined by employee commitment and satisfaction. These sets of best practices may take many forms; some have advocated a universal set of practices that would enhance the performance of all organizations to which they were applied (Pfeiffer, J., 1998.), seven practices of successful organizations.

Claydon et al. have argued that both theories aim to achieve high performance in organizations (Claydon, T., Beardwell, J. and Claydon, T., 2007). According to Sparrow and Hiltrop, these models can be classified as 'matching models' because their common aim is to align the human resources strategy with the Corporations. The 'best fit' school of SHRM emphasizes the importance of close alignment between organizational strategy and other systems. Lawler claims that all organizational systems must start with business strategy because "it specifies what the company wants to accomplish, how it wants to behave, and the kinds of performance and performance levels it must demonstrate to be effective" (Lawler III, EE, 1995)

2.5 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW OF SHRM PRACTICES

Strategic human resource management (SHRM) became increasingly important in the success stories of organizations as the business world becomes more complex and

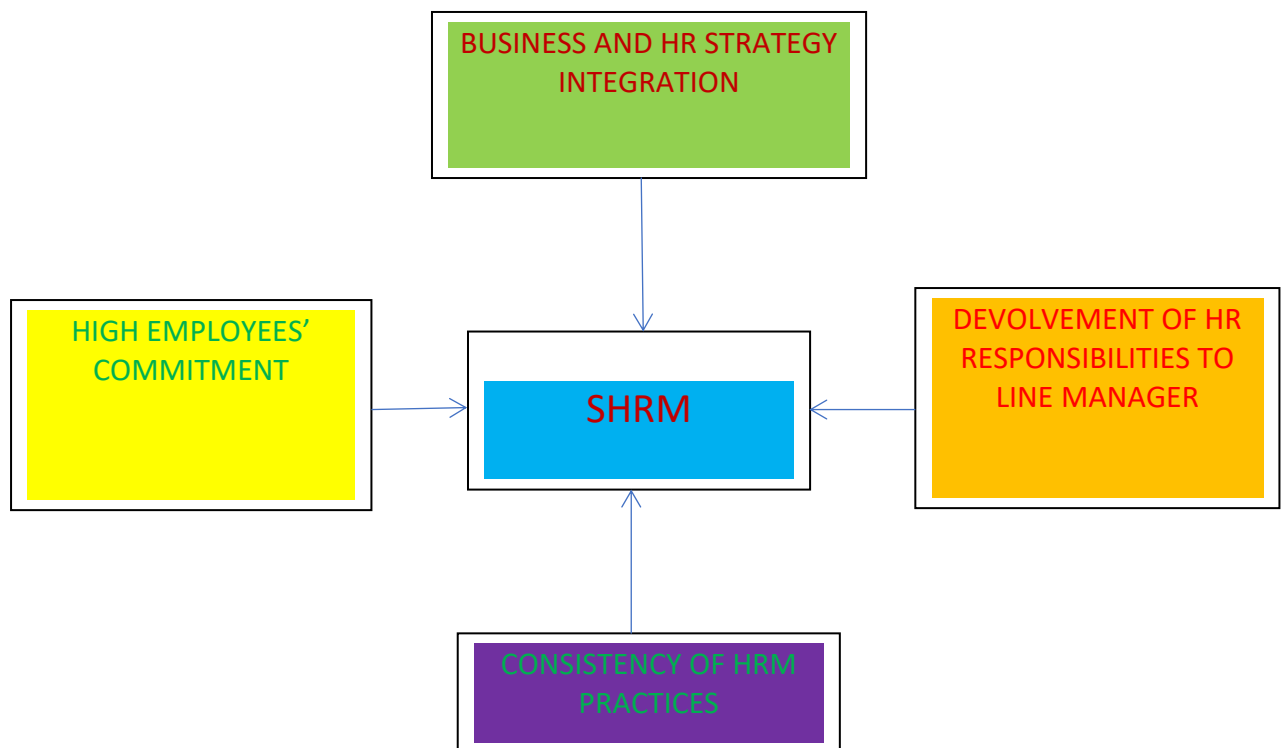
challenging. Employees will undoubtedly continue to play vital roles as creative and innovative ideas reside in this pivotal resource management. HR and the management of an organization's workforce are critical to the firm's overall growth and development. Human resource management is responsible for attracting, selecting, and training, evaluating, and rewarding employees in an organization. As a result, strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) are aimed at achieving organizational goals. Maintaining high productivity is essential to the survival of any successful business anywhere in the world. No matter how much money an organization invests in the business, the business will stagnate and eventually fail without productivity and strategy implementation. Ensuring an effective rewards system would help an organization achieve high productivity and profitability. As a result, when employees are not properly rewarded or compensated, productivity suffers and profit declines. One of the most critical responsibilities of human resources is compensation management.

Legge emphasizes that organizational rewards are the materials and psychological payoffs for doing something (Legge, K., 1995). Therefore, when employees are not adequately rewarded or compensated, productivity suffers, and profit dwindles. Compensation management is one of the essential responsibilities of HR. Organizations must implement an adequate salary and benefits package in order to attract promising talents (recruits) and motivate employees to perform to the best of their abilities, as Fitzenz describes the need to ensure that the recruitment function is efficient. He also stated that evaluating recruiters as a team rather than as individuals whenever possible (Fitzenz, J.2002). Fitzenz stated that in order to determine recruiter team efficiency, HR measurement attempts (strategies) should focus on the productivity of their interviewing techniques, the average length of interviews for the respective job groups, and the number of interviews required to make a quality hire.

According to Wofford, strategic planning and the development of an HR framework to align employees with corporate organizational plans and objectives are required (Wofford, D., 2002). Strategic planning aims to identify the organizational decisions and actions that will provide the most significant advantage under various assumptions about the organization and its environment. (Wofford, D., 2002) emphasized the importance of integrating human resources into organizational strategy so that HR function enables to support and implement the strategic plan to gain a competitive advantage.

Strategic human resource development improves an organization's employee competence. Employee development is HR practices used to increase productivity and thus help people and organizations become more successful in the long run.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the study



CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

A comprehensive co-existence of previously identified elements and any other information or data leads to a reasonable outcome. In order to reach an error-free, accurate conclusion, the research design must adhere to a pre-planned, well-thought-out methodology, in agreement with the pre-selected research type. A good research design should have the following characteristics: flexible, effective, efficient, appropriate, reliable, and economical, among others. It should improve the reliability and reduce the bias of any data or information collected and reviewed.

When it comes to experiments, surveys, and so on, it must be less prone to error. Nevertheless, the research design is based on a research problem, research objective, or other research questions. As a result, achieving the research goal may necessitate combining various research designs and approaches. A good research design ought to maximize reliability while minimizing bigotries in the data collected and reviewed.

The section on research design or methodology describes the overall approach and practical steps that the researcher will take to address the research question. It determines what will be included and what will not be included. It also specifies the criteria for evaluating the results and reaching a conclusion. The study's reliability and validity are determined by how data is collected, measured, analysed, and interpreted.

3.2 POPULATION, SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

3.2.1 POPULATION

Whenever you refer to the population or universe, you are referring to the entire case study population. Thus, the sample population for the study is HR Managers and Line Managers at Ethiopian Post Service.

3.2.2. SAMPLE SIZE

Using empirical evidence, the present study assessed SHRM practices and the integration (relationship) between the HR strategy and the business strategy. The Cochran formula is used to calculate the ideal sample size given a desired level of precision, a desired confidence level, and the estimated proportion of the attributes present in the population. The size of the sample directly correlates with generalizations about the population as Creswell (2011) points out.

Table 1: The Total Population and Sample of the study

Location	Line Manager		HR Manager	
	Population	Sample	Population	Sample
Main Post Office (Headquarter)	25	20	1	1
Addis Ababa Region Post Office	50	40	1	1
Arada Zone Post Office	25	20	1	1
Total	100	80	3	3

Source: HR record of EPSE as of the year 2018

It is imperative to determine the sample size with great care because sample size and precision of information are highly related. According to Creswell (2011), higher sample size will provide better generalization about the whole population and vice versa. Thus, a sample size formula of (Israel, 2013) below by taking a margin error of 5% and a confidence interval of 95%, 80 respondents were chosen out of 100 line Managers for the questionnaire. 1 HR manager was considered for an interview due to its importance and small in number.

$$n = N / [1 + (N * e^2)] = 100 / [1 + (100 * 0.05^2)]$$

n= 80 Respondents.

Where:

n - The sample size,

N - The population size, and

e - The level of precision ($e = 0.05$)

To maintain a representative sample for each stratum, the study used a proportionate stratified sampling technique.

Ethiopian postal services enterprise has 100 Line managers in the above-chosen three post offices. Hence, it will have a sample of 80-line managers out of the total population in the study. The population or target groups are line managers, and HR managers are working in the Main Post Office (Headquarters), Addis Ababa Region Post office and Arada Zone Post office. The Chief Officer (CO) of the HR Department at the Main Post Office was considered for an interview. Since the two Region and Zone Post offices are located in Addis Ababa, they are homogeneous in characteristics. The number of samples is obtained by simple random sampling based on a proportionate stratified sampling technique.

3.3 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

3.3.1 INTRODUCTION

For its successful accomplishment of the study, both primary and secondary sources of data were used. Researcher-collected primary data refers to the first time that information is collected by the researcher. Thus, primary data was collected from sample respondents using a close-ended and an open-ended questionnaire, as well as quantitatively measured on a five-point Likert scale. Further, the study also used structured interviews to gather relevant information to answer the first two research questions and analysed personal and public documents.

3.3.2 QUESTIONNAIRE

A quantitative questionnaire was used by the researcher in collecting data. The use of closed-ended questions is prevalent in quantitative research since they are easy to analyze quantitatively and provide uniform responses (Dawson, C., 2002). As a result, different questions were developed for line managers to answer. The researcher

developed the questionnaires for the devolution of HR responsibilities to line managers as well as employee commitment based on the Schooler and Jackson (1987) criteria. Employee commitment was measured using standard questions adapted from the revised survey (Meyer, J.P., Allen, N.J. & Gellatly, I.R., 1990).

3.3.3 INTERVIEW

As the major primary data sources for the study, semi-structured interviews were used for gathering information about HR integration and HRM practices in relation to each other. It was therefore better to conduct an interview to get the actual practice of HRM, rather than relying on the HR Policy of EPSE to get information about HRM Integration and Consistency. A manager of the Main Post Office's human resources department answered ten questions during the interview. After informing of its confidentiality, the interview was conducted face-to-face.

3.3.4 DOCUMENT REVIEW

The researcher reviewed documents, the internet, and the Post office website to get additional data sources and understand more about the EPSE profile and the subject matter.

3.4 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

3.4.1 VALIDITY

Sekaran identified three types of validity: content, criterion-related, and construct (Sekaran, U., 2009). Content validity ensures that the measure includes an adequate and representative set of items that tap the concept under study. The more the scale items cover the concept, the greater the content validity. It is to see how successful the research has achieved. What did it set out to achieve? Does x cause y? In other words, is the researcher correct in maintaining a causal link between these two variables? Is the research design sufficiently rigorous? Have alternative explanations been considered? Hence, to ensure the study is free from bias and valid was adapted a standard questionnaire was (Allen, N.J. and Meyer, J.P., 1990) that measured organizational commitment. Furthermore, the other questionnaire and interview guideline questions were developed by referring to reliable sources such as published books and articles.

3.4.2 RELIABILITY

The plan that I am going to provide comprises the following tasks: -

Does the task create information that will be necessary for my decision?

Does the task reduce uncertainty related to decision criteria?

Do the tasks answer a question clearly and timely?

The tasks which I have listed in my plan will answer my specific research questions; guide me on how I allocate my time; enable me to challenge each element of my primary research questions

My approach to reliability test is as follows:

There are four commonly used procedures for calculating a test's reliability coefficient (also known as its self-correlation); namely,

- 1) Test-Retest (Repetition),
- 2) Alternate or Parallel Forms,
- 3) split-half Technique,
- and 4) Rational Equivalence.

For the reliability test, we chose the split-half Technique from the four options presented above. This approach (procedure) was chosen because the Split-half method improves the previous two methods, and it incorporates both the characteristics of stability and equivalence. It may not be possible not to use the same test twice and get an equivalent result. Hence, we determined that estimating reliability through a single test administration was preferable to overcoming these difficulties, reducing the memory effect and administration of the test.

This method is best suited for homogeneous tests because the test is only administered once on the sample. Such a method ensures that test scores are internally consistent. The scores are arranged or created in two sets obtained from odd and even numbers of items separately. For instance, a test of 100 items may be administered (Cronbach, 1943).

The correlation coefficient is computed after obtaining two scores on odd and even numbers of test items. It is a relationship between two halves of scores obtained in a single sitting. The Spearman-Brown Prophecy formula is used to estimate reliability.

The Spearman-Brown formula is given by:

in which r_{11} = the reliability of the whole test.

$r_{11/22}$ = the coefficient of correlation between two half tests.

Example 1:

A test consists of 100 items. These items are arranged in descending order of difficulty, beginning with the easiest and progressing to the most difficult. Students complete the test, and it is graded.

The students' scores in the odd number of items are totalled separately, and the even number of items is totalled separately. The correlation coefficient discovered between these two sets of scores is 0.8.

The reliability of the whole test (or)

While using this formula should be kept in mind that the variance of odd and even halves should be equal, i.e., $\sigma_{2\text{odd}}^2 = \sigma_{2\text{even}}^2$.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

In summary, raw data from the questionnaire was analyzed utilizing a quantitative approach in order to be input into an application such as IBM's SPSS. To prepare the data for further analysis, the data was edited, coded, and classified after it had been gathered properly. In this process, control variables were used to show respondents' demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education background, and experience. Besides tables and graphs, means, modes, medians, variances, and standard deviations are also used to analyze quantitative techniques such as thematic content analysis (Boyatzis, R.E., 1998).

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Research design demands that ethical consideration be incorporated into the research process. Here are the questions about ethical consideration that I should ask:

- Did participants receive adequate information about the study?

- Are they informed that they can leave at any time? Are they informed that informed consent is required?
- Are some participants at risk of harm (or are they deprived of care) because of the study? What security measures are in place to protect the data and identities of participants?
- Does the description of the event conform to the wishes of the participants in terms of language and tone? Is the research document fair and accurate in accrediting all individuals (and only those individuals) involved in its development and implementation?

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected from primary and secondary sources were analysed using tables, graphs, and figures. The participants' reply rate on devolvement of HR responsibilities to line managers as well as employees' commitment was analysed using Statistics Package Social Science (SPSS) software. The results of the interview to integrate and consistency of HRM practices are also given.

4.2 RESPONDENTS' RESPONSE RATE

Structured and semi-structured interviews and open-ended and close-ended questionnaires were prepared to collect relevant primary data from sample respondents. Hence, 80 questionnaires were distributed to respondents and out of them, 70 questionnaires were returned being completed. Cooper and Schindler (2003) said that more than 50% response rate of the total samples would provide adequate generalization about the characteristics of the study problem.

Whereas the answer obtained from participants' rate indicated in Table 3 shows 93.8%, which is deemed acceptable.

Table 2: **Questionnaire Response Rate**

DESCRIPTION	NUMBER OF RESPONSESES			
	Main Post Office	Addis Ababa Region Post Office	Arada Zone Post Office	Total
Distributed	20	40	20	80
Returned	18	35	17	70
Response Rate	90%	87.5%	85%	87.5%

Source: *my own result of the survey 2021*

4.3 PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

The survey's demography comprised of Gender, Age, Education background, and position. As indicated in Table 4 here- below, among the total 80-line managers, 65 (81.25%) were male, and the remaining 15 (18.75%) were female. This implies that the most significant proportion of line managers in EPSE is male. From this, it can be concluded that the enterprise did not do the required work in empowering female workers.

Table 3: Participant's Demographic Survey

Statistics					
		Gender	Age	Work Experience in years	Level of Education
N	Valid	80	80	80	80
	Missing	6	6	6	6

Frequency Table

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	65	75.6	81.3	81.3
	Female	15	17.4	18.8	100.0
	Total	80	93.0	100.0	
Missing System		6	7.0		
Total		86	100.0		

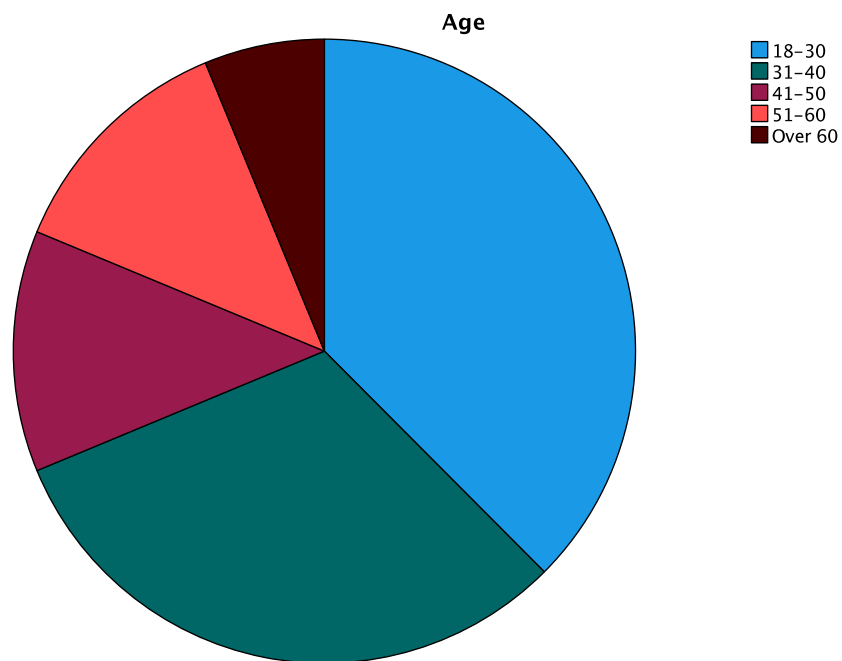
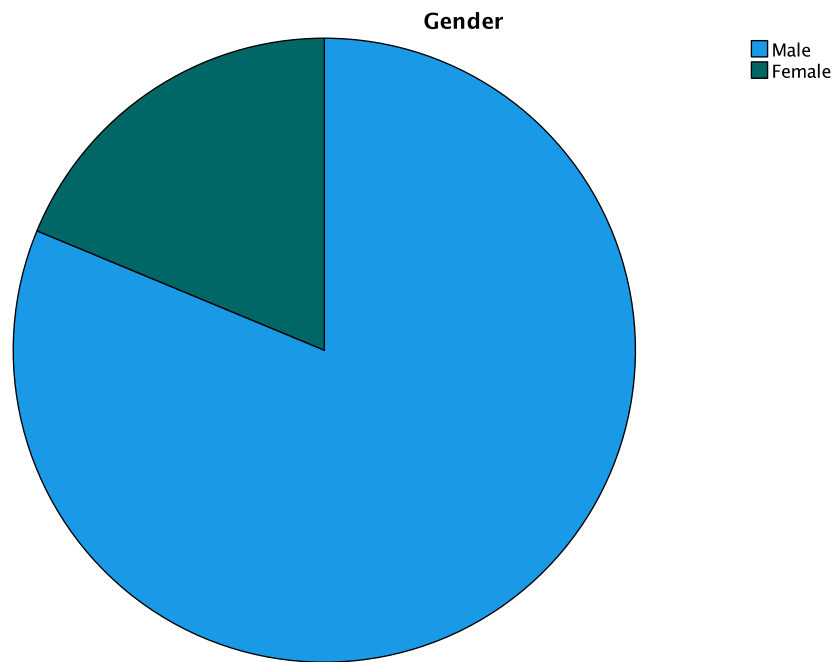
Age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-30 years	30	34.9	37.5	37.5
	31-40 years	25	29.1	31.3	68.8
	41-50 years	10	11.6	12.5	81.3
	51-60 years	10	11.6	12.5	93.8
	Above 60 years	5	5.8	6.3	
	Total	80	100.0		100.0

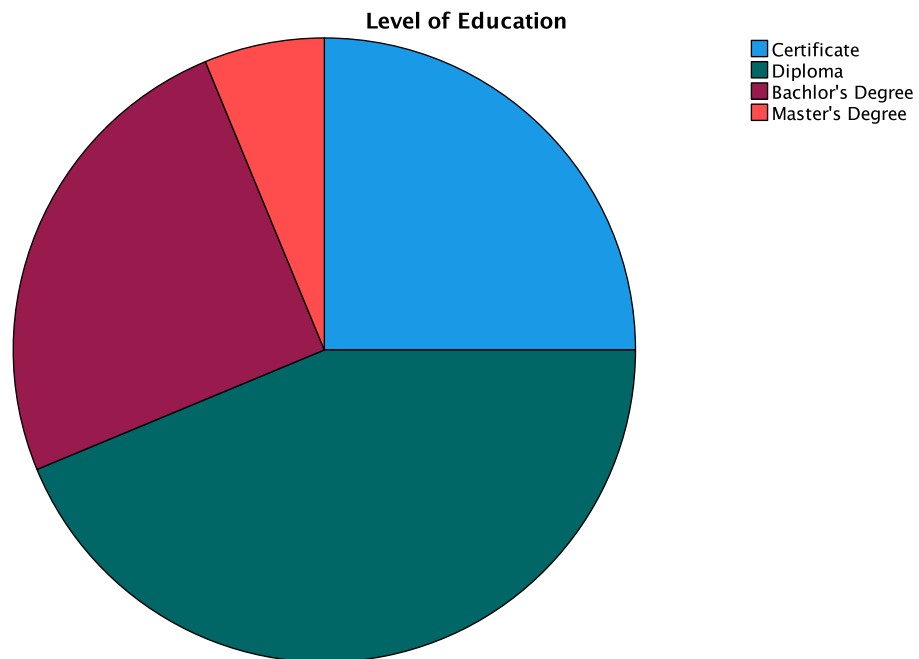
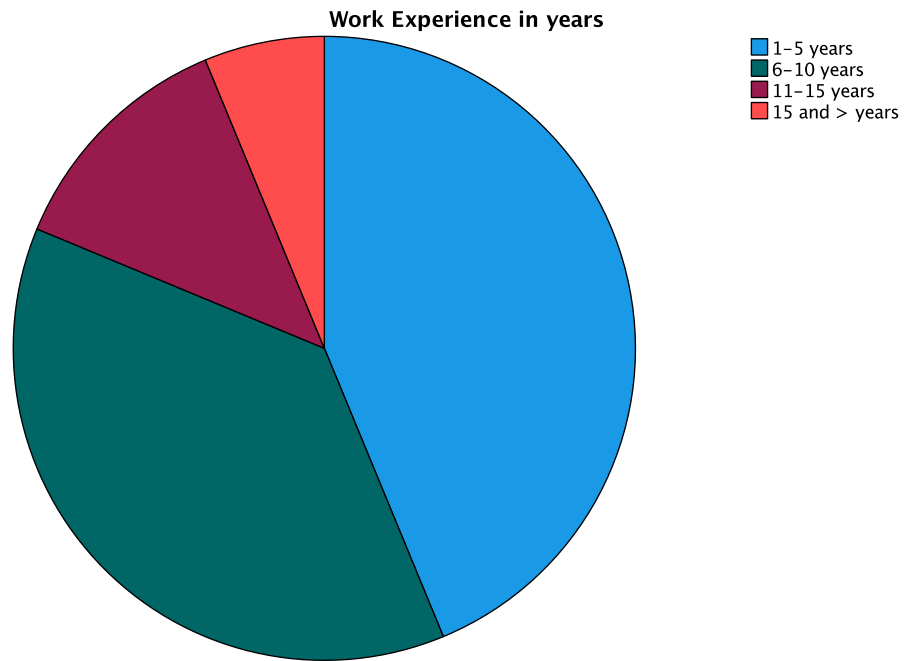
Missing System	6	7.0		
Total	86	100.0		

Work Experience in Years					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-5 years	35	40.7	43.8	43.8
	6-10 years	30	34.9	37.5	81.3
	11-15 years	10	11.6	12.5	93.8
	15 years and above	5	5.8	6.3	
	Total	80	93.0		100.0
	Missing System	6	7.0		
Total		86	100.0		

Level of Education					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Certificate	20	23.3	25.0	25.0
	Diploma	35	40.7	43.8	68.8
	Bachelor's Degree	20	23.3	25.0	93.8
	Master's Degree	5	5.8	6.3	100.0
	Total	80	93.0	100.0	
	Missing System	6	7.0		
	Total	86	100.0		

PIE CHART





As per the respondents' age category, more than 50 respondents, i.e. (68.75%), were between the ages of 18-40 years. This shows that most of the EPSE line managers are

adult. The following higher numbers of 20 (25.00%) participants were senior staff (41-60), and the remaining 5 (6.25%) participants were above the age of 60 years.

As shown in Table 4 above, most participants with 65 (80.25%) work experience fall under relatively longer service years between 1-10 years. The following 10 (26.4%) participants' work experience was from 7 to 10 years. Moreover, 10 (12.5%) respondents were equally covered from the 10-15 work experience category. Finally, the work experience of a small proportion was found less than 50 years and above 50 years of service are 5 (6.25%).

When we look at the education qualification of participants, 35 (43.75) of them are Diploma holders. Thereby, 20 (25.00%) participants have a Bachelor's Degree. The rest, i.e., 2 (6.25%) sample have Master's Degree. This implies that the sample population in the study have a better educational background and the majority of line managers in EPSE are holders of Diploma and Degree.

4.4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The primary data collected through questionnaires were analysed quantitatively by using frequency, mean and standard deviation.

Regarding HR devolvement to Line managers, the results obtained from descriptive statistics under Table 5 below show that most respondents' reply was less than expected except for appraising employees' performance. To generalize, the result received under all categories from the survey questionnaire was not encouraging.

Concerning the involvement of Line-managers' level of participation in attraction activities, selection and hiring of candidates in recruiting new employees is 25 (31.25%). This shows that the response was deficient. 20 (20.5%) participants also replied that they are not involved in candidate selection or facilitation of training programs to employees under their supervision. The majority of the participants, about 10 (12.5%), were not responsible for rewarding high performing employees.

More surprisingly, the only HR practices devolved to line managers in the Post office were performance appraisal. About 15 (18.75%) of respondents replied that the primary responsibility of performance appraisal resides on line managers to a greater extent. 20 (25.0%) of respondents have replied that the devolvement of performance appraisal was

to a moderate extent. The rest 5 (6.25%) did not accept performance appraisal's devolvement and rated to a lower extent.

4.4.1 DEVOLVEMENT OF HR RESPONSIBILITIES TO LINE MANAGERS

According to the survey questionnaire, none of the categories produced particularly encouraging results. However, most respondents to the survey 35 (43.75%), have never been trained to undertake HR-related duties. About 15 (18.75%) of participants got moderate training. Yet, among the sample respondents, 20 (25.0%) answered they had received more training.

As a result of the above analysis, a lack of empowerment of line managers to take on HR-related responsibilities has been apparent at Ethiopian Postal Service.

Table 4: Responses of Line Managers regarding HR Devolvement

Responses of Line Managers regarding HR Responsibility	1	2	3	4	5
1. Involvement in making strategic decision implement and enact HR policies	12.5%	31.3%	25.0%	18.8%	12.5%
2. Involvement in recruitment activities, career planning, occupational health and safety compliance	12.5%	25.0%	18.8%	18.8%	25.0%
3. Responsibility in synthesizing information about emerging issues, for example internal or external developments and event and trends viewed as important to the organization	22.5%	15.0%	25.0%	25.0%	12.5%
4. Received training which enables to undertake HR related responsibilities	18.8%	25.0%	18.8%	25.0%	12.5%
5. Insolvent in conduction performance reviews, promotions decisions, and communicate termination	18.8%	6.3%	37.5%	31.3%	6.3%
6. Intervention in rewarding employees with high performance	12.5%	25.0%	37.5%	12.5%	12.5%
7. Direct responsibility in facilitating in	25.0%	12.5%	31.3%	18.8%	12.5%

job and outside job training to employees					
8. Rank of level of participation in attraction, selection and hiring of candidates	12.5%	31.3%	22.5%	8.8%	25.0%
9. Engagement in recruitment and selection process	31.3%	12.5%	25.0%	18.8%	12.5%



Source: *my own result of the survey 2021*

As per the EPSE HR strategy, introduced in the 2016, the proportion of HR specialists to the total employees was found very low i.e. 3.75%. Although most previous studies agreed that lower HR specialists' proportion have more significant opportunity for the devolvement of HR, the above results showed that EPSE did not utilize those opportunities for devolvement.

Generally, from the above result, we can say that HRM devolvement in EPSE is low.

4.4.2 EMPLOYEES' COMMITMENT

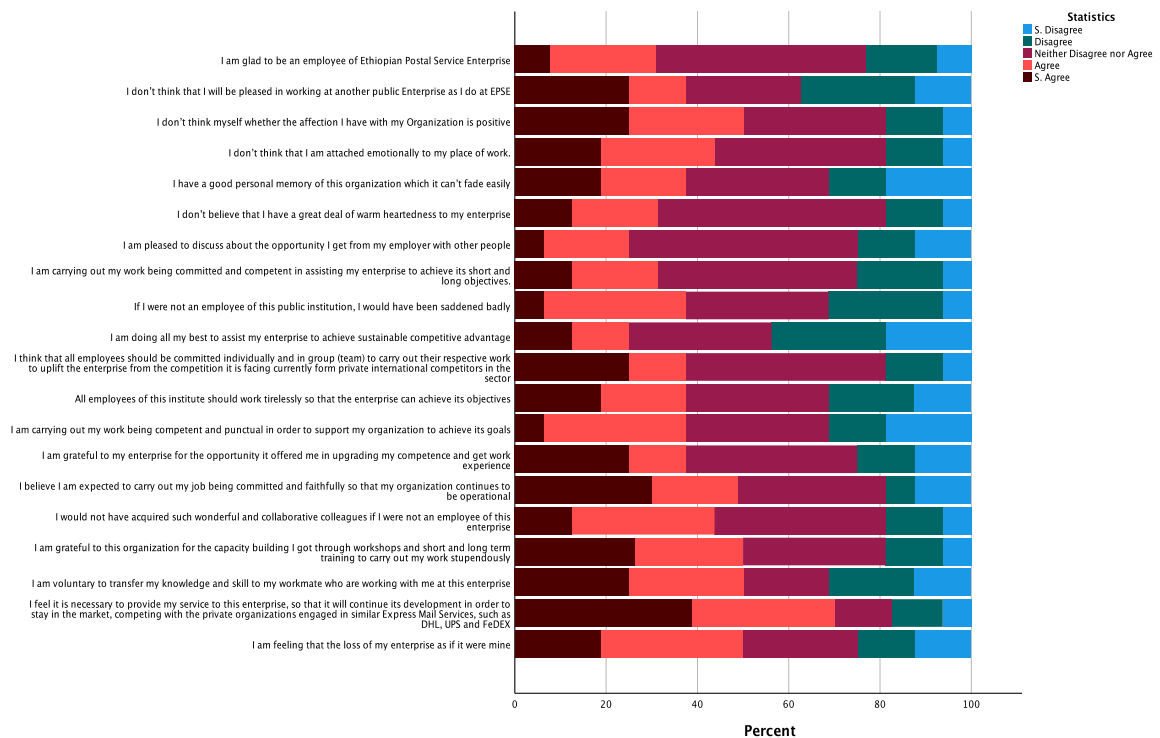
The existence of strategic human resource management practices in the Post office are also be tested by the level of employee commitment (Schuler and Walker, 1990). The study measured the level of EPSE line managers' commitment as follows:-

Table 5: Line-mangers response regarding Employees' Commitment

Responses of Line Managers regarding Employees' Commitment	E	D	C	B	A
1. I am feeling that the loss of my enterprise as if it were mine.	12.5%	12.5%	25.0%	31.3%	18.8%
2. I feel it is necessary to provide my service to this enterprise, so that it will continue its development in order to stay in the market, competing with the private organizations engaged in similar Mail Services, such as DHL, UPS and FedEx	6.3%	11.3%	12.5%	31.3%	38.8%
3. I am voluntary to transfer my knowledge and skill to my workmates who are working with me at this enterprise	12.5%	18.8%	18.8%	25.0%	25.0%
4. I am grateful to this organization for the capacity building I got through workshops and short and long term training to carry out my work stupendously	6.3%	12.5%	31.3%	23.8%	26.3%
5. I would not have acquired such wonderful and collaborative colleagues if I were not an employee of this enterprise	6.3%	12.5%	37.5%	31.3%	12.5%
6. I believe I am expected to carry out my job being committed and faithfully so that my organization continues to be	12.5%	6.3%	32.5%	18.8%	30.0%

operational					
7. I am grateful to my enterprise for the opportunity it offered me in upgrading my competence and get work experience	12.5%	12.5%	37.5%	12.5%	25.0%
8. I am carrying out my work being competent and punctual in order to support my organization to achieve its goals	18.8%	12.5%	31.3%	31.3%	6.3%
9. All employees of this institute should work tirelessly, so that the enterprise can achieve its objectives	12.5%	18.8%	31.3%	18.8%	18.8%
10. I think that all employees should be committed individually and in group (team) to carry out their respective work to uplift the enterprise from the competition it is facing currently from private international competitors in the sector (market).	6.3%	12.5%	43.8%	12.5%	25.0%
11. I am doing all my best to assist my enterprise to achieve sustainable competitive advantage	18.8%	25.0%	31.3%	12.5%	12.5%
12. If I were not an employee of this public institution, I would have been saddened badly	6.3%	25.0%	31.3%	31.3%	6.3%
13. I am carrying out my work being committed and competent in assisting my enterprise to achieve its short and long term goals (objectives).	6.3%	18.8%	43.8%	18.8%	12.5%
14. I am pleased to discuss about the opportunity I get from my employer enterprise with other people	12.5%	12.5%	50.0%	18.8%	6.3%
15. I feel it is necessary to provide my service to this enterprise, so that it will continue its development in order to stay in the market, competing with the private organizations engaged in	6.3%	12.5%	50.0%	18.8%	12.5%

similar Mail Services, such as DHL, UPS and FedEx					
16. I have a good personal memory of this organization which it can't fade easily	18.8%	12.5%	31.3%	18.8%	18.8%
17. I don't think that I am attached emotionally to my place of work.	6.3%	12.5%	37.5%	25.0%	18.8%
18 I don't think myself whether the affection I have to my Organization is positive	6.3%	12.5%	31.3%	25.0%	25.0%
19. I don't think that I will be pleased in working at another public Enterprise as I do at EPSE	12.5%	25.0%	25.0%	12.5%	25.0%
20. I am glad to be an employee of Ethiopian Postal Service Enterprise	7.7%	15.4%	46.2%	23.1%	7.7%



Employees' commitment in the above Table 6 measured participants' perception concerning their attachment to the Post Office. Hence, out of a total of 80 sample participants, 51 (63.75%) of them were very happy to be an employee of EPSE. Whereas 19 (23.75%) were neutral and 10 (12.5%) disagreed, and turnover is high. Most of the participants, 20 (25.5%), 35 (43.75) and 25 (31.25%) in the reversed questions, agreed that they were not motivated by the Post Office for the service they are rendering. This reveals that they have no good sense of connection to the Post Office.

This implies that the above proportions of participants are not committed to the Post Office.

4.5 MEAN DISTRIBUTION OF VARIABLES

The descriptive statistics were used to examine the mean and standard deviation of the answer obtained from respondents in the Devolvment and Employee commitment scale. Thus the mean and standard deviation of the variables are presented as follows in Table 9.

Work out for:

Table 6: Devolvment HR responsibilities to line managers:

Grades	Median	(\bar{X})	Frequency (f)	(X- \bar{X})	(X- \bar{X}) ²	f (X- \bar{X}) ²
10-30	20.0	16.5	1	3.5	12.25	1x12.25
10-25	17.5	16.5	4	1.0	1.0	4x1.0
10-20	15.0	16.5	3	-1.5	2.25	3x1.5
5-30	17.5	16.5	1	1.0	1.0	1x1.0
5-10	12.5	16.5	1	-4.0	16.0	1x16
$\bar{X} = 82.5/5=16.5$						$\sum f (\sum Xi- \bar{X})$

$$\frac{\sum f (\sum Xi- \bar{X})}{n-1} = 40/10-9 = 40/9=4.44$$

$$S^2= 4.44$$

$$\bar{X} = \underline{\underline{16.5}}$$

$$S = \sqrt{4.44} = \underline{\underline{2.10}}$$

Table 7= Employees' Commitment

Grades	Media n	(\bar{X})	frequency (f)	(X- \bar{X})	(X- \bar{X}) ²	f (X- \bar{X}) ²
10-30	20.0	18.21	1	1.79	3.20	(1x3.20)=3.20
10-25	17.5	18.21	4	-0.71	0.50	(4x0.50)=2.0
10-20	15.0	18.21	1	-3.21	10.30	1x10.30=10.30
5-40	22.5	18.21	2	4.29	18.40	(2x18.40)=36.80
5-35	20.0	18.21	1	1.79	3.20	(1x3.20)=3.20
5-30	17.5	18.21	6	-0.71	0.50	(6x0.50)=3.0
5-25	15.0	18.21	4	-3.21	10.30	(4x10.30)=41.20
$\bar{X} = 127.5/7=18.21$						$\sum f (\sum Xi- \bar{X})$

$$\frac{\sum f (\sum Xi- \bar{X})}{n-1} = 99.70/19-1 = 99.70/18 = 5.53$$

$$S^2= 5.53$$

$$\bar{X} = \underline{\underline{18.21}}$$

$$S = \sqrt{5.54} = \underline{\underline{2.35}}$$

Table 8: Mean Distribution of Variables

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Devovement of Line managers	80	5.00	30 .00	16.5	2.10
Valid N (list wise) Total	80	5.00	30.00	16.5	2.10
Employees' commitment	80	5.00	40.00	18.21	2.35
Organizational commitment	80			18.21	2.35

Source: my own result of the survey 2021

Kothari (2004) has been used for the mean score measurement description of participants. Accordingly, a Mean score of less than 16.5 is described as a low mean score between 5 and 30. It is described as moderate on a five-point scale.

The average answer of Line managers concerning their involvement in HR practices in the Ethiopian Post office has the lowest mean score value of 16.5 (Std. Dev., 2.10) on a five-point scale. Moreover, the results from providing training for line managers to undertake HR-related responsibilities are low. This shows that most candidates' hiring and selection activities above Standard (Level) 5 are carried out centrally by the HR department located at the Main Post Office. The manager of the Addis Ababa Region Post office as well as the Arada Zone post office are empowered to employ post clerks, postmen, post motorists and contract workers below level 5.

Generally, the organizational commitment level in EPSE was found to be in average, that is 18.21 (Std. Dev., 2.35). This implies that the results for organizational commitment were found moderate. The result from organizational commitment implied that other factors made the result averaged, which gives other researchers a chance to carry out further research.

Moreover, the level of employee commitment in the Post office was not found to be satisfactory. Therefore, it is recommended that the Post office should design a new HR strategy.

4.6 INTERVIEW RESULT

The study used semi-structured interviews for collecting primary data from interviewees. For this purpose, three HR managers were selected from the Main Post Office (Headquarters of the Ethiopian post office), Addis Ababa Region Post Office and Arada Zone Post Office to answer 10 questions prepared by the researcher. Accordingly, the interview results were reviewed in connection with the two research questions of Integration of HR and Business Strategy and consistency of HR practices between each other.

4.6.1 INTEGRATION OF HR AND BUSINESS STRATEGY

The study has adopted Schuler and Jacksons (1987) evaluation criterion for assessing the HR integration practice of the Post office. The interview's result revealed that Ethiopian Postal Service has HR Strategy prepared for 5 years, which was realized in 2016, duly prepared by the Ethiopian Management Institute. The mentioned HR strategy enables the EPSE to integrate its HR strategy with the cooperate business. It became evident that HR responsibilities were devolved to line managers as per the HR initiative.

Though the EPSE comprises 7 Region Post offices and 32 Zone Post offices, the integration process implemented between the HR strategy and business strategy was extraordinary. This integration of the HR and business strategies enables employees to heighten their job satisfaction and job security. It was said that the underlined assumption behind this integration process revealed between the HR strategy and Business strategy is acceptable.

The best-fit approach is perceived in vertical integration between the HR strategy and Business strategy. The Post office is improving its service delivery system by implementing three strategies in order to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

The post office also applied the best-practice approach, which enables the coordination work carried out horizontally among the different operational divisions (departments). The Post office is one of the public enterprises which is accountable to the Federal Public Enterprise Corporation, but its day to day activity is managed by the Ministry of Transport and Communication Board.

As per the result of the interview and document review, it can be concluded that EPSE has a well-organized written HR strategy, which enables the strategic HRM connects corporate-level strategy and HRM tightly integrating HR with the business.

To sum up, according to the above-obtained results, it is likely to say EPSE meet the vertical integration of HR strategy with the corporate Business strategy of the Post office to a greater extent. Moreover, the vertical integration helped the Post office integrate the HR strategy horizontally with other operational (divisions) strategies, namely EMS, Financial, Parcel local and foreign reception, and forwarding shared common objectives with the corporate strategy.

4.6.2 CONSISTENCY OF HRM PRACTICES

Consistency of HRM practices is the most relevant indicator of strategic human resource management practices in an organization. This is mainly because individual HR practices have a limited ability to generate competitive advantage in isolation of other synergetic practices.

In this study, the consistency of human resource management practices in EPSE was assessed based on (Baron and Kreps, 2005) aspects of internal consistency. The interview guideline questions were developed in such a way as to show the existing practices followed by the Ethiopian Postal Service concerning the consistency of its policy and practices.

According to the interview result, HR activities by nature have a precedence relationship, i.e. the result of one HR practice can serve as an input for other HR types of practices. For instance, the result of the performance appraisal process in EPSE serves as criteria in the hiring and selection process and promotion and in doing so, this system applies equally to employees holding other positions.

The Post Office has encountered consistency problems in connecting the performance appraisal with compensation and reward management, though the compensation package of the post office is not contingent on individual performance. Despite the above analysis of the consistency of HRM practices/ activities/ between each other, the Post office employees are expecting more consistency concerning the organization's strategy and policies.

The HR managers of the 7 Regions and 32 zones post offices have an autonomous authority to recruit and select only post-office clerks, post motorcyclists and contract workers up to level 5, all hiring; selection process of candidates above level 5 is carried out by the Chief Officer of HR Management at the Main Post Office. The post office's policy is prepared every 5 years period. Much variation is not seen concerning the policy and strategy of the organization as it is a non-profitable organization. Its reward system is based on its annual revenue. If the organization becomes profitable, it gives bonuses and incentives to its employees, which is the positive side of the organization. The organization is also consistent in rendering benefits to its employees; for example, every post office employee has an opportunity to learn from grade 1 to high school and continue his/her education until Degree level, where their education cost is covered fully (100 %) by the Post office. When one needs to continue his/her study for Master s/he needs to get prior approval from the management. Health coverage is also 100 % to all employees. This all shows that the organization's policies in education, health, promotion, and other areas are consistent.

The interview result of consistency agrees with (Baron and Kreps, 2005) assumption that an organization should not change its HR policies, practices as well as philosophies frequently to maintain temporal consistency of HR practices. Therefore, the interview's result shows an average level of consistency in the HRM policy of the Post office.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to assess the strategic human resource management practices employed by the Ethiopian Postal Services. Based on the results of descriptive statistics, questionnaires, and interviews, the significant findings below have been identified. In terms of demographics, the majority of males (81.25%) are young workers (37.5%) aged 18-30, also 56.25.3% are Diploma and Degree holders, and 43.75 % have work experience from 11-15 years.

As shown in the descriptive statistics, devolving HR responsibilities to line managers results in a lower mean score value of 16.5 (Std. Deviation, 2.10). Further, line managers who received on-the-job training to fulfill HR-related responsibilities scored below average. In light of this finding, it is incumbent upon the Ethiopian Postal Service to empower line managers with responsibilities formerly held by the Human Resources Manager. The average commitment level of employees in Ethiopian Postal Service was 18.21 (Std. Dev., 2.35). As a result of the integration of HR strategy into the Post office's business strategy, the outcomes were aligned adequately.

As a result of the researcher's review of the interview data concerning the enterprise's policy consistency, the researcher determined that the compliance was average. Ethiopian Postal Service prepares its HR strategy for five years, which explains its consistency. The HR strategy for the next five years will be revised if any changes are required. Consequently, all Ethiopian Postal Service employees are not feeling any inconsistent practices in performing their duties. This demonstrates that the best-fit approach is being used appropriately by the post office's HR strategy and business strategy as well as by different operational divisions and the corporate business of the organization.

In spite of this, the lack of consistency of HR practices at the Post Office is a result of favouritism. In light of this, employees of the Ethiopian Postal Service are not hesitant to accept an offer of a better job with better pay and benefits elsewhere.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

We attempted to assess SHRM practices in Ethiopia Postal Services through four objectives: HR Integration, HR practices consistency, Devolution of HR responsibilities to Line Managers, and Employees' commitment to their organization. Post-office has

taken steps to create two-way communications between HR and the business strategy, which manifests itself as an interest of its HR staff. Additionally, due to severe competition in the market, the Postal Service must upgrade the skills and knowledge of its line managers when managing the employees they supervise. Consequently, the integration of HR strategy with business (operational) departments needs much work to ensure job satisfaction and job security for its employees.

In the business and corporate world, HR responsibilities are progressively delegated to line managers. In this sense, line managers should have more power and responsibilities. It is also necessary to incorporate line managers' opinions into HRM's decision-making. Participant employees generally showed a high level of commitment to their employer, on average. It follows from the study that every EPSE's line manager was found to be committed and motivated to carry out their jobs efficiently and effectively to meet the enterprise's objectives.

Furthermore, according to the findings above, EPS has adopted SHRM practices moderately. Therefore, these suggestions will reduce employee turnover and absenteeism for the EPS.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

While the Ethiopian Postal Service's HR and business strategies are in harmony, still there are areas that need to be improved. Hence, the internal fit (alignment) between HR and business strategy should be revised so that operations practice outputs can be inputs to another division's operational activities. It is imperative that Ethiopian Postal Service's reward and compensation practices emphasize employee self-initiative and commitment so that employees work together to achieve the enterprise's short-term and long-term goals. EPS should provide its HR specialists with opportunities so that they can participate in HR-related international and local conferences where work experiences can be shared and technologies transferred.

It is recommended that a uniform work of operations should be introduced in order to resolve the EPS's inconsistency issue concerning HRM practices across 7 region post offices, 32 zone post offices. A frequent evaluation must be conducted to ensure the post offices of those regions and zones work together in harmony and centrally since they are located far apart.

It is important for the Post office's HR department to focus on finding the best candidate for the right position during recruitment and selection activities. Since incompetence, a lack of morale, and self-initiation were cited as gaps during the study, newly recruited employees should fill them. It is imperative that line managers are empowered to carry out more HR duties since they are considered the link between employees and HR. As such, EPS should conduct a survey to identify any gaps between the services it offers and the needs of its customers in order to make appropriate corrections.

The study showed that EPS's employees are less committed to their organization due to job insecurity and job satisfaction. It is therefore recommended that the Ethiopian Postal Service give salary increases to its employees so that there is a decline in turnover and absenteeism.

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Appendix- I Interview Guideline Questions

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

MASTER'S OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

INTERVIEW GUIDELINE QUESTIONS FOR HR INTERGRATION AND CONSISTENCY

1. Do you presume that business and HR issues influence each other and in turn influence corporate and business unit strategies? If your answer is yes, to what extent?
2. Does the HR manager engage directly in planning a human resource strategy for recruiting and selecting the best employees for the right place? If your answer is yes, to what extent?
3. It is stated that an organization's HR policies must be consistent to each other. It is also called best-fit approach. Hence, Best-fit can be perceived in terms of vertical integration between business and HR strategies? To what extent is HR and Business strategies connected at your Enterprise?
4. Do you believe your enterprise has HR strategy which creates best employees who are enjoying a high level of satisfaction and job security, who form a work force ready to achieve the firm's business goals?
5. Although, strategic integration between business strategy and human resource strategy is desirable, it has not been easy task. Do you agree or disagree with the above statement? If you agree what makes it desirable?
6. The 'best practice' highlights the relationship between 'sets' of good HR practices and organizational performance, mostly defined in terms of employee commitment and satisfaction. Do you think HR practices at your Enterprise are translated in a way employees become satisfied in what they are doing and feel that their job is secured?
7. Do your HR department regularly checks with other functional departments to identify if an organization training needs and support those departmental managers in carrying out their respective duty as part of their core activities? If you say yes, to what extent?
8. Has your HR department ever changed its HR policies, which are the formal rules and guidelines that businesses put in place with regard: equal employment opportunities policy, employee classification, overtime compensation, vacation policies, holidays, sick days and personal leave for (mourning, jury duty and voting etc..), for the last five years? If your reply is yes how do you rate its consistency?
9. Do you believe that there is deep rooted discrimination at your enterprise-regarding ensuring equal employment opportunities, harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression- age,

disability, nationality origin or any other characteristics? If your answer is yes to what degree?

10. Do you think your enterprises' HR activities that include recruitment, hiring and firing as well as administration of health benefits, associated with the practice of providing consistent employee training and development, are fully integrated each other? How do you rate its consistency with regard to single and team of employees?

Appendix- II Questionnaire

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

MASTER'S OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY LINE-MANAGERS OF EPSE'S MAIN OFFICE, ARADA BRANCH OFFICE AND ARAT KILO BRANCH OFFICE

Researcher: Tadesse Gebremariam;

Contact Tel. No.: +251-911546004;

E-mail: tadessegebremariamhagos@gmail.com

Research Topic: Assessment of Strategic Human Resource Management Practices: The case of Ethiopian Postal Service Enterprise.

Dear Respondents,

I am a graduate student at Addis Ababa College of Business and Economics School of Commerce, actually conducting a research for the completion of my Master's Degree in Human Resource Management. The aim of this questionnaire is to value the overall Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) practices of Ethiopian Postal Service Enterprise. I would like to know that the information that you will give me will be used only for academic aim. Nobody will have access to the data. The support I will get from you all in filling this questionnaire will be vital for the completion of this research. Hence, I ask you all kindly to answer every question provided in this questionnaire. Last but not least, I would like to verbalize my heartfelt thanks for your time, willingness, and perseverance you have devoted to complete the questionnaire.

General Information:

- It's not necessary to write your name,
- Please mark "X" on the box you think it is appropriate.
- The questionnaire has **three** parts. Please, write your answer on the provided blank for **Part III** questions of the questionnaire.

**Part I – Respondents Background Information (Please mark (X)
on the box)**

1. Gender.

Male

Female

2. Age:

18- 30 yrs.

31- 40 yrs.

41- 50 yrs.

51- 60 yrs.

Over 61 yrs.

3. Which Department do you work in the EPSE?

Human Resource

Finance

Marketing

Other (specify) _____

4. How many years have you worked at EPSE?

1-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years 15 years and above

5. Please indicate your position at the EPSE

Manager

Supervisor

Line manager

Employee

6. Your education background:

Certificate

Degree

Diploma

Master's

Part II – Devolvement of HR manager’s responsibilities to Line Manager

You are kindly requested to rate the extent to which you are involved in the Human Resource Management (HRM) responsibilities below based on the 5-scale Likert scale 1 to 5.

Key:

- 1) 1- Strongly disagree
- 2) D- Disagree
- 3) D- Average
- 4) B- Agree
- 5) A- Strongly agree

Item No.	SHRM Dimension	SCALE				
		1	2	3	4	5
	Devolvement of HR responsibilities to Line Managers					
1	Your level of engagement in recruitment and selection process at EPSE?					
2	Assign a rank of your level of participation in attraction, selection and hiring of candidates?					
3	Your direct responsibility in facilitating in job and outside job training to employees?					
4	Your intervention in rewarding employees who have scored high performance point?					
5	Your involvement in conducting performance reviews, make promotion decisions and communicate terminations					
6	How often did you receive training which enables you to undertake HR related responsibilities?					

7	Your responsibility in synthesizing information about emerging issues, for example internal or external developments and events and trends viewed as important to the organization?					
8	Your involvement in recruitment activities, career planning, occupational health and safety compliance?					
9	Your participation in conducting performance reviews, make promotion decisions and communicate terminations.					
10	Your level of involvement in making strategic decision, implement and enact HR policies?					

Part III – Level of Employees’ Commitment

You are kindly requested to mark “X” in the box provided here below in conformity with 5 scales Likert 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree.

Key:

- 1) E- Very low
- 2) D- Low
- 3) D- Average
- 4) B- High
- 5) A- Very high

Item No.	SHRM Dimension	SCALE				
	Employees’ Commitment	E	D	C	B	A
1	I am glad to be an employee of Ethiopian Postal Service Enterprise.					
2	I am feeling that the loss of my enterprise as if it were mine.					
3	I don’t think that I will be pleased in working at another public Enterprise as I do at EPSE.					
4	I don’t think myself whether the affection I have with my Organization is positive.					
5	I don’t think that I am attached emotionally to my place of work.					
6	I have a good personal memory of this organization which it can’t fade easily.					
7	I don’t believe that I have a great deal of warm heartedness to my enterprise.					
8	I am pleased to discuss about the opportunity I get from my employer with other people.					
9	I am carrying out my work being committed and competent in assisting my enterprise to achieve its short and long objectives.					
10	If I were not an employee of this public institution, I would have been saddened badly.					
11	I am doing all my best to assist my enterprise to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.					

12	I think that all employees should be committed individually and in group (team) to carry out their respective work to uplift the enterprise from the competition it is facing currently from private international competitors in the sector.					
13	All employees of this institute should work tirelessly so that the enterprise can achieve its objectives.					
14	I am carrying out my work being competent and punctual in order to support my organization to achieve its goals.					
15	I am grateful to my enterprise for the opportunity it offered me in upgrading my competence and get work experience					
16	I believe I am expected to carry out my job being committed and faithfully so that my organization continues to be operational.					
17	I would not have acquired such wonderful and collaborative colleagues if I were not an employee of this enterprise.					
18	I am grateful to this organization for the capacity building I got through workshops and short and long term training to carry out my work stupendously..					
19	I am voluntary to transfer my knowledge and skill to my workmate who are working with me at this enterprise.					
20	I feel it is necessary to provide my service to this enterprise, so that it will continue its development in order to stay in the market, competing with the private organizations engaged in similar Express Mail Services, such as DHL, UPS and FeDEX.					

Comments or any additional information/suggestion to be included, if any

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Part IV – Open-ended Questions

1. Do you think that there are other areas of HRM responsibilities that you are directly involved in regarding questions of devolvement of HR responsibilities to Line managers?

2. If your answer is negative for the above (No. 1) open ended question, what are the factors that prevent you from being involved in such HRM Practices?

3. Any other comment regarding the overall HR practices of the Ethiopian Postal Service Enterprise.

Thank you a lot!

**Appendix III- Letter issued from the Addis Ababa University
School of Commerce**



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የንግድ ሥራ ት/ቤት

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
College of Business and Economics (CoBE)
SCHOOL OF COMMERCE**

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አዲስ አበባ ኢትዮጵያ
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

**To: Ethiopian Posta Services Enterprise Human Resource
Administration Sector
Addis Ababa**

The Addis Ababa University School of Commerce currently runs five Masters level programs and one Doctoral Program: Human Resource Management (MA), Project Management (MA), Marketing Management (MA), Supply Chain and Logistics Management (MA), Business Leadership (MA, PhD) In addition to this, the School is also Preparing itself to launch some more expedient Programs very soon.

As an immediate and direct stakeholder to this socioeconomically pragmatic move, we would like you to cooperate with us by way of assisting our students to conduct academic researches and case analyses in your organization. As such, we kindly request your esteemed organization to provide student **Tadesse Gebremariam Hagos IDNo GSE/2244/11** with information pertaining to **Assessment of HRM Practices in Ethiopian Posta Services Enterprise**. A copy of the paper produced may be provided to you if so demanded.

Thanking for your earnest Cooperation, we remain

Sincerely Yours

Dr. Fasilahun M. Mulugeta
 BAIS Department Head

**Appendix IV: A letter issued from Ethiopian Postal Services Enterprise
Human Resource Management's Management**

የኢትዮጵያ ፖስታ አገልግሎት ድርጅት



ETHIOPIAN POSTAL SERVICE ENTERPRISE

ቀን /Date 11 2013

18 JUN 2021

ቁጥር/ Ref No 004/13/2/7/08

በአዲስ አበባ የኒቨርስቲ በቢዝነስና ኢኮኖሚክስ ኮሌጅ

ለንግድ ስራ ትምህርት ቤት

አዲስ አበባ

ጉዳዩ:- በድርጅታችን በኩል የተደረገውን ትብብር መግለፅን ይመለከታል።

የየኒቨርስቲያችሁ ተማሪ የሆኑት አቶ ታደሰ ገ/ማሪያም ሀጎስ የመ.ቁ GSE/2244/11 የመመሪያ ጥናታቸውን በድርጅታችን የሰው ሀብት አስተዳደር ላይ ለመስራት የሚፈልጉ ስለሆነ ለጥናታቸው የሚያግዛቸውን መረጃ በመስጠት ትብብር እንድናደርግላቸው እ.ኤ.አ ዲ.ሴ.ም.በ.ር 8 ቀን 2020 ዓ.ም በቁጥር BAIS/H/180/20 በተባሉ ደብዳቤ መጠየቃችሁ ይታወሳል።

በዚህም መሰረት በድርጅታችን ያለውን የሰው ሀብት አስተዳደርን የሚመለከቱ እና ለጥናታቸው የሚጠቅማቸውን መረጃዎች ሁሉ የሰጠናቸው መሆኑን እንገልጻለን።



ከምላምታ ጋር
የህግ ሀብተሚካሌል
የሰው ሀብት አመራር
ዲፓርትመንት ጅ.ፍ. አፋሪ

ግልባጭ:-

- ✦ ለሰው ሀብት ስራ አመራር ዲፓርትመንት
 - ✦ ለአቶ ታደሰ ገ/ማሪያም ሀጎስ
- አዲስ አበባ**