



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

**THE EFFECT OF JOB DESIGN ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN
THE CASE OF ETHIOPIAN ELECTRIC UTILITY (EEU) HEAD
OFFICE**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ADDIS
ABABA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF COMMERCE IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

MAY, 2025

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

Declaration

This thesis, entitled "The Effect of Job Design on Employee Performance in the Case of Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office," is my original work and has not been submitted to any other institution for a degree or certification. It is being presented to the School of Commerce, College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a Master of Human Resource Management.

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Approval

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Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Almighty God for granting me the strength, wisdom, and perseverance to complete this research. My sincere appreciation goes to my advisor, Dr. Worku Mekonnen, for his invaluable guidance, constructive feedback, and unwavering support throughout the development of this thesis. His expertise and encouragement were instrumental in shaping this work. I am also grateful to the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office management and employees for their cooperation in providing the necessary data and insights for this study. Without their participation, this research would not have been possible.

My heartfelt thanks go to Addis Ababa University, School of Commerce, for providing me with the academic foundation and resources to undertake this research. I extend my gratitude to my professors and colleagues for their intellectual contributions and moral support. Special thanks to my family for their endless love, patience, and encouragement during this challenging yet rewarding journey. Lastly, I acknowledge all friends and individuals who, directly or indirectly, contributed to the completion of this thesis.

Meskerem Sahil

May 2025

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Acronyms

EEU	Ethiopian Electric Utility
HR	Human Resource
HRM	Human Resource Management
JCM	Job Characteristics Model
JDS	Job Diagnostic Survey
KSAOs	Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other characteristics
OCBs	Organizational Citizenship Behaviors
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

Abstract

This study investigates the effect of job design on employee performance at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office, analyzing five key job characteristics: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Using Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model (JCM) as the theoretical framework, the research is quantitative in its nature and explanatory in its design. A total of 211 responses were collected, yielding an 88.65% response rate. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regressions to assess the relationship between job design elements and employee performance. The findings demonstrate that task significance ($\beta = 0.367$, $p < 0.001$) has the strongest positive influence on performance, followed by autonomy ($\beta = 0.278$) and task identity ($\beta = 0.284$). While skill variety ($\beta = 0.204$) and feedback ($\beta = 0.229$) also contribute to performance, their effects are comparatively weaker. The regression model explains 97.3% of the variance in employee performance, highlighting the substantial role of job design in enhancing productivity. Based on these results, the study concludes that optimizing job design—particularly by emphasizing meaningful work, granting employees greater autonomy, and ensuring clear task ownership—can significantly improve performance at EEU. Practical recommendations include aligning job roles with organizational objectives, implementing flexible work processes, restructuring workflows to enhance task completion, and establishing more effective feedback systems. These insights provide valuable guidance for public-sector organizations seeking to boost employee engagement and operational efficiency through strategic job redesign.

Keywords: *Job design, employee performance, Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU)*

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research proposal titled: "Effects of Job Design on Employee Job Performance in The Case of Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office." It includes the background of the research, the statement of the problem, research objectives (general and specific), and research questions, significance of the study, scope, and organization of the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

Designing a job is a highly effective way of improving employee job performance. An employee's responsibilities and goals are best suited to an individual's capabilities and such designed jobs foster employee engagement and productivity. Multiple studies have been done regarding the relationship between job design and performance and they note positively correlated outcomes in these parameters. Employees are greatly impacted by the structure of work tasks, in other words, work design. Parker (2014) defines work design as the content, structure and organization of tasks encompassing job autonomy and workload, which affect employees' health, well-being and engagement. It is cited in literature that these health characteristics strongly predict employees' wellness and productivity (Parker, Morgeson, & Johns, 2017). Because of this impact, work design has gained substantial interest from researchers.

The concept of job design traces back to the early industrial revolution but gained momentum in the 20th century through Fredrick Taylor and subsequent contributors who underscored its role in employee productivity. However, the potential of job design has often been underappreciated by managers, leading to suboptimal productivity levels in many businesses. According to Bates (2018), Harter (2022), and Baumruk (2018), a well-structured job design fosters employee involvement in work-related activities, which enhances both individual and organizational performance. Scholars like Bakker et al. (2012), Hackman and Oldham (1980), and Parker and Wall (1998) have emphasized that well-designed jobs contribute to employee welfare, commitment, and performance. Recently, research has increasingly focused on understanding how job characteristics affect employee well-being, satisfaction, and commitment while also assessing their potential to reduce job stress. Together, these characteristics shape what is known as job design (Tims et al., 2014).

Grant and Parker (2019) describe job design as the structuring and modification of tasks and roles, which subsequently influence individual, group, and organizational outcomes. Armstrong (2019) further defines job design as the specification of tasks, methods, and job relationships to fulfill technological and organizational requirements and to meet the social and personal needs of employees. Effective job design begins with analyzing task requirements and incorporating motivating factors such as autonomy, responsibility, discretion, and self-control (Armstrong, 2019). Chaneta (2011) emphasizes that job design should maximize specialization, reduce the time and skill level required, minimize training demands, maximize machine utilization, and limit flexibility in task performance.

The approach to work design can significantly affect how employees view their work and, in turn, their productivity. Managers and researchers have grown interested in how job design influences employee attitudes and behavior. Historical examples, such as Taylor's scientific management approach (1911) and Ford's assembly line innovation (1914), demonstrated how structural changes in work can significantly impact motivation and productivity. In the current knowledge-based economy, successful organizations tend to harness and develop employees' technical skills through effective job design strategies. These strategies drive employee performance and ultimately contribute to organizational success. Organizational performance relies on a strategic human resource management approach that attracts, develops, and retains committed employees (Al-Ahmadi, 2019). Staff involvement depends on work design that encourages motivation, and Armstrong (2021) identifies the job characteristics model as a useful framework for structuring jobs. Hackman and Oldham (2015, 1980) highlight three essential psychological states—responsibility, knowledge of results, and task meaningfulness—that link job characteristics with employee behavior.

Robbins (2017) argues that job characteristics are critical for determining the suitability of an individual's role and enhancing performance. Hackman and Oldham (1975) identified five key job characteristics that shape work experience: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Each of these contributes uniquely to an employee's engagement and productivity. Research generally supports a positive relationship between job design and employee performance. Al-Ahmadi (2019) observed that job variety and challenges are positively correlated with performance, while Ivancevich (1998) noted that job design can influence both performance and satisfaction. Throughout the 20th century, various job design models emerged, highlighting

the complexity and diversity of the field. This diversity has enriched our understanding but has also led to fragmented knowledge, making it challenging to establish an overarching framework for studying job design.

While job design and employee performance have been extensively studied in developed countries, limited research exists in Ethiopia. This study seeks to address this gap by investigating the effect of job design on employee performance in the Ethiopian context, specifically at Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office. This study aims to provide current insights on job design and employee performance, helping decision-makers and stakeholders make informed decisions. In particular, it addressed the lack of research on job design in Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office.

1.2. Company Profile

The Ethiopian Electric Utility is responsible for the generation, transmission, and distribution of electric power in Ethiopia as a government franchise, serving the entire population of the country. The company's headquarters is located in Addis Ababa and aims to procure bulk power, construct infrastructure, and expand clean energy solutions into remote areas so electricity can become sustainable, reliable, and affordable for all citizens of Ethiopia. The vision of EEU is to be a highly competent utility which fulfills the increasing requirements of the economy of Ethiopia, and its citizens. The company adheres to the core values of safety, customer care, respect, operational excellence, sustainability, innovation, and integrity. EEU ensures the safety and well-being of its employees, customers, and the public. Along with maintaining the accountability of services provided, it places great emphasis towards meeting set targets of customer satisfaction by means of providing efficient and high-quality services. The company fosters an inclusive culture aimed towards employees as well. As such, EEU aims towards targeting enhances service delivery through improvement, financial sustainability, and innovation in technology.

Through various projects and programs, EEU ensures long-term energy accessibility and supports national economic development. The utility also combats sociocultural problems alongside public participation and awareness efforts in the context of corporate social responsibility. For further inquiries, EEU can be contacted via its call center (905) or email (info@ethiopianelectricutility.gov.et). The organization remains committed to powering Ethiopia's growth through dependable and modern electricity services.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Effective job design influences how well an employee performs specific tasks while also considering the success of the organization. Morgeson and Campion (2022) highlight how the structure of job roles directly impacts an organization's productivity, efficiency, and employee satisfaction. Work design, which includes organizing tasks, assigning responsibilities, and outlining work processes, has been regarded as one of the significant factors driving motivation and goal achievement (Parker, 2014). There have been decades of research regarding organization science (Clegg & Spencer, 2017; Fried et al., 2008; Hofmans et al., 2014), but there are still gaps such as the lack of linkage between some job factors and employee performance as well as their general well-being. Providing the groundwork is the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1975, 2015), which highlights the importance of five core dimensions to a person's job: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. These dimensions serve as fundamental motivators for employee satisfaction and motivation. In addition, Emberland and Rundmo (2010) mention that effective job design and employee engagement, resilience, and adaptability are critical in today's global economy which is changing due to technology, workforce diversity, and increasing globalization.

In Ethiopia, public sector organizations like the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU)—a state-owned entity responsible for electricity generation, transmission, and distribution—rely on effective job design to align employee roles with organizational objectives. EEU structures its job roles to balance operational efficiency, safety, and service delivery, ensuring reliable electricity access nationwide. However, the extent to which EEU's job design enhances employee performance remains understudied, particularly in a high-demand sector where workforce productivity directly impacts national development. Poor job design in such critical infrastructure organizations can lead to inefficiencies, employee stress, and reduced job satisfaction (Kelloway & Barling, 1991).

Empirical evidence suggests that job characteristics—such as skill variety, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—enhance employee engagement and commitment (Matula & Uon, 2016; Turgut et al., 2013; Ram & Prabhakar, 2011). However, most studies focus narrowly on task performance, overlooking contextual performance—behaviors that strengthen the organizational

environment, such as teamwork, adaptability, and proactive problem-solving. This gap is particularly relevant in utility sectors like EEU, where coordination among engineers, technicians, and administrative staff is crucial for operational success. Additionally, while job design research is well-documented in developed economies, few studies explore its application in public sector organizations in developing countries, where bureaucratic constraints, resource limitations, and high service demand create unique workforce challenges. Without context-specific insights, organizations like EEU may struggle to optimize job roles effectively, risking inefficiencies and employee disengagement.

This study addresses these gaps by examining how job design influences employee performance at EEU's Head Office in Addis Ababa. Specifically, it investigates the impact of core job characteristics—skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—on both task and contextual performance. By doing so, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of how job design affects productivity, employee well-being, and service quality in a critical public utility. The findings offers actionable recommendations for EEU's management to refine job structures, enhance workforce efficiency, and improve service delivery—contributing to Ethiopia's broader energy sector goals.

1.4. Research Objectives

1.4.1. General Objective

The main objective of the study was to assess the Effects of Job Design on Employee Job Performance in The Case of Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office and to identify the specific job design factors that most significantly influence employee performance within the organization.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- To determine the effect of skill variety on employee performance at Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office.
- To assess the influence of task identity on employee performance at Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office.

- ☛ To examine the impact of task significance on employee performance at Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office.
- ☛ To evaluate the effect of autonomy on employee performance at Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office.
- ☛ To explore the impact of feedback on employee performance at Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office.

1.5. Research Questions

In order to achieve the objectives of the study the researcher used the following major research questions.

- ☛ What effect does skill variety have on employee performance in Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office?
- ☛ To what extent does task identity influence employee performance in Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office?
- ☛ How does task significance impact employee performance in Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office?
- ☛ How does autonomy affect employee performance in Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office?
- ☛ What effect does feedback have on employee performance in Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office?

1.6. Significance of the Study

This study is significant for human resource (HR) practitioners, organizational leaders, and policymakers at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) and similar public sector institutions, as it will provide evidence-based insights on how job design influences employee performance. By examining key job characteristics—such as skill variety, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—the findings will offer practical guidelines for redesigning roles to enhance productivity, motivation, and job satisfaction in a critical infrastructure sector. For EEU’s HR managers, this research will help in restructuring job roles to align with operational demands, ensuring that employees are effectively engaged while maintaining service reliability. The study will also highlight the importance of contextual performance (e.g., teamwork, adaptability) in a

utility setting, where collaboration across technical and administrative roles is essential for smooth operations.

Policymakers and public sector administrators can use the findings to develop workforce strategies that improve efficiency and reduce turnover in state-owned enterprises. Given EEU's role in national development, optimizing job design can contribute to better service delivery and energy accessibility across Ethiopia. For HR consultants and researchers, this study will expand knowledge on job design in developing-country public utilities, a relatively understudied area. It will provide new insights into how socio-organizational factors (e.g., bureaucratic constraints, resource limitations) interact with job characteristics to affect performance. Academics can build on this research to explore broader applications in similar sectors. Finally, this study will address gaps in existing literature by examining both task and contextual performance within a real-world organizational setting, using EEU as a case study. Future researchers can leverage these findings to conduct comparative studies across different public sector institutions, further enriching the discourse on job design and employee performance in Ethiopia and beyond.

1.7. Scope of the Study

This study was delimited by its geographical, conceptual, and methodological scope. Geographically, the research will be conducted at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office in Addis Ababa. As the central administrative and operational hub of Ethiopia's power sector, the Head Office represents an ideal setting to examine how job design influences employee performance in a large public utility organization. The findings from this location provide insights that could be applicable to other regional EEU offices across the country. Conceptually, the research investigated the relationship between job design and employee performance by focusing on five core job characteristics: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. These independent variables were examined in relation to their impact on both task performance (measured through work output and efficiency) and contextual performance (including teamwork, adaptability, and organizational citizenship behaviors).

Methodologically, this research employed a quantitative approach using descriptive and explanatory research designs. Primary data was collected through structured surveys administered to employees at EEU's Head Office. The survey instrument measured perceptions of job

characteristics and self-reported performance indicators. Statistical analysis techniques, including correlation and regression analysis, were used to examine the relationships between variables. This methodological approach allowed for systematic measurement of how different job design elements contribute to employee performance outcomes in this specific organizational context.

1.8. Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter includes the introduction, research context, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives, scope, and significance of the study and organization of the paper. Chapter Two provides a comprehensive analysis of existing literature, including definitions of terms, theoretical and empirical analyses, and the study's conceptual framework. Chapter Three describes the research methodology, including the research approach and data collection and analysis methods. Chapter Four analyzes and presents the study's findings, addressing each research question and demonstrating how these results contribute to the study's main purpose. Finally, Chapter Five summarizes the research findings, present conclusions, and offer recommendations based on the findings. The thesis concludes with references and appendices containing survey questionnaires and other supporting documents.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a literature review on the effect of job design on employee performance, drawing on studies from a range of researchers. It primarily discusses the concepts of job design and employee performance, theoretical foundations, empirical evidence, and the conceptual framework relevant to this research.

2.2. Definitions of Job Design

According to Armstrong (2019), job design involves structuring a job to meet organizational needs and employee requirements, covering tasks, relationships, and responsibilities. Hussain Ali and Aroosiya (2010) further describe job design as the structuring of tasks, responsibilities, and duties into a cohesive work unit. Armstrong (2019) also emphasized the role of task requirements and motivational characteristics—responsibility, autonomy, self-control, and discretion—as foundational elements in job design. Modern approaches to job design have their roots in early scientific management, dating back to the early 1900s. The pioneers of scientific management, such as Gilbreth (1911) and Taylor (1947), systematically examined jobs, identifying job design as crucial to improving efficiency and effectiveness.

Job design is considered a structured approach aimed at minimizing job dissatisfaction. The scientific management perspective, notably advanced by Fredrick Taylor, underscored the importance of defining tasks, duties, and responsibilities. Schermerhorn et al. (2015) noted that the most effective job design meets both organizational performance goals and employees' needs for job satisfaction. They outlined alternative job design approaches, including job simplification, job rotation, job enlargement, and job enrichment. The Job Characteristics Model (JCM), developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980), has influenced much of the current understanding of job design. The model posits that five core job characteristics—skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—can foster intrinsic motivation, leading to higher job performance.

2.2.1. Definition of Job Characteristics

Hackman and Oldham (1975) defined job characteristics as elements of job design that create three critical psychological states: meaningfulness, responsibility, and knowledge of results. These psychological states are influenced by core job characteristics—skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—which ultimately lead to improved job outcomes (Kulik et al., 1987).

2.2.2. Dimensions of Job Characteristics

The Job Characteristics Model (JCM), developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976), identifies five core dimensions that significantly influence job design and employee motivation. These dimensions are:

- ☛ **Skill Variety:** This dimension refers to the degree to which a job requires a range of different skills and talents. A higher level of skill variety can enhance employee motivation, particularly for those who thrive on diverse tasks and challenges. Research indicates that jobs with greater skill variety not only boost motivation but also lead to higher job satisfaction and improved performance (Huang et al., 2019).
- ☛ **Task Identity:** Task identity is defined as the extent to which a job allows an employee to complete an entire piece of work, from beginning to end, resulting in a visible outcome. Jobs that enable employees to see the tangible results of their efforts tend to foster a sense of ownership and fulfillment, which can enhance overall job satisfaction (Zhou et al., 2020).
- ☛ **Autonomy:** Autonomy refers to the level of freedom and discretion employees have in scheduling their tasks and making decisions regarding work processes. Greater autonomy is associated with a stronger sense of responsibility and empowerment among employees, which can lead to increased job satisfaction and performance. Recent studies have shown that autonomy is a critical factor in fostering innovation and enhancing employee engagement (Gagné & Deci, 2019).

- ☛ **Task Significance:** This dimension assesses the degree to which a job has a meaningful impact on others, whether within the organization or in society at large. When employees perceive that their work significantly contributes to the well-being of others, they are likely to experience greater motivation and job satisfaction. Research has demonstrated that higher perceived task significance is linked to better job performance and employee retention (Grant, 2017).
- ☛ **Feedback:** Feedback pertains to the availability of clear and direct information regarding performance from the job itself. Effective feedback mechanisms enable employees to understand their performance levels and areas for improvement, which can enhance motivation and learning. Studies indicate that timely and constructive feedback is essential for fostering employee development and job satisfaction (Kluger & DeNisi, 2019). By understanding these dimensions, organizations can better design jobs that enhance employee motivation and performance, ultimately leading to improved organizational outcomes.

2.2.3. Job Characteristics Model and Importance of Job Characteristics

Hackman and Oldham's (1975) The Job Characteristics Model is based on the idea that when employees undergo the critical psychological processes of perception of meaningfulness, responsibility, and awareness of the consequences of their work, they are motivated and perform satisfactorily, leading to overall job satisfaction. This model emphasizes some of the intrinsic characteristics of the job as the primary reason for poor performance and low satisfaction levels. Autonomy and performance feedback as job resources serve as the major components of the design because they nurture the employees' work-related growth, manage the demands of the job, and increase motivation (Demerouti et al. 2021; Wegman et al. 2018). Such resources indeed enhance intrinsic motivation for the employees, as well as job satisfaction and performance (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2021).

Effective job design positively impacts organizational performance by fostering intrinsic motivation, which contributes to higher job performance (George & Zhou, 2021; Tierney & Rancher, 2022; Demerouti, 2021). Core job characteristics, including autonomy, feedback, skill variety, task significance, and task identity, play a fundamental role in determining employee performance and engagement (Oldham & Cummings, 1996; Tierney & Rancher, 2022). Shifts in

work contexts have influenced job characteristics, particularly as workplaces have evolved to include more cognitive and technology-driven roles (Wegman et al., 2018). The Job Characteristics Model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how job design meets basic human needs in the workplace (McGregor, 1960). Early theories, such as Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene Theory, underscored the significance of intrinsic work factors like recognition and achievement, which, despite later criticism, emphasized the motivational potential of job enrichment (Herzberg et al., 1959; Herzberg, 1966; Locke & Henne, 1986). The dynamic nature of job characteristics has evolved over time (Wegman et al., 2018). In today's work environments, which often feature cognitive and technologically intensive roles, job satisfaction remains a challenge. Despite advancements in job design and management practices, contemporary jobs are not necessarily more satisfying than those in earlier decades (Ryan & Ployhart, 2014; Wegman et al., 2018).

2.2.4. Employees' Job Performance

Different researchers have investigated aspects of job performance. The achievement of specific goals in an organization is deemed a job performance by execution of tasks and responsibilities (Bailey et al., 2022). As an example, Putterill and Rohrer (2020) referred to it as a worker's output measured in terms of the quantity and quality of accepted output in a manufacturing firm over a given timeframe. Hence, performance encompasses both personal and group efforts towards achievement of organizational goals (Bartram et al., 2023). Job performance describes actions or behaviors that directly enhance efficiency of an organization. Such actions include both positive and negative behaviors that support the organizational goals (Smith & Brown, 2021). Based on the traditional taxonomy proposed by Motowidlo (2019), job performance includes two main functions – task and contextual performance – whereby task performance refers to specific job duties one is hired to do and contextual performance includes actions that maintain the interrelations between people in work and social environment (Lee & Johnson, 2022).

In a high-performance work environment, employees may experience increased pressure to perform, which can lead to burnout if not properly managed (Wegman et al., 2016; Chan et al., 2022). Research has shown that adequate support can mitigate the adverse effects of performance pressure, helping employees to maintain productivity and well-being (Mitchell et al., 2019; Lee et

al., 2022). Job satisfaction is also crucial to job performance, often linked to employee engagement and organizational commitment (Siengthai & Pila-Ngarm, 2016; Scott & Williams, 2023). Satisfied and engaged employees are more likely to stay committed, exhibit higher motivation, and contribute positively to organizational goals (Chen et al., 2021). Higher job satisfaction and motivation contribute significantly to productivity and decrease turnover (Mason & White, 2023).

In contemporary research, job performance is viewed as encompassing both "in-role" and "extra-role" behaviors, including organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) like helping colleagues and contributing positively to the organization's environment (Organ, 1998; Johnson et al., 2023). Job performance, therefore, depends on an individual's capability, motivation, and engagement in organizational citizenship behaviors (Sarmiento et al., 2017; Jex & Britt, 2014). Organizations increasingly use job satisfaction as an indicator of job performance, noting that satisfied employees are often more productive and demonstrate greater workplace commitment (Pang & Lu, 2018; Zhang & Chen, 2022). Several factors influence job satisfaction and, by extension, job performance, such as work environment, work motivation, and organizational culture (Kainkan, 2015; Taylor & Grant, 2023).

For this study, job performance is defined in line with Motowidlo's (2019) model, which distinguishes between task performance (job-specific tasks) and contextual performance (behaviors supporting the work environment) (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2022). Specifically, task performance focuses on job requirements as outlined in formal job descriptions and the extent to which these tasks contribute to organizational goals (Mawoli & Babandako, 2021). Recent research encourages exploring additional variables influencing job performance across different industries, particularly focusing on the relationship between job design and task performance (Bailey et al., 2022; Chen & Zhao, 2023). According to Motowidlo's (2019) model, task performance involves direct job responsibilities, whereas contextual performance contributes to organizational effectiveness through its impact on workplace dynamics (Smith & Williams, 2023). This study specifically focuses on the relationship between job design and employees' task performance.

2.2.4.1. Task Performance

According to Borman and Motowidlo (1993) task performance is defined as is “the proficiency with which job incumbents perform activities that are formally recognized as part of their job; activities that make a contribution to the enterprise’s technical core either immediately by using enforcing a part of its technological manner, or indirectly by way of offering it with needed materials or services” (Borman and Motowidlo, 1993). Borman and Motowidlo (1993) agree with that behavior or sports that make contributions to the technical middle, directly or not directly, should be blanketed in task performance. Two central features in this definition of task performance are activities that are formally recognized as part of the job and contribute to the technical core. When employees experience misfit at work, they may also experience stress, discomfort, or incompatibility with tasks and colleagues. These feelings can manifest in low performance a lack of employee engagement and ultimately organizational deviance (De Clercq, Bouckenoghe, Raja, & Matsyborska, 2014), burnout (Dyląg et al., 2013;Rosales, Fung, & Lee, 2021;Van den Broeck, Schreurs, Guenter, & van Emmerik, 2015;Wacker, Schorlemmer, & Fischer, 2021), and turnover intentions (Islam et al., 2019;Zhang et al., 2015). Similarly, Murphy (1989) defines task performance as the accomplishment of tasks within an incumbent’s job description. Campbell et al. (1993) and Campbell (1990) also includes elements related to task performance in their taxonomies of job performance (e.g., core technical proficiency, general soldiering proficiency, job-specific task proficiency, and non-job-specific task proficiency).

2.2.4.2. The Conceptual Foundation of Job Performance

Job performance is one in all the foremost vital criterion measures within the industrial and organizational psychology research (Borman 2018; Borman and Motowidlo 1993, Borman and Motowidlo 1997; Organ 1997). This is based on the fact that job performance has invariably been rumored as a major indicator of organizational performance, although it has been conceptualized in many different ways (Organ 1997).Jex and Britt (2014), Motowidlo (2019), stated that performance is oftentimes assessed in terms of financial figures and through the combination of expected behavior- and task-related aspects. In addition to this, Schmitt and Chan (1998) classified worker's job performance into “can-do” and “will-do”. The previous refers to the KSAOs that a private house and should have in performing a certain job. “Will-do” reflects the incentive level of companion level in performing his or her work. Further, Cardy and Dobbins in (Williams 2022) conceptualized job overall performance as work consequences and job- relevant behaviors. Work outcomes deal with task performance, like quality or quality of work done, whereas job-relevant

behavior refers to the behavioral aspects helpful in achieving task performance (Williams 2022). In other words, job-relevant behaviors offer support in performing task-related matters. Most significantly, job performance measures, which can be supported associate degree definite quantity or a relative judgment, are often generalized to the structural performance as a result of, in total, it reflects the structure performance to a precise extent (Jex and Britt 2014; Sacket et al., 2021; Wall, et al. 2018). The absolute value of the performance is predicated on the target results, like total points from sales or productivity, whereas relative judgments are performance analysis created to support the behavioral-related aspects that are subjective.

Concerning different conceptualizations of job performance, the most issues raised by scholars, like Campbell et al. (1990) and (Borman 2018), is that employees' behaviors at work represent job performance. Historically, job performance is restricted to the core task activities that were based mostly exclusively on job analysis (Campbell 1990; Jex and Britt, 2008). The construct has, however, enlarged into the behavioral aspects connected to the core tasks and alternative behaviors that support the core task performance. Scholars (Borman 2018; Borman and Motowidlo 1993; Campbell, 1990; Jex and Britt 2014; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994) declared that job performance ought to be measured in terms of task performance and discourse performance to completely grasp a holistic conception of the construct. This is often as a result of discourse performance is that the behaviors that support the core task performance in enhancing organizational effectiveness (Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994). In essence, task performance thinks about with behaviors that are needed to complete job tasks, whereas discourse performance is required to safeguard and upgrade the organizational, social and psychological setting within the organization (Jex and Britt, 2008; LePine, et al. 2000; Dyne and Graham 1994; Van Scotter and Motowidlo 1996). Each aspect of performance is crucial to realize organizational objectives (Black and Porter, 1991; Jahangir et al., 2018). Likewise, Vey and Campbell (2018), Fisher and Härtel (2018) declared that in mensuration job performance, it's vital to integrate things on the task, also as discourse performance as a result of them are powerfully connected, and it's tough to differentiate as a result of activity aspects of job performance are terribly subjective. Johnson's (2021) findings unconcealed that task and discourse performance contributed well in predicting overall job performance ratings. Borman and Motowidlo (1997) rumored that once creating overall job performance ratings, supervisors evaluated equally task and discourse performance during which the correlation between these dimensions with the job performance ratings were important.

2.2.4.3. The Relationship between Job Design and Employees Job Performance

Another previous study also reveal there is a link between job design and employee job performance. Zareen, et al (2013) claim that job design positively affects employee performance. Furthermore, they established that an employee's perception is a major determinant in the relationship between job design and employee performance. Al-Ahmadi (2019)also discussed that the nature of the job itself was found positively correlated with performance, which means that satisfaction with the amount of variety and challenge in one's job affects performance. Job significant, feeling critical in the eyes of others, knowing one's competence, and freedom to make decisions are all related to overall performance. In contrast, Ivancevich (1998) suggested that an alternative method of approach to job design will result to improved job performance to satisfaction at the intended level. Clearly, strategy of job design focus in a utmost primary approach on increasing performance.

According to Kahya (2017)andBorman (2018), employee training and job remodeling, the focus is nearly continually on improving task performance. Some argue that job design improves workers' motivation and dedication to work, however on closer examination job design can only contribute to better efficiency within an organization eliminate some health problems. According to, Garg and Rastogi (2021), well-designed jobs can have a positive impact on both employee satisfaction and quality of performance. The perceived job needs, job control and social guide through job design lead to excessive productiveness (Love &Edwards, 2015) as in(Garg and Rastogi 2021)). Likewise, Campion, et al. (2015) recommended that Nature of work has a sizable effect on a worker's performance and attitude. In general, the study conducted byMalkanthi and Ali (2016), Ali and Zia-ur-Rehman (2014) states that job design and employee job performance has a positive and significant relationship. Those findings stated that there is a strong relationship between Job design and Employees' performance.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

In this study, various theories and models are utilized to explain job characteristics and their relationship to employee performance. The Herzberg Two-Factor Theory serves to elucidate the significance of certain job characteristics, which may be considered motivators for employees. The

Job Characteristics Model is the anchor model for this study, as it explains all five job characteristics and their effects on employee performance.

2.3.1. Taylorism (Scientific Management)

The origins of job design and its methodologies can be traced back to scientific management, which emerged in the early 1900s. Pioneering scientific managers, such as Taylor (1947), systematically examined jobs using specific strategies. He proposed that work design could be the most distinctive aspect of scientific management. By adopting a scientific approach to work to enhance efficiency, Taylor argued that ideal jobs consisted of single, highly simplified, and specialized tasks that were repeated throughout the working day, with minimal downtime in between (Campion & Thayer, 1988). Taylor developed these ideas during the Industrial Revolution, which facilitated the automation of many job functions. Employees were often viewed as components of machinery, easily replaceable.

The essential principles of Taylorism include simplification and specialization, as well as the selection and training of employees to ensure a good fit between job demands and employees' abilities. These principles led to a significant increase in efficiency, prompting the adoption of Taylorism in office jobs as well. Today, Taylorism continues to influence the design of both manufacturing and service jobs in many organizations (Parker et al., 2017). Despite its positive impact on productivity, one downside of this mechanistic approach to job design was a decline in employee morale. For instance, at the Midvale Steel plant, where Taylorism was implemented, employees experienced mental and physical fatigue and boredom, which resulted in sabotage and absenteeism (Walke & Guest, 1952). The negative effects of Taylorism ultimately prompted the development of less mechanistic and more motivational work designs, incorporating social and psychological approaches.

2.3.2. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

To understand the design of individual jobs, one fundamental principle introduced by Herzberg et al. (1959) is crucial. Their Two-Factor Theory distinguishes between two types of elements:

motivators, which are intrinsic to the work itself (e.g., fulfillment, recognition, and responsibility), and hygiene factors, which are extrinsic to the work (e.g., work conditions, pay, and supervision). The proposition is that hygiene factors are essential for retaining employees within an organization. According to Herzberg et al. (1959), only a challenging job offers opportunities for achievement, recognition, advancement, and growth, which ultimately motivate personnel. The Two-Factor Theory (also known as the Dual-Factor Theory or Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory) was developed by psychologist Herzberg et al. (1959), who posited that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction exist independently of one another. The theory indicates that certain factors in the workplace contribute to job satisfaction, while different factors lead to job dissatisfaction.

The impetus for job enrichment mainly originated from Frederick Herzberg's work in the 1960s and 1970s, which responded to the "white-collar woes" and the "blue-collar blues" described by Gooding (1970). This period was characterized by workers reacting to their jobs in various "unproductive ways," such as sabotage, absenteeism, strikes, and turnover, a response seen as partly due to a universal increase in aspirations and capabilities stemming from greater access to education. The core tenet of this theory is that modifying hygiene factors can alleviate dissatisfaction but cannot enhance satisfaction or motivation. Job satisfaction can only be achieved by altering the intrinsic aspects of the job. Research has indicated that working in a motivation-seeking state is generally more productive than working in a hygiene-seeking state, thus making work more enriching by increasing the presence of motivators (Herzberg, 1959).

Several principles have been suggested to enhance job enrichment, including increasing individual accountability, reducing controls on workers, providing employees with whole work units, offering direct feedback to workers rather than only to supervisors, increasing autonomy, discretion, and authority, assigning specialized responsibilities to help workers become professionals, and introducing more challenging tasks (Herzberg, 1968). This approach represented a significant advancement in the study of job design. Rather than merely documenting the harmful effects of simplified jobs, a psychological theory was developed, along with practical suggestions for job redesign. However, while it encouraged research and practice in job design, the theory received limited empirical support (King, 1970; Dunnette et al., 1967; Wall & Stephenson, 1970; Locke & Henne, 1986). For instance, King (1970) argued that the dichotomy of the two factors could be a practical artifact. Additionally, Herzberg's theory assumes that everyone seeks self-actualization and motivation, suggesting that if individuals are denied hygiene

factors, they will become "mentally unhealthy." Hulin and Blood (1968) contend that this assumption overlooks the importance of individual differences in responses to job redesign. Borman (2018) reported that well-designed jobs serve two significant objectives: challenging and motivating workers while ensuring that the required work is completed efficiently and effectively. The following principles should be implemented as suggested by Herzberg (1968): reduce controls on employees, increase autonomy, enhance discretion and freedom, provide direct feedback to workers instead of only to supervisors, and introduce more complex responsibilities. Jobs that are poorly designed are likely to be frustrating, boring, and discouraging to workers. According to this theory, only a job that presents challenges has the potential for recognition, accomplishment, growth, and advancement, which will inspire work.

2.3.3. Theory of Socio-Technical Systems

The theory of Socio-Technical Systems, developed by Trist and Bamforth (1951), posits that job design should consider both the technical and social systems of an organization. The argument is that job designs based solely on technical systems, without considering social aspects, are suboptimal. Similar to Lawler et al. (1996), the underlying premise of this theory suggests that job designs should align with the features of the organization and, equally importantly, with the organization's environment. Trist (1981) stated that the theory of socio-technical systems significantly transformed how organizations and work are designed. Within the framework of this theory, self-managed teams are considered fundamental organizational designs (Lawler, Mohrman et al., 1996; Appelbaum and Batt, 1994; Pasmore, 1988; Trist, 1981; Macy and Izumi, 1993). The socio-technical systems approach focuses on organizations and groups as units of analysis. While it adopts a systems perspective, it assumes that analysis will occur at multiple levels.

According to Cummings and Worley (1997), theories of socio-technical systems have been applied in various ways in multiple countries with varying degrees of success. Proponents of the socio-technical approach emphasize that both the technical and social systems must be optimized together. A balanced approach that overlooks the social and psychological needs of workers, while prioritizing new trends and technologies, undermines interactions and activities that are crucial for aligning technology with workers. The theorists argue that simple and repetitive work destabilizes performance, motivation, and commitment. At the workgroup level, excessive supervision and competition can lead to petty grievances, stress, low morale, and scapegoating. Rather than

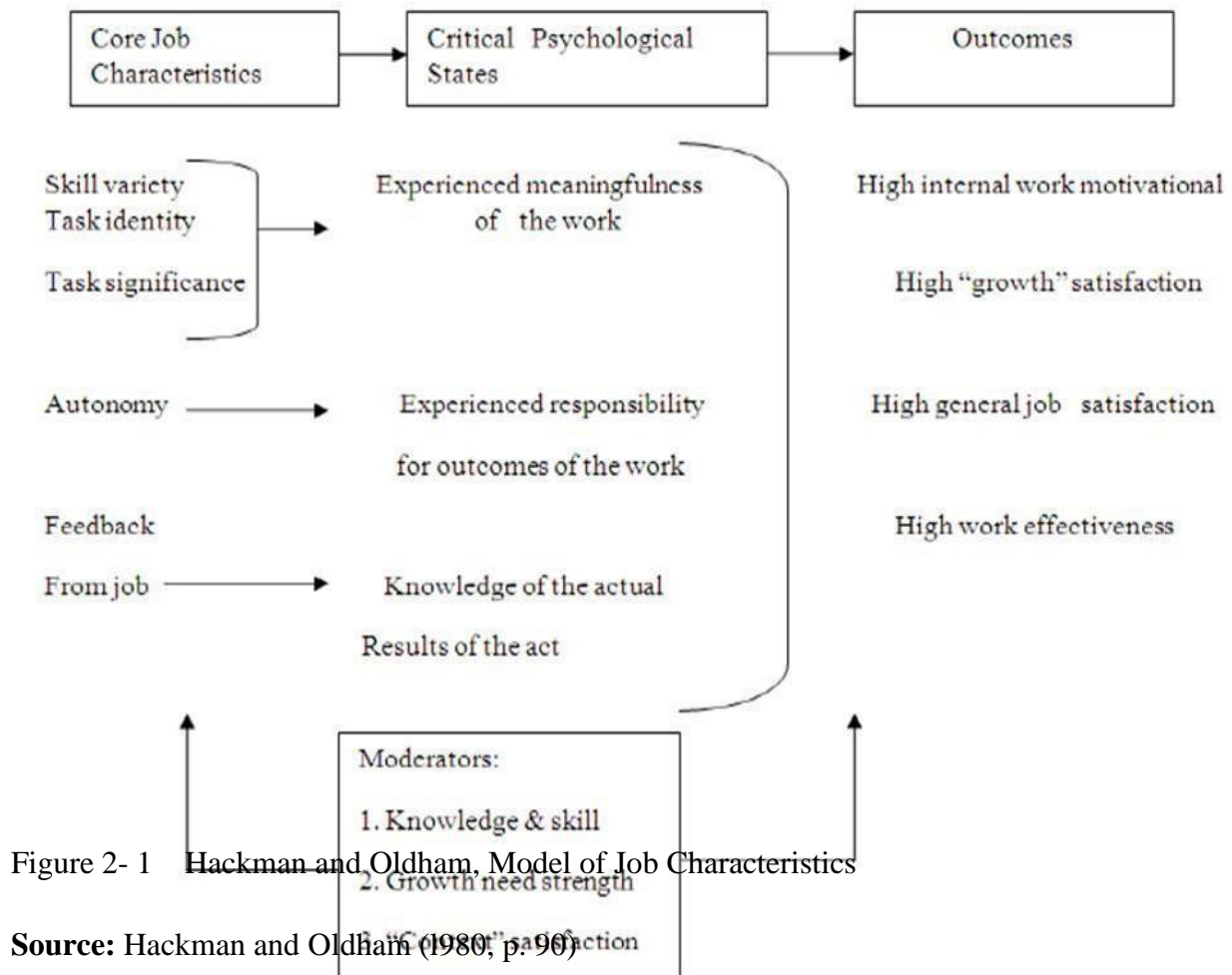
adopting a rational system perspective that assumes standardizing work demands will improve performance, socio-technical theorists focus on the social and psychological aspects of work and the characteristics needed for efficient job performance. In situations of significant uncertainty, managers should prioritize enriching job elements over simplifying work into easily trainable tasks that allow for quick employee replacement. They should mentor employees for diverse responsibilities and enable them to be self-managing, placing them in roles beyond mere task execution.

2.3.4. The Job Characteristics Model (JCM)

The Job Characteristics Model (JCM), formulated by Hackman and Oldham in 1974, is one of the earliest in-depth examinations of motivational design and offers insight into the underlying components of motivation and well-structured jobs. The authors outlined five elements which together make a job more appealing to employees: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. This model serves as the basis of the current research. “According to Hackman and Oldham (1975), the model describes five core job dimensions that provide a set of organizational outcomes that are highly valued by the individual and that result from positive conducted processes in the organization.” The five job dimensions mentioned have a positive impact and promote motivation. They enable an active participation in three psychological states: the employee experiences a sense of meaning regarding his or her work, assumes personal responsibility for the outcomes of his or her work-related endeavors, and knowledge about the results of his or her work activities.

The job characteristics of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback do not have uniform effects. As noted by Sandra et al. (2012), the greater the number of these characteristics a job possesses, the more motivating the job will be. The JCM predicts that individuals with such jobs will experience high job satisfaction and exhibit increased productivity, leading to higher performance levels. This model is particularly useful for this study, as it encompasses and explains the key independent variables: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Within this model, the primary outputs—motivation and satisfaction—are utilized to inform the mediating variable in the study, as well as the dependent

variable, which is employee performance, illustrating the interdependence of these factors. Figure 2-1 below illustrates the JCM.



2.4. Empirical Studies

2.4.1. Job Characteristics and Job Performance

Past research has demonstrated a relationship between job design and employee performance. Jobs characterized by higher complexity, including autonomy, skill variety, task identity, significance, and feedback, positively impact employee performance (Oldham and Cummings, 1996; Morgeson et al., 2021). When jobs are complex, individuals performing these jobs are likely to be excited and increasingly interested in engaging with well-structured work activities. Consequently, employees are more likely to focus their attention and effort on their jobs, making them more

insightful and willing to experiment with new ideas and consider diverse alternatives. This ultimately leads to improved job performance (Oldham and Cummings, 1996; Shalley and Gilson, 2018). Therefore, successful job design innovation has positive implications for employees' policies and attitudes, such as job satisfaction, commitment, involvement, motivation, perceptions of outcomes, uneasiness, and stress (Humphrey et al., 2017) and overall job performance (Morgeson and Humphrey, 2021).

Another study conducted by Eswar (2013) on public service employees in Malaysia examined the relationship between job characteristics and job performance. It found that the four dimensions—task significance, task identity, autonomy, and feedback—positively and significantly affected task performance, while skill variety did not influence task performance. According to a study by Phoomphong (2008) in a university's Faculty of Agriculture, there was a significant positive relationship between overall job characteristics and job performance. Additionally, skill variety, autonomy, feedback, and task identity showed a significant positive relationship, whereas task significance did not influence job performance. A study by Onukwube and Iyagba (2011) among construction professionals in Nigeria investigated the relationship between task performance and job characteristics, finding a significant positive relationship. Furthermore, a study conducted in China among professional nurses indicated a significant relationship between the core dimensions of job characteristics and employee performance (Yuxiu et al., 2011).

As the five core dimensions (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback) are enhanced, three psychological conditions within employees (experienced meaningfulness, responsibility, and knowledge of the results of activities) are triggered. Wegman et al. (2016) affirmed that these job dimensions, which contribute to positive psychological states, serve as indicators for job enrichment and argued that there is a positive connection between job characteristics and employee performance and commitment.

2.4.2. Skill Variety and Job Performance

According to Hackman and Oldham (1975), skill variety defines the degree to which a job requires a range of tasks to be performed which works towards a single, set goal, calling for the different

skills and abilities of the worker. In his study, Johari and Yahya (2016) found that there is a direct relationship between skill variety and job performance of public servants. Evelyne et al. (2018) corroborated this finding by conducting a study in 25 private firms in Kenya with 210 respondents and showed that skill variety positively and significantly affects employee performance, proving that job design impacts performance. Garg and Rastogi (2021) highlighted that skill variety is the degree to which different skills and abilities are utilized. It is one of the other factors in the Job design Model (JCM) concerning the meaningfulness of the employees' tasks. A high skill variety job is often wide in scope (Hackman and Oldham, 1975).

Spector (1986) and Janssen (2021) mentioned that multifaceted assignments are strongly correlated with a customer's job satisfaction, internal motivation, and productivity. In other works, skill variety refers to the different elements of specific tasks in a defined job. A greater variety of tasks leads to improved understanding (Pentland, 2019). Younger employees depict a strong willingness to search and undertake specific activities that will allow them to accomplish their objectives (Feldman & Thomas, 2012). Task related attribute such as importance of the work and variety of skills needed tends to have low absenteeism (Taber and Taylor, 1990). Meta-analytic studies examining changes in the nature of work suggest that with the expansion of the knowledge economy, since the mid-1970s there has been a marked increase in the number of positions needing greater skill variety (Wegman et al., 2018). There is evidence that skill variety positively and significantly contributes towards job performance. There is also a feeling of achievement attached to it, such as nurses of advanced skills having better chances of promotions. On the other hand, without performance evaluation, there is no impact on job performance. The study also found that these nurses need training to improve their skills and work performance. This study was based on the health sector and did not extend its findings to other sectors or industries.

2.4.3. Task Identity and Job Performance

Task identity is achieved when an employee has the opportunity to complete a whole piece of work within their job, ensuring that they feel a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction upon seeing an observable outcome. This connection fosters a deeper engagement with the job (Hackman and

Oldham, 1975). According to Kahn (1990), individuals who can both contribute to and receive feedback from job tasks that resonate with their self-perception are more engaged in their work. A study conducted in the health sector of Kenya by Maru et al. (2013) demonstrated a significant positive effect of task identity on the performance of nurses. This study utilized an explanatory survey with a sample size of 320 nurses from Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret. Most respondents affirmed the use of various complex skills in their jobs. Another study by Malkanthi and Ali (2016) in the Ampara district of Sri Lanka found a significant positive relationship between task identity and employee performance at the NGO. This study revealed that dimensions of job design—such as skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—all showed moderate significance.

Evelyn et al. (2018) also found that task identity positively correlates with employee performance in private firms in Kenya. Choge et al. (2014) explored the effects of task identity on employee motivation and identified a significant relationship between task identity and motivation, suggesting that motivated employees tend to perform better. Locke and Edwin (2008) asserted that task identity refers to the extent to which a job requires the completion of a meaningful task. If a task lacks identity, employees may lack motivation to engage with it fully. Gatauwa (2014) noted that a lack of awareness in task identity is a significant challenge in performance, which may relate to inadequate recognition of task identity by employees. Overall, task identity is considered a crucial component of job design that positively impacts output and overall employee performance (Humphrey et al., 2017).

2.4.4. Task Significance and Job Performance

Task significance is a vital aspect of job characteristics that contributes to employee performance. The motivation to achieve high performance increases when employees perceive their work as having a significant impact on others, both inside and outside the organization (Hirschfeld et al., 2022). According to research by Johari and Yahya (2016), task significance significantly influences work involvement, which subsequently impacts the job performance of public servants. Task significance refers to the extent to which employees perceive their work as significantly affecting others (Allan, 2017). This concept was first recognized as a core feature of job characteristics theory (Hackman & Oldham, 2015) and continues to play a significant role in shaping employees' work experiences (Wegman et al., 2018).

Dodd and Ganster (1996) summarized that task significance is one of the job characteristics that have not emerged as strong predictors of outcomes. Two major meta-analyses in job design literature indicate weak relationships between task significance and both objective and subjective measures of job performance (Fried and Ferris, 1987; Humphrey et al., 2017). Studies identifying a relationship between task significance and overall job performance have faced at least two significant barriers. First, many studies have relied on cross-sectional designs, failing to rule out the possibility that task significance may be a consequence rather than a cause of job performance (e.g., Mathieu et al., 1993). Second, relatively few experimental studies have manipulated task significance alongside other job characteristics and social cues, making it difficult to isolate task significance as a critical factor affecting job performance (Dodd and Ganster, 1996; Parker and Wall, 1998).

Evelyn et al. (2018) found that while task significance is positively related to employee performance, it does not significantly impact employees in private firms in Kenya. This suggests that task significance may not be a determining factor in job performance for these employees. Further empirical research on task significance is necessary due to its importance within and outside organizations. Employees are likely to feel more engaged in their jobs and organizations when they understand that their work can influence the lives of others, whether within the organization or in the broader community. Given the complexity of many businesses and the diverse abilities and knowledge required, interdependence in organizations has significantly increased (Allvin & Movitz, 2017; Grant & Parker, 2019; Wegman et al., 2018). A study conducted by Grant (2008) explored the effects of task significance on job performance, relational mechanisms, and boundary conditions. The findings indicated that the methodological limitations, including the reliance on correlation designs and confounded manipulations, have hindered researchers from accurately assessing the contributory impact of task significance on job performance.

2.4.5. Autonomy and Job Performance

The theory posits that without sufficient freedom for self-decision, an incumbent cannot succeed (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). High levels of autonomy do not rely on instructions from a

supervisor or job procedures; rather, they depend on the individual's effort and decisions (Hackman and Oldham, 2015). Furthermore, autonomy provides a sense of feasible gain, enabling employees to take action (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Job autonomy refers to the extent to which employees are given discretion over when, where, and how to carry out their tasks (Grant & Parker, 2019). A significant amount of research has demonstrated the positive effects of job autonomy on employees' affective and motivational outcomes, such as job satisfaction, employee engagement, organizational commitment, and intrinsic work motivation (Chung-Yan, 2010; Humphrey et al., 2017; Wegman et al., 2018). It also positively influences behavioral outcomes, including task performance and innovative work behaviors (Carpini et al., 2017; De Spiegelaere et al., 2016). Although limited, existing research specifically in the public sector suggests that job autonomy significantly influences absenteeism (Kivimäki et al., 1997; North et al., 1993).

Some studies have shown that job autonomy imparts meaning to work (Wegman et al., 2018) and allows employees to experience competence and self-control, thus promoting psychological well-being (Nielsen et al., 2017) and, in turn, improved physical health. Job autonomy enables individuals to minimize conflicts arising from competing work and family responsibilities (Korunka and Kubicek, 2017). As working hours increase and two-income households become more common, job autonomy may be crucial for balancing family and work (Wegman et al., 2018). Based on the logic of the job demand-resource model, it is believed that providing employees with resources such as job autonomy can increase job satisfaction by fostering work-family balance (Chen et al., 2017). Tepper (2021) found a significant interaction effect in two studies involving participants from a wide range of jobs, including those with low levels of autonomy, such as construction workers and clerical staff (Vidal, 2013). Furthermore, average levels of job autonomy have increased in recent decades (Wegman et al., 2018). There are differences between older studies with significant findings (Fields et al., 2000; Tepper, 2021) and more recent studies with non-significant findings (Fischer et al., 2014).

Research by Hassan (2014), Krasman (2013), and Bontis et al. (2011) indicates that employees in high-autonomy jobs are more likely to develop positive feelings at work, resulting in desirable behaviors. Arfanda (2011) found that job autonomy has a strong positive influence on job performance, demonstrating a positive relationship between autonomy and employee job performance. According to Maru et al. (2013), a study conducted in the health sector in Kenya showed that autonomy significantly and positively affected the performance of nurses. This study

used an explanatory survey with a sample size of 320 nurses drawn from Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret. The majority of respondents acknowledged the use of several complex skills to perform their jobs.

Another study by Tungkiatsilp (2013) in the restaurant industry showed that job autonomy was significantly positively related to job performance, while skill variety, task identity, task significance, and feedback were not significantly related to job performance. Evelyne et al. (2018) also found that autonomy has a significant and positive relationship with employee performance among private firms in Kenya. A study conducted by Adebayo and Ezeanya (2011) concerning autonomy, task identity, and job performance involved seventy-nine (79) nurses and utilized a correlational design. The field study aimed to find the relationship between the two variables, revealing that when employees enjoy increased levels of independence, they are more likely to meet job demands, thereby reducing burnout. Furthermore, employees with greater control over their jobs can better manage the demands placed upon them (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993). This study focused on nurses in the health sector and did not extend to other industries.

According to the logic of the job demand-resource model, providing employees with resources such as job autonomy may increase job satisfaction by fostering work-family balance (Chen et al., 2017). In light of rising working hours and the prevalence of two-income families, job autonomy is becoming increasingly necessary for managing family and work (Wegman et al., 2018). This aligns with the modern era of career development, which emphasizes the importance of the employee (Kost et al., 2020). Saragih (2011) conducted research on the effect of autonomy on job outcomes, such as satisfaction, employee performance, and work stress, with self-efficacy as the intervening variable. The descriptive study aimed to establish the impact of work satisfaction on work performance and work stress on work performance. The results indicated that the model estimated in this research was acceptable based on its goodness-of-fit index score. The operational relationship showed that autonomy in the job was significantly related to work satisfaction and work performance, but not significantly related to work stress. These findings are important for supervisors in their role of designing work, as they indicate that work satisfaction is significantly related to work performance. However, the study noted an insignificant relationship between job autonomy and job performance, suggesting that individual differences may contribute to this insignificance and further research should explore the effects of autonomy and individual differences on performance.

2.4.6. Feedback and Job Performance

The final characteristic is feedback, which pertains to the degree to which completing work activities provides the worker with direct and clear information about the effectiveness of their overall performance (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). Employees receive feedback from the outcomes that result from their job (Aldrich & Martinez, 2021). Job feedback is understood to provide clear information to workers about the value of their output. Individuals who receive information about the effectiveness of their efforts are more likely to report higher levels of engagement. This is because knowledge of work outcomes can enhance job satisfaction and enthusiasm (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). Feedback from work also allows employees to monitor their individual progress toward achieving their goals, providing feedback on their work outputs. According to the research findings of Johari and Yahya (2016), feedback significantly influences work involvement, which in turn impacts the job performance of public servants. Evelyne et al. (2018) also found that feedback has a significant and positive relationship with employee performance among private firms in Kenya. Feedback from work allows employees to monitor their progress toward achieving their goals, providing feedback on their work outputs.

Various scholars have noted that feedback has a minimal but positive influence on both objective and subjective indicators of work output (Humphrey et al., 2017). Nancy and Daniel (2017) indicated that significant improvements can be observed with the immediate impact of both feedback and the workers' ability to structure work, whether independently or in teams. Work-related feedback is positively associated with employee motivation, satisfaction, and performance in practical settings (Geister et al., 2021). Performance evaluation serves as an important tool for employee feedback in management and acts as a means of improving programs (Mausolff, 2018). Effective feedback channels play a vital role in enhancing employee work output (Elkins and Phillips, 2000). Knowledge of job outcomes provides information that can encourage employees to adjust their efforts if they wish to improve performance over time (Hackman and Oldham, 1975). Importantly, employees become more aware of the quality of work expected of them. Bacha (2014), Ghosh et al. (2015), and Krasman (2013) reported that employees who receive feedback on their work are more likely to exhibit positive attitudes and behaviors in the workplace.

A study by Organ et al. (2015) stated that job feedback regarding operational efficiency affects employees' performance. Employees acquire knowledge from the learning that results from their

efforts. Kerr and Jermier (1978) and Organ and Ryun (2020) argued that job feedback is crucial because it occurs instantly and accurately during self-assessment, which fosters intrinsic motivation. If a person commits to work with the hope of success, job feedback serves not only as a reward but also as an opportunity to improve job performance through trial and error.

2.5. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is designed to update and refine existing concepts to reflect changes. In this study, it illustrates the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, demonstrating that the independent variable, job characteristics, directly affects the dependent variable, employee performance. The diagram below illustrates the association between the study variables and their indicators. The independent variables include skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback, while the dependent variable is employee performance. The framework explains the relationships between these variables as follows.

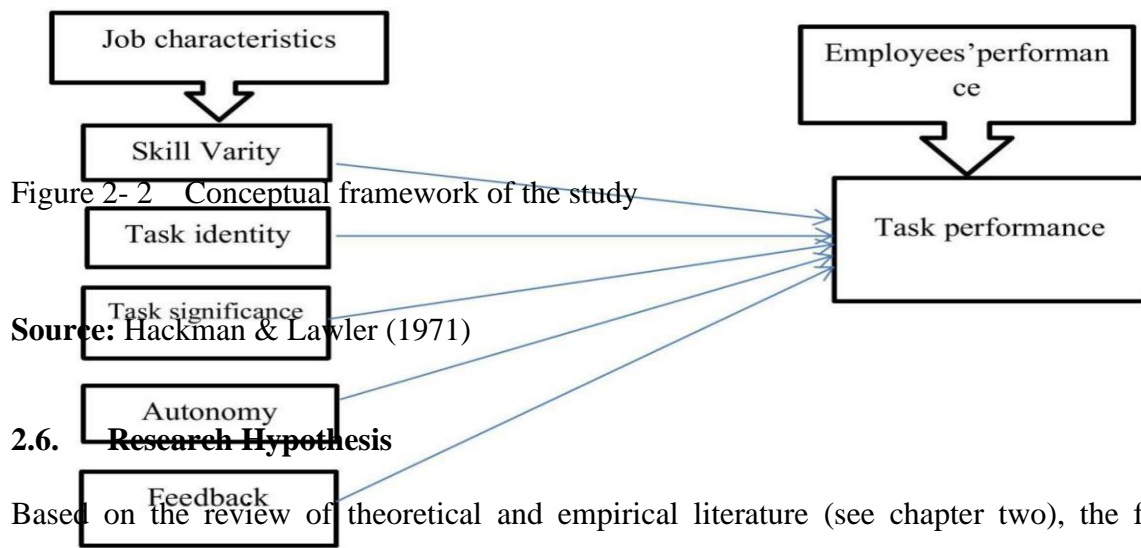


Figure 2- 2 Conceptual framework of the study

Source: Hackman & Lawler (1971)

2.6. Research Hypothesis

Based on the review of theoretical and empirical literature (see chapter two), the following hypotheses are developed to guide the empirical work of the present study:

H1: Skill variety has significantly and positively influences employees' job performance of Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office.

H2: Task identity has significantly and positively influences employees' job performance of Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office.

H3: Task significance has significantly and positively influences employees' job performance of Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office.

H4: Autonomy has significantly and positively influences employees' job performance of Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office.

H5: Job feedback has significantly and positively influences employees' job performance of Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section presents the study area, the research design, sampling techniques, sample size, methods of data collection, sources and types of data and the methodologies that were employed to analyze data.

3.1. General Description of the Study Area

This study is conducted at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office, located within the NIB International Bank Head Office building in Addis Ababa. As visible in satellite imagery, the building is situated in a central business district, providing easy accessibility for employees and stakeholders. The EEU Head Office serves as the strategic and administrative hub for Ethiopia’s national electricity operations, overseeing power distribution, infrastructure development, and regulatory functions. The building’s modern infrastructure supports EEU’s operational needs, housing key departments such as human resources, finance, engineering, and customer service. Its central location facilitates coordination with government agencies, international partners, and regional EEU branches. The surrounding area includes commercial establishments, transport networks, and other institutional offices, making it a vital node in Addis Ababa’s urban landscape. This setting provides an ideal environment to examine job design and employee performance, as the Head Office employs a diverse workforce—from technical engineers to administrative staff—all working under the same organizational policies and physical conditions. The study’s findings will thus reflect the realities of a major public utility’s workplace dynamics in Ethiopia’s capital city.



Figure 3- 1 Head Quarter of Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU)

Source: (Satellite Image)

3.2. Research Design

The research design forms the structural framework of the study, providing a systematic plan for data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2014). To investigate the impact of job design on employee performance at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office, this study employed an explanatory research design. This approach is suitable for establishing causal relationships between job design characteristics (e.g., skill variety, autonomy, task significance) and employee performance metrics, enabling hypothesis testing and statistical validation of theoretical propositions (Bryman, 2016; Saunders et al., 2019). Complementing this, a descriptive survey design was used to capture employees' perceptions of their job roles and evaluate how these design elements influence their productivity (Kothari, 2004). By integrating both explanatory and descriptive methods, the study not only measured the strength of associations between variables but also offered a detailed snapshot of existing job design practices within EEU. This dual-method approach strengthens the validity of findings, providing actionable insights for HR policymakers and organizational leaders to optimize workforce efficiency in a critical public-sector utility.

3.3. Research Approach

This study employed a quantitative research approach to systematically analyze the relationship between job design and employee performance through statistical and computational methods (Given, 2008). A quantitative methodology was particularly suitable for this research, as it allowed for the empirical testing of established theories on how job design influences workplace productivity (Creswell, 2019). The approach focused on collecting measurable data, applying statistical analysis techniques, and drawing objective conclusions about the key factors affecting performance outcomes (Bryman, 2018). Following a pragmatist research philosophy, the study prioritized actionable insights, ensuring that findings contribute to practical improvements in organizational practices (Saunders et al., 2019). Data was gathered through structured surveys and analyzed using quantitative techniques to identify patterns, correlations, and predictive relationships between job design elements and employee performance metrics. This methodological framework enhanced the reliability of the results while maintaining scientific rigor in assessing workforce dynamics.

3.4. Target Population and Sampling Technique

3.4.1. Target Population

Population is a collective term used to describe the total quantity of cases of the type which are the subject of the study. It can consist of objects, people and even events (Walliman, 2011). The target population of the study consisted of 586 permanent employees of EEU Head office employee located in Addis Ababa.

3.4.2. Sampling Technique

The researcher used probability sampling techniques. From the probability sampling, simple random sampling was used for sampling members of the surveyed organization. Simple random sampling is a sampling technique that ensures that each element in the population had an equal chance of being included in the sample. The correct sample size in a study is dependent on the nature of the population and the purpose of the study. Although there are no general rules, the sample size usually depends on the population to be sampled (Walliman, 2011).

3.4.3. Sample size determination

By the time this research is prepared the total number of permanent in EEU head office is 586. The researcher used Yamane's formula (1967), in order to determine the sample size of the population. This formula is reliable to 95% and has only 5% deviation factor.

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

Where: n = Sample size

N = Population size

E = Level of precision or acceptable sampling error (0.05)

$$\text{Sample size (n) } =586/ [1+586(0.05)^2]$$

n=238

3.5. Measurement of Variables

This study employed validated measurement instruments to ensure accurate assessment of key job characteristics and employee performance. Job characteristics—including skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—will be measured using the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980). This survey consists of 15 items, with each job characteristic evaluated through three specific questions. A five-point Likert scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5), was utilized to capture responses. In the first section of the survey, demographic information was gathered, covering factors such as gender, age, education level, and years of work experience. The second section assessed the five core job characteristics as outlined by the JDS: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and job feedback. Each characteristic were measured with precision to examine its contribution to overall job design.

Employee job performance, the dependent variable in this study, was measured in the final section using the Koopmans performance index (Koopmans et al., 2014), also on a five-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). This measurement specifically focused on task performance, providing a robust gauge of how effectively employees meet the demands of their roles. Two groups of variables were central to the analysis. The independent variables—skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback—served as the primary job characteristics under examination. The dependent variable, employee job performance, was the key outcome measured to assess the impact of job design elements. Both independent and dependent variables were consistently measured on a five-point Likert scale to maintain alignment across all data points.

3.5.1. Measurement of Independent Variables

To assess job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback), the study utilized the Job Diagnostic Survey introduced by Hackman and Oldham (1980). The questionnaire for job characteristics consisted 15 items. The adopted questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale. In this section, respondents were asked to rate their

perceptions about their jobs on a scale from 1 to 5. Subsequently, they indicated their level of agreement with several statements ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," assigning scores from 1 to 5, respectively. The perceived degree of job design in an organization was operationalized into five dimensions: Skill Variety, Task Identity, Task Significance, Autonomy, and Feedback (Hackman and Oldham, 2015). The questionnaire evaluated the dimensions of job design and employee job performance, determining the extent to which employees perceive job design. The 15 question items were divided into five factors: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. A five-point Likert scale will be utilized to evaluate responses. The independent variables consist of five dimensions of job characteristics, detailed as follows:

3.5.1.1. Skill Variety

Skill variety refers to the extent to which a job requires a variety of activities that involve different skills and talents (Hackman and Oldham, 2015). To measure skill variety, three questions was adapted from the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980).

3.5.1.2. Task Identity

Task identity is defined as the extent to which a job requires the completion of an identifiable piece of work, meaning the extent to which work has a clear beginning and end, resulting in a tangible outcome (Hackman and Oldham, 2015). To measure task identity, three questions were prepared by adapting the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980).

3.5.1.3. Task Significance

Task significance refers to the extent to which a job affects the lives or work of other people, both within the immediate organization and in the external environment (Hackman and Oldham, 2015). To measure task significance, three questions were prepared by adapting the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980).

3.5.1.4. Autonomy

Autonomy is defined as the extent to which a job allows the individual substantial freedom, independence, and discretion in planning work and determining the procedures for performing it (Hackman and Oldham, 2015). To measure autonomy, three questions were prepared by adapting the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980).

3.5.1.5. Feedback

Feedback is defined as the extent to which job activities provide individuals with direct and clear information about the effectiveness of their performance (Hackman and Oldham, 2015). To measure feedback, three questions were prepared by adapting the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980).

3.5.2. Measurement of Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study is employee job performance. Data for this variable was collected from employees at Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) head office in Addis Ababa City through self-administered questionnaires. A five-point Likert scale was employed to measure employees' job performance. To assess employee job performance, the study utilized the Koopmans job performance index (Koopmans et al., 2014). The five-point self-assessment scale ranges from 1, indicating "strongly disagree," to 5, indicating "strongly agree." A survey questionnaire was distributed to employees.

3.6. Sources and Types of Data

This study utilized both primary and secondary data sources to comprehensively examine the relationship between job design and employee performance. Primary data, which refers to original information collected firsthand for research purposes (Saunders et al., 2019), was gathered directly from the study participants. The researcher collected primary data through structured surveys administered to a sample of 238 employees (calculated using appropriate sampling techniques) across various departments in Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) head office.

For secondary data, the study analyzed existing organizational documents, including Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) annual performance report, human resource policy manuals, and job design frameworks. As noted by Bryman (2016), secondary data provides valuable contextual information that can enhance the interpretation of primary findings. The combination of these data sources enabled a robust examination of how job design elements influence employee performance metrics.

3.7. Data Collection Techniques

This study utilized both primary and secondary data sources to comprehensively examine the effect of job design on employee performance at Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) head office. For primary data collection, the research employed structured questionnaires with closed-ended questions using a 5-point Likert scale and multiple-choice formats. These questionnaires were pre-tested to ensure validity and reliability before being distributed to all 238 employees.

3.8. Data Analyses

This study employed the Pearson Product-Moment correlation technique to examine the hypothesized relationship between job design characteristics and employee performance using SPSS software version 25. Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires distributed directly to participants. Each completed questionnaire was carefully reviewed for accuracy upon return, assigned serial numbers for tracking, and systematically coded into worksheets with corresponding scores for analysis. The data analysis incorporated both univariate and bivariate approaches. Univariate analysis utilized mean and standard deviation as measures of central tendency and dispersion, appropriate for the interval-scale measurements used in this study. The standard deviation was particularly valuable for assessing variability among employee responses.

For bivariate analysis, parametric tests were employed since the data was collected using interval scales and is expected to follow a normal distribution. The Pearson correlation coefficient determined the strength and direction of relationships between pairs of interval-scale variables. Additionally, the study conducted multiple regression analysis (Field, 2019) to

model the predictive relationship between job design components and performance. The regression model was specified as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y = Employee Job Performance (dependent variable)

β_0 = Constant (y-intercept)

X_1 = Skill Variety

X_2 = Task Identity

X_3 = Task Significance

X_4 = Autonomy

X_5 = Feedback

β_1 - β_5 = Regression coefficients for each predictor variable

ε = Error term

This analytical approach enabled comprehensive examination of how specific job design elements collectively influence employee performance outcomes at Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) head office.

3.9. Validity and Reliability

3.9.1. Validity

This study addressed validity by ensuring that all measures accurately represent their intended constructs, following Bhattacharjee's (2012) definition of validity as the degree to which an instrument assesses what it claims to measure. The research examined both internal validity (the extent to which findings reflect true causal relationships) and external validity (the generalizability of results to other contexts), as outlined by Pelissier (2008). To establish validity, several measures were implemented: First, the job design questionnaire was adapted from the validated Job Diagnostic Survey developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980),

ensuring alignment with established theoretical frameworks. Second, the job performance assessment was incorporated items based on Koopmans' performance model (Koopmans et al., 2014), providing a robust measurement approach. Third, data collection will focus exclusively on Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) head office in Addis Ababa, targeting respondents who possess direct experience with the organization's job design practices. These methodological choices strengthened both the internal coherence of the research instruments and the external relevance of findings for similar organizations. The study further enhanced validity through careful questionnaire design, pilot testing, and systematic data collection procedures to ensure accurate measurement of the relationship between job design characteristics and employee performance outcomes.

3.9.2. Reliability

To ensure the reliability of the measurement instruments in this study, the internal consistency of the questionnaire items were evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951). This statistical measure assessed the extent to which all items in the questionnaire consistently measure the same underlying constructs related to job design and employee performance. The study considered a minimum threshold of 0.70 for Cronbach's alpha coefficient to establish acceptable reliability, indicating that respondents provide stable and consistent responses across related items. If the computed alpha value falls below 0.70, the data deemed insufficiently reliable, potentially necessitating revisions to the research instrument before proceeding with further analysis. By applying this rigorous reliability test the following results were obtained.

Table 3- 1 Reliability Test Results

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Skill Variety	0.750	3
Task Identity	0.909	3

Task Significance	0.769	3
Autonomy	0.741	3
Job Feedback	0.711	3
Employee Job Performance	0.748	5
Overall Reliability	0.910	20

Source: Survey data result (2025)

The reliability test results, measured using Cronbach's Alpha, demonstrate strong internal consistency across all variables, indicating that the survey instrument was highly reliable for assessing job design and employee performance at EEU. Skill Variety ($\alpha = 0.750$), Task Significance ($\alpha = 0.769$), and Autonomy ($\alpha = 0.741$) showed good reliability, while Task Identity exhibited excellent consistency ($\alpha = 0.909$), suggesting that respondents interpreted these job characteristics uniformly. Job Feedback ($\alpha = 0.711$) and Employee Job Performance ($\alpha = 0.748$) also met the acceptable threshold ($\alpha > 0.70$), confirming the dependability of these scales. The overall reliability score of 0.910 for all 20 items further reinforces the robustness of the measurement tool, validating that the collected data accurately reflects the intended constructs and supporting the credibility of subsequent statistical analyses and conclusions drawn from the study. These results affirm that the research instrument effectively captured the key dimensions of job design and performance without significant measurement error.

3.10. Ethical Considerations

This study strictly adhered to established research ethics principles as outlined by Bhattacharjee (2012). The ethical framework incorporated five fundamental aspects: (1) voluntary participation, ensuring no coercion or undue influence; (2) non-maleficence, guaranteeing no harm comes to participants; (3) comprehensive informed consent procedures; (4) strict maintenance of anonymity and confidentiality; and (5) full transparency regarding research objectives and data usage. Prior to data collection, all participants received detailed information about the study's purpose, methodology, and intended use of findings. Written informed consent was obtained from each

participant, emphasizing their right to withdraw at any stage without consequence. To protect participant privacy, all collected data was anonymized through coding systems, with access restricted to the research team. Electronic data was stored on password-protected systems, while physical documents were kept in secured locations. These measures ensured compliance with both academic ethical standards and organizational data protection policies at Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) head office.

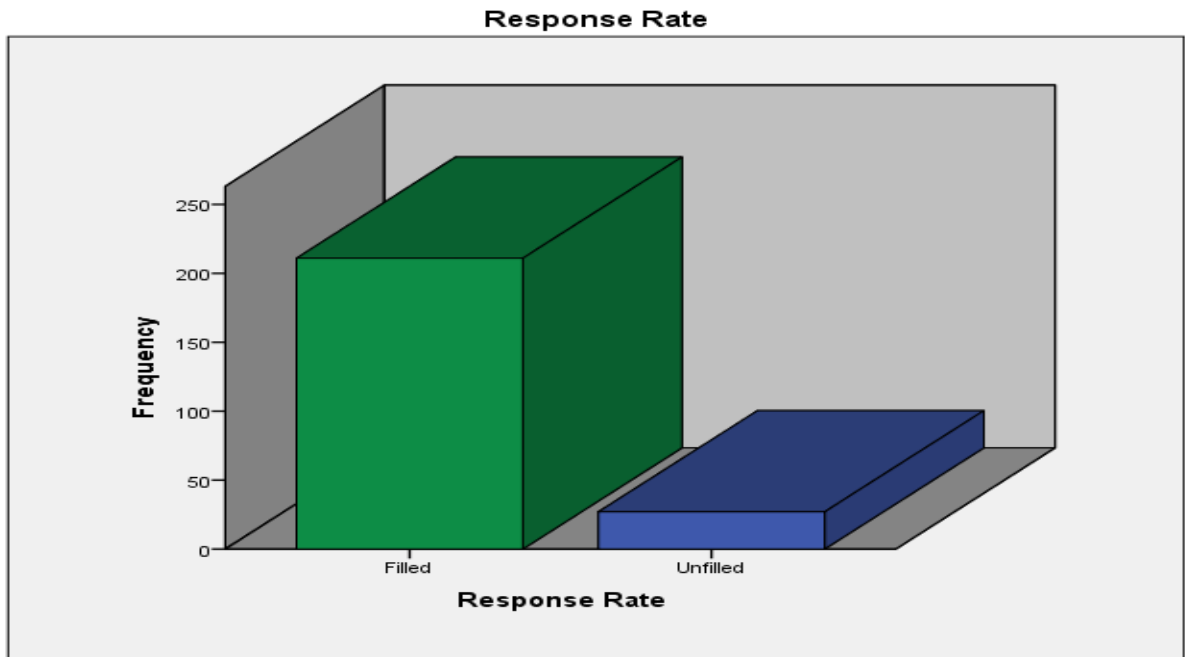
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter delves into the analysis, interpretation, and presentation of the data gathered during the research. It also includes a discussion of the findings in relation to the study objectives. The background information of the participants is provided, along with a thorough examination of the results using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The chapter offers a comprehensive overview of the study findings and their implications.

4.2. Response Rate

A total of 238 questionnaires were distributed to the employees of Ethiopian Electric Utility Head Office in Addis Ababa. The study managed to receive a total of 211 filled questionnaires which constituted a response rate of 88.65%, Figure 4-1 shows the summary. According to Edwards et al. (2002), a response rate of 80% and above is viewed as sufficient to enable the researcher to draw adequate conclusions.



Source: Survey data result (2025)

Figure 4- 1 Response Rate

4.3. General Information Analysis

In this section, the basic information of the respondents is presented to better understand the target population. Gender, age, education level and work experience.

The gender distribution among respondents in the study on the effect of job design on employee performance at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office reveals a notable disparity, with males constituting 60.7% (128 respondents) and females representing 39.3% (83 respondents). This suggests a male-dominated workforce in the organization, which may reflect broader gender imbalances in the sector or workplace. The findings could imply potential gender-related differences in job design experiences or performance outcomes, warranting further investigation into whether job design policies equitably address the needs and perceptions of both male and female employees.

The age distribution of respondents reveals that the majority of employees fall within the 36-45 age group, representing 51.2% of the sample. This suggests that the workforce is predominantly middle-aged, which may indicate a stable and experienced employee base. The second-largest group consists of younger employees (18-35 years), accounting for 29.4%, while older employees (46-55 years and over 55 years) make up smaller proportions at 11.8% and 7.6%, respectively. This distribution implies that while the organization has a significant number of experienced employees, there is also a notable presence of younger workers, which could influence perceptions of job design and performance dynamics. The findings may reflect a workforce with a blend of energy and experience, potentially impacting how job design strategies are perceived and their subsequent effect on performance. Further analysis could explore whether age-related differences moderate the relationship between job design and performance outcomes.

The educational status of employees reveals a workforce predominantly composed of individuals with first degrees, constituting 60.2% of the sample, followed by diploma holders at 23.2%, and second-degree holders at 16.6%. This distribution suggests that the majority of employees possess a foundational undergraduate education, which may influence their capacity to engage with and adapt to job design strategies aimed at enhancing performance. The relatively smaller proportion of employees with advanced degrees (16.6%) could indicate limited access to higher education or fewer roles requiring specialized expertise within the organization. The findings imply that job design interventions at EEU should be tailored to leverage the skills of first-degree holders while potentially incorporating up skilling or training programs for diploma holders to bridge any competency gaps. Additionally, the presence of second-degree holders, though modest, highlights opportunities for leadership or specialized roles that could drive performance improvements through strategic job design.

The results show that the majority of employees at the Ethiopian Electric Utility Head Office have been working in the company for 6-20 years, with 36.6% having 6-10 years of experience, 23.5% having 16-20 years of experience, and 17.2% having 11-15 years of experience. This indicates that the company has a relatively stable workforce with significant tenure, which can have both positive and negative implications. On the positive side, employees with longer

tenures are likely to have a deeper understanding of the company's culture, processes, and expectations, which can lead to increased efficiency and productivity. These employees may also have stronger relationships with their colleagues and a sense of loyalty to the organization, which can contribute to a positive organizational culture. However, on the negative side, a workforce with primarily mid-to-long term employees may also be resistant to change and new ideas, leading to stagnation and a lack of innovation. Additionally, there may be a risk of complacency among employees who have been in the company for a long time, which can hinder growth and development.

Table 4- 1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	128	60.7%
	Female	83	39.3%
Age Group	18-35 years	62	29.4%
	36-45 years	108	51.2%
	46-55 years	25	11.8%
	Above 55 years	16	7.6%
Education Level	Diploma	49	23.2%
	First Degree	127	60.2%
	Second Degree	35	16.6%
Work Experience	6-10 years	77	36.6%
	11-15 years	36	17.2%
	16-20 years	50	23.5%
	Other (Below 6 or above 20)	48	22.7%

Source: Survey data result (2025)

4.4. Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics, presented in terms of mean and standard deviation, highlight key dimensions of job design and their perceived impact on employee performance at the Ethiopian

Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office. Using a five-point Likert Scale, the analysis categorized responses based on Best’s (1977, as cited by Yonas, 2013) classification: 1–1.8 = Strongly Disagree, 1.81–2.6 = Disagree, 2.61–3.4 = Neutral, 3.41–4.20 = Agree, and 4.21–5 = Strongly Agree. The results reveal employees' perceptions of job design factors, providing insights into how these elements influence their performance.

4.4.1. Descriptive Statistics for Skill Variety

Table 4- 2 Skill Variety

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
My job involves a wide range of tasks.	211	3.74	1.176
My work is diverse and includes different types of activities.	211	3.46	1.126
I have the opportunity to perform various duties in my role.	211	3.00	1.197

Source: Survey data result (2025)

The descriptive statistics for skill variety indicate that employees at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office generally agree that their jobs involve a wide range of tasks (Mean = 3.74, SD = 1.176) and diverse activities (Mean = 3.46, SD = 1.126), placing these responses in the "Agree" range (3.41 – 4.20) on the Likert scale. However, the statement regarding the opportunity to perform various duties received a lower mean score (Mean = 3.00, SD = 1.197), falling into the "Neutral" category (2.61 – 3.40). This suggests that while employees perceive their jobs as varied in terms of tasks and activities, they are less certain about having sufficient opportunities to engage in different types of duties. The relatively high standard deviations across all items (ranging from 1.126 to 1.197) indicate moderate variability in responses, reflecting differing perceptions among employees about skill variety in their roles.

4.4.2. Descriptive Statistics for Task Identity

Table 4- 3 Task Identity

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
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My job enables me to see projects through to completion.	211	3.62	1.086
My role is structured so I can complete work from start to finish.	211	3.26	1.332
My job allows me to finish the tasks I begin.	211	3.14	1.327

Source: Survey data result (2025)

The descriptive statistics for Task Identity reveal that employees at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office generally agree that their jobs enable them to see projects through to completion (Mean = 3.62, SD = 1.086), placing this item in the "Agree" range (3.41 – 4.20). However, responses were more neutral regarding whether their roles are structured to allow them to complete work from start to finish (Mean = 3.26, SD = 1.332) and whether their jobs permit them to finish the tasks they begin (Mean = 3.14, SD = 1.327), both falling within the "Neutral" range (2.61 – 3.40). The higher standard deviations (>1.0) suggest moderate variability in employee perceptions, indicating that while some employees feel their jobs provide clear task identity, others may experience fragmented or incomplete work assignments. These findings suggest that task identity is moderately present but could be improved to enhance employee performance by ensuring clearer task ownership and completion.

4.4.3. Descriptive Statistics for Task Significance

Table 4- 4 Task Significance

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
My role is important within the organization.	211	3.51	1.289
My job is very significant in the broader scheme of things.	211	3.42	1.237
My job is one that may affect a lot of other people by how well the work is performed.	211	3.41	1.123

Source: Survey data result (2025)

The descriptive statistics for task significance reveal that employees at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office generally agree that their roles hold importance within the organization. The mean scores for all three items—"My role is important within the organization" (3.51), "My job is very significant in the broader scheme of things" (3.42), and

"My job may affect many others by how well the work is performed" (3.41)—fall within the 3.41–4.20 range, indicating agreement on the Likert scale. The relatively low standard deviations (1.123–1.289) suggest moderate consensus among respondents, though some variability exists in their perceptions. These findings imply that employees recognize the meaningfulness of their work, which could positively influence motivation and performance, aligning with job design theories that emphasize task significance as a key driver of employee engagement.

4.4.4. Descriptive Statistics for Autonomy

Table 4- 5 Autonomy

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
My job provides the opportunity for independent thought and action.	211	3.82	1.153
I have autonomy in how I complete my work.	211	3.47	1.262
My job gives me considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my work.	211	3.31	1.229
Shares an optimistic vision for the future.	268	3.2687	.86690
Valid N (list wise)	268		

Source: Survey data result (2025)

The descriptive statistics for autonomy reveal that employees at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office generally agree that their jobs provide a moderate level of independence. The highest-rated statement, "My job provides the opportunity for independent thought and action" (Mean = 3.82, SD = 1.153), falls under the "Agree" range (3.41–4.20), indicating strong perceived autonomy in decision-making. The second statement, "I have autonomy in how I complete my work" (Mean = 3.47, SD = 1.262), also aligns with "Agree", though with slightly more variability in responses. However, the third statement, "My job gives me considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my work" (Mean = 3.31, SD = 1.229), leans toward "Neutral" (2.61–3.40), suggesting that some employees may feel limited in their operational freedom. The fourth item, "Shares an optimistic vision for the future" (Mean =

3.27, SD = 0.867), also falls in the "Neutral" range, possibly reflecting mixed perceptions about leadership's role in fostering autonomy.

4.4.5. Descriptive Statistics for Job Feedback

Table 4- 6 Job Feedback

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
My work provides me with the feeling that I know whether I am performing well or poorly.	211	2.74	1.228
I receive real-time feedback on my performance while working.	211	2.41	.983
My job allows me to track and assess my performance effectively.	211	2.35	1.037

Source: Survey data result (2025)

The descriptive statistics for job feedback reveal that employees at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office generally hold neutral to slightly disagreeing perceptions regarding performance feedback. The mean scores for the three items—ranging from 2.35 to 2.74—fall within the "Neutral" (2.61–3.40) and "Disagree" (1.81–2.60) ranges on the five-point Likert scale. Specifically, respondents slightly disagreed with statements such as receiving real-time feedback (Mean = 2.41) and effectively tracking their performance (Mean = 2.35), while they were nearly neutral about knowing whether they performed well or poorly (Mean = 2.74). The relatively high standard deviations (0.983–1.228) indicate variability in responses, suggesting that employees' experiences with feedback mechanisms are inconsistent. These findings imply that EEU's current feedback systems may not be sufficiently clear, timely, or structured, which could hinder employee performance and motivation. Strengthening feedback mechanisms could be a key area for improvement in job design at the organization.

4.4.6. Descriptive Statistics for Employee Job Performance

Table 4- 7 Employee Job Performance

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
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I successfully prioritized main tasks over secondary ones.	211	3.57	1.023
I consistently focused on the key results I needed to achieve in my work.	211	3.48	1.034
I effectively planned my work to ensure timely completion.	211	3.38	.970
My planning was efficient and well-optimized.	211	3.34	1.116
I accomplished my work efficiently with minimal time and effort.	211	2.47	.896

Source: Survey data result (2025)

The descriptive statistics for employee job performance reveal varying perceptions among respondents at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office. The highest-rated item, "I successfully prioritized main tasks over secondary ones" (Mean = 3.57, SD = 1.023), falls under the "Agree" category (3.41–4.20), indicating that employees generally feel confident in task prioritization. Similarly, "I consistently focused on key results" (Mean = 3.48) and "I effectively planned my work" (Mean = 3.38) also align with "Agree," suggesting satisfactory planning and focus. However, "My planning was efficient and well-optimized" (Mean = 3.34) nears the lower threshold of "Agree", hinting at slight uncertainty. Notably, "I accomplished my work efficiently with minimal time and effort" (Mean = 2.47) falls into the "Disagree" range (1.81–2.60), signaling inefficiencies in work execution.

4.5. Correlation Analysis

This study employed correlation analysis to examine the relationships between key job design variables (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback) and employee performance at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office. Following Amin's (2005) methodological approach, the research utilized descriptive statistics to provide both numerical summaries and graphical representations of the dataset, enabling comprehensive data interpretation. Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated to determine the strength and direction of these relationships, with statistical significance set at the conventional 0.05 threshold. For interpreting the correlation results, the study adopted the widely recognized

framework of Somekh and Lewin (2005), which classifies correlation coefficients as follows: 0.01-0.29 indicates a weak relationship, 0.30-0.49 suggests a moderate relationship, and 0.50-1.0 signifies a strong relationship. Negative values denote inverse relationships where one variable increases as the other decreases, while coefficients approaching zero indicate negligible associations. These established benchmarks provided the basis for evaluating the study's correlation findings, which are systematically presented in the subsequent results section to demonstrate how specific job design elements influence employee performance outcomes at EEU.

Table 4- 8 Correlation Between Job Design and Employee Performance

		Skill Variety	Task Identity	Task Significance	Autonomy	Job Feedback	Employee Job Performance
Skill Variety	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	211					
Task Identity	Pearson Correlation	.798	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
	N	211	211				
Task Significance	Pearson Correlation	.627	.660	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
	N	211	211	211			
Autonomy	Pearson Correlation	.397	.360	.723	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000			
	N	211	211	211	211		
Job Feedback	Pearson Correlation	-.156	.018	-.005	.217	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	.794	.941	.002		

	N	211	211	211	211	211	
Employee Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.735	.792	.882	.776	.261	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	211	211	211	211	211	211

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

Source: Survey data result (2025)

The correlation analysis reveals significant relationships between various job design variables and employee performance at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office. Following Somekh & Lewin’s (2005) scale, the strength and direction of these relationships are interpreted as follows:

Task Significance and Employee Performance

The analysis reveals a very strong positive correlation ($r = 0.882, p < 0.001$) between task significance and employee performance, indicating that employees who perceive their work as highly meaningful and impactful tend to perform significantly better. This finding aligns with established job design theories, particularly Hackman and Oldham’s Job Characteristics Model, which posits that employees are more motivated and productive when they understand how their contributions affect others or the organization as a whole. The strength of this relationship suggests that task significance is the most influential factor among the job design variables examined. For EEU, this implies that managers should emphasize the broader purpose of employees' roles, ensuring they recognize how their tasks contribute to organizational success. Enhancing perceived task significance could involve clearer communication of job roles, linking individual tasks to company objectives, and fostering a sense of shared mission among employees.

Task Identity and Employee Performance

A very strong positive correlation was found between task identity and performance ($r = 0.792, p < 0.001$). This demonstrates that employees who can complete whole, identifiable pieces of work (rather than fragmented tasks) perform substantially better. The magnitude of this

correlation suggests that seeing tangible outcomes of one's work significantly boosts motivation and performance. This has important implications for job structuring at EEU, particularly in ensuring employees can see projects through to completion rather than working on disconnected task components.

Autonomy and Employee Performance

Autonomy shows a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.776$, $p < 0.001$) with employee performance, indicating that employees who have greater control over their work processes and decision-making tend to perform better. This finding reinforces the importance of empowering employees by allowing them flexibility in how they accomplish their tasks. Autonomy fosters a sense of ownership and accountability, which can lead to increased motivation and innovation. For EEU, this suggests that managers should consider delegating more authority, reducing micromanagement, and encouraging employees to take initiative in their roles. Implementing policies that support flexible work arrangements or participatory decision-making could further strengthen this relationship, ultimately boosting overall performance.

Skill Variety and Employee Performance

The analysis identifies a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.735$, $p < 0.001$) between skill variety and employee performance, meaning that employees who utilize a wider range of skills in their jobs tend to be more productive. This underscores the value of job enrichment—designing roles that require diverse competencies and provide opportunities for employees to apply and develop their skills. When employees are challenged to use different abilities, they are more likely to remain engaged and perform at higher levels. For EEU, this could involve cross-training programs, multidisciplinary project teams, or structured career development plans that expand employees' skill sets. By fostering an environment where continuous learning and skill application are encouraged, the organization can enhance both individual and collective performance.

Job Feedback and Employee Performance

Unlike the other variables, job feedback exhibits only a weak positive correlation ($r = 0.261$, $p < 0.001$) with employee performance. While the relationship is statistically significant, its modest strength suggests that feedback alone may not be a primary driver of performance improvements. This could imply that the current feedback mechanisms at EEU are either insufficiently impactful or not effectively structured to influence performance meaningfully. However, feedback remains an important component of job design, as it helps employees understand expectations and areas for improvement. To strengthen its effect, EEU could focus on making feedback more timely, specific, and actionable. Incorporating regular one-on-one check-ins, 360-degree feedback systems, or performance coaching sessions might enhance the quality and utility of feedback, thereby increasing its influence on employee performance.

The findings collectively highlight that certain job design elements—particularly task significance, task identity, autonomy, and skill variety—are strongly linked to employee performance at EEU. These results suggest that optimizing job roles to enhance meaningfulness, diversity, independence, and skill application can lead to significant performance gains. In contrast, while feedback is still relevant, its weaker correlation indicates that it should be supplemented with other motivational strategies. For EEU's management, these insights provide a clear direction for job redesign initiatives. Prioritizing interventions that increase task significance, diversify work responsibilities, grant greater autonomy, and expand skill usage will likely yield the most substantial improvements in employee performance. Additionally, refining feedback processes to make them more constructive and development-focused could further support these efforts. By strategically addressing these key job design factors, EEU can create a more engaging and productive work environment for its employees.

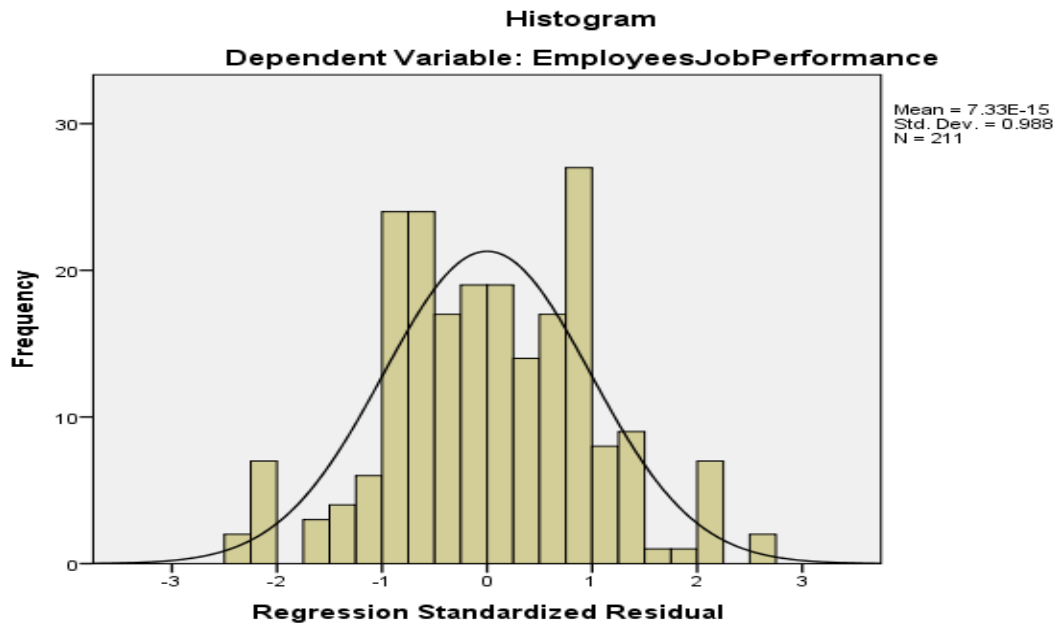
4.6. Regression Analysis

4.6.1. Assumption Tests

Before applying the multiple linear regression analysis, some tests were conducted in order to ensure the appropriateness of data analysis as follows:

4.6.1.1. Normality Test

The researcher used histogram method of testing the normality of the data. Histogram is bell shaped which lead to infer that the residuals (disturbance or errors) are normally distributed. The residuals should be normally distributed about the predicted dependent variable score. As shown on figure 4-6 below, dependent Variable is normally distributed for each value of the independent variables.



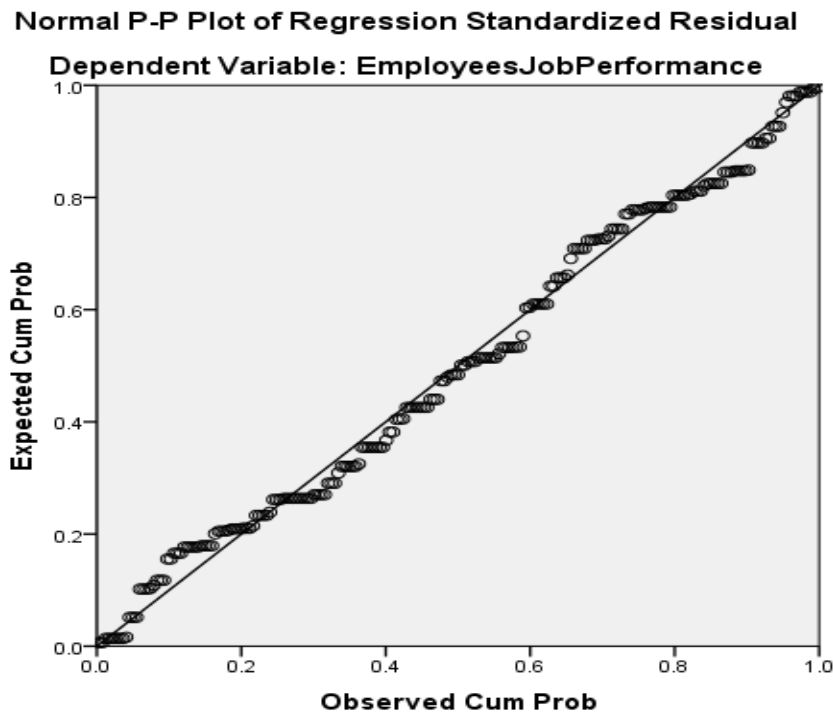
Source: Survey data result (2025)

Figure 4- 2 The regression model assumption of normality in the study

4.6.1.2. Linearity Test

Linearity refers to the degree to which the change in the dependent variable is related to the change in the independent variables. To determine whether the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable is linear; plots of the regression residuals through SPSS software had been used. In case of linearity, the residuals should have a straight line relationship with predicted dependent variable scores. As shown on figure 4-7 below, the change in the dependent variable is more of related to the change in the Independent Variables.

Therefore, there is no linearity problem on the data for this study and residual follow at straight line.



Source: Survey data result (2025)

Figure 4- 3 The regression model assumption of linearity in the study

4.6.1.3. Multicollinearity Tests

Multicollinearity can be assessed using a correlation matrix and Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) (Hair et al., 2006). A correlation matrix helps to identify correlations between independent variables (explanatory variables) and the dependent variable, indicating the presence of multicollinearity. This matrix computes Pearson's bivariate correlations among all independent variables, revealing the magnitude of the correlation coefficients. Additionally, VIF values in the regression model ranged from 1.259 to 3.652, while tolerance values ranged from 0.274 to 0.794. These statistics further confirm the absence of severe multicollinearity among the independent variables (Hair et al., 2006).

Table 4- 9 Collinearity Statistics

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	Skill Variety	.308	3.243
	Task Identity	.280	3.568
	Task Significance	.274	3.652
	Autonomy	.390	2.565
	Job Feedback	.794	1.259

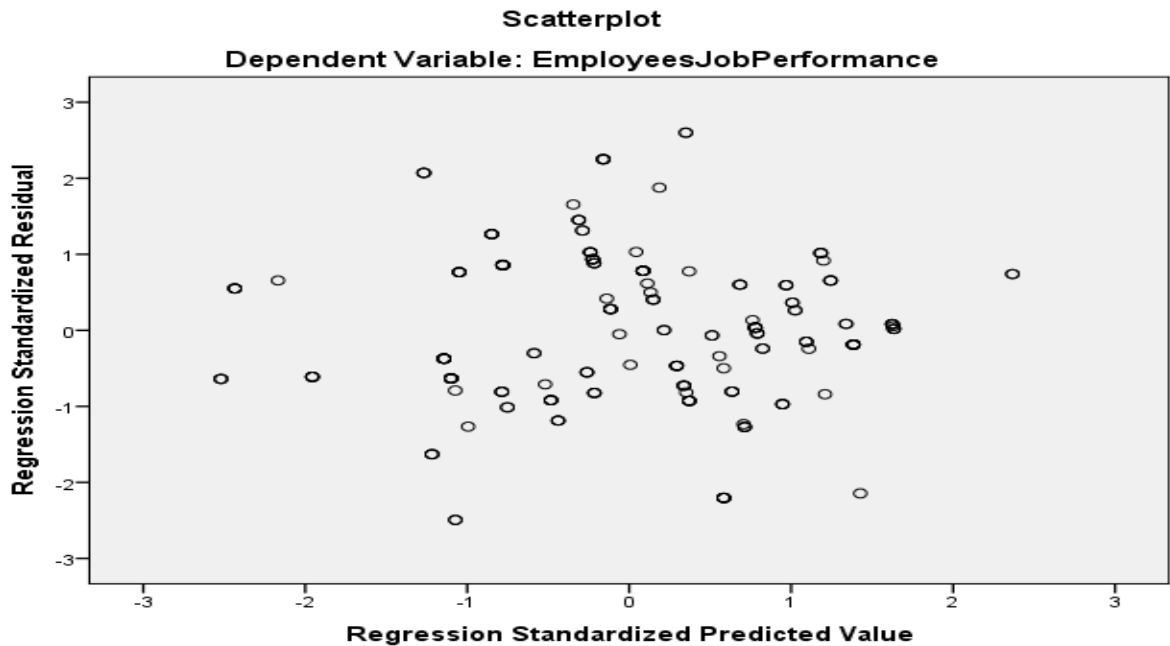
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Job Performance

Source: Survey data result (2025)

As stated by Field (2005) the Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) of the linear regression indicated the degree that the variances in the regression estimates are increased due to multicollinearity and VIF values higher than 10.0 shows as there is multicollinearity problem. In other hands, as stated by Pallant (2007) Tolerance is a statistical tool which indicates the variability of the specified independent variable from other independent variables in the model and it has no multicollinearity problem if the tolerance is greater than 0.10 values. The results of Tolerance and VIF suggests that multicollinerarity is not suspected amongst the independent variables because the values of Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) are below 10 while the tolerance values are above 0.10.

4.6.1.4. Homoscedasticity

Testing for Homoscedasticity lies with an assumption in regression analysis that the residuals at each level of the predictor variable(s) have similar variances. Using the plots of ZRESID against ZPRED, the distribution is checked whether the graph looks like a random array of dots evenly dispersed around zero. This is to mean that at each point along any predictor variable, the spread of residuals should be fairly constant.



Source: Survey data result (2025)

Table 4- 10 The regression model assumption of Homoscedasticity in the study

In Figure 4-9, it shows that each of the predictor variable against the standard residual values. The plot depicts that how the points are randomly and evenly dispersed throughout the plot. And, these patterns are indicatives of a situation in which the assumption of homoscedasticity have been met.

4.6.2. Multiple Regression Analysis

After conducting correlation analysis and tests for linearity, normality, homoscedasticity and multicollinearity, regression analysis was performed to examine the association between the independent variables and the dependent variable. According to Hair et al. (2007), multiple regression analysis is a suitable statistical technique for analyzing the relationship between a single dependent variable and multiple independent variables (predictors). The regression analysis resulted in an R value of .987 and an Adjusted R square value of .973, indicating that 97.3% of the variations in dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables collectively, while 2.7% is attributed to other factors (Hair et al., 2007).

Table 4- 11 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.987	.973	.973	.11760

Predictors: (Constant), Job Feedback, Task Significance, Skill Variety, Autonomy, Task Identity

Dependent Variable: Employees Job Performance

Source: Survey data result (2025)

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results of the regression between predictor variables and organizational culture shows that, the probability value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) indicates the relationship was highly significant in predicting the changes in dependent variable as a result of independent variables as shown in table 4-11 below. On the other hand, the P-value can explain the variation in the dependent variable. That is when the P-value is less than 0.05 the independent variables do a good job explaining the variation in the dependent variable. Whereas, when the P-value is greater than 0.05 then, the independent variables do not explain the variation in the dependent variable. To this effects, since P-value is 0.000 ($p < 0.05$).

Table 4- 12 ANOVA Results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	103.912	5	20.782	1502.638	.000
	Residual	2.835	205	.014		
	Total	106.747	210			

Dependent Variable: Employees Job Performance

Predictors: (Constant), Job Feedback, Task Significance, Skill Variety, Autonomy, Task Identity

Source: Survey data result (2025)

The Beta Coefficient (B) result shows the strength of the effect of each individual independent variable to the dependent variable (Employee Job Performance) as shown in table 4-12 below.

Table 4- 13 Multiple Regression Coefficients Result

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.021	.043		.487	.627
	Skill Variety	.152	.015	.204	9.934	.000
	Task Identity	.190	.014	.284	13.199	.000
	Task Significance	.259	.015	.367	16.853	.000
	Autonomy	.201	.013	.278	15.265	.000
	Job Feedback	.188	.011	.229	17.912	.000

Source: Survey data result (2025)

Quantitative Association Model

The multiple regression analysis yielded the following statistically significant predictive equation for employee job performance:

$$\text{Employee Performance} = 0.021 + 0.152(\text{Skill Variety}) + 0.190(\text{Task Identity}) + 0.259(\text{Task Significance}) + 0.201(\text{Autonomy}) + 0.188(\text{Job Feedback})$$

Model Components:

- **Y (Dependent Variable):** Employee Job Performance
- **Constant (B₀):** 0.021 (p=0.627, not statistically significant)
- **Skill Variety (SV):** β=0.204 (B=0.152, p<0.001)
- **Task Identity (TI):** β=0.284 (B=0.190, p<0.001)
- **Task Significance (TS):** β=0.367 (B=0.259, p<0.001)
- **Autonomy (A):** β=0.278 (B=0.201, p<0.001)
- **Job Feedback (JF):** β=0.229 (B=0.188, p<0.001)

The multiple regression results demonstrate that all examined job design factors significantly predict employee performance at Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office (p < 0.001 for all variables). Task significance emerged as the strongest predictor (β = 0.367, B = 0.259),

indicating employees who perceive their work as meaningful show substantially better performance, followed by autonomy ($\beta = 0.278$, $B = 0.201$) and task identity ($\beta = 0.284$, $B = 0.190$). Skill variety ($\beta = 0.204$, $B = 0.152$) and job feedback ($\beta = 0.229$, $B = 0.188$) showed relatively weaker but still meaningful positive effects, highlighting that while utilizing diverse skills and receiving feedback contribute to performance, they are less impactful than intrinsic motivators like meaningful work. The non-significant constant term ($B_0 = 0.021$, $p = 0.627$) suggests minimal baseline performance without these job design elements, emphasizing their collective importance in driving employee effectiveness at EEU. These findings provide empirical support for prioritizing task significance and autonomy in job redesign initiatives while maintaining complementary focus on skill development and feedback systems to optimize overall workforce performance.

4.7. Hypothesis Testing Results

The regression analysis provided clear evidence regarding each research hypothesis:

H1: Skill Variety and Employee Performance

The hypothesis that skill variety has a positive and significant relationship with employee performance was **accepted**. The regression results showed a statistically significant effect, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.152 ($p < 0.001$) and a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.204. The high t -value (9.934) and extremely low p -value (.000) confirm that employees who engage in diverse tasks tend to perform better at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office.

H2: Task Identity and Employee Performance

The hypothesis that higher task identity positively affects employee performance was accepted. The analysis revealed a strong, statistically significant relationship, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.190 ($p < 0.001$) and a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.284. The t -value (13.199) and p -value (.000) indicate that employees who see their work as a whole, identifiable task perform at higher levels.

H3: Task Significance and Employee Performance

The hypothesis that employees who perceive their tasks as more significant demonstrate higher performance was **accepted**. Task significance emerged as the strongest predictor, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.259 ($p < 0.001$) and a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.367. The high t-value (16.853) and p-value (.000) strongly support the idea that meaningful work drives better performance at EEU.

H4: Autonomy and Employee Performance

The hypothesis that greater autonomy improves employee performance was **accepted**. The regression results showed a highly significant effect, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.201 ($p < 0.001$) and a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.278. The t-value (15.265) and p-value (.000) confirm that employees with more control over their work tend to perform better.

H5: Job Feedback and Employee Performance

The hypothesis that job feedback has a positive, though relatively weaker, relationship with employee performance was **accepted**. While still statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), its effect was slightly weaker compared to other predictors, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.188 and a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.229. The high t-value (17.912) confirms that feedback contributes to performance, but not as strongly as task significance or autonomy.

All five hypotheses were supported, confirming that job design factors—particularly task significance, autonomy, and task identity—play a crucial role in enhancing employee performance at EEU. While skill variety and job feedback also contribute, their impact is relatively weaker. These findings suggest that job redesign efforts should prioritize meaningful work, independence, and clear task ownership to maximize performance.

Table 4- 14 Hypothesis Test Summary

Hypothesis	Relationship Tested	Result
H1	Skill Variety → Performance	Accepted
H2	Task Identity → Performance	Accepted

H3	Task Significance → Performance	Accepted (Strongest)
H4	Autonomy → Performance	Accepted
H5	Job Feedback → Performance	Accepted (Weaker)

Source: Survey data result (2025)

4.8. Discussion of Research Objectives

General Objective Achievement

The study successfully achieved its overarching aim of assessing job design's impact on employee performance at EEU Head Office. The comprehensive analysis revealed that all examined job characteristics significantly influence performance outcomes, with particularly strong effects from task significance ($\beta=0.367$) and autonomy ($\beta=0.278$). These results not only confirm the theoretical importance of job design but also provide EEU with actionable, evidence-based insights for human resource optimization. The findings specifically identify which elements require priority attention in organizational development initiatives.

Specific Objective 1: Skill Variety Effects

The first specific objective regarding skill variety's impact was conclusively addressed. Results demonstrated a significant positive relationship ($\beta=0.204$, $p<0.001$), confirming that diverse skill utilization enhances performance. However, its relatively moderate effect size compared to other factors suggests that while skill variety should be incorporated in job redesign, it should be combined with stronger motivators like task significance. Practical implementation could involve job enrichment programs that systematically expand the range of skills employees apply in their roles.

Specific Objective 2: Task Identity Influence

Analysis of task identity yielded robust support ($\beta=0.284$, $p<0.001$), addressing the second specific objective. This strong effect indicates that enabling employees to complete whole, identifiable work processes substantially boosts performance. For EEU, this implies the need

to restructure overly segmented workflows and create clearer task ownership. The finding is particularly relevant for technical roles where work is often divided across multiple units.

Specific Objective 3: Task Significance Impact

The third objective concerning task significance produced the most compelling results ($\beta=0.367$, $p<0.001$). This dominant effect size underscores that perceived work meaningfulness is the single most powerful performance driver at EEU. The organization should prioritize interventions that enhance employees' understanding of how their specific contributions advance Ethiopia's electrification goals and community development.

Specific Objective 4: Autonomy Evaluation

Examination of autonomy's effects ($\beta=0.278$, $p<0.001$) confirmed its importance, achieving the fourth specific objective. The substantial coefficient suggests that even within the utility sector's regulated environment, carefully implemented autonomy enhancements could yield significant performance gains. Strategic applications might include flexible work methods in appropriate departments and increased employee involvement in operational decision-making.

Specific Objective 5: Feedback Exploration

The study's exploration of feedback ($\beta=0.229$, $p<0.001$) revealed significant but comparatively modest effects. While supporting the fifth objective, these results suggest EEU's current feedback systems may require quality improvements rather than complete overhaul. Recommended enhancements include implementing more frequent, structured feedback mechanisms tied to clear performance metrics and developmental goals.

The study successfully achieved its overarching objective of assessing the impact of job design on employee performance at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office. The findings revealed that all examined job characteristics significantly influence performance, with particularly strong effects from task significance ($\beta=0.367$) and autonomy ($\beta=0.278$). These results align with Hackman & Oldham's (1976) Job Characteristics Model (JCM), which identifies these dimensions as key drivers of motivation and performance. Additionally, Humphrey et al. (2007) found similar patterns across industries, reinforcing the universal

relevance of these factors. However, the study also highlights contextual nuances—while task significance emerged as the most powerful predictor, skill variety ($\beta=0.204$) showed a more moderate effect, echoing Eswar’s (2013) findings that skill diversity does not always translate directly into higher task performance.

The strong relationship between task identity ($\beta=0.284$) and performance supports prior research by Choge et al. (2014), who linked task ownership to increased motivation. Similarly, the significant impact of autonomy aligns with Shane (2008), who demonstrated that greater employee control enhances productivity, even in structured environments like utilities. Meanwhile, feedback ($\beta=0.229$) exhibited a positive but comparatively weaker effect, consistent with Organ & MacKenzie (2006), who emphasized its role in learning and efficiency. However, this contrasts with Chantaraprab’s (2004) study on nurses, where feedback showed no significant performance link—suggesting that industry-specific dynamics may influence its effectiveness.

These findings provide actionable insights for EEU’s human resource strategies. Prioritizing task significance—by clearly linking roles to Ethiopia’s electrification goals—could maximize performance gains, as supported by Grand (2008). Restructuring workflows to enhance task identity and introducing structured feedback mechanisms, as recommended by Morris & Venkatesh (2010), would further optimize outcomes. The study not only validates core JCM principles in a non-Western utility context but also refines their application, demonstrating that while autonomy and significance are universally impactful, other dimensions like skill variety may require complementary interventions. This evidence-based approach offers a roadmap for EEU and similar organizations to enhance performance through strategic job design.

CHAPTER FIVE: KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the key findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study on the effect of job design on employee performance at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office. It summarizes key findings, discusses their implications, and provides actionable recommendations for organizational improvement. The conclusions reinforce the significance of job design in enhancing employee performance, while the recommendations offer practical strategies for implementation. Together, these insights aim to guide EEU in optimizing workforce productivity through effective job design interventions.

5.2. Summary of Key Findings

A total of 238 questionnaires were distributed to employees of the Ethiopian Electric Utility Head Office in Addis Ababa, with 211 completed questionnaires returned, yielding an 88.65% response rate. As illustrated in Figure 4-1, this high response rate exceeds the 80% threshold recommended by Edwards et al. (2002) for drawing reliable conclusions. The strong participation rate ensures the data's robustness and enhances the validity of the study's findings regarding job design's impact on employee performance. This substantial response minimizes non-response bias and provides a comprehensive dataset for analysis, reflecting broad employee engagement with the research topic.

The gender distribution among respondents revealed a significant disparity, with male employees constituting 60.7% (128 respondents) and female employees representing 39.3% (83 respondents). This male-dominated workforce composition may reflect broader gender imbalances within Ethiopia's energy sector or organizational hiring practices. The imbalance suggests potential gender-related differences in job design experiences and performance outcomes that warrant further investigation. The findings highlight the need to examine whether current job design policies equitably address the needs and perceptions of both male and female employees, particularly regarding autonomy, task significance, and feedback

mechanisms that may be experienced differently across genders. Analysis of respondent age groups showed that the majority (51.2%) fell within the 36-45 year range, indicating a predominantly middle-aged workforce. Younger employees (18-35 years) comprised 29.4% of respondents, while older employees (46-55 years and over 55 years) accounted for 11.8% and 7.6% respectively. This distribution suggests EEU maintains a stable core of experienced employees while also employing a substantial cohort of younger workers. The age composition may influence how different generations perceive and respond to job design elements, with potential implications for motivation and performance strategies. The blend of experience and youthful energy presents both opportunities for knowledge transfer and challenges in meeting varying workplace expectations across age groups.

The study revealed that first-degree holders constituted the majority (60.2%) of respondents, followed by diploma holders (23.2%) and second-degree holders (16.6%). This educational profile indicates most employees possess foundational undergraduate qualifications appropriate for their roles, while a smaller segment has advanced specialized training. The distribution suggests job design interventions should be tailored to leverage the skills of degree holders while potentially incorporating up skilling programs for diploma-qualified staff. The presence of second-degree holders, though modest, highlights opportunities to utilize their expertise in leadership or specialized technical roles that could drive performance improvements through strategic job design modifications. Employee tenure analysis showed that 36.6% had 6-10 years of service, 23.5% had 16-20 years, and 17.2% had 11-15 years of experience, indicating a stable, experienced workforce. While long-tenured employees offer deep institutional knowledge and process familiarity that enhances efficiency, there may be risks of resistance to change and innovation stagnation. The findings suggest EEU should balance leveraging veteran employees' expertise with implementing change management strategies to maintain adaptability. The experience distribution underscores the importance of designing jobs that motivate both newer and long-serving employees through varied challenges and growth opportunities.

Descriptive statistics for skill variety showed employees generally agreed their jobs involved diverse tasks (Mean=3.74) and activities (Mean=3.46), but were neutral about opportunities to perform various duties (Mean=3.00). The standard deviations (1.126-1.197) indicate moderate response variability, suggesting inconsistent experiences across roles. While employees recognize task diversity, the neutral rating on duty variety implies potential constraints in applying different skills. These findings highlight opportunities to enhance job rotation or cross-training programs to fully realize the motivational benefits of skill variety as proposed in job characteristics theory. Employees agreed they could see projects through completion (Mean=3.62) but were neutral about completing work from start to finish (Mean=3.26) or finishing tasks they began (Mean=3.14). The high standard deviations (1.086-1.332) reveal significant variation in these experiences. The results suggest that while some employees have clear task ownership, others face fragmented workflows that may undermine motivation and performance. This aligns with job design literature emphasizing the importance of whole-task responsibility and indicates potential areas for workflow restructuring to strengthen task identity.

All task significance items received agreement ratings (Means=3.41-3.51) with moderate standard deviations (1.123-1.289). Employees consistently recognized their work's importance to the organization and broader impact, a key motivational factor according to job characteristics theory. The findings suggest EEU has successfully communicated role meaningfulness, which likely contributes to employee engagement. However, the response variability indicates some employees may need stronger connections between their daily tasks and organizational goals to maximize this performance driver. Employees strongly agreed about independent thought opportunities (Mean=3.82) but showed lower agreement on work completion autonomy (Mean=3.47) and freedom in work methods (Mean=3.31). The standard deviations (1.153-1.262) reflect differing experiences across roles. While employees feel empowered in decision-making, they report less flexibility in how work gets done, suggesting potential micromanagement in certain areas. These findings align with autonomy's established role in motivation but highlight implementation inconsistencies that could be addressed through targeted supervisory training and policy adjustments.

Feedback-related items received neutral to slightly disagreeing ratings (Means=2.35-2.74), with standard deviations (0.983-1.228) indicating varied experiences. Employees expressed uncertainty about performance awareness and reported inadequate real-time feedback. These results suggest EEU's current feedback systems may be inconsistent or insufficiently structured, potentially hindering performance improvement. The findings contrast with some literature emphasizing feedback's importance and indicate a critical area for HR system enhancements to support employee development and performance management. Employees agreed they successfully prioritized tasks (Mean=3.57) and focused on key results (Mean=3.48), but neutral ratings on planning efficiency (Mean=3.34) and disagreement about working with minimal effort (Mean=2.47) suggest room for process improvements. The standard deviations (0.896-1.116) show relatively consistent perceptions. While employees demonstrate effective task management, the results indicate potential inefficiencies in work execution that could be addressed through better job design, particularly in task structuring and resource allocation.

The analysis revealed very strong positive correlations between performance and task significance ($r=0.882$), task identity ($r=0.792$), autonomy ($r=0.776$), and skill variety ($r=0.735$), with a weaker but significant feedback relationship ($r=0.261$). These findings robustly support job characteristics theory while highlighting the particular importance of meaningful work and independence in this context. The exceptionally strong task significance correlation suggests EEU employees are highly motivated by their work's societal impact, a unique aspect of utility sector jobs that should be emphasized in job design. The regression model (Adjusted $R^2=0.973$) confirmed all job design dimensions significantly predict performance ($p<0.001$), with task significance ($\beta=0.367$) and autonomy ($\beta=0.278$) as strongest predictors. The comprehensive model explains nearly all performance variance, demonstrating job design's overwhelming importance in this setting. The non-significant constant ($B_0=0.021$, $p=0.627$) indicates minimal baseline performance without proper job design implementation, underscoring its critical role in organizational success. These results provide empirical justification for prioritizing job redesign initiatives at EEU.

5.3. Conclusion

The study concludes that job design significantly influences employee performance at the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) Head Office, with each examined dimension—skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and job feedback—demonstrating a measurable impact. The findings reinforce the validity of job design theories, particularly Hackman and Oldham’s Job Characteristics Model, by empirically confirming that well-structured roles enhance motivation and productivity. Task significance emerged as the most influential factor, indicating that employees who perceive their work as meaningful and impactful perform at substantially higher levels. This underscores the importance of aligning individual roles with organizational goals and communicating the broader purpose of employees' contributions. Autonomy and task identity also proved to be strong predictors of performance, suggesting that employees thrive when given control over their work processes and the ability to complete whole, identifiable tasks rather than fragmented assignments. Skill variety contributed positively but with a relatively moderate effect, implying that while diverse tasks engage employees, their performance is more strongly driven by intrinsic motivators like meaningfulness and independence. Job feedback, though statistically significant, had the weakest correlation, indicating that EEU’s current feedback mechanisms may lack the timeliness, specificity, or developmental focus needed to substantially enhance performance.

The demographic insights further contextualize these findings, revealing a workforce characterized by experience, stability, and a slight gender imbalance. The predominance of mid-career employees with considerable tenure suggests that job design interventions must account for potential resistance to change while leveraging the depth of institutional knowledge. The high explanatory power of the regression model (97.3%) highlights the centrality of job design in shaping performance outcomes, with minimal variance attributed to external factors. Collectively, the study provides robust evidence that optimizing job design—particularly by enhancing task significance, autonomy, and task identity—can lead to measurable improvements in employee performance at EEU. These conclusions not only validate theoretical frameworks but also emphasize the practical relevance of job design in public sector utilities, where operational efficiency and employee engagement are critical to

service delivery. The study's outcomes contribute to the broader discourse on workplace productivity by demonstrating how structured, meaningful, and empowering job roles can drive performance even in highly regulated and technical work environments.

5.4. Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) should prioritize job redesign initiatives to enhance employee performance by strengthening key job design dimensions. First, to maximize task significance, management should clearly communicate how individual roles contribute to organizational goals and Ethiopia's broader electrification efforts. This can be achieved through regular briefings, mission-driven training, and recognition programs that highlight employees' impact on customers and communities. Second, to improve autonomy, supervisors should delegate decision-making authority where feasible, reduce micromanagement, and allow employees flexibility in how they accomplish tasks. Implementing participatory decision-making processes and flexible work arrangements (where applicable) could further empower employees and boost engagement.

Third, to enhance task identity, workflows should be restructured to allow employees to complete whole tasks or projects rather than fragmented assignments. This could involve cross-functional collaboration, clearer task ownership, and project-based work structures that enable employees to see the tangible outcomes of their efforts. Fourth, while skill variety positively influences performance, its impact was moderate compared to other factors. Thus, EEU should implement job rotation, cross-training, and skill-development programs strategically, ensuring they complement rather than overshadow stronger motivators like autonomy and task significance.

Finally, to strengthen job feedback, EEU should establish structured, real-time feedback mechanisms that go beyond annual reviews. Regular one-on-one check-ins, 360-degree feedback systems, and performance coaching sessions can help employees track progress and make continuous improvements. Training managers on delivering constructive, actionable feedback will also enhance its effectiveness. By adopting these evidence-based

recommendations, EEU can create a more motivating work environment that leverages job design principles to drive higher performance, job satisfaction, and organizational efficiency. These changes should be implemented in phases, with continuous monitoring and employee feedback to ensure successful adaptation and sustained impact.

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APPENDIX I: Questionnaire



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

Questionnaire to be filled by Employees of Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU) head office.

Dear Respondents,

My name is **MESKEREM SAHILH** I am a graduate student at Addis Ababa University, I am conducting a research study on a research title “THE EFFECT OF JOB DESIGN ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN THE CASE OF ETHIOPIAN ELECTRIC UTILITY (EEU) HEAD OFFICE.” in partial fulfillment of Master of Human Resource Management (HRM) at Addis Ababa University. Your genuine response is highly valuable for the study and there are no identified risks from participation in the survey. The survey is anonymous. Participation is completely voluntarily. It will take you approximately 5 - 7 minutes of your time to complete filling this questionnaire.

The questionnaire is prepared only for academic purpose and its confidentiality is well protected. The researcher respectfully request dear respondents to follow the instructions and provide honest answers for the questions. If you have any enquiry, please be free to contact the researcher at the following addresses:

E-mail:

Telephone:

Thank you for your cooperation!

MESKEREM SAHILH

Part I: BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

Instruction: Please provide your response for the questions related to your personal background by putting 'X' sign in the circles.

GENDER

- Male
- Female

AGE

- 18-35 Years
- 36-45 Years
- 46-55 Years
- Over 55 Years

EDUCATIONAL STATUS

- Diploma
- 1st Degree
- 2nd Degree
- Above 2nd Degree

WORK EXPERIENCE

- Below 5 Years
- 5-10 Years
- 11-15 Years
- 16-20 Years
- Above 20 Years

Part II: Questions on the Research Variables

Instruction: This section covers questions that relate to traits of job design and employee performance.

Please kindly mark “√” on one of the five numbers to the right of each statement as indicated in the following:-

(1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)

No.	Items	1 SD	2 D	3 N	4 A	5 SA
Skill Variety						
1.	My job involves a wide range of tasks.					
2.	My work is diverse and includes different types of activities.					
3.	I have the opportunity to perform various duties in my role.					
Task Identity						
4.	My job allows me to finish the tasks I begin.					
5.	My role is structured so I can complete work from start to finish.					
6.	My job enables me to see projects through to completion.					

Task Significance					
7.	My job is one that may affect a lot of other people by how well the work is performed.				
8.	My role is important within the organization.				
9.	My job is very significant in the broader scheme of things.				
Autonomy					
10.	I have autonomy in how I complete my work.				
11.	My job provides the opportunity for independent thought and action.				
12.	My job gives me considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my work.				
Job Feedback					
13.	I receive real-time feedback on my performance while working.				
14.	My job allows me to track and assess my performance effectively.				
15.	My work provides me with the feeling that I know whether I am performing well or poorly.				
Employees' Job Performance					
16.	I effectively planned my work to ensure timely completion.				
17.	My planning was efficient and well-optimized.				
18.	I consistently focused on the key results I needed to achieve in my work.				

19.	I successfully prioritized main tasks over secondary ones.					
20.	I accomplished my work efficiently with minimal time and effort.					

THANK YOU!