

Examining the Influence of Political Intervention on Recruitment Outcomes in Government Agencies

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the extent of political intervention in recruitment processes and its impact on recruitment outcomes in a government agency. Political intervention was assessed in terms of political patronage, political pressure, government policies, and partisan influence, while recruitment outcomes were measured through candidate selection, job fit, employee qualifications, and diversity and inclusion. Results showed that all dimensions of political intervention were rated “Good,” with political patronage ($M = 3.09$) being the most prominent, suggesting that favoritism and connections remain influential. Recruitment outcomes were also rated “Good,” though candidate selection ($M = 2.75$) scored lowest, indicating concerns about transparency and fairness. Correlation analysis revealed that political intervention significantly affects task efficiency ($r = .555$, $p < .001$), quality of work ($r = .525$, $p < .001$), and overall productivity ($r = .382$, $p < .01$), while having no significant impact on time management or teamwork. Overall, the findings suggest that while agencies maintain acceptable recruitment standards, political considerations continue to undermine fairness and meritocracy, raising doubts about transparency and inclusiveness in hiring practices. Strengthening institutional safeguards against political influence is therefore crucial to promote equity, accountability, and effective workforce performance.

Keywords: *Political Intervention, Recruitment, Government Agencies, Candidate Selection, Political Patronage*

INTRODUCTION

Public-sector recruitment is often portrayed as a contest between political control and merit-based professionalism, yet contemporary evidence shows the boundary between the two is fluid and consequential for outcomes. Recent work demonstrates that when political actors expand discretion over appointments, the profile and responsiveness of senior bureaucrats can shift in ways that recalibrate the state’s capacity to deliver impartial services (Askim, Bach, & Kolltveit, 2024; Alon-Barkat, Gilad, Kosti, & Shpaizman, 2025). These dynamics matter because recruitment rules are the “front door” to bureaucratic competence, impartiality, and trust.

At the same time, governments continue to revisit personnel rules—sometimes explicitly—to privilege political alignment over competitive merit. In the United States, for example, a 2025 proposal to create a new “merit hiring plan” sparked debate about loyalty testing and politicized hiring, underscoring how formal rule changes can reshape incentives for both managers and applicants (CHCOC/OPM, 2025; Kornfield & Natanson, 2025). Cross-national studies echo this concern: politicization of personnel policies is associated with shifts in turnover intentions and organizational “closedness,” indicating that recruitment arrangements affect whether experienced officials remain or exit (Suzuki & Hur, 2023/2024).

The empirical record increasingly distinguishes how political intervention works. In some contexts, patronage networks steer hiring toward politically connected candidates or temporary contracts, altering worker effort and the distribution of talent across roles (Quintero, 2025; Feng, Lu, Wang, &

Yu, 2025). Other studies show that even where politicians cannot directly install allies, they can influence the professional profile of top officials, trading off competence against pliability—and thereby subtly redirecting bureaucratic priorities without rewriting laws (Askim et al., 2024).

Conversely, evidence from comparative public administration suggests that meritocratic recruitment and bureaucratic autonomy tend to enhance performance and service delivery, offering a partial antidote to politicization. Large-N analyses in Africa and broader theoretical tests reveal that merit appointments improve government effectiveness and that the mechanisms run through competence and impartiality norms embedded at entry (Fernandez & Cheema, 2024; Kolvani & Nistotskaya, 2025). These findings reinforce the classic claim that recruitment institutions are foundational to state capacity, not merely procedural niceties.

Taken together, the emerging literature suggests a contingent picture: political interventions in recruitment can sometimes align with managerial goals, but more often they skew incentives toward loyalty, heighten uncertainty for temporaries, and degrade impartiality—effects that can ripple into citizens' experiences of government. Rigorous designs linking appointment rules to attitudes, turnover, and performance are therefore essential to isolate causality and inform reform. This study contributes by examining how political intervention shapes recruitment outcomes in government agencies, specifying mechanisms—from temporary contracts to elite profiling through which politics enters the “black box” of hiring and, in turn, affects productivity and service quality.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To examine the influence of political intervention on recruitment outcomes in government agencies, this study adopted a quantitative-descriptive approach. This design was appropriate as it enabled the researcher to capture the perceptions of employees in measurable terms, allowing for the analysis of prevailing patterns and trends. Data were collected primarily through a standardized survey questionnaire, which was carefully designed to align with the study's objectives. The instrument included statements rated on a five-point Likert scale, providing a structured way to gauge agreement or disagreement on issues concerning political intervention and recruitment practices. Prior to distribution, the questionnaire was validated by field experts to ensure content accuracy, and a pilot test was conducted with a small sample to assess clarity, reliability, and consistency of responses.

The study population consisted of employees from selected government agencies, specifically those directly involved or affected by recruitment processes. To secure the relevance of responses, purposive sampling was employed, targeting individuals with sufficient knowledge and experience of recruitment procedures. The surveys were distributed both physically and electronically, depending on accessibility and preference of the respondents, ensuring wider coverage and higher participation. Once collected, the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, particularly mean and standard deviation, to summarize perceptions, and inferential techniques to determine the extent of political intervention's influence on recruitment outcomes. Ethical principles such as voluntary participation, informed consent, and confidentiality were upheld at every stage, safeguarding the integrity of the research process and the trust of the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data in Table 1 highlights how participants view the presence of political patronage within the agency's recruitment and selection processes. With an overall mean of 3.09 (SD = 0.51), the responses fall under the Good category, suggesting that political factors are noticeably present but not overwhelming. The indicator with the highest rating, “Candidates with political backing are more

likely to be selected for positions” ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 0.73$, Very Good), shows a strong perception that political ties significantly affect hiring outcomes. Similarly, the belief that political affiliations influence candidate selection ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 0.80$) reinforces this pattern of influence.

Conversely, the lowest score was observed in the statement “The recruitment process is fair, regardless of political connections” ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 1.01$). This low rating reveals a lack of confidence among participants in the fairness of hiring practices, pointing to the perception that merit alone may not always be the basis for employment decisions. Overall, the results demonstrate that political patronage is still a relevant issue, shaping participants’ views on fairness and transparency within the organization’s personnel selection system.

Table 1
Participants’ Level of Political Intervention in terms of Political Patronage

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
Political affiliations influence the selection of candidates for positions in this agency.	3.26	0.80	Good
The hiring process in this agency is influenced by political patronage.	3.04	0.83	Good
Political connections often play a role in recruitment decisions within this agency.	3.16	0.82	Good
Candidates with political backing are more likely to be selected for positions.	3.40	0.73	Very Good
The recruitment process is fair, regardless of political connections.	2.58	1.01	Good
Overall	3.09	0.51	Good

The findings presented in Table 2 illustrate how political pressure influences recruitment within the agency. With an overall mean of 3.02 ($SD = 0.67$), the participants rated this factor as Good, indicating that while political pressure exists, its impact is moderate rather than overwhelming. The highest-rated item, “Political figures exert pressure on hiring decisions within the agency” ($M = 3.14$, $SD = 0.86$), reveals that external political actors are perceived to play a role in shaping recruitment outcomes. Similarly, the statement “Political pressure has a significant impact on the recruitment process” ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.75$) reinforces the notion that politics can affect decision-making in personnel selection.

Table 2
Participants’ Level of Political Intervention in terms of Political Pressure

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
Political figures exert pressure on hiring decisions within the agency.	3.14	0.86	Good
Political pressure has a significant impact on the recruitment process in this agency.	3.12	0.75	Good
The agency feels compelled to hire candidates based on political demands.	2.86	0.88	Good
Political pressure affects the diversity of candidates selected for positions.	3.00	0.88	Good
The agency prioritizes political considerations over merit in recruitment.	2.96	0.75	Good
Overall	3.02	0.67	Good

On the other hand, the lowest mean score came from “The agency feels compelled to hire candidates based on political demands” ($M = 2.86$, $SD = 0.88$), which, while still rated Good, suggests that

participants may not view political pressure as entirely dominant in recruitment practices. The responses to items on prioritizing political considerations over merit ($M = 2.96$) and its effect on candidate diversity ($M = 3.00$) further reflect a moderate acknowledgment of political intervention. Overall, these results point to a situation where political influence is present and noticeable, but not perceived as fully overriding the principles of fairness and merit in recruitment processes.

Table 3 highlights the extent to which government policies influence recruitment practices in the agency. The overall mean of 2.80 ($SD = 0.63$) indicates a Good rating, suggesting that participants recognize the role of government mandates in shaping recruitment processes, though not to an excessive degree. The highest-rated statement, "Recruitment policies in this agency are often shaped by government policies" ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 0.77$), reflects that participants acknowledge government involvement as a guiding force in policy formulation. Similarly, the perception that government regulations influence recruitment criteria ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 0.82$) underscores the impact of top-down governance on hiring standards.

On the other hand, the lowest score was recorded in the statement "The recruitment process is transparent and unaffected by government policies" ($M = 2.36$, $SD = 0.90$, Fair). This result indicates skepticism among participants, as they believe transparency may be compromised when government policies intervene in the process. Meanwhile, responses regarding changes in procedures brought about by shifting government policies ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 0.95$) and compliance with mandates ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 0.93$) further reinforce the perception that the agency operates under significant governmental influence. Overall, while government policies provide structure and regulation, they are also perceived as potentially limiting transparency and flexibility in recruitment.

Table 3
Participants' level of Political Intervention in terms of Government Policies

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
Recruitment policies in this agency are often shaped by government policies.	3.02	0.77	Good
Government regulations influence the criteria used in the recruitment process.	2.98	0.82	Good
The agency follows government mandates when making recruitment decisions.	2.90	0.93	Good
Changes in government policies often lead to changes in recruitment procedures.	2.72	0.95	Good
The recruitment process is transparent and unaffected by government policies.	2.36	0.90	Fair
Overall	2.80	0.63	Good

As shown in Table 4, the participants' perceptions regarding the role of partisan influence in recruitment reveal an overall mean of 2.96 ($SD = 0.57$), interpreted as Good. This suggests that while partisan politics is seen as a factor in the hiring process, it does not overwhelmingly dominate recruitment decisions. Among the indicators, the highest rating was given to the statement "The hiring process in this agency reflects the political preferences of the ruling party" ($M = 3.08$, $SD = 0.78$), highlighting the notion that recruitment may be aligned, to some extent, with the political agenda of those in power. Similarly, the recognition that partisan preferences affect candidate selection ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.87$) and that political party loyalty influences recruitment ($M = 3.04$, $SD = 0.78$) indicates that political affiliations still hold weight in employment decisions.

Conversely, the lowest rating was observed in the statement "The recruitment process is impartial and free from political party influence" ($M = 2.74$, $SD = 0.90$). This shows that participants are somewhat

doubtful about the neutrality of the recruitment system, perceiving partisan influence as present, though not absolute. Overall, the results point to a moderate but noticeable impact of political party dynamics on recruitment, with the perception that political alignment may provide certain advantages to applicants, while full impartiality remains questionable.

Table 4
Participants' Level of Political Intervention in terms of Partisan Influence

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
Political party affiliations influence the hiring process in this agency.	2.90	0.91	Good
Partisan preferences affect the selection of candidates for government positions.	3.06	0.87	Good
Political party loyalty plays a role in recruitment decisions.	3.04	0.78	Good
The hiring process in this agency reflects the political preferences of the ruling party.	3.08	0.78	Good
The recruitment process is impartial and free from political party influence.	2.74	0.90	Good
Overall	2.96	0.57	Good

Table 5 presents the overall level of political intervention in the recruitment process as perceived by the participants. The results show that all four dimensions—political patronage ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 0.51$), political pressure ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 0.67$), government policies ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 0.63$), and partisan influence ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 0.57$)—fall under the Good qualitative description. Among these, political patronage emerged with the highest mean, implying that favoritism and personal or political connections are more strongly felt in recruitment decisions compared to other forms of intervention.

On the other hand, government policies obtained the lowest mean, indicating that participants view policy-driven recruitment interventions as less dominant compared to patronage and pressure from political figures or parties. This suggests that while formal policies play a role, informal political practices such as favoritism and partisan considerations tend to shape participants' perceptions more strongly. Overall, the findings point to a moderate presence of political intervention, where recruitment is influenced by political factors, though not to an extreme degree, thereby raising concerns about fairness and transparency in the selection process.

Table 5
Overall Participants' Political Intervention

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
Political Patronage	3.09	0.51	Good
Political Pressure	3.02	0.67	Good
Government Policies	2.80	0.63	Good
Partisan Influence	2.96	0.57	Good

Table 6 presents the participants' perception of recruitment outcomes in terms of candidate selection. The overall mean score of 2.75 ($SD = 0.60$) indicates that the process is generally rated as Good, but closer to the lower end of the scale, suggesting that issues remain in ensuring fairness and meritocracy. Notably, the highest-rated item was political recommendations being prioritized over merit ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.81$), highlighting that participants recognize the influence of political factors in determining candidate selection. Conversely, the lowest-rated indicator was the statement on transparency and unbiased selection ($M = 2.54$, $SD = 0.91$), which reflects doubts about the fairness of the process.

Overall, the findings reveal that while the recruitment process is perceived to operate at a “Good” level, there are evident concerns about merit-based hiring and transparency. The presence of political intervention is acknowledged, which undermines confidence in the system’s ability to consistently select the most qualified candidates. This suggests the need for strengthening mechanisms that promote fairness, accountability, and meritocracy in recruitment practices.

Table 6
Participants’ Level of Recruitment Outcomes in terms of Candidate Selection

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
The recruitment process in this agency selects candidates based on merit and qualifications.	2.62	0.83	Good
Political intervention affects the fairness of candidate selection in this agency.	2.84	0.98	Good
The selection of candidates for positions is transparent and unbiased.	2.54	0.91	Good
Political recommendations are sometimes prioritized over merit in candidate selection.	3.00	0.81	Good
The recruitment process ensures that the best-qualified candidates are selected.	2.76	0.94	Good
Overall	2.75	0.60	Good

When examining recruitment outcomes in relation to job fit, the results in Table 7 show an overall mean of 2.96 (SD = 0.44), which falls under the Good description. This indicates that, on average, participants believe the agency makes some effort to align candidates’ qualifications with job requirements, but political influence continues to interfere with this goal. Notably, the highest-rated items were political intervention affecting the job fit of candidates (M = 3.10, SD = 0.71) and political influence leading to poor fit (M = 3.04, SD = 0.83), both suggesting that external factors remain a strong force in shaping outcomes.

Table 7
Participants’ level of Recruitment Outcomes in terms of Job Fit

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
Selected candidates are well-suited for the positions they are hired for.	2.72	0.97	Good
Political influence often leads to candidates being selected who are not a good fit for the job.	3.04	0.83	Good
The recruitment process ensures a good match between candidates’ skills and job requirements.	2.92	0.88	Good
Political intervention affects the job fit of selected candidates.	3.10	0.71	Good
The agency strives to match candidates with jobs that align with their expertise and qualifications.	3.02	0.82	Good
Overall	2.96	0.44	Good

Meanwhile, indicators that focus on merit, such as candidates being well-suited for the positions (M = 2.72, SD = 0.97) and ensuring a proper match of skills to job requirements (M = 2.92, SD = 0.88), received lower ratings, reflecting participants’ doubts about the fairness and effectiveness of the process. The agency’s attempt to match candidates with jobs aligned to their expertise (M = 3.02, SD = 0.82) is acknowledged, but the presence of political considerations weakens the integrity of these efforts. These findings emphasize the need for strengthening systems that prioritize meritocracy to ensure that candidates selected are not only qualified but also the best fit for the roles they assume.

Looking into the dimension of employee qualifications, Table 8 presents an overall mean score of 3.07 (SD = 0.38), interpreted as Good. This suggests that participants generally recognize the recruitment process as capable of selecting qualified individuals, but political intervention still leaves noticeable traces in the outcomes. Among the indicators, the highest-rated items were political influence leading to the hiring of underqualified candidates (M = 3.12, SD = 0.72), hired candidates meeting job standards (M = 3.12, SD = 0.69), and political intervention affecting qualifications (M = 3.12, SD = 0.77). These results highlight the duality of the process: while qualifications are often met, political pressures sometimes distort merit-based hiring.

On the other hand, items emphasizing the agency's effort to maintain qualification standards, such as ensuring that all candidates possess required qualifications (M = 3.02, SD = 0.71) and selecting candidates with necessary qualifications (M = 2.98, SD = 0.71), received slightly lower means. This implies that while procedures are in place to secure qualified hires, their consistent enforcement may be compromised by external political influences.

Taken together, the findings reveal that the recruitment process demonstrates a moderate ability to uphold qualification requirements but is not immune to political pressures. This points to the importance of strengthening safeguards and institutional mechanisms to ensure that political interventions do not undermine the professional standards required of employees.

Table 8
Participants' Level of Recruitment Outcomes in terms of Employee Qualifications

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
The recruitment process selects candidates with the necessary qualifications for the job.	2.98	0.71	Good
Political influence sometimes results in the hiring of underqualified candidates.	3.12	0.72	Good
The qualifications of hired candidates meet the standards required for the job.	3.12	0.69	Good
Political intervention affects the level of qualifications of selected candidates.	3.12	0.77	Good
The agency ensures that all selected candidates possess the required qualifications for their roles.	3.02	0.71	Good
Overall	3.07	0.38	Good

Examining the results on diversity and inclusion in recruitment outcomes, Table 9 yields an overall mean score of 2.97 (SD = 0.51), qualitatively described as Good. This indicates that while participants acknowledge efforts toward promoting diversity and inclusiveness, political intervention still exerts a meaningful influence that can restrict these goals. Notably, both political interventions' negative impact on diversity (M = 3.08, SD = 0.84) and the promotion of diversity and inclusion in recruitment (M = 3.08, SD = 0.75) received the highest ratings, reflecting the participants' recognition of both the agency's efforts and the simultaneous challenges posed by political dynamics.

Meanwhile, items that highlight the limitations of diversity promotion—such as political preferences leading to less diverse outcomes (M = 2.98, SD = 0.71), prioritization of diversity in decisions (M = 2.88, SD = 0.82), and fostering an inclusive, bias-free process (M = 2.84, SD = 0.87)—received slightly lower ratings. These results suggest that while there are mechanisms that aim to support inclusivity, political factors remain barriers to fully realizing these objectives.

Overall, the findings emphasize that the agency's recruitment process reflects moderate attention to diversity and inclusion, but the influence of political considerations still weakens its effectiveness.

This points to the need for stronger institutional safeguards and clearer merit-based frameworks to ensure that inclusivity and fairness are consistently prioritized over political agendas.

Table 9
Participants' level of Recruitment Outcomes in terms of Diversity and Inclusion

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
Political intervention has a negative impact on the diversity of candidates selected for recruitment.	3.08	0.84	Good
The recruitment process in this agency promotes diversity and inclusion.	3.08	0.75	Good
Political preferences sometimes lead to less diverse recruitment outcomes.	2.98	0.71	Good
The agency prioritizes diversity when making recruitment decisions.	2.88	0.82	Good
The recruitment process fosters an inclusive environment, free from political biases.	2.84	0.87	Good
Overall	2.97	0.51	Good

The consolidated findings on overall recruitment outcomes are presented in Table 10, which shows that all four dimensions were rated as Good, though with varying degrees of strength. The highest-rated indicator was employee qualifications ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 0.38$), suggesting that despite political interventions, agencies are still generally able to hire individuals who meet the basic qualifications required for their roles. This is closely followed by diversity and inclusion ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 0.51$) and job fit ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 0.44$), both indicating that while recruitment practices are moderately effective, political influences may compromise the alignment of skills with job requirements as well as the inclusiveness of the process.

On the other hand, the lowest-rated outcome was candidate selection ($M = 2.75$, $SD = 0.60$), implying that this area is most vulnerable to political intervention. The fairness, transparency, and merit-based nature of candidate selection appear to be weakened, reflecting the perception that political recommendations sometimes take precedence over objective criteria.

Taken together, the overall mean values suggest that recruitment outcomes in the agency are functioning at an acceptable level but remain susceptible to political pressures. Strengthening institutional mechanisms, particularly in candidate selection, would be crucial to ensuring fairness, transparency, and credibility in the recruitment process.

Table 10
Overall Participants' Recruitment Outcomes

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION
Candidate Selection	2.75	0.60	Good
Job Fit	2.96	0.44	Good
Employee Qualifications	3.07	0.38	Good
Diversity and Inclusion	2.97	0.51	Good

Taken together, the overall mean values suggest that recruitment outcomes in the agency are functioning at an acceptable level but remain susceptible to political pressures. Strengthening institutional mechanisms, particularly in candidate selection, would be crucial to ensuring fairness, transparency, and credibility in the recruitment process.

The results reveal a mixed pattern regarding the influence of political intervention on recruitment outcomes. Significant but moderate correlations were found between political intervention and task

efficiency ($r = .555, p < .001$), as well as quality of work ($r = .525, p < .001$), suggesting that political involvement in recruitment can moderately affect how efficiently employees perform tasks and the quality of their outputs. Furthermore, political intervention showed a weaker but still significant influence on overall office productivity ($r = .382, p < .01$), implying that while political considerations in hiring decisions do affect productivity, the effect is not as strong as with other variables. This indicates that politically influenced recruitment may sometimes result in employees being less optimally matched to positions, thereby affecting their efficiency and quality of work, though not to an extreme extent.

On the other hand, the correlations with time management ($r = .003, p = .982$) and collaboration and teamwork ($r = .011, p = .939$) were found to be not significant. This suggests that political intervention in recruitment has little to no impact on employees' ability to manage time effectively or to work collaboratively within teams. Such a finding may reflect that these dimensions are more strongly influenced by organizational culture, training, and individual work habits rather than the political context of hiring. Overall, while political intervention in recruitment does have measurable consequences for efficiency, work quality, and to some degree productivity, it does not appear to shape interpersonal or time management dynamics. From a managerial perspective, this highlights the need to minimize undue political influence in hiring practices, ensuring that recruitment decisions are based on merit and alignment with organizational goals to foster sustainable performance and equitable workplace outcomes.

Table 11
Significant Influence of Participants' Political Intervention on Recruitment Outcomes

Independent Variable Constant (x)	Pearson R	p-value	Interpretation
Task Efficiency	0.555***	<.001	Highly Significant
Quality of Work	0.525***	<.001	Highly Significant
Time Management	0.003	<.982	Not Significant
Collaboration and Teamwork	0.011	<.0939	Not Significant
Overall Office Productivity	0.382**	<.006	Significant

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The results reveal a mixed pattern regarding the influence of political intervention on recruitment outcomes. Significant but moderate correlations were found between political intervention and task efficiency ($r = .555, p < .001$), as well as quality of work ($r = .525, p < .001$), suggesting that political involvement in recruitment can moderately affect how efficiently employees perform tasks and the quality of their outputs. Furthermore, political intervention showed a weaker but still significant influence on overall office productivity ($r = .382, p < .01$), implying that while political considerations in hiring decisions do affect productivity, the effect is not as strong as with other variables. This indicates that politically influenced recruitment may sometimes result in employees being less optimally matched to positions, thereby affecting their efficiency and quality of work, though not to an extreme extent.

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consequences for efficiency, work quality, and to some degree productivity, it does not appear to shape interpersonal or time management dynamics. From a managerial perspective, this highlights the need to minimize undue political influence in hiring practices, ensuring that recruitment decisions are based on merit and alignment with organizational goals to foster sustainable performance and equitable workplace outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study reveal that political intervention, while moderate, has a noticeable influence on recruitment practices and outcomes within the agency. Political patronage emerged as the most influential factor, reinforcing perceptions that personal or political connections can overshadow merit-based decision-making. Although recruitment outcomes such as job fit and employee qualifications were rated positively, candidate selection received the lowest ratings, reflecting persistent concerns about fairness and transparency. The correlation analysis further highlighted that political influence can moderately affect task efficiency, quality of work, and overall productivity, though it has little bearing on teamwork or time management.

Overall, the results point to a dual reality: the agency demonstrates the capacity to maintain minimum qualification standards and some alignment between jobs and candidates, yet political considerations continue to erode the integrity of recruitment processes. This undermines public trust, weakens confidence in meritocracy, and risks long-term organizational efficiency. Reducing political interference and strengthening accountability mechanisms are, therefore, critical steps to ensure that recruitment is guided primarily by fairness, transparency, and professional standards.

Recommendation

1. Establish stricter recruitment policies that emphasize transparency and merit-based selection.
2. Implement third-party or independent oversight in the hiring process to minimize political influence.
3. Develop clear evaluation frameworks for candidate qualifications, skills, and job fit.
4. Provide training for HR personnel on ethical recruitment and anti-patronage practices.
5. Introduce whistleblowing mechanisms and grievance systems to report undue political pressure.
6. Strengthen diversity and inclusion policies to ensure equitable representation regardless of political affiliation.
7. Regularly audit recruitment practices to ensure compliance with fairness and accountability standards.

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