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Research Article

The Effect of Employee Motivation on Organizational Performance Within the Unique Context of Guchi Woreda in Ethiopia

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Abstract

This study addressed the problem of understanding the effect of employee Motivation on organizational performance within the unique context of Guchi Woreda. To achieve this objective, the study utilized a mixed-methods research approach, with a strong emphasis on quantitative data analysis. Data was systematically collected through the distribution of self-administered questionnaires to a carefully selected random sample of 272 employees from the Guchi Woreda workforce. This sample size was statistically determined to be as indicative of the broader employee population. The collected quantitative data was then subjected to comprehensive statistical analysis, encompassing both descriptive measures and inferential techniques, notably regression analysis. The study's main findings revealed that incentives, the working environment, organizational culture, and job security each exerted a substantial positive effect on organizational performance within Guchi Woreda. These factors collectively played a substantial role in shaping employee motivation and subsequent performance outcomes. Conversely, the study found that employee recognition, as currently practiced and perceived by employees in Guchi Woreda, did not demonstrate a statistically significant impact on their organizational performance. Based on findings, Guchi Woreda organizations should prioritize enhancing incentives, working environment, organizational culture, and job security to significantly boost employee motivation and organizational performance. Employee recognition showed no significant impact, warranting further investigation.

Keywords

Employee Motivation, Organizational Performance, Mixed Methods

1. Introduction

In today's dynamic business landscape, organizations prioritize employee motivation to secure a competitive edge, enhance performance, and achieve higher productivity [32]. Organizational performance, a key focus for managers and stockholders, is judged by its capacity to realize established objectives [43]. Employee motivation is instrumental in boosting overall organizational performance by predicting individual behavior and effectiveness [70]. Cultivating strong employee relationships and strategic planning are essential for stimulating performance and achieving organizational objectives [40].

Low motivation negatively impacts both employee and

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organizational performance. While motivated employees are loyal, diligent, receptive to feedback, and adaptable. Unmotivated staff exhibit disengagement, poor service, reduced output [52], tardiness, absenteeism, and increased turnover [73]. Employee performance is shaped by various factors, including fair compensation, leadership, autonomy, recognition, training, career advancement, and a positive workplace culture. Understanding the drivers of motivation, whether external or internal, is crucial.

Effectively motivating employees is crucial for organizational success, enhancing value, performance, and growth. Human resources are recognized as a firm's most valuable asset for competitive advantage, making employee treatment critical for success and survival. Organizations increasingly balance worker contributions with provided benefits [86]. Employee motivation is vital for retention and productivity, prompting the implementation of motivational strategies like performance incentives [58]. Ultimately, employee drive is a key factor in achieving organizational objectives and influencing job performance and overall organizational performance [37].

Motivation's presence or absence significantly impacts organizational effectiveness. Insufficient motivation leads to low productivity, staff departures, unethical practices, absenteeism, and poor conduct. Conversely, supportive leaders who value and treat employees fairly boost motivation [45], directly influencing employee behavior and organizational success. Motivated employees are empowered to exceed assigned duties and volunteer for additional tasks, leading to significantly higher output [56]. Organizations can enhance motivation and performance through financial incentives (e.g., competitive salaries) and non-financial approaches (e.g., stress management, teamwork, recognition, job enrichment). The critical role of employee motivation is further highlighted by increasing business failures in Africa, prompting companies to seek motivated employees and develop enhanced remuneration programs [49].

Extensive research has investigated the relationship between employee motivation and organizational performance. While most empirical studies assert motivation significantly affects individual and organizational performance, some research suggests it doesn't invariably lead to enhanced performance, nor is it the sole determinant of productivity [9]. Studies by [12] linked recognition to higher motivation and commitment. [28] emphasized that motivational factors significantly increase job satisfaction, enhancing organizational performance. Despite these findings, a gap persists in understanding how specific motivational techniques can be tailored to diverse organizational contexts and employee demographics, and the sustained impact of various motivational factors on employee engagement and performance remains under-explored.

Studies on employee motivation's influence on organizational success in Ethiopia are currently limited [13, 11, 87]. Based on the researcher's eight years of observing motivational deficiencies in public service organizations, it is argued that employee engagement drivers are intrinsically personal; what inspires one may discourage another, and human satisfaction is unending. Thus, high salaries and benefits alone do not guarantee motivation, challenging modern managers to address diverse individual preferences [62]. This study addresses the limited understanding of specific employee motivational factors and their impact on organizational performance within Guchi Woreda, Ethiopia. It aims to empirically examine which factors influence organizational performance among Guchi Woreda employees, given the observed motivational deficiencies in public service and the scarcity of local research.

2. Literature Review

The internal drive of motivation leads individuals to act in specific ways [67]. [72] define motivation as the process that drives individuals to exert effort toward organizational goals, contingent on those efforts satisfying individual needs. Motivation fuels action and sustains ongoing effort. According to [10] motivation acts as the primary driver of behavior, providing energy, direction, and persistence. This behavior can be intrinsic, originating from the inherent satisfaction of the task, or extrinsic, performed to achieve an external reward or influence. According to [76], motivation is a fundamental influence on individual resilience, the development of expertise, and sustained commitment to goals. Individual motivational factors are diverse, reflecting the varied nature of human needs. Maslow's well-known hierarchy of needs theory proposes five levels, suggesting that individuals progress to higher levels only after satisfying those below. A crucial point, however, is that motivation is necessary for this progression; without it, the higher levels lack personal meaning [4].

2.1. Importance of Motivation

Employee performance relies heavily on motivation. Without it, individuals are unlikely to exert the effort needed to perform effectively. While performance is influenced by other factors like ability, competence, role perception, and resources, motivation remains crucial. Effective motivational systems not only boost performance and retention but also attract talent. Traditional rewards and financial incentives for strong performance are common motivational tools [58].

2.2. Types of Motivation

2.2.1. Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation stems from internal drives and interests, as opposed to external incentives. It represents the impetus to engage in an activity due to its inherent alignment with an individual's values or its contribution to a personally valued goal. According to [69], our most profound aspirations serve as the strongest drivers of motivation. [65] describe three forms of intrinsic motivation. The first is *interest*, where individuals engage in activities, they find inherently enjoyable and fulfilling, such as pursuing a personal interest project at work. The second is *accomplishment*, where even tedious tasks can be motivating due to the sense of satisfaction derived from completing them, such as meeting a deadline. The third form is *compliance*, where motivation stems from adhering to personally held standards, such as ethical principles, loyalty to a team, or a commitment to fairness and justice.

2.2.2. Extrinsic Motivation

A study defines extrinsic motivation as engaging in an activity due to external influences or incentives[74]. It focuses on actions performed to achieve outcomes separate from the work itself. Within the workplace, extrinsic motivation denotes the desire to meet obligations or attain goals that are external to the intrinsic aspects of the job, often exemplified by perceiving employment primarily as a vehicle for financial gain. Extrinsic motivation originates from external sources, with money being the most common and often debated example. [10] provides further examples, including employee of the month awards, benefits packages, bonuses, and company-sponsored events.

2.3. Organizational Performance

A study [13] defines organizational performance as the evaluation of achievements against established objectives and goals, essentially comparing actual outcomes with intended outputs. This review focuses on three key performance indicators: shareholder return, financial performance, and market performance. Financial performance measures the efficiency of a business or product within the market, while market performance reflects its overall success. Shareholder return indicates the extent to which a company increases shareholder wealth. Organizational performance is a critical element for all organizations, regardless of whether they are for-profit or non-profit. To effectively leverage the factors that influence performance, managers must understand them and how to implement them. However, organizational performance remains a debated topic among researchers, with varying perspectives on its definition and measurement [3].

2.4. Financial Incentives

Financial incentives encompass the total monetary compensation provided to employees, whether paid in a lump sum or through regular payments, including all income sources [7]. As one of the initial kinds of motivators, they are commonly identified by their immediacy, providing employees with direct and timely feedback on their performance [17]. Incentive programs link compensation to productivity, primarily aiming to motivate individuals and teams to achieve higher performance levels. Incentives are designed to encourage specific actions or increased effort. [42] define them as mechanisms intended to elicit particular behavioral changes. Performance refers to how effectively an employee completes assigned tasks using their skills and effort. Incentive pays, as defined by [10], is a form of compensation awarded upon achieving predetermined performance goals. Financial motivation typically centers around salary, the primary monetary incentive for most employees. Beyond base pay, employees may also receive allowances for cost of living, travel, and other expenses. Salaries are often subject to annual increases, with occasional adjustments to allowances. Some organizations link salary incentives to performance targets, either individual or organizational, with the amount awarded based on actual output compared to those targets [49]. Incentive systems, which link compensation to performance, are used to motivate employees and boost productivity. They encourage both immediate improvements and the achievement of future goals. Incentives are used by organizations to reach specific targets, encourage desired actions, and build teamwork for group benefits. While not universally applicable, incentive systems can be effective in improving individual effort and performance when implemented appropriately within a suitable context [54].

2.5. Working Environment

A productive work environment, characterized by efficient processes, appropriate work locations and schedules, and readily available resources, fosters employee success [68]. This, in turn, facilitates career development, leading to individual and organizational growth while reinforcing the organization’s fundamental values. A productive work environment is characterized by peace and quiet, fostering focused work. Employees who can concentrate without frequent interruptions are more likely to stay on task and accomplish more daily. A stress-free atmosphere further enhances cognitive performance and physical well-being [55]. Effective communication is also essential, often involving open dialogue between employees at all levels, including management. Opportunities for employees to ask questions and receive feedback contribute to a sense of value and promote professional development. The work environment is a multifaceted concept, as reflected in the existing literature. It encompasses the physical setting where employees perform their work [30]. [72] highlight the significant influence of the work environment on employee welfare and productivity, particularly through the "psychological contract," which shapes emotional reactions at work. Consequently, the workplace conditions can have both favorable and unfavorable impacts on employees’ professional and psychological welfare.

2.6. Organizational Culture

Culture represents the common practices, beliefs, and norms that shape how people live together in society. [18] describes group culture as "a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems." Essentially, as groups evolve, they face two fundamental challenges: creating internal cohesion and adapting to the external environment for continued survival. Through collective problem-solving, groups learn and develop shared assumptions and beliefs—their culture. This shared set of values, beliefs, and norms shapes the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral patterns of individuals within the organizational context [78].

A study indicates that organizational cultures are systems of values that subconsciously influence decision-making within the organization [8]. Organizational culture, according to [24] refers to the norms that employees experience and understand as their workplace, influencing their behavior and how they adjust to meet organizational objectives. [80] further describe it as the internal and external communication patterns of its members. Expanding on this, [12] define organizational culture as a shared system of values, symbols, and rituals within a company that dictates "how things are done" to address internal management issues as well as interactions with customers, suppliers, and the broader environment.

Numerous academic perspectives suggest that a robust organizational culture yields three primary benefits for companies. First, it acts as a form of deeply embedded social control, influencing employee actions and behaviors. Second, it provides social cohesion, creating a feeling of unity and a bond among the workforces. This social glue is increasingly crucial for attracting and retaining top talent. Finally, a strong culture helps employees interpret organizational events, facilitating more efficient and effective communication. This shared understanding of reality fosters greater cooperation among employees [57].

2.7. Employee Recognition

Recognition is crucial for employees because it provides a sense of purpose, reminding them of the value of their contributions to the organization's overall goals. This, in turn, fosters a stronger sense of connection and satisfaction with their work. Integrating employee recognition into the workplace culture is essential. In today's work environment, organizations with the most satisfied and engaged employees often have robust training programs and highly skilled staff. However, even the most capable employees cannot perform optimally without sufficient motivation. For many employees, recognition from management is a primary source of motivation. Therefore, understanding the connection between recognizing staff and impactful leadership plays a critical role in positive organizational outcomes [14]. Employees are highly motivated by recognition from colleagues and superiors for their hard work. While organizations often associate staff recognition with monetary incentives or grand celebrations, showing gratitude doesn't need to be costly. Simple gestures like a compliment, a thank-you email, or a warm welcome can be powerful forms of recognition. The key to a successful employee engagement program is a consistent flow of meaningful interactions between leaders and employees, which fosters greater job satisfaction. A company-wide recognition system can enhance capabilities and inspire employees to excel. A simple meeting dedicated to expressing gratitude can be particularly impactful, especially in remote work environments where human interaction is limited. Such appreciation gatherings can significantly boost morale [51].

2.8. Employee Job Security

Job security refers to the certainty of continued employment, often protected by employment contracts, collective bargaining agreements, or labor laws that prevent arbitrary dismissal. Without job security, employees face a significant risk of job loss [84]. The increasing prevalence of economic instability has brought job security to the forefront of academic discourse. Indeed, some scholars argue that job security is becoming increasingly important for both employees and organizations [2]. Job insecurity stands as a considerable, and sometimes unnoticed, difficulty for enterprises, negatively impacting employee performance. Furthermore, research has established job insecurity as a major contributor to declining employee well-being. The adequacy of organizational support in addressing employee job security concerns warrant's investigation [6]. Organizations can cultivate a culture of intrinsic motivation by fostering positive relationships and interactions between employees and employers. This internal drive significantly influences employee performance through various micro-factors [33].

2.9. Empirical Reviews

A study [61] explores how staff drive affects company output, focusing on the Ken Trade Network Agency case study. The investigation seeks to clarify the connection between pay, workplace environment, development, and employment stability regarding staff drive. The research utilizes Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, Vroom's expectancy theory, and Herzberg's motivation theory to gain a deeper understanding of the subject better. The research applies a descriptive approach and statistical methods to examine the information. Results indicate that pay, advancement opportunities, and development programs considerably affect staff drive and work output. The research determines that a favorable workplace drives staff, builds collaboration, and enhances client relations. The study recommends management review employee remuneration, provide continuous training, and allow employees to innovate and think freely to improve staff and organizational performance.

The study investigates factors affecting construction workers' motivation and their impact on performance and productivity [64]. Key factors include teamwork, contract-based work, leadership-based supervision, and equipment provision. Communication, love and belonging, challenging tasks, goal identification, and overtime are also critical factors. These factors significantly influence motivation and overall productivity.

A study [23] aimed to evaluate the impact of worker motivation on organizational performance in a nonprofit agency, specifically Alight Rwanda. The study included 81 participants from the entire intended population. Data was gathered through questionnaires and interviews and analyzed utilizing SPSS Version 23. The findings indicated that consistent salary and earnings enhanced staff productivity, although a minority disagreed. The research concluded that allocating more resources towards financial rewards, such as salaries, compensation, and benefits, would improve personnel effectiveness and output. The results hold significance for diverse categories and sectors in Rwanda, encompassing researchers, future scholars, Alight Rwanda, MKU University, the government, and the public.

A study [11] investigated the influence of motivation on employee performance at the Bank of Abyssinia. To gather data, the researcher surveyed 176 employees from the head office and five branch locations using questionnaires and conducted semi-structured interviews. The study revealed a significant impact of employee motivation on organizational performance. Despite promotion being the main motivational factor, most respondents reported low motivation levels. This low motivation affects staff commitment, productivity, and organizational success. The study recommends using employee-based motivational packages like Maslow's hierarchy of need to achieve individual and organizational goals.

A study [45] examines the effect of motivation on employee performance at the Vice President's Office in Dar es Salaam. Results show a positive relationship between motivation and performance, with salary, transport, medical, extra duty allowance, career achievement, promotion benefits, and recognition all showing a positive correlation. The results suggest that to get the most out of human resources and improve performance, motivation packages should include both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. [31] examined the influence of economic motivation on performance among Kenyan project workers, specifically focusing on the impact of additional time bonuses. The study used questionnaires and SPSS 23 and Excel for analysis. Giancola's study on financial motivation and business performance found that employees prioritize money and rewards over recognition and awards. Organization leaders are interested in understanding which incentives motivate their employees to maintain stability.

A study [63] suggests that leaders and compensation specialists should link pay to performance and a positive attitude to achieve performance goals. Incentive policies are essential for organizational success and goal achievement.

A study [32] explores the impact of employee motivation on organizational performance and the relationship between reward systems and performance. It focuses on literature and past studies, concluding that employe motivation positively impacts organizational performance. The study concluded the importance of employee motivation and reward systems in improving productivity and viability. It emphasizes the need for managers and employers to maintain and improve their reward systems.

The study examined the impact of employee motivation on organizational performance in manufacturing firms in Enugu State [25]. Results showed a strong positive relationship between employee motivation and organizational performance, with extrinsic motivation significantly influencing performance. This aligns with equity theory, emphasizing fair remuneration packages. The study recommends firms adopt extrinsic rewards to increase productivity. Further research on rewards' relationship and influence on performance is recommended to address individual conflicts resulting from poor rewards.

This study aimed to examine the impact of employee motivation on organizational performance [66]. The research used Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Equity theory, with a descriptive survey design. The study revealed that employee job satisfaction significantly impacts organizational performance. The findings imply that institutions should acknowledge employees' contributions and offer incentives for high performance, ensure competitive pay, and promote a positive and engaging work atmosphere to encourage employees' retention. This study will be valuable to management and future researchers, serving as a reference point for subsequent research on similar topics.

2.10. Hypothesis Development and Conceptual Framework

2.10.1. Hypothesis Development

Employee Incentive and Organizational Performance

Financial incentives aim to boost productivity and performance by motivating desired behaviors. Competitive salaries that meet individual needs are key factors in attracting and retaining employees. Conversely, inadequate compensation, misaligned with the effort expended, can lead to decreased productivity [5]. [36] explored the impact of financial motivation on business performance using both qualitative and quantitative data. The survey results indicated that financial rewards are the primary motivator for most employees, with appreciation being a secondary consideration. To effectively motivate employees and foster stability within the organization, leaders need to understand which incentives are most appealing to individuals and groups. Most employees are more motivated by compensation and benefits than by recognition and awards. It was suggested by [63] that performance-based financial incentives work better when leaders make it clear how pay is linked to performance and encourage people to have a positive attitude about meeting performance goals. Successfully linking pay to performance requires collaboration between executives and compensation specialists. Organizations commonly adopt incentive policies due to their crucial role in driving performance and achieving organizational goals, according to the literature.

H1: Employee Incentive positively affects organizational performance among Guchi Woreda Employees.

Employee working environment and organizational performance

The physical work environment significantly influences employee interaction, task completion, and overall well-being. It directly impacts the senses and subtly shapes interpersonal dynamics, ultimately affecting productivity. Room or location characteristics play a crucial role in employee satisfaction and output. In today's dynamic job market, where employees have numerous options, a positive work environment is paramount for retention [81]. Research consistently demonstrates that employees value specific workspace features, such as lighting, ventilation, access to natural light, and acoustics, as these directly correlate with their productivity and satisfaction [90]. Effective lighting, along with ergonomic furniture, positively impacts employee health and, consequently, productivity, as light significantly affects physical, physiological, and psychological well-being [89]. Ambient office features, including lighting, temperature, windows, and air circulation, also influence employee attitudes, behaviors, satisfaction, and performance. Closed office layouts, offering individual or shared offices, provide greater privacy and a quieter environment, facilitating concentration and creative thinking [60]. Conversely, open-plan office layouts can be a source of stress and reduce motivation due to noise and a lack of private space [27].

H2: Employee Working Environment positively affects organizational performance among Guchi Woreda Employees.

Organizational Culture and Organizational Performance

Given the profound and pervasive influence of culture on organizational life, it is reasonable to expect a link between cultural elements and high organizational performance. A common belief is that for organizational culture to positively impact performance, it must be "strong," possessing distinctive characteristics such as specific shared values, beliefs, and behavioral patterns. Some argue that positive cultural attributes directly enhance performance in proportion to their intensity. This viewpoint is referred to as the "strong culture hypothesis" [75]. Strong organizational cultures are often presented as essential for improved performance and a key driver of sustained business success. Companies with such cultures are believed to generate a palpable sense of shared energy that empowers employees and moves the organization toward enhanced performance. Numerous management scholars have associated strongly shared values with increased commitment, self-confidence, ethical behavior, and reduced job stress.

A study [50] suggests that organizational culture may improve organizational performance, employee job satisfaction, and confidence in addressing issues. However, a discrepancy between organizational culture and the changing demands of internal and external stakeholders can reduce organizational efficiency [26]. Therefore, the link between specific cultural characteristics and high performance has varied over time. Organizational culture influences employee behavior and performance in several keyways. First, it gives employees an understanding of organizational history along with current operations, shaping future actions. Second, it may cultivate dedication to the organization's mission and values, creating unity among those working toward shared goals. In essence, organizational effectiveness often depends on shared employee values. Third, culture functions as a control mechanism through its norms, guiding behavior toward accepted standards. Achieving this is also possible by hiring and keeping employees whose principles are consistent with the organization's. Finally, particular kinds of organizational cultures might better facilitate efficiency and productivity compared to others [82]. The influence of organizational culture regarding employee conduct and output can be outlined in four main themes [15].

H3: Organizational culture positively affects organizational performance among Guchi Woreda Employees.

Employee Recognition and organization performance

A study [22] argues that effective appreciation leads to improved employee performance. Recognition makes employees feel valued, boosting morale and increasing efficiency. [20] suggest that well-implemented rewards and recognition foster a positive work environment conducive to high performance. [83] argues that recognition is the most prevalent and impactful tool organizations use to foster employee engagement. For recognition to be effective, [83] outlines three essential conditions: First, recognition should be frequent, ideally weekly, so that employees perceive themselves as consistently appreciated. Second, it ought to be detailed, clearly defining the action or accomplishment that is acknowledged, which adds significance and reinforces desired actions. Finally, recognition should be timely, delivered promptly after the commendable activity.

H4: Employee Recognition positively affects organizational performance among Guchi Woreda Employees.

Job security and organization performance

Job security, as [21] argued, is a critical element of employee well-being, and in turn affects sustained productivity. [17] also highlight the beneficial effect of job security on workers' mental and physical well-being. These factors then influence overall well-being and performance. [53] posits that worker well-being is crucial for organizational health. Prior research has consistently shown the significance of taking worker well-being into account when studying the connection between different HR strategies and their results [48]. Moreover, [21] discovered a link between how secure employees felt in their jobs and various aspects of their well-being at work, such as emotional involvement, indicating that a greater sense of job security may improve personal capabilities. Therefore, this research seeks to explore the relationship between job security and how well people perform at work, with an emphasis on worker well-being.

H5: Job security positively affects organizational performance among Guchi Woreda Employees.

2.10.2. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shows how employee motivation relates to organizational performance among employees at Guchi Woreda. Organizational performance, the dependent variable, is contingent upon effective employee motivation. Several key determinants contribute to high employee motivation, including employee incentives, organizational culture, the work environment, recognition, and job security. This framework, visually depicted in Figure 1, serves as the guiding structure for this study's investigation into these interrelationships.

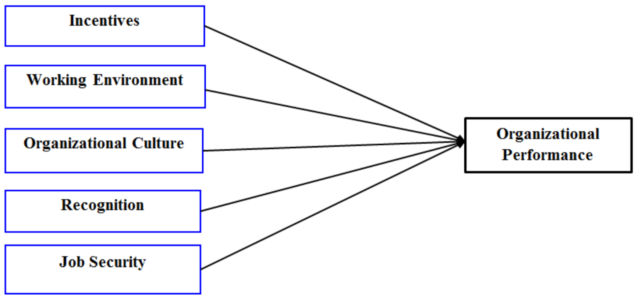


Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework.*

3. Materials and Methods

The study primarily employed a robust quantitative methodology to investigate the effect of Employee Motivation on Organizational Performance, specifically focusing on Guchi Woreda Employees. This approach utilized a descriptive and explanatory research design to identify associations and clarify cause-and-effect relationships between variables. From a target population of 844 Guchi Woreda employees, a representative sample size of 272 was determined using simple random sampling and [92]. formula, ensuring an unbiased selection process. Data collection was facilitated through structured, self-administered questionnaires, meticulously designed by adapting items from previous studies and incorporating a five-point Likert scale for both dependent and independent variables. To ensure the content validity of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted with 30 respondents, leading to essential wording adjustments and alignment with the study's objectives. Furthermore, the reliability for internal consistency was rigorously examined using Cronbach's alpha, with all variables successfully surpassing the acceptable threshold of 0.7. The collected data were then analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 26.0, employing both descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, standard deviation) and a Multiple Linear Regression Model to comprehensively examine how independent variables, such as employee incentives, working environment, organizational culture, recognition, and job security, influence the dependent variable of organizational performance.

Model Specification

To make the study's goal come true, a linear regression model was created and tested. This model looked at how incentives, organizational culture, the working environment for employees, employee recognition, and job security affect organizational performance. In this regard, the following model will be developed:

$$Y= \alpha + \beta^1X^1+ \beta^2X^{2} + \beta^3X^3 +\beta^4X^4 + \beta^5X^5 +\mu^i$$

Where,
Y = dependent variable (organizational performance)
α = constant
β^i= Independent variable coefficient
X^i = Independent variable
μ^i=Error terms
X^1= Employee Incentive
X^2 = Employee working environment
X^3= Employee Organizational Culture
X^4= Employee Recognition
X^5= Employee Job Security

4. Result and Analysis

4.1. Reliability Statistics

Reliability is an attribute of an instrument used indicates the consistency among the items within each scale. This study established the reliability of the measurement instrument. The scale construct questions for each variable were designed to assess the intended concept. To evaluate how effectively the items within each scale construct consistently measured the same underlying idea, the researcher employed [19]. The Cronbach's alpha results, calculated using SPSS 26, are presented in the table below, illustrating the influence of incentives, the working environment for employees, organizational culture, employee recognition, and job security on organizational performance among Guchi Woreda employees. According to [85], an acceptable Cronbach's alpha level typically ranges from 0.70 to 0.95 across different studies. Alpha values below 0.70 might suggest weak inter-item correlation within the construct. Table 1 below shows the Cronbach's alpha values for all employed variables, ranging from 0.768 to 0.869, demonstrating the reliability of the questionnaire and the collected data.

Table 1. Reliability Test (Cronbach's Alpha).

Variables	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Incentives	5	0.869
Working Environment	5	0.768
Organizational Culture	5	0.822
Recognitions	5	0.816
Job Security	5	0.837
Organizational Performance	5	0.788

Source: Author Own.

4.2. Demographic Result and Descriptive Statistics

The questionnaire commenced with a section on demographic characteristics to gauge the composition of the sample population. This initial section aimed to gather a limited set of data pertaining to the respondents' demographic backgrounds. Following this, the subsequent variables of the respondents, including gender, age, level of education, and experience of the Guchi Woreda employees, are summarized and described in the Table 2 below. Accordingly, gender composition shows that both males and females participated in the study. Gender distribution revealed a noticeable male majority of the respondents, 166 (64.8%) compared to 90 females (35.2%). The age of the respondents shows that 102 (39.9%) are under 30 years old, 76 (29.7%) are between 31 and 40, 47 (18.3%) are between 41 and 50, and the smallest group, 31 (12.1%), is over 50 years old. Specifically, the combined percentage of respondents aged under 30 (39.9%) and 31-40 (29.7%) totals 69.6%. This ratio signifies that a substantial portion of the survey participants fell within these two younger age brackets, highlighting a clear dominance of young adults in the collected data. Furthermore, educational attainment showed that the largest group of respondents held a bachelor's degree. The respondents demonstrated varying levels of educational attainment, with 37 (14.4%) having completed grade 12 & Level. Following this, 95 (37.1%) were diploma holders, and the largest group, 109 (42.6%), held bachelor's degrees. Finally, 15 (5.9%) possessed master's degrees or higher. The educational status data shows that a substantial majority have attained a diploma or higher (79.7%), implying that the insights gathered are largely from individuals with post-secondary education. Lastly, the experience levels indicate that the bulk of the respondents have between 3 and 10 years of professional experience (approximately 65.7%), suggesting that the findings are primarily shaped by the experiences of those in the early to mid-stages of their careers, with less influence from very early careers or highly experienced individuals. Regarding work experience, the data indicates that the most common range among respondents was 4-6 years. The distribution shows that 64 (25%) had less than 3 years of experience. The largest group followed, with 102 (39.8%) reporting 4-6 years of experience. A substantial portion also reported 7-10 years of experience, accounting for 79 (30.9%). Finally, the smallest group had above 10 years of experience, totaling 11 (4.3%). The most prevalent experience level within the polled group was 4 to 6 years.

Table 2. Demographic and Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents.

Features	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	166	64.8
	Female	90	35.2
	Total	256	100
Age	Less than 30	102	39.9
	31-40	76	29.7

Features	Category	Frequency	Percent
	41-50	47	18.3
	Above 50	31	12.1
	Total	256	100
Educational Status	Completed grade 12 & Level	37	14.4
	Diploma	95	37.1
	Degree	109	42.6
	MSc and above	15	5.9
	Total	256	100
Experience	Less than 3 years	64	25
	4-6 years	102	39.8
	7-10 years	79	30.9
	Above 10 years	11	4.3
	Total	256	100

Source: Author Own.

Table 3 presents a descriptive overview of several key variables, utilizing mean scores and standard deviations derived from a five-point scale administered to 256 respondents. The interpretation of these scores is facilitated by categorizing them into low (below 2), moderate (2 to below 3), and high (3 and above) perception levels [77]. Examining the variable of incentive, the mean of 3.66 signifies a high level of perceived adequacy, with a standard deviation of 0.795 indicating a moderate consistency in responses. Similarly, respondents perceive the working environment as high, with a mean of 3.48 and a standard deviation of 0.815. Organizational culture follows this trend with a mean of 3.47, suggesting a high perception, although the slightly larger standard deviation of 0.876 points to a bit more variability in opinions. In contrast, recognition stands out with a mean of 2.88, placing it in the moderate perception category, and its higher standard deviation of 0.969 reveals the most diverse range of opinions among the assessed variables. Once again, people perceive job security as high, with a mean of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 0.851. Finally, organizational performance registers a mean of 3.34, indicating a high overall perception, with a standard deviation of 0.853 reflecting a moderate spread in responses. Overall, the data suggests that respondents generally hold high perceptions across most of the examined factors, with the exception of recognition, which is perceived as moderate and exhibits the greatest variability in responses.

Table 3*. Descriptive statistics.*

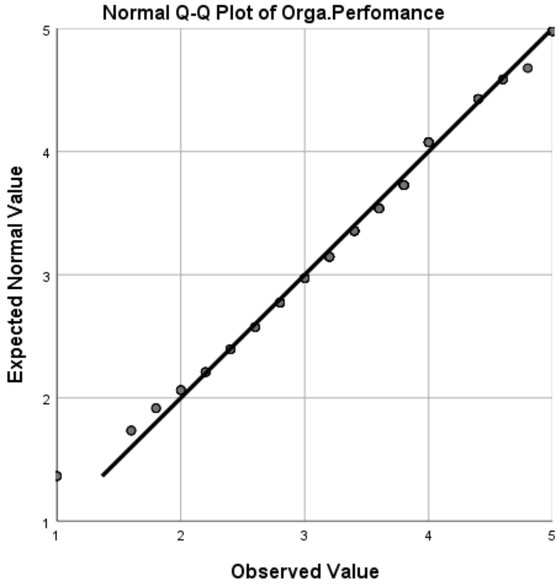
Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Incentive	256	3.66	0.795
Working Environment	256	3.48	0.815
Organizational Culture	256	3.47	0.876
Recognition	256	2.88	0.969
Job Security	256	3.65	0.851
Organizational Performance	256	3.34	0.853

Source: Author Own.

4.3. Test for the Linear Regression Model Assumption

4.3.1. Linearity Test

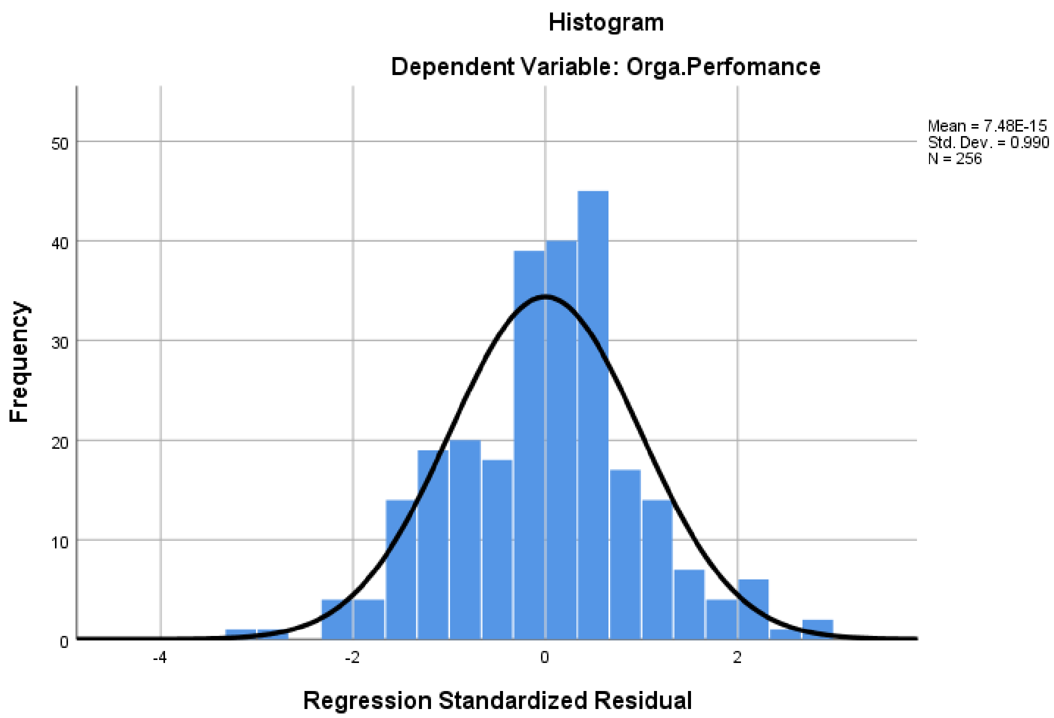
According to [39], the linearity test for the connection between variables is its correlation method. This relationship can be visually represented using a scatter plot, where pairs of values for two metric variables are mapped as individual points, with the aim of identifying a straight-line trend in the plotted data. [34] explains that homoscedasticity means the amount of error is the same no matter the level of the predictor variables. In simple terms, when looking at a dependent variable, homoscedasticity means its spread of variance is the same across all levels of the predictor variables, which can be seen as a cloud of dots on a scatter plot. On the other hand, non-homoscedasticity is usually seen as a funnel shape, which shows that the error variance goes up (or down) in a regular way as the dependent variable. Figure 2 below illustrates the study's linearity results. This suggests that the distribution of organizational performance is approximately normal.



Source: Author Own.

Figure 2. *Linearity.*

4.3.2. Normality Test



Source: Author Own.

Figure 3. *Histogram.*

The histogram shows how the regression standardized residuals for organizational performance are spread out, along with a normal distribution curve. This visual assessment helps in evaluating whether the residuals are approximately normally distributed, a key assumption for many linear regression analyses [38]. Therefore, Figure 3 presents a histogram suggesting approximately normally distributed residuals.

4.3.3. Multicollinearity Test

(i). Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

According to [39], multicollinearity occurs when one variable exhibits a strong relationship with another. The more pronounced this inter-correlation, the more challenging it becomes to understand the individual impact of each variable in an analysis. The researcher assessed multicollinearity using Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) to verify its absence. Table 4 demonstrates that no significant multicollinearity issues existed among independent variables. This conclusion is evidenced by the VIF values, which ranged from 1.565 to 2.073, all below the commonly accepted threshold of 5 [40].

Table 4. *Multicollinearity test.*

Model	Collinearity Statistic	
	Tolerance	VIF
Constant		
Incentive	0.639	1.565
Working Environment	0.504	1.983
Organizational Culture	0.607	1.647
Recognition	0.482	2.073
Job Security	0.541	1.848

Source: Author Own.

(ii). Correlation Matrix

According to [46], correlation signifies the extent to which two or more variables are associated. The linear correlation coefficient (r) quantifies the degree to which these variables change together. This coefficient (r) quantifies the magnitude and nature of a linear relationship between two variables, specifically the dependent and independent ones. Its possible values range from -1 to +1. A positive ‘r’ indicates a positive association between the variables, with +1 representing a perfect positive association. Conversely, a negative ‘r’ denotes a negative association, and -1 signifies a perfect negative association. An ‘r’ of zero implies no linear relationship between the variables. Table 5 displays the Pearson correlation matrix.

The Pearson correlation analysis reveals in the table 5 shows that there is a significant positive relationship between several factors and organizational performance within the study’s sample of 256 Guchi Woreda Employees participants. The statistical analysis reveals that all correlations are significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$), suggesting a low probability of these relationships being due to random chance. Notably, incentive demonstrates the strongest positive correlation with organizational performance (r =.698), suggesting a strong association between higher incentives and better organizational outcomes. Job security (r =.627) and working environment (r =.605) also exhibit strong positive correlations with organizational performance, implying that increased job security and a more positive work environment are significantly linked to improved organizational performance. Organizational culture (r =.551) and recognition (r =.504) show moderate positive correlations, indicating that a favorable organizational culture and higher levels of employee recognition are also significantly associated with better organizational performance. Furthermore, the analysis reveals inter-correlations among the independent variables themselves, suggesting that these factors are interrelated to varying degrees. For instance, the working environment and recognition show a strong positive correlation (r =.620). In conclusion, the findings strongly suggest that improvements in incentives, job security, working environment, organizational culture, and recognition are all associated with enhanced organizational performance within this specific context. However, it is crucial to remember that correlation does not establish causation.

Table 5. *Pearson Correlation.*

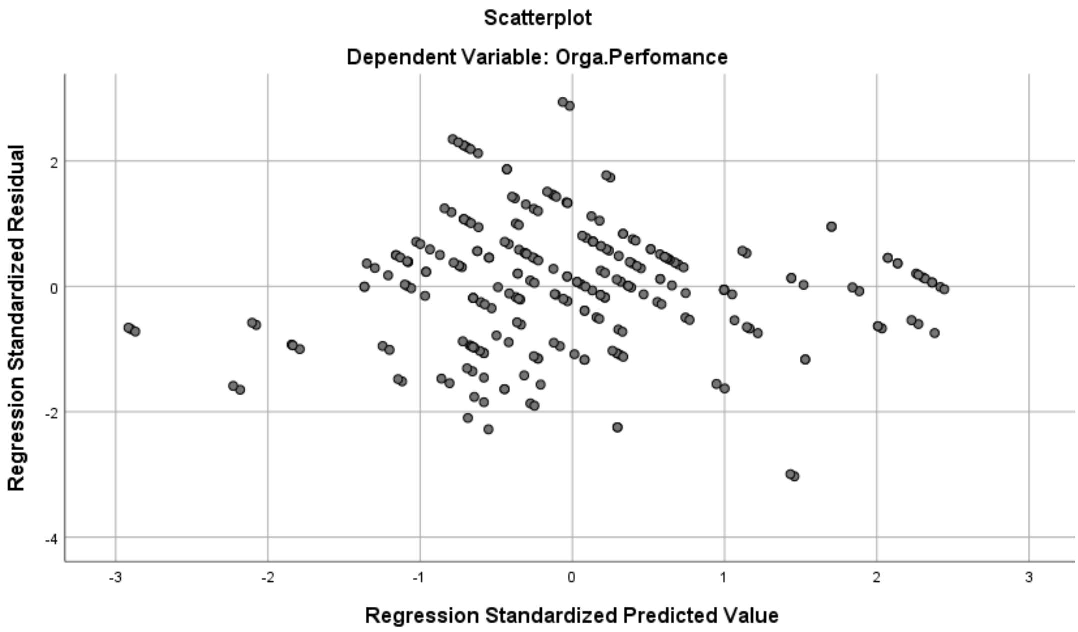
		Incentive	Org. Culture	Working. Evt	Recognition	Job. Security	Orga. Performance
Incentive	Pearson Correlation	1	.424**	.556**	.485**	.436**	.698**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	256	256	256	256	256	256
Org. Culture	Pearson Correlation	.424**	1	.476**	.537**	.551**	.551**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	256	256	256	256	256	256
Working.	Pearson Correlation	.556**	.476**	1	.620**	.535**	.605**

		Incentive	Org. Culture	Working. Evt	Recognition	Job. Security	Orga. Performance
Evt	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	256	256	256	256	256	256
	Pearson Correlation	.485**	.537**	.620**	1	.598**	.504**
Recognition	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	256	256	256	256	256	256
	Pearson Correlation	.436**	.551**	.535**	.598**	1	.627**
Job. Security	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	256	256	256	256	256	256
	Pearson Correlation	.698**	.551**	.605**	.504**	.627**	1
Orga. Performance	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	256	256	256	256	256	256

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Source: Author Own.

4.3.4. Homoscedasticity Test

In this regression model examining organizational performance, homoscedasticity implies that the variance of the error terms is the same across all predicted levels of organizational performance. Figure 4 (the scatterplot) allows us to visually check this assumption. If the spread of the points (representing the errors) is roughly the same across the entire range of predicted values, then homoscedasticity is likely present. In Figure 4, the points appear randomly scattered without forming a distinct pattern like a funnel or a widening/narrowing band. This evidence suggests that the error variance is relatively constant across the predicted values of organizational performance. So, looking at Figure 4, it seems that the assumption of homoscedasticity is satisfied, which means our regression analysis is likely reliable [29, 35]. If homoscedasticity is violated (heteroscedasticity), meaning the error variance changes with different predicted values, it can impact how accurate our predictions are and how valid our statistical tests are.



Source: Author Own.

Figure 4. *Homoscedasticity.*

The researcher constructed the following linear regression model with the included variables.

$$OP=\beta0 + \beta1X1 +\beta2X2 + \beta3X3+ \beta4X4 + \beta5X5 + \mu$$

The coefficient of determination (R^2) shows well the regression model accounts for changes in the dependent variables, and the beta value can be either negative or positive, indicating how much each variable affects the dependent variables. The beta coefficient indicates each variable's level of influence on the dependent variables. The P-value indicates the probability that the observed results are due to chance. This following table 6 shows an adjusted R^2 value of 64.3%, meaning that the independent variables (incentive, organizational culture, working environment, recognition, and job security) together account for that percentage of the dependent variable (organizational performance). Another variable explains the remaining 35.7% of performance.

Table 6. Model summary.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.806[a]	.650	.643	.51032

a. Predictors: (Constant), Incentive, Org. Culture, Working. Env, Recognition, Job. Security

b. Dependent Variable: Org. Performance

Source: Author Own.

Table 7. ANOVA test.

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	120.660	5	24.132	92.663	.000[b]
	Residual	65.107	250	.260		
	Total	185.767	255			

a. Dependent Variable: Org. Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Incentive, Org. Culture, Working. Env, Recognition, Job. Security

Source: Author Own.

As shown in Table 7, the regression model demonstrates a significant ability to predict the dependent variable. This is supported by the statistical significance of the model ($p < 0.05$). In summary, the regression model significantly predicts the outcome variable, suggesting a good fit for the observed data.

Table 8 displays the results of the model's prediction of performance based on incentive, working environment, organizational culture, recognition, and job security. With a 95% confidence level, all variables show a positive and significant impact, except for recognition. The unstandardized coefficient (beta value) reflects the relative importance of each independent variable in influencing the dependent variable.

Table 8. Regression result.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.268	.171		1.563	.119

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	Incentive	.390	.041	.443	9.449	.000
	Working. Env	.181	.055	.173	3.284	.001
	Org. Culture	.155	.047	.159	3.316	.001
	Recognition	-.092	.058	-.086	-1.592	.113
	Job. Security	.306	.051	.305	5.998	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Org. Performance

Source: Author Own.

Regression Model Equation results presented as follows:

Organizational Performance = 0.268 + 0.390 Incentive + 0.181 Working Env. + 0.155 Org. Culture - 0.092 Recognition + 0.306 Job Security + μ

4.4. Discussion

4.4.1. Employees Incentive and Organizational Performance

Financial incentives are monetary compensation offered to employees to motivate them toward higher performance levels. Typically, these incentives are linked to performance goals, with salary being the primary monetary incentive. Proper implementation can enhance individual effort and performance. The results of this study in Table 8 revealed that employees' incentive variables have a significant positive influence on organizational performance, with a β estimate value of 0.390 and a *p*-value of 0.00. This evidence implies that a one-unit increase in the incentive package for employees results in a 39% unit increase in organizational performance among Guchi Woreda employees. Consequently, the researcher does not reject the revealed hypothesis (H1) regarding this variable. This implies that investing in and optimizing employee incentive structures can yield tangible improvements in overall organizational performance. It highlights the direct link between motivating employees through financial rewards and achieving higher operational efficiency and output. This study's finding aligns with [36], who determined a significant positive relationship between motivation and the performance of organizations through financial incentives. Financial rewards are the primary motivator for employees. Leaders must understand which incentives are most appealing to individuals and groups to effectively motivate employees and foster organizational performance. Similarly, [5] confirms that financial incentives, such as competitive salaries, are crucial for attracting and retaining employees, while inadequate compensation can lead to decreased productivity. Furthermore, [63] suggests that performance-based financial incentives are effective when leaders link pay to performance and promote positive attitudes toward goal achievement. [91] concluded that the incentives used by employer trigger and influence employee motivation, and that monetary incentives have an impact on job performance.

4.4.2. Employees' Working Environment and Organizational Performance

A productive work environment with efficient processes, suitable arrangements, and accessible resources significantly boosts organizational performance by enabling employee success. A peaceful, quiet atmosphere fosters focused work, maximizing output through minimized interruptions. Additionally, a stress-free environment enhances cognitive function and well-being, improving efficiency and work quality. Ultimately, this environment supports individual and organizational growth, reinforces core values, and precisely contributes to enhanced organizational performance [55, 68]. The results of this study in Table 8 show that the working environment has a significant influence on organizational performance, with a β estimate of 0.181 and a p-value of 0.001. This evidence indicates that a one-unit increase in the working environment results in an 18.1% increase in organizational performance in Guchi Woreda employees. Therefore, the researcher does not reject the stated hypothesis (H2) regarding this variable. This implies that strategic investments in fostering an efficient, peaceful, and stress-free work atmosphere are not merely beneficial for employee well-being but are direct drivers of enhanced productivity and overall organizational outcomes. This study's findings align with [71] who highlighted the significant influence of the work environment upon employee well-being and productivity. Specifically, factors such as comfort, safety, positive relationships, and recognition directly boost employee morale, engagement, and productivity. Similarly, [79] depicted that a better working environment motivates employees to perform better and positively affects organizational success. In addition to the above, [59] found that a comfortable employee working environment, encompassing aspects like office location and design, as well as the policies and procedures formulated to boost employee motivation, significantly and positively influenced organizational performance by encouraging employees to fulfill their working responsibilities properly.

4.4.3. Employees Organizational Culture and Organizational Performance

Organizational culture significantly influences performance. It is widely believed that strong, shared values, beliefs, and behavioral patterns enhance performance. Positive cultural attributes directly improve performance in proportion to their intensity. Over the past decade, organizational culture has become a crucial aspect of daily functioning, as performance is increasingly understood depending on it. The results of this study in Table 8 show that organizational culture has a significant positive influence on organizational performance, with a β estimate of 0.155 and a p-value of 0.001. This evidence indicates that a one-unit increase in organizational culture leads to a 15.5% increase in organizational performance in Guchi Woreda employees. Therefore, the researcher does not reject the stated hypothesis (H3) regarding this variable. This implies that cultivating a strong culture with shared values, beliefs, and positive behavioral patterns isn't just about fostering a good work environment; it's a direct strategy for boosting productivity and achieving organizational goals. This study's findings align with [50] assertion that organizational culture influences organizational performance. [82] discussed how organizational culture shapes employee behavior and performance by providing a sense of history, fostering commitment to mission and values, acting as a control mechanism, and influencing employee recruitment and retention. Certain types of organizational culture can be more conducive to efficiency and productivity. Additionally, [3] concluded that when organizations' employees have clearly outlined work ethics, share common beliefs and values, and are guided by the principle of uniformity, flexibility, and an effective communication network, they develop a sense of belonging, which increases their commitment to work and ultimately foster better performance. Similarly, [15] concluded that understanding an organization's culture helps employees comprehend its history, operations, and values, guiding future behaviors and promoting shared goals. It also acts as a control mechanism, potentially leading to increased effectiveness and productivity. [33] demonstrated that organizations can foster a workplace culture that cultivates intrinsic motivation in employees, which, through various micro-factors, significantly influences their performance.

4.4.4. Employees Recognition and Organizational Performance

Employee recognition is vital as it gives employees purpose by highlighting their value to organizational goals, making the connection between recognition and effective leadership crucial for success [14]. Both colleague and superior recognition strongly motivate employees, and even simple expressions of gratitude, especially in remote settings, can significantly improve morale [51]. Well-executed rewards and recognition programs also cultivate a positive and high-performing work environment [20]. The finding in Table 8 of this study, indicating an insignificant effect of employee recognition on organizational performance among Guchi Woreda employees (β = -0.092, p = 0.113), contrasts with numerous prior studies. For instance, [41] demonstrated a strong and significant positive link between recognition and performance, suggesting that recognized employees experience increased motivation to perform their duties, ultimately leading to higher performance through goal achievement. Similarly, [47] confirmed that employee recognition enhances performance within Kenyan commercial banks. Recognition from colleagues and supervisors validates an individual's hard work, thereby increasing employee motivation and subsequently improving performance. However, some studies present contrasting results with no significant impact. This implies that organizations in Guchi Woreda might need to re-evaluate their current recognition strategies. For example, [16] revealed that recognition and performance had no significant relationship. Likewise, increasing individual accomplishments in recognition systems can hinder teamwork and organizational success. If employees perceive recognition to be unfair or lack clear criteria, it can lead to reduced morale, negatively impacting team cohesion and productivity, and reducing the potential benefits of recognition for a select few.

4.4.5. Employees Job Security and Organizational Performance

Job security means having a stable job without the worry of unexpected job loss [84]. When employees lack this security, it can harm their performance and overall well-being. Organizations need to look into how well they support employees who are concerned about their job security [6]. This study's results, with a β coefficient of 0.306 and a p-value of 0.001, significantly indicate a positive influence of employees' job security on organizational performance. Specifically, a one-unit rise in job security is associated with a 30.6% improvement in organizational performance among Guchi Woreda employees. Consequently, the hypothesis (H5) concerning this variable is not rejected. Previous research This implies that fostering a perception of job security is a powerful strategy to enhance employee performance and overall organizational outcomes. supports these findings. For example, [44] identified a strong positive effect of genuine job security on organizational performance. Similarly, [88] confirmed a substantial positive influence of job security on the organizational performance of hospital physicians. Furthermore, [21] discovered that job security enhances employee well-being, and this in turn positively and significantly affects long-term performance. In contrast, [1] illustrates that employees experiencing job insecurity, who are preoccupied with the threat of job loss and actively seeking new employment, tend to perform less efficiently, consequently negatively affecting organizational performance.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study indicates that incentives, working environment, organizational culture, and job security significantly and positively influence the organizational performance of Guchi Woreda employees. As these factors increase, organizational outcomes improve. On the other hand, employee recognition did not show a statistically significant impact on organizational performance in this specific context. This finding contrasts with some previous research, suggesting the importance of considering the specific organizational and cultural context. The strong positive relationship between incentives and organizational performance highlights the importance of well-designed compensation and reward systems. Moreover, a positive work environment, a supportive organizational culture, and guaranteed job security are essential for boosting employee productivity and achieving overall organizational success among employees in Guchi Woreda.

6. Policy Recommendations

The study was conducted in Guchi Woreda Employees. Considering the results above, the following recommendations are suggested for the organizations of Guchi Woreda.

1) Organizations of Guchi Woreda should review and enhance their incentive programs to ensure they are competitive, aligned with performance goals, and effectively motivate employees. Exploring a variety of financial and non-financial incentives tailored to employee needs and preferences could further boost performance.
2) Efforts should be made to continuously improve the working environment by addressing factors such as workplace comfort, safety, resources, and interpersonal relationships. Creating a supportive and stress-free atmosphere will likely lead to increased employee well-being and productivity.
3) Organizations of Guchi Woreda should actively promote a positive organizational culture characterized by clearly defined work ethics, shared values, adaptability, and effective communication. This can foster a sense of identity and commitment among employees, ultimately enhancing organizational performance.
4) Management of Guchi Woreda Organizations should prioritize creating and maintaining a sense of job security among employees. Transparent communication about organizational stability and fair employment practices can reduce anxiety and improve employee focus and long-term commitment, positively impacting performance.
5) Given the insignificant findings regarding employee recognition, organizations of Guchi Woreda should critically examine their current recognition programs. It's recommended to understand if the current forms of recognition are valued, perceived as fair, or effectively communicated. Tailoring recognition programs to better align with employee expectations and organizational goals may yield different results in the future.

Abbreviations

SPSS Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

Author Contributions

Garbicha Duba Wako is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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