

Motivation Challenges on Employee Performance at Moshi Municipal Council in Tanzania

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Abstract: This paper examined the effects of motivation practices on employee performance at Moshi Municipal Council, Tanzania. Motivation is one among the critical factors influencing employee commitment, productivity, and organisational success in the public sector. Despite the presence of various motivation policies, public institutions continue to experience performance challenges. Grounded in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and guided by a pragmatic philosophy, the research used a mixed-methods sequential design. Quantitative data were collected from 119 respondents using questionnaires and 09 key informants through interviews, out of 119 questionnaires 111 questionnaires were successfully returned, representing a 93.3% response rate. In qualitative data, all the 09 Key Informant Interviews were successfully conducted, representing a 100% response rate for the qualitative component. Overall, the study achieved a combined response rate of 96.7%, reflecting a high level of participation across quantitative and qualitative components. Quantitative data were analysed descriptively by using SPSS, while qualitative data were analysed thematically. Results show that both financial and non-financial practices training, recognition, promotion, and allowances positively influence morale and work commitment, but their effectiveness is constrained by limited budgets, perceived favoritism, weak communication, and delays in promotions. The findings align with Herzberg's distinction between hygiene factors and motivators: financial elements address dissatisfaction while non-financial motivators enhance intrinsic commitment. The study recommended that; transparent and merit-based reward systems, prioritised budget allocation for motivation programs, improved communication and participation in decision making, and structured training and career development plans. Implementing these measures could strengthen employee morale, reduce turnover risk, and improve service delivery at Moshi Municipal Council and other Tanzania's local government authorities.

Keywords: Motivation Practices, Employee Performance, Motivation Challenges, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Public Sector, Tanzania.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is the backbone of effective service delivery and institutional development. In the public sector, particularly within local government authorities, employee motivation plays a pivotal role in ensuring accountability, efficiency, and innovation. Motivation practices refer to strategies designed to influence employee behaviour positively by fulfilling their personal and professional needs (Bandhu et al., 2024). Globally, motivated employees tend to exhibit greater commitment, reduced absenteeism, and improved job satisfaction (Rahman et al., 2024).

In developed economies, empirical studies show that motivation enhances job commitment and productivity. For example, Peoples, (2025) in Canada revealed that recognition-based reward systems reduced turnover rates, while Sharma, (2025) in India demonstrated that continuous training improved innovation and output. In the African

context, Ofosu-Yeboah (2024) established that non-financial motivation such as communication and career development improved performance in Ghanaian institutions, whereas Wachira (2025) in Kenya found that recognition and promotion reduced absenteeism.

In Tanzania, employee motivation remains a critical determinant of service delivery and institutional growth. Matiba, (2024) and Lameck, (2024) emphasised that inadequate motivation frameworks and limited career opportunities contribute to low morale and inefficiency in public organisations. Moshi Municipal Council, like many local authorities, experiences challenges such as delayed service delivery, low accountability, and limited innovation, despite the existence of motivation policies. This gap suggests the need for an empirical assessment of how motivation practices affect employee performance at the Council. The study aimed to: identify motivation practices employed at Moshi Municipal Council; assess their

effectiveness on employee performance; and examine challenges hindering their implementation.

Despite efforts to enhance employee motivation through training, recognition, and rewards, performance in Tanzania's public institutions, including Moshi Municipal Council, remains inconsistent. Challenges such as unfair promotions, limited training, and lack of recognition persist, and their direct impact on employee performance remains insufficiently examined.

II. DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

➤ *Motivation and Motivation Practices*

Motivation referred to the internal and external forces that initiate, direct, and sustain individuals' efforts toward achieving specific goals (Ahmad et al., 2024). According to Ridwan, (2025) motivation involved intrinsic and extrinsic factors that stimulate individuals to act. Fujita et al., (2024) defined motivation as the psychological process that initiated and maintained goal-oriented behavior in organisational contexts. Similarly, Bilous, and Rozghon, (2025) described it as the psychological encouragement that enhanced an employee's enthusiasm and commitment to work. Sumarmi et al., (2025) emphasised that motivation shaped how employees align their efforts with organisational objectives, while Abbas et al., (2025) argued that motivation is a fundamental internal drive that influences job performance.

Motivation practices, in contrast, referred to the deliberate and structured organisational strategies aimed at enhancing employee motivation (Valenzuela et al., 2024). These included financial incentives such as salaries and bonuses, non-financial incentives such as recognition, promotions, training, and opportunities for professional growth. Voloshchenko, and Nikolaeva, (2024) defined motivation practices as techniques designed to influence employee behavior and improve organisational outcomes. Nguyen et al., (2024) explained that public-sector motivation practices involve salary increments, structured promotions, and skills development initiatives meant to boost performance and job satisfaction.

According to Al-Oun, and Al-Khasawneh, (2025) motivation practices were multifaceted and include both monetary and non-monetary components like career development, recognition, and work-life balance. Ahmad et al., (2024) further assert that motivational practices such as incentives, mentorship programs, and continuous training lead to increased productivity and job engagement. Bello, (2024) added that, work-life balance practices were also part of modern motivational techniques that significantly enhanced employee satisfaction and reduce burnout. In Tanzania, motivation practices were often constrained by limited resources, but institutions like Moshi Municipal Council have implemented training, promotion systems, and employee recognition to address performance challenges (Vezi, 2014).

This study adopted a working definition of motivation practices as a set of formal and informal strategies including

financial rewards, promotions, recognition, and capacity-building programs used to improve employee morale, commitment, and performance.

➤ *Performance and Employee Performance*

Performance referred to the measurable outcomes and behaviors exhibited by individuals or teams in the execution of their assigned tasks (McGee, and Crowley-Koch, 2024). Performance was involved the actual results achieved when employees use their skills and resources within a given environment (Ghedabna et al., 2024). Sharma, (2025) defined performance as the ability to meet organisational goals through efficiency, consistency, and effectiveness in work delivery. It was widely accepted as a key determinant of institutional success, especially in the public sector.

Employee performance specifically referred to how well employees carry out their responsibilities in alignment with organisational expectations (Jamaluddin et al., 2024). Karmila et al., (2024) described employee performance as the effectiveness which employees accomplish their duties and contribute to organisational objectives. Arbyan, and Riyanto, (2024) asserted that employee performance results from a blend of knowledge, effort, motivation, and the work environment, all of which affect the quality and quantity of output. In addition, Oladimeji, (2024) found that employee performance is highly influenced by organisational support mechanisms, such as training, fair rewards, and structured leadership, while Sumantri et al., (2024) highlighted that employee's performance in local governments was shaped by both institutional policies and individual morale. These perspectives aligned with Rojak et al., (2024), who noted that in African public institutions, performance of employees included elements like accountability, innovation, and consistency under constrained conditions.

For this study, employee performance was defined as the extent to which employees of execute their duties efficiently, consistently, and in alignment with the organisational service delivery targets. It was included dimensions such as work quality, timeliness, initiative, and ability to contribute positively to institutional development.

III. THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

This study was guided by Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, developed by Frederick Herzberg in 1959. The theory explained job satisfaction and performance through two categories of factors: hygiene factors and motivators (Alrawahi et al., 2024). Hygiene factors such as salary, supervision, and working conditions prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily improve motivation or performance. In contrast, motivators such as recognition, responsibility, advancement, and training were the true drivers of employee motivation and improved performance (Shinde, 2025). According to Hasan & Mishra (2025), motivators (training, recognition, promotion, capacity building) encouraged employees to work beyond expectations and directly influence productivity. The theory assumed that employees

are motivated primarily by intrinsic factors and that the absence of motivators leads to lower performance.

The strengths of the theory: It was clearly distinguished between hygiene factors and motivators, providing practical guidance for designing motivation practices (Alrawahi et al., 2024). It focused on sustainable, non-financial incentives that enhanced employee satisfaction and performance (Shinde, 2025). In the side of weakness, the theory may overlook cultural and contextual differences, and some factors can be subjective, varying among employees (Hasan & Mishra, 2025). In relation to this study, the theory supported the objective by classifying different motivation practices common in organisations.

IV. EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Empirical evidence across different countries reveals that challenges in motivation practices continue to hinder employee performance. In the UK, Udodiugwu et al., (2024) found that unclear reward systems and lack of individualized motivation strategies created dissatisfaction and low morale. Bhutta, and Mahmood, (2024) in Pakistan reported that irregular promotions and poor feedback systems reduced commitment and productivity among academic librarians.

In Nigeria, Uzoh, and Anya (2024) observed that delayed salaries, lack of recognition, and minimal career growth opportunities led to low productivity in public institutions. Similarly, Maitha, et al. (2024) in Kenya identified lack of incentives and teacher demotivation as major barriers to performance.

In Tanzania, Minja, and Makatha, (2025) highlighted poor working conditions and inconsistent policies, while Kitole, and Mwita, (2025) revealed that favoritism and unclear reward structures weakened commitment. These studies collectively show that weak and unfair motivation systems as the challenges which undermine morale and organisational efficiency.

V. METHODOLOGY

➤ *Research Philosophy, Approach and Design*

This study was guided by the pragmatic research philosophy, which emphasised practical outcomes and the use of multiple approaches to solve real-world problems effectively (Omodan, 2024). Pragmatism allows flexibility in selecting research methods that best answer the research questions, making it appropriate for investigating how motivation practices influence employee performance at Moshi Municipal Council.

Under this philosophy, the study employed a sequential research design combined with a mixed-methods approach. The sequential design involved data collection in two phases: first through structured questionnaires to obtain quantitative data, followed by semi-structured interviews to gather qualitative insights. Findings from the first phase informed the second, allowing for a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of employee perceptions and organisational conditions (Jackson-Gordon, and Plano Clark, 2024; Huang et al., 2025).

The mixed-methods approach integrated both quantitative and qualitative techniques, ensuring triangulation and a balanced perspective. Quantitative data captured measurable trends in motivation and performance, while qualitative data provided context and explanation of underlying behaviours and attitudes. This integration strengthened the reliability and depth of the findings, consistent with recommendations by Jain and Sengar (2024).

➤ *Research Study Area, Target Population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques*

The study was conducted at Moshi Municipal Council, located in Kilimanjaro Region, northeastern Tanzania (Tarimo, 2025). The Council consists of departments such as Human Resources, Finance, Education, Health, ICT, Procurement, and Planning. It was chosen because it represented a typical Tanzanian local government authority facing persistent issues of low employee morale, inconsistent recognition systems, and limited training access (Mussa, and Boniface, 2025). These challenges made it a suitable context for assessing how motivation practices affect employee performance.

The target population comprised 190 employees from various departments at Moshi Municipal Council headquarters (Moshi Municipal Council, 2025). Using Yamane's formula 1967, a sample size of 128 respondents was determined where 119 were used as quantitative respondents, along with an additional of 09 participants as key informants for qualitative insights. The study employed a stratified random sampling technique for the quantitative phase to ensure representation from all departments (Akkaş, and Meydan, 2024). Within each stratum, simple random sampling was used to select participants.

For the qualitative phase, purposive sampling was applied to identify 09 department heads and human resource officers directly responsible for implementing motivation practices. This ensured that the study captured in-depth and experience-based insights from key informants (Ahmad, and Wilkins, 2025).

➤ *Data Collection Methods and Analysis*

The study employed structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. 119 Questionnaires were administered to employees across departments using a five-point Likert scale to measure agreement with statements on motivation and performance (Paap et al., 2024). In-depth interviews were conducted from 09 participants such as department heads and HR officers selected purposively as the key informants to obtain deeper insights on employee motivation practices (Ahmad, and Wilkins, 2025)

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics through SPSS, where frequencies, percentages, and regression analysis identified relationships between motivation and performance (Keeler and Curtis, 2024).

Qualitative data were transcribed and analysed thematically using NVivo, identifying recurring themes and meanings (Gupta et al., 2024). Integration of both results enhanced triangulation, ensuring comprehensive understanding and validity of findings (Jain & Sengar, 2024). In other words, qualitative data obtained through interviews, thematic analysis was employed to identify, interpret, and report patterns within the data. The analysis followed several systematic steps as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2019). First, the researcher familiarised with the data by repeatedly reading the interview transcripts to gain an overall understanding. Second, initial codes were developed manually to represent meaningful segments of data related to

the study objectives. Third, the codes were grouped into sub-themes based on similarities and relationships among ideas. Fourth, broader themes were generated that captured the main patterns emerging from the participants’ narratives. Fifth, the themes were reviewed, refined, and named to ensure they accurately represented participants’ views.

VI. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Despite the existence of motivation policies, the study found several challenges affecting their implementation, including budget limitations, favoritism, and inconsistent application of policies. These findings correspond with studies by Minja, and Makatha, (2025), who reported that public institutions in Tanzania often face resource constraints and biased reward systems. From a theoretical perspective, Herzberg’s hygiene factors such as salary, supervision, and organisational policy were inadequately addressed, leading to demotivation among staff. The shortage of financial resources hindered regular training and recognition programmes, while favoritism eroded employees’ trust in management.

➤ *Motivational Challenges on Employees’ Performance*

This section aimed to investigate the challenges related to motivation practices on employee performance at Moshi Municipal Council. Data were analysed using mean scores and standard deviations as summarized in Table 6.1, while qualitative data were included to provide a deeper understanding of the identified challenges.

Table 1 Motivational Challenges on Employee Performance (n = 128)

Challenge	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Budget limitations	128	4.18	0.67	Strongly Agree
Inconsistent application of policies	128	3.96	0.79	Agree
Inadequate communication	128	3.88	0.83	Agree
Favoritism in recognition and promotion	128	4.05	0.72	Strongly Agree

Source: Field Data (2025).

The findings revealed that limited financial resources significantly hinder the effective implementation of motivation programs at Moshi Municipal Council. With a mean score of 4.18 and a standard deviation of 0.67, respondents strongly agreed that inadequate funding restricts the council’s ability to sustain motivation initiatives such as training, promotions, and performance-based rewards. This aligned with previous studies by Ștefan et al., (2024), which found that budget constraints weaken employee motivation in public institutions. Insufficient financial support leads to the postponement or cancellation of important programs, reducing employee morale and performance. To address this challenge, the council should seek increased government funding, explore income-generating activities, and adopt cost-effective motivators like recognition and empowerment to maintain motivation and enhance performance.

The findings revealed that inconsistent implementation of motivation policies negatively affects employee morale and performance at Moshi Municipal Council. With a mean score of 3.96 and a standard deviation of 0.79, respondents agreed that irregular application of motivation programs such as training, promotions, and recognition creates uncertainty and discourages high performance. This aligned with Ștefan et al., (2024) who found that irregular policy enforcement reduces employee confidence and morale. Therefore, consistent and fair implementation of motivation policies is essential to sustain trust, commitment, and improved performance across all departments within the council.

The findings showed that poor communication between management and employees contributes to low motivation and performance at Moshi Municipal Council. With a mean score of 3.88 and a standard deviation of 0.83, most respondents agreed that limited feedback and lack of information on policies or recognition programs weaken motivation. This implied that effective communication is vital in sustaining employee engagement and productivity, as it fosters transparency, trust, and inclusion in decision-

making. This aligned with Sharma (2025) who noted that poor communication reduces cohesion and engagement. Therefore, establishing open and regular communication channels is essential to enhance motivation and performance across the council.

The findings revealed that favoritism in recognition and promotion negatively influences employee morale and performance at Moshi Municipal Council. With a mean score of 4.05 and a standard deviation of 0.72, respondents strongly agreed that unequal treatment in rewards and advancement lowers motivation. This implied that favoritism undermines fairness, weakens trust, and discourages employees from performing effectively. These findings aligned with Ștefan et al., (2024), who observed that favoritism created divisions and damages organisational cohesion. Promoting transparency and merit-based recognition can enhance motivation, trust, and overall productivity within the council.

➤ *Qualitative Response*

- *During the Interview, a Participant Added that:*

The biggest challenge we face is the shortage of funds to support training and rewards. Sometimes promotion or reward takes too long, which discourages us also, sometimes you work very hard, but there are no resources to recognize your effort. It becomes discouraging because we all want to see our performance appreciated. When the budget is limited, training programs and allowances are delayed, and that affects our morale and commitment to the job (PARTICIPANT 7; MMC HQ; on 03rd October, 2025)

- *Another Participant Remarkd:*

Favouritism is a serious issue that affects motivation. Some employees receive rewards or promotion because of who they know, not their performance. That creates divisions and reduces teamwork. Those who are left out feel unappreciated, and their performance goes down. We would like to see a system that rewards everyone fairly based on merit and not personal connections (PARTICIPANT 8; MMC HQ; on 7th October, 2025)

- *Still, Another Participant Said:*

Poor communication is another challenge that discourages employees. Sometimes we don't get clear information about opportunities for training or allowances, and that makes us feel left out. Management needs to improve transparency so that everyone understands how motivation programs work. When information is shared openly, it builds trust and improves the overall working environment (PARTICIPANT 9; MMC HQ; on 10th October, 2025).

Such issues challenge and weaken the effectiveness of motivation practices and reduce employee morale, ultimately affecting productivity. Strengthening fairness, communication, and financial support mechanisms would enhance the impact of motivation strategies within public service settings.

The study's findings strongly support Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory by demonstrating that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors jointly influence employee performance.

Financial incentives address basic needs, while non-financial motivators training, recognition, and promotion fulfil psychological and self-development needs. These results are consistent with Uzoh, and Anya (2024), confirmed that motivation depends on organisational climate and managerial practices, not only on monetary rewards.

VII. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

➤ *Summary*

The study assessed the effects of motivation practices on employee performance at Moshi Municipal Council, Tanzania. Guided by Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and the pragmatic research philosophy, the study applied a mixed-methods sequential design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to provide comprehensive insights.

Findings revealed that the Council employs both financial and non-financial motivation practices such as training, recognition, promotion, and allowances. Among these, training and recognition emerged as the most influential in improving morale and work commitment. The motivation system was perceived as moderately effective, enhancing job satisfaction and performance but limited by challenges including budget constraints, favoritism, and inconsistent implementation of motivation policies.

Interview responses confirmed that delays in promotions, inadequate communication, and insufficient funding negatively affect motivation. These outcomes highlight that while the Council's motivation framework has positive components, it requires strengthening to achieve consistency and fairness.

➤ *Conclusion*

The study concluded that motivation practices at Moshi Municipal Council are constrained by inadequate financial resources, favoritism, weak communication, and inconsistent policy enforcement. These challenges collectively weaken employee morale, reduce productivity, and hinder overall organisational performance. To improve the situation, the council should prioritise budget allocation for employee motivation programs, ensure transparency and fairness in reward distribution, and establish strong communication channels between management and staff. The government should also provide supportive policy frameworks and capacity-building programs for local authority managers to enhance leadership competence and accountability. Future research could expand to multiple councils or ministries to enable comparative analysis and assess the long-term impact of motivation reforms in Tanzania's public sector.

These conclusions align with earlier studies by Minja, and Makatha, (2025), Uzoh, and Anya (2024), and Kitole, and Mwita, 2025, which emphasised that public-sector motivation must balance intrinsic and extrinsic factors to promote long-term organisational performance.

➤ Recommendations

Based on the study's findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed as categorised in short term and long term.

• Short Term Recommendations

Moshi Municipal Council should enhance fairness and transparency by establishing and communicating clear, documented criteria for promotions, rewards, and recognition. This will help eliminate favoritism and strengthen employee trust. The Council should also strengthen communication channels through regular meetings, newsletters, and digital platforms to ensure that employees are well-informed about motivation opportunities, performance expectations, and evaluation results. Additionally, management should increase financial support for motivation programs by reallocating existing resources to fund immediate motivational needs such as recognition schemes and short training workshops.

• Long Term Recommendations

Council should invest in continuous training and career development by designing structured programs that address both technical and soft skills, thereby improving long-term employee performance and retention. Furthermore, management should advocate for increased budget allocations from the central government and explore alternative income-generating activities to ensure sustainable funding for motivation initiatives. By prioritizing these short-term and long-term measures, the Council can establish a more equitable, motivated, and high-performing workforce.

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