

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO HOW MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES IMPACT ON
OVERALL ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE, A CASE OF LILONGWE CITY
COUNCIL, MALAWI.**

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Abstract

Employee motivation and organizational performance of employees are essential tools for delivery of quality services. The study was conducted to investigate the impact of motivational strategies to overall organizational performance of the Lilongwe City Council (LCC,) in Malawi. The council faces the challenge of balancing administrative efficiency and service quality while ensuring the well - being and productivity of its workforce as highlighted in the 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan. Lilongwe, the capital city of Malawi is a significant contributor to the country's economy being a hub for government administration, business and commerce.

This is in line with the Pillar 3: Urbanization that is in the Malawi 2063 Development Agenda and its Enablers 2 and 3 which states that the country needs effective government systems and institutions with strict adherence to the rule of law and enhanced public sector performance respectively. In the same vein, urban centres are very critical to the economy of any country such as Malawi. According to National Statistics Office survey (2019), the Central Region, where Lilongwe is located contributed around 43% to Malawi's GDP.

In the contemporary work environment, the role of managing the human capital in shaping employee performance has gained significant attention. However, despite the recognition of the importance of human capital to organizational success, there remains a gap in the understanding of how motivational strategies directly influence the performance of employees. The study premised on its potential to bridge the gap between theory and practice, offering practical solutions and recommendations to management of the city council. The study used a mixed approach, i.e. qualitative and quantitative methods.

Furthermore, the study used structured questionnaires, interviews, and desk research for data collection. The data analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in order to obtain meanings and insights in the context of the LCC. The data obtained was processed where simple descriptive and inferential statistical calculation on frequencies of research variables were converted to percentages ratings.

The LCC has the following main motivational strategies in place, i.e. rewards, staff training, job rotation, employer's support, promotions and teamwork amongst employees. These motivational strategies are consistent and properly monitored. However, although the LCC has a good pool of employees who are conversant to their work demands, they often face challenges of inadequate financial resources for implementation of planned activities. There is also the challenges of political interference that renders their decisions to be ineffective.

Therefore, the researcher recommended that the central government should give full autonomy to the LCC to manage its activities in accordance with their mandate some of which could be to fully implement the decentralization process.

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1.0 Introduction

There have been various studies in the field of business administration on how motivational strategies impact into overall organizational performance so that the delivery of services is efficient and effective. Motivational strategies can be in the form of monetary or non-financial rewards. In the contemporary business landscape, the role of motivational strategies in the administration of the human capital has evolved from being primarily administrative to becoming a strategic function critical for success of organizations.

The impact of motivational strategies on overall organizational performance has gained increasing attention in academic literature and practical settings. The understanding of how motivational strategies affect organizational performance is crucial for institutions aiming to enhance their competitive edge, foster employee engagement and employee commitment in order to achieve sustainable growth. The research investigated the intricate relationship between the Lilongwe City Council's (LCC's) motivational strategies and overall organization's performance, focusing on specific jurisdictions of the LCC.

Lilongwe, the capital city of Malawi is a significant contributor to the country's economy being a hub for government administration, business and commerce.

This is in line with the Pillar 3: Urbanization that is in the Malawi 2063 Development Agenda and its Enablers 2 and 3 which states that the country needs effective government systems and institutions with strict adherence to the rule of law and enhanced public sector performance respectively. In the same vein, urban centres are very critical to the economy of any country such as Malawi. In the same vein, urban centres are very critical to the economy of any country such as Malawi. According to National Statistics Office (NSO) survey (2019), the Central Region, where Lilongwe is located contributed around 43% to Malawi's GDP.

As one of the major administrative bodies in Lilongwe, Malawi, the LCC plays a pivotal role in driving local governance and delivering essential services to the residents and other stakeholders. Through examining the administrative dynamics within this context was paramount, as it not only contributed to the understanding of motivational initiatives in a public sector setting, but also provided insights for optimizing organizational performance i.e. fostering effective public service delivery. The LCC faces the challenge of balancing administrative efficiency and quality service delivery while ensuring the well-being and productivity of its workforce.

The study recognized the significance of identifying the key motivational strategies that influence employee commitment within the realms of the LCC and consequently, impact the overall organizational effectiveness. Through a comprehensive analysis of the existing literature on motivational strategies, employee performance and public sector management, the research aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing valuable insights into the specific factors within the management of motivational strategies that directly influence employee performance within the LCC 's context. It is widely believed that being profitable is a minimum expectation for almost all organizations. However, highly effective organizations are more than merely profitable for shareholders, they benefit all stakeholders including employees, investors, and customers/ clients. These highly efficient and effective organizations promote high quality performance.

Therefore, identifying the challenges and opportunities in the current 14 institutional frameworks, the study sought to provide evidence based recommendations for improving the management of motivational strategies, practices and policies that can foster a more conducive work environment, enhance employee morale and ultimately contribute to overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Lilongwe City Council.

High - quality employee motivation and wellness can contribute to long- term organizational health, customer/ client satisfaction and financial success (Doshi, &Mc Gregor, 2015; Sisodia, 2014) Motivation can solve three types of performance challenges, thus; employees are resisting change, employees being unfocussed themselves and failure to persist at a key task as well as making mistakes by not investing mental effort and taking responsibility because of overconfidence. The most recent developments in service industry have intensified the need for motivating workers. Research studies have shown that there has been a greater need for managers to have sufficient knowledge and understanding of factors that influences motivation and their relationship with job performance (Aarabi et al, 2013).Motivation is a Latin word and it means 'to move" (Wade & Tavis, 2008).

The City of Lilongwe was inaugurated as a capital city for the Republic of Malawi in 1975. The city's operational structure comprises the following Departments; the Administration, Finance, Internal Audit, Public Works, Planning and Development, Education, Youth and Support, Health and Social Services, Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Natural Resources and Commerce and Industry. The political head of the council is a Mayor, who is elected from fellow elected councillors. The councillors form working committees that

oversees the operations of various directorates to check whether they are performing prudently. The LCC has seven mandatory service committees, which are provided for in the Local Government Act, (LGA) 1998.

The council is responsible for recruitment, staff development, promotions and disciplining of its employees except for directors, for which the Local Government Service Commission is responsible and the Chief Executive Officer, who is appointed by the Minister (Local Government Act, 1998).

According to the Lilongwe City Scoping Study conducted by Strachan et al, (2021), The population of the city has tremendously increased nearly ten times in the past 40 years with an estimated population of 989,318 at the latest population census in 2018, giving an indication of highest urban growth rate of 4%. It has been established that internal migration was the main driver of population growth in the city due to limited economic benefits in the rural areas, which are often constrained or disrupted by climate change. However, it is believed that such migration has been compelled by the desire to improve conditions of life in rural areas (Strachan et al, 2021).

Since its inauguration as a city, the council has experienced slow growth in form of infrastructural development as well as delivery of essential services to the residents, which has been confronted by a number of challenges. Some of the key challenges that have affected organizational performance were; the increasing urban poverty which is characterized by, among others, the population explosion due to rural- urban migration, poor planning and infrastructure, erratic power and water supply, poor housing, poor sanitation as well as increased unemployment and scramble for limited social amenities.

For example, in the year 2008, the population of Lilongwe City was 669,021, with an annual growth rate of 4.3 percent, about 76 percent of this population is living in the informal settlements. The living conditions in the informal settlements are deplorable and the residents have little or no access to social amenities and infrastructure (National Statistical Office, 2008).

It is in this respect that the workers have to be motivated because, apart from other resources of production, they remain the most important among all the resources that organizations possess. When an organization retain efficient and experienced employees, it is likely to be in a position of achieving its goals and objectives. Employees who are well motivated can help make an organization to be competitive, add more value and may become profitable. However,

apart from the availability of financial resources, visionary leadership was also seen to be essential coupled with the adoption of sound motivational strategies.

2.0 Literature Review

It is widely believed that motivation is an internal drive aimed at satisfying an unsatisfied need and to achieve a certain defined goal. According to Kalimullah (2010), motivated employees have their goals aligned with those of the organization and directs all their efforts in that direction.

2.1. Motivation theories

- a) Mc Gregor's X and Y theory – It is based on several assumptions about human nature and motivation. Theory X assumes that most people want to be directed, they do not want to assume responsibility and they value their own safety above all else. It also posits that people are motivated by financial means and the threat of sanctions. In contrast,

Theory Y primarily assumes that a satisfying work environment, aligned with the individual employees' goals, motivates a person to be productive. It further assumes that employees can be self-directed and very creative when they are motivated properly. The theory X primarily expounds the relevance of increased supervision whereas the theory Y, explains the motivating role of job satisfaction that encourages employees to approach tasks without direct supervision.

- b) Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (source: Google Scholar)

Employees get motivated both at home and at work when their needs are satisfied, i.e. (esteem, physiological, safety, social, psychology and self-actualization needs). However, the needs of employees change over time and depend on current situation, experiences and benchmarking (comparisons) with other players in the same industry.

- c) Herzberg's Hygiene theory

There are certain characteristics of an employment contract that relates to job satisfaction and improved performance whereas there are other job factors that are associated with employee dissatisfaction. In this respect, improving causes of dissatisfaction does not create satisfaction and on the other hand, improving factors of job satisfaction does not eliminate job dissatisfaction, e.g. by awarding a promotion to an employee in a hostile work environment cannot bring satisfaction and improved performance. According to Herzberg, the factors leading to job satisfaction are separate and distinct from those that lead to job dissatisfaction. However, the researcher argues as regarding to the motivation theories that at a certain point, motivational interventions may reach a point of satisfaction, where additional intervention may not bring more satisfaction.

For example, if one gets a bottle of Coca - Cola to quench thirst, the first bottle will satisfy the desire to quench thirst, whereas the subsequent bottles that can be drunk will be just for pleasure. Therefore, it can be argued that excessive rewards may not wholesomely, satisfy needs for enhanced employee performance.

In the same light, employee performance may be affected by human errors (negative attitudes and perceptions), machine errors (technological flaws) and uncontrollable natural phenomenon (flash floods, typhoons, tsunamis, sandstorms or earthquakes).

d) Equity theory

This theory, also known as social comparison theory that suggests that employee at workplace compare themselves with others doing similar work under the same circumstances and make judgments whether they are being fairly treated by comparison. According to (Adams, 1964), discovered that employees that happen to be treated equitably, their work effort was sustained; whereas those who felt were not treated equitably in relation to other comparable employees, their effort towards work declined. The review was conducted in order to gain more understanding, insights, or critique more objectively on the work that other researchers already established as relating to how the motivational strategies can become the drivers of organizational performance and effectiveness.

It can therefore be argued that societal and organizational culture is central to the organizing principle of employees' understanding of work, their approach to it and the way in which they expect to be treated. The review identified and appreciated the theoretical perspective of the problem, the theories that necessitated the research, minimized the risks of reaching dead ends, wasting effort, trial and error activities and prevented unnecessary duplication by identifying what was already done in this area of study.

This review helped in exploiting on previous successes and failures of others and came up with a more intelligent approach to the problem. The review also assisted in sourcing scholarly data with which comparisons and evaluation to the subsequent findings were made. When motivational strategies are inconsistent with the deeply held societal values, employees are likely to feel dissatisfied, distracted, uncomfortable and uncommitted (Armstrong, 2011). As a result, they perform less well.

Furthermore, the study carried out an investigation on the impact of decentralization, i.e. autonomy status of the LCC, the current strategic plan as regards to the development of

motivational strategies. It also evaluated the effectiveness of conditions of service, the importance of requisite skills for managing employees through committees had on the motivation and its impact on overall organizational performance.

It was further assumed that strategies stimulate or contribute to a wider organizational culture, employee's involvement, participation and commitment, which can enhance the organization's resource capabilities. Employees that have a higher level of involvement and empowerment are less likely to be resistant to any changes because they are capable of providing important information to the organization.

A motivated employee acknowledges the importance that the goals of the organization need to be aligned to those that he aspires and must direct all effort towards that cause (Kalimullah, 2010). Employee motivation is an important part of worker's productivity and overall organizational performance. It tends to activate human behaviour, leading them to a specific goal and shows direction on how that goal can be sustained. In the same line of thought, motivation is an emotional force that determines personality traits of an individual's behaviour in the organization (Jones & George, 2012).

Employees who lack motivation in the work places because of poor leadership, are a risk factor when it comes to executing day to day operations of the organization. The operational risks include; absenteeism, poor quality work, toxic work environment, personnel risks (employee turnover), reputational risks, environmental and health risks as well as financial risks. Some leaders and key decision makers often fail to see real issues and problems that employees face, they assume that everything is running smoothly in their organizations, which is detrimental to organizational effectiveness (Ashford et al, 2009).

Therefore, employee voice conveys a likelihood that the worker gets a strong desire or sense of obligation to help the organization to operate more effectively or more appropriately vis-a-vis benefitting the organization, customers/clients and the community (Morrison, 2011).

It is further argued that employee voice as a motivational factor has a positive impact on work - group performance which entails positive effect on organizational - level financial performance (Kenzie et al, 2011). There are several indicators of low morale, which can derail performance and become costly to the organization such as job security, poor pay, increased employee turnover and absenteeism. However, absenteeism does not necessarily translate that employees dislike their job roles but it can also arise from not feeling empowered, or lack of training so that they perform effectively (Wolfe,2015).

Creating a positive morale can be effected through a diversified approach to relationship building, recognition and attractive compensation effectively (Wolfe, 2015). The sense of being valued and worthy is not a state that is a given omen in work organizations; rather, it is something that is created or destroyed by the way people interact or are treated at work place (Dutton et al, 2012).

Leaders who prohibit open dialogue in the workplace issues denies themselves first-hand information on the challenges that face their organization. As a result, a gap is created instead of addressing challenges, which may lead to escalation of the problems, affecting employee trust, ushering disrespect towards management and reduced morale and work motivation (Simonton, 2015). Leaders need to manage emotional dirt, lest it spirals out of control.

It is argued that leaders need to practice ‘leading with emotional labour’’, as a means of regulating their own emotional feelings (Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011). Thus effective leaders engage in genuine emotional expression or (at least) engage in deep acting to model their emotions as suited to the situation at hand.

The motivating factors that impacts on overall organizational effectiveness formed the independent variable of the research study and were influenced either positively or negatively by the dependent variable i.e. organizational performance. Rewards, Staff training, Job rotation, Employers support, Promotions, Team work are independent variables that affect dependent variables i.e. performance.

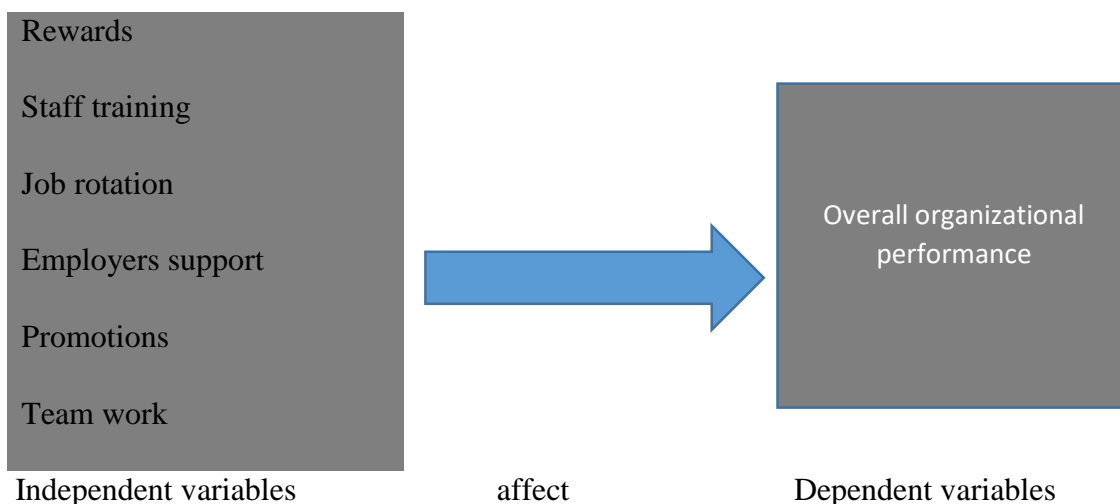


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

According to figure 2.1, the above listed motivational strategies are believed to have influence on organizational performance. While rewards, staff training, employer's support and promotions have monetary connotations, job rotation and teamwork are likely seen to have little or no monetary implications. In this respect, many alternative work arrangements cut across or even fall outside of the work confines. The control over the work process, which governs the relationship between the efforts of the worker and the organization, is believed to positively benefit both, the employee and the organization (Capelli & Keller, 2013).

3.0 Methodology

The choice of the methodology was determined by the nature of the research questions, the availability of time and resources including the skills or preference of the researcher. Research methodology is a systematic approach used to resolve a research problem through data collection using various techniques, providing an interpretation of data collected and drawing conclusions about researched data.

Most people often get confused with the terms; methodology and methods. Methodology can be defined as a set of principles and ideas that inform the design of the research study, whereas, methods are practical procedures that are used to generate and analyse data (Birkes & Mills, 2011). In every research, it is important to come up with research philosophies and approaches. A research philosophy is posited as a belief about the ways in which data about a phenomenon gets collected, analysed and used.

There are several philosophies that can be adopted in a research such as; positivism, ethnography, critical realism, interpretivism, post-modernism and pragmatism. In the study, the researcher adopted pragmatism philosophy because of its flexibility such as;

- a) Its emphasis on the importance of using the best tools possible to investigate phenomena.
- b) Allowing an element of researcher involvement and subjectivity specifically when drawing conclusions based on participants' responses and decisions and
- c) Flexibility on alteration of a study experiment to suit the researcher's needs.
- d) Allowing mixed or multiple method designs in data collection on both, quantitative and qualitative research.

There are several approaches to theory development in a research study, i.e. deductive, inductive and abductive. In this study, a survey strategy was adopted and the researcher used the deductive approach other than the inductive approach because of the nature of the research problem. It was deemed necessary to get more information of various theories that were applied and later build on them a new theory using the available data where as if it were inductive, the researcher developed a new theory on a phenomenon that society has little or no known knowledge.

3.1 Research design

Research design is a master plan for conducting a research study. It is a framework for choosing specific methods of data collection and data analysis. The study adopted a descriptive research design to establish the impact of motivational strategies on overall organizational performance.

A simple random survey through self-administered questionnaires and the computer statistical analysis of SPSS was used to analyse the data on how motivational strategies impacted into overall organizational performance.

The researcher also carried out an investigation on the current structure, the recruitment processes, the decision making processes, the leadership styles, the hierarchy of the council, the systems, internal and external influences as well as the overall operational budget so as to sieve the main obstacles that impeded on optimal performance. The nature and objectives of the problem under study and the means of obtaining data were the most important elements that were considered in order to choose a suitable research design, hence the choice of a descriptive approach.

Pragmatism is a philosophy in which truth is not seen as an absolute but a moveable and usable construct for understanding the reality of nature. The pragmatists epistemology posits that truth is ‘what works’, rather than what might be considered absolutely and objectively ‘true’, or ‘real’. Pragmatism asserts that concepts are only relevant where they support action. For a pragmatist, research begins with a problem and aims to contribute practical solutions that inform future practice (Elkjaer & Simpson, 2011). For the purpose of this study, the researcher selected the pragmatic philosophy.

It can therefore be construed that while every philosophy has its limits, different approaches can be complementary. It also allowed using different techniques at the same time or one after the other. For example, the researcher may start with face-to-face interviews with several people and then use the findings to construct a questionnaire to measure attitudes in a large-scale sample with the aim of carrying out statistical analysis.

3.2 Research Strategy

The research study adopted a survey strategy. A survey is a positivist research strategy in which a sample is selected from a population and studied to make inferences about the population.

The survey used questionnaires and interviews in order to determine opinions, preferences, attitudes and perceptions of persons of interest. In order to ensure greater reliability and validity, the researcher deemed it necessary that the research instruments were free from bias in the way the questionnaire was developed.

It was also important to get more information of various theories that can be applied and later build on such a theory (or test it) using the available data where as if it were inductive, the researcher would have been developing a new theory on a phenomenon that society has little or no known knowledge.

3.3 Sampling design

The study adopted the simple random sampling approach and the participants was drawn from the interested employees of the council. The study followed the sampling cycle, which was categorized into; invited sample, the accepting sample and the data-producing sample.

The invited sample comprised all the elements of the population selected to form the sample and invited to participate in the study. The portion of the sample that accepted the invitation to participate in the study was categorized as the accepting sample and the data-producing sample was the actual sample that provided the data for the study.

Throughout the sampling process, the researcher was guided by the recurring requirements to ensure that the sample is representative. The study adopted a simple random sampling technique where each element in the population had an equal and independent chance of being selected as part of the sample.

3.4 Data collection methods and tools

In order to ensure reliability and validity, the researcher had to plan the data collection process as follows;

- a) The researcher organized the format of the research instruments by ensuring that all the research categories of data required for the completion of the research objectives are in place.

- b) The researcher identified appropriate statistical techniques. In this respect, the researcher need to be familiar with statistical techniques that was used in the analysis of each section of the research instrument.
- c) The researcher was well acquainted with data presentation and layout, i.e. the type of tables and graphics that need to be used in data presentation.
- d) A pilot study was conducted to a small pilot group to establish the user – friendliness, comprehensiveness and adequacy of the data collection procedures and instruments.
- e) The implementation of plan of action was prepared rather than arriving at ad hoc decisions.

The data collection was done through both self – administered questionnaires and observations. It is important to note that as regarding to the research problem, multiple data collection strategies were employed in order to outlay any weaknesses that can be experienced through single data collection strategy. Data is the pillar of any data analysis work performed in the research process. It is a collection of unorganized facts and numbers from different sources.

As regarding to this study, the data used was primary, secondary and tertiary data sources including statistical data that was retrieved from the premises where the research was conducted.

4.0 Results

The study findings, which were directed according to the research objectives and questions on the impact of motivational strategies into overall organizational performance using the research instruments i.e. the questionnaires and face to face interviews by applying simple descriptive and inferential statistical calculation on frequencies that were converted to percentages ratings.

The range was ‘Strongly agree - (5)’ to ‘strongly disagree - (1)’. According to Kajuju (2012), the scores of strongly agree /agree should be taken to present a variable which has a mean score of 3.5 to 5 on the continuous Likert scale; ($3.5 \leq S.E < 5$). The scores of ‘neutral’ should be taken to represent a variable with a mean score of 2.5 to 3.4 on the continuous Likert scale; ($2.5 \leq M.E < 3.4$). The score of disagree/strongly disagree should be taken to represent a variable which has a mean score of 0 to 2.5 on the continuous Likert scale; ($0 \leq L.E < 2.5$).

A standard deviation of >0.8 implies a significant difference on the impact of the variable among respondents.

4.1 Critical analysis the existing motivational strategies at the LCC.

Motivational strategies are believed to create a working environment and help to develop policies and practices that will provide for higher levels of performance from employees. They include the development of total reward systems, performance management processes and leadership development programs (Armstrong, 2009).

4.1.1 Rewards

Reward management is concerned with the formulation and implementation of strategies and policies in order to meet the needs of both, the organization and its stakeholders. The findings are presented in figure 7.1 and the descriptive statistics are presented in table 9.

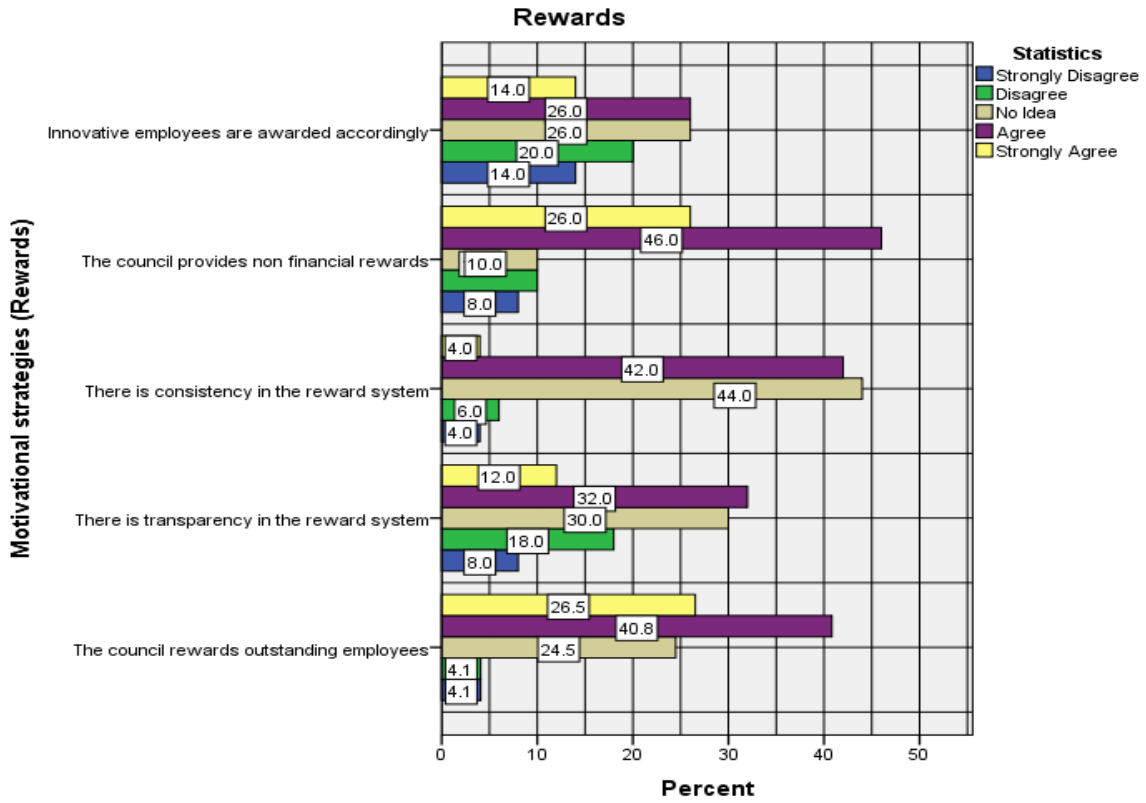


Figure 4.1 Rewards

According to the Figure 4.1, a large proportion of respondents agreed: the council provides non-financial rewards (46%). There is transparency in the reward system (32%) and the council rewards outstanding employees (40.8 %). However, there was also a majority of who expressed neutrality on the consistency in the reward system (44%). The related descriptive statistics is presented in table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Rewards

Descriptive Statistics (Rewards)					
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kurtosis	
				Statistic	Std. Error
The council rewards outstanding employees	49	3.82	1.014	.789	.668
There is transparency in the reward system	50	3.22	1.130	-.601	.662
There is consistency in the reward system	50	3.36	.827	1.276	.662
The council provides non-financial rewards	50	3.72	1.196	.180	.662
Innovative employees are awarded accordingly	50	3.06	1.268	-.982	.662

The results in table 4.1 shows that the mean for the following; the council rewards outstanding employees is (3.82) and the council provides non-financial rewards (3.72) which are within the mean score of 3.5 on the continuous Likert scale: $(3.5 \leq SE \leq 5)$.

4.1.2 Staff training

Training involves the application of formal processes to impart skills and knowledge so that employees can perform in an efficient and effective manner.

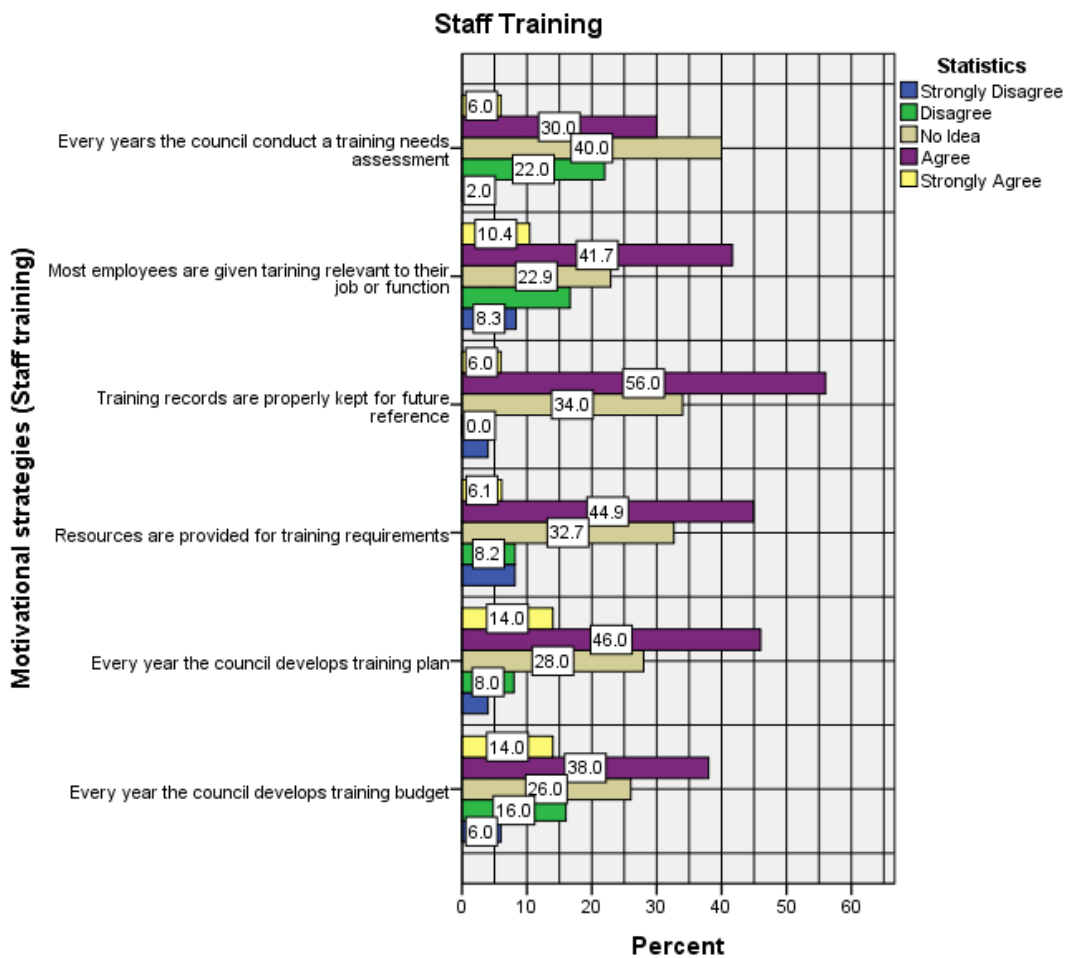


Figure 4.2 Staff training

According to the Figure 4.2, a large proportion of respondents agreed: the council has an effective record keeping on training issues for future reference (56.0 %). The council develops a training plan annually (46.0 %). The council provides training to employees relevant to their job function (41.7%). However, a large proportion of respondents were neutral that the council conducts a training needs assessment every year (40%). The related descriptive statistics is presented in table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Staff training

Descriptive Statistics (Staff training)					
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kurtosis	
				Statistic	Std. Error
Every year the council develops training budget	50	3.38	1.105	-.456	.662
Every year the council develops training plan	50	3.58	.971	.555	.662
Resources are provided for training requirements	49	3.33	1.008	.411	.668
Training records are properly kept for future reference	50	3.60	.782	3.321	.662
Most employees are given training relevant to their job/function	48	3.29	1.129	-.520	.674
Every years the council conduct a training needs assessment	50	3.16	.912	-.402	.662

The results in table 4.2 shows that the mean for the following: The training records are properly kept for future reference is (3.6) and that the council develops training plan every year (3.58), which are within the mean score of 3.5 on the continuous Likert scale .

4.1.3 Job rotation

Task requirements, using the job analysis techniques are seen to be important in order to meet the purpose of the existence of the organization, its technological prowess and its structure. The movement of employees from one task to another is seen to have an effect in the reduction of monotony by increasing variety of knowledge employees.

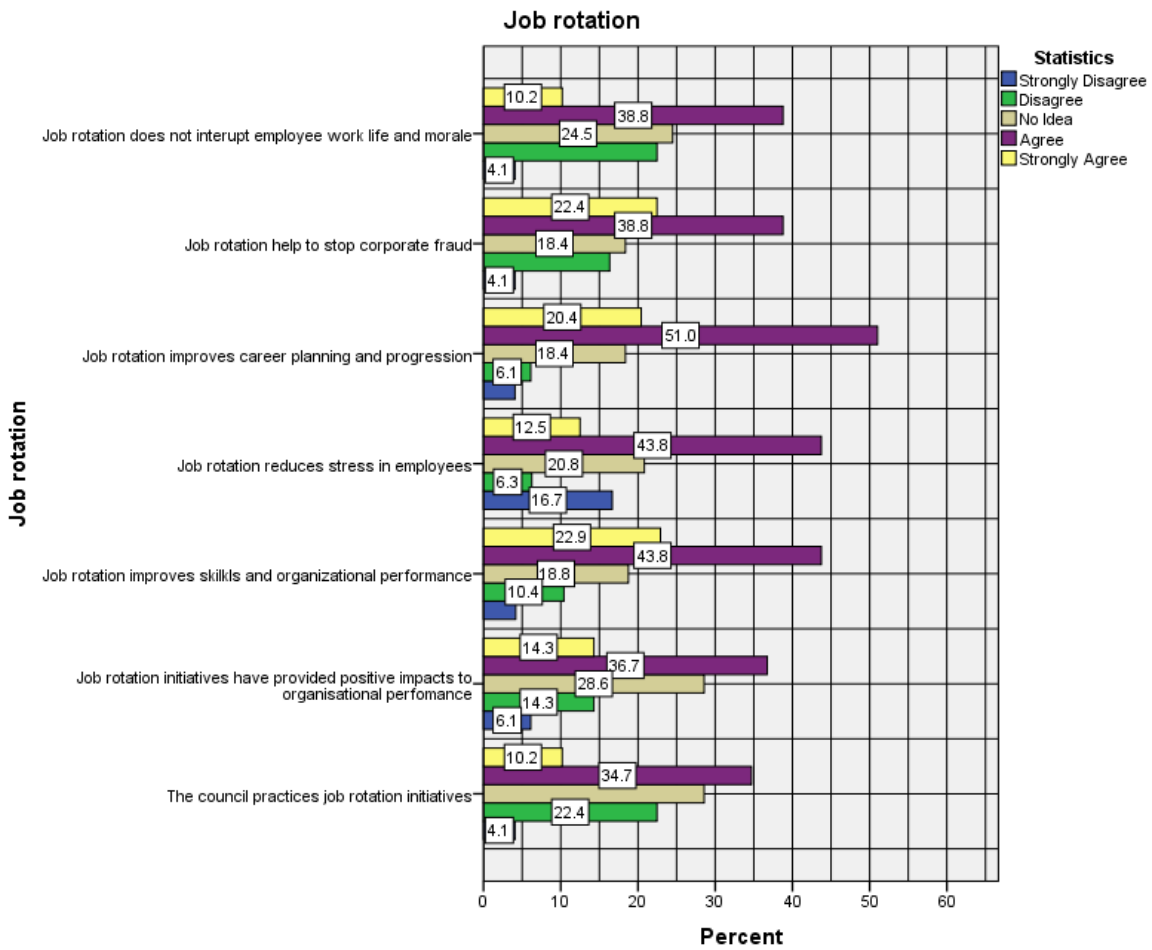


Figure 4.3 Job rotation

According to Figure 4.3, a large proportion of respondents agreed: job rotation improves career planning and progression (51%). Job rotation reduces stress and improves skills and organizational performance (43.8%). However, a large proportion of respondents were neutral on that job rotation initiatives provide positive impact to organizational performance (28.6%). The related descriptive statistics is presented in table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Job rotation

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kurtosis	
				Statistic	Std. Error
The council practices job rotation initiatives	49	3.24	1.051	-.681	.668
Job rotation initiatives have provided positive impacts to organisational performance	49	3.39	1.096	-.354	.668
Job rotation improves skills and organizational performance	48	3.71	1.071	.165	.674
Job rotation reduces stress in employees	48	3.29	1.271	-.556	.674
Job rotation improves career planning and progression	49	3.78	.985	1.182	.668
Job rotation help to stop corporate fraud	49	3.59	1.135	-.544	.668
Job rotation does not interrupt employee work life and morale	49	3.29	1.061	-.719	.668

The results in table 4.3 show that the mean for the following: Job rotation improves career planning and progression (3.78). Job rotation improves skills and organization performance (3.71) and Job rotation help to stop corporate fraud (3.59) which are within the mean score of 3.5 on the continuous Likert scale ($3.5 \leq SE \leq 5$).

5.0 Discussion

Motivational strategies such as rewards, staff training, job rotation and improved work environment etc., are used by organizations to initiate a goal directed behaviour on employees to attain higher performance though improved service quality remains a main big challenge to most organizations (Abioro, 2013). However, there has been enough empirical evidence from various studies about the relationship between motivational strategies and overall organizational performance although there has been mixed results.

Therefore, it is argued whether motivation given to employees can improve or exacerbate overall organizational performance. For instance, when the motivational strategies e.g. rewards are always directed to the same employees which might demotivate the remaining employees through loss of trust and loyalty to the organization.

In order to critically analyse the existing motivational strategies, the study found out that the council has the following motivational strategies in place.

The council reward outstanding employees. However, the mean value of 3.2 was indicative that there was inconsistency in the rewarding system. provided both, financial and non – financial rewards to its employees. In addition, it made a deliberate to in this respect, according to literature, motivational strategies are developed with the idea of having a cognitive decision-making and the intention to instil behaviour of achieving a specified goal through initiation and monitoring (David & Anderzej, 2010).

Therefore, motivational strategies are deemed important to an organization if properly executed. According to the self – determination theory, the type of strategy adopted influence both, the employee and overall organizational performance. In the same light, it is construed that reward is a popular practice used for attaining the desired goals (Gungor, 2011).

According to the findings, it is believed that the council always developed training budget that catered for training requirements. The council also provided training in accordance with relevant job function. It is also important to note that the council kept all the training records for future reference. This was seen to be important as it helped in ensuring that employees are bestowed with equal opportunities for training.

However, it is argued that social capital may improve performance when employees access organizational resources through laid down procedures to facilitate the transfer and sharing of

knowledge among employees'. When employees are properly motivated, they are likely to be creative by among other things, developing new capabilities with the available resources provided by the organization. This was in tandem with the literature as training guarantees an employee with latest information and knowledge, thereby increasing the organizational effectiveness to innovate, increase productivity and performance (Bauernschuster, Falck & Hebllich, 2009).

According to the findings, job rotation initiatives was seen to have a greater impact on career planning and progression, reduced stress and improved skills and organizational performance. For instance, it was believed to be improper to deny a client a service on the basis that the job holder was absent from duty. Most variables under job rotation had mean scores above 3.5 which translated that such initiatives were very significant. According to literature, job rotation and enrichment was seen to have improved skills and knowledge of employees.

In addition, it made jobs to be more challenging as employees provided feedback on their job assignments at the same time gaining recognition. For example, job rotation as a strategy to motivate staff, may reduce stress, initiate learning and sharing of knowledge. Further to this, job rotation may also help to ensure that all the employees within a department /section/ unit have all the necessary information and abilities to perform assigned tasks thereby reducing time wastage or turning back clients because the post holder was not available at that particular time. Therefore, job rotation may result in improved employee satisfaction, motivation and commitment.

According to the findings, rewards were based on knowledge, skills and performance. It inspired employees to work harder though the study found out that there were more men than women in higher positions. All the variables under promotion had a standard deviation of more than 0.8 which translated that they were significant to the study. In relation to literature, promotional awards are believed to have created value at organizational level as they enhanced motivation and performance at individual level (Nyberg et al, 2014).

However, during the face-to-face interviews, with some of the respondents differed to the assertion that the council fully supported its employees citing the challenges of resource constraints. In relation to literature, lack of incentives to employees might produce unintentional negative results, which might include reduction in cooperation, increase of risky behaviours, unethical attitudes and job errors (Park et al, 2022).

Therefore, it was indicative that employees influence all the pertinent issues of organizational performance by conceiving and implementing strategies. The literature revealed that the LCC did not have a standard framework for motivational interventions that could change employee behaviour or timeline within which certain services must be accomplished, delivered and accessed by its clients.

However, the LCC developed a strategic plan, to help leverage on attainment of higher performance and quality delivery of services. There is a greater need to upgrade delivery of services in line with improvements in technology and changing human needs.

The main research variables of the study, thus; rewards, staff training, job rotation employers' support and teamwork had p – value score of ≤ 0.01 indicating that the results were extremely statistically significant and likely that the results were real. However, the p – values did not indicate the size or importance of the variable effect. The researcher took into consideration of the research questions, study design and other moderating factors. The smaller the p - value the more evidence there was against the null hypothesis and the more likely that the observed effect was real.

6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

As already alluded to, the LCC faces the challenge of balancing administrative efficiency and service quality while ensuring the well - being and productivity of its workforce. The LCC, as a local government institution, is confronted with the challenge of optimizing its human capital to achieve its organizational goals effectively. The main objective of the study was to investigate how motivational strategies influenced the performance of LCC. It is widely believed that motivation can bring out positive behavioural changes to employees. The council faces numerous, which force local government officials to deal with ever increasing complexity and uncertainties. Therefore, motivational interventions seem to be quite essential in delivery of efficient services.

According to literature, the socio – comparison theory suggests that employees at workplace compare themselves with others doing similar job under the same circumstances and make judgments whether they are being fairly treated by comparison. Therefore, according the findings, that ratings on the variables have a p - value score of $.000 \geq 1$ indicating that the existing motivational strategies are significant.

According to literature, there are some strategies that relate to job satisfaction and improved performance. However, some motivational interventions may bring job dissatisfaction. It is therefore argued that improving factors of job dissatisfaction may not translate complete elimination of job dissatisfaction. According to the research findings, the variables under scrutiny indicated that the responses from the study participants had a p – value score of $.000 \geq 1$ which translate to higher levels of employees’ satisfaction. According to the findings, employee performance impacted greatly the overall organizational performance. According to the literature, there is still power struggle between the local authorities and the central government, which has failed, to effect full fiscal decentralization process. For motivational strategies to be fully implemented, there is need for financial resources.

However, it is seen to be problematic in the way the process has been managed. There is a greater need for the central government to relinquish its control on the local councils so that they become more effective and register high performance.

6.2. Recommendations

- a) It is recommended that the Lilongwe City Council should improve on information sharing among its employees so that they are able to know any new developments

occurring in their respective work environments. In addition, the council need to create a participatory decision making framework in order to create ownership on decisions made on planned activities. This is important since it will enable its employees to be seen as part of the council system by demonstrating high involvement and commitment work practices resulting in high performance.

- b) The Lilongwe City Council should consider improving its capacities and capabilities so that planned activities in their strategic plan are executed timely e.g. the issues to do with the Public Private Partnerships (PPP's), which has become a white elephant.
- c) The Lilongwe City Council should find ways of improving access to financial resources so that its able to support new motivational strategies to enhance service delivery.
- d) There is need to embark on a full decentralization so that functions currently being done by the central government are devolved to the council, e.g. issuing of trade licensing fees, running of public schools, hospitals, roads infrastructure within the city boundaries, etc. whose revenue can support service delivery activities.
- e) There should be no political interference on all matters relating to the affairs of the council e.g. recruitment and selection, enforcement of city-bye laws etc.
- f) There is greater opportunity that the council can operate as a business by investing in other ventures such as hospitality industry, recreation whose revenue can support the activities thereby making it possible to implement strategies that can steer employee motivation.

6.3 Further research

Since the study premised on employees of the council in order to investigate the impact of motivational strategies on overall performance of the Lilongwe City Council, there was need to cast the net wide by involving other stakeholders such as business persons, city residents, who pay various rates and fees in order to compare their opinions as regarding the service delivery. This would have allowed coming up with more generalizations on the findings on the impact of motivational strategies on overall organizational performance.

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