

## Employee Motivation and Job Performance in the Public Sector: A Case Study of the Greater Accra Region, Ghana

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World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 2026, 29(01), 1646-1659

Publication history: Received on 19 December 2025; revised on 25 January 2026; accepted on 28 January 2026

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2026.29.1.0221>

### Abstract

This study examined the relationship between employee motivation and job performance in the public sector, using the Greater Accra Region of Ghana as a case study. The purpose of the study was to assess the key motivational factors influencing public sector employees and to determine how these factors affect their level of job performance. Guided by motivation theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, This study adopted a quantitative research design with a descriptive and correlational approach. A target population of 2500 was utilized with a sample size of 250 which was 10% of the employees to ensure representativeness across departments and job levels. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions. Collected data were coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28. The findings revealed that both intrinsic factors (such as recognition, job satisfaction, and opportunities for career advancement) and extrinsic factors (including salary, job security, and working conditions) played a significant role in influencing employee performance. However, intrinsic motivation was found to have a stronger and more sustainable impact on employees' commitment and productivity. The study also identified challenges such as inadequate incentives, limited promotion opportunities, and bureaucratic constraints as barriers to effective motivation in the public sector. The study concluded that enhancing employee motivation is critical to improving efficiency, service delivery, and overall performance in public sector institutions. It therefore recommended that policymakers and public sector managers prioritize comprehensive motivation strategies that combine fair compensation, recognition systems, capacity building, and supportive work environments to improve job performance in the Greater Accra Region.

**Keywords:** Employee Motivation; Extrinsic Motivation; Greater Accra Region; Job Performance and Public Sector

### 1. Introduction

Employee motivation is widely recognized as a fundamental driver of job performance in the public sector, particularly in developing economies where public institutions play a central role in service delivery and socio-economic development (Perry & Wise, 1990). In the Greater Accra Region of Ghana, public sector employees operate in a highly demanding administrative and political environment, marked by rapid urbanization, population growth, and increasing citizen expectations for efficient and transparent public services. Motivation in this context is influenced by a combination of intrinsic factors, such as personal fulfillment, sense of duty, professional pride, and opportunities for skills development, as well as extrinsic factors including salaries, allowances, promotions, job security, and the availability of adequate working resources (Armstrong, 2014). The extent to which these motivational factors are effectively addressed by government policies and institutional leadership has a direct bearing on employees' willingness to exert effort, demonstrate commitment, and align their personal goals with organizational objectives.

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Employee motivation refers to the internal and external forces that stimulate, direct, and sustain employees' willingness to perform their work effectively and to commit themselves to organizational goals (Robbins & Judge, 2017). It encompasses the psychological processes that influence an individual's level of energy, persistence, creativity, and enthusiasm in carrying out job-related tasks. Motivation may arise from intrinsic factors, such as personal satisfaction, interest in the work, sense of achievement, and opportunities for growth, or from extrinsic factors, including salary, promotions, recognition, job security, and favorable working conditions (Herzberg et al., 1959). A motivated employee is more likely to demonstrate high levels of productivity, commitment, and job satisfaction, while also contributing positively to teamwork and organizational performance. In this sense, employee motivation is a critical managerial concern, as it directly affects efficiency, retention, and the overall success of an organization (Welbeck & Chanda, 2025)..

Job performance in the public sector refers not only to the ability of employees to complete assigned tasks, but also to the quality, timeliness, and effectiveness with which public services are delivered to citizens (Armstrong, 2014). In the Greater Accra Region, performance challenges such as delays in processing public documents, poor customer relations, absenteeism, and limited accountability have often been associated with low motivation and weak incentive structures. Empirical studies in Ghana indicate that employees who perceive fairness in reward systems, receive regular feedback, and work under supportive supervisory leadership tend to exhibit higher levels of productivity, professionalism, and ethical conduct (Agyeman & Ponniah, 2014). On the other hand, inadequate remuneration, limited promotion prospects, political interference, and poor working conditions have been found to erode morale, leading to reduced efficiency and diminished job performance across many public institutions.

The public sector refers to the part of an economy that is owned, managed, and operated by the government on behalf of the public, with the primary aim of promoting collective welfare rather than generating profit (World Bank, 2017). It includes government ministries, departments, agencies, state-owned enterprises, and public institutions at national, regional, and local levels. The public sector is responsible for formulating and implementing public policies, delivering essential services such as education, healthcare, security, infrastructure, and social protection, and regulating economic and social activities to ensure fairness, stability, and accountability. It is largely funded through taxation, grants, and public revenues, and its operations are guided by principles of public interest, equity, transparency, and accountability (OECD, 2015). In this way, the public sector plays a central role in national development by addressing market failures, reducing inequality, safeguarding public goods, and supporting sustainable economic and social progress.

An expanded examination of employee motivation and job performance in the Greater Accra Region provides critical insights for strengthening public sector management and governance in Ghana (Rainey, 2009). Using a case study approach makes it possible to explore how organizational culture, leadership practices, performance appraisal systems, and human resource policies collectively shape employee attitudes and behaviors. Such an analysis also highlights context-specific challenges, including budgetary constraints and institutional rigidities that affect motivation in the public sector. The findings from this type of study are valuable for informing policy reforms aimed at enhancing employee motivation through improved incentive schemes, capacity-building initiatives, and transparent performance management systems (World Bank, 2017). Ultimately, improving motivation among public sector employees is essential for boosting job performance, enhancing service delivery, and promoting public trust in government institutions within the Greater Accra Region and beyond.

## **1.1. Statement of the Problem**

Employee motivation and job performance remain significant concerns in Ghana's public sector, with evidence indicating that while many public servants are motivated to some degree, structural and extrinsic factors continue to undermine optimal performance outcomes. According to the Salaries and Remuneration Commission (n.d.), only about 20.6% of public sector employees report being highly motivated, whereas 48.6% are moderately motivated and approximately 30.8% are not motivated at all, highlighting uneven motivation levels that may negatively affect productivity and job performance. Motivational challenges are compounded by persistent issues such as inadequate remuneration and weak reward systems, which limit employees' capacity to perform effectively and consistently in service delivery roles (Adjei & Segbenya, 2025). Research within Ghanaian local government contexts further indicates that extrinsic motivators such as bonuses, housing schemes, and performance-based rewards significantly influence employee performance, yet these rewards are often inconsistent or insufficient, posing barriers to improved service outcomes (Ibid, 2025). Historical studies in the Greater Accra Region also document workplace obstacles, including low salaries, delayed promotions, and lack of essential resources, which generate dissatisfaction and demotivate public employees, impairing the quality of service delivery (Ossai, 2003/2002). Despite policy initiatives aimed at linking pay to productivity to enhance employee motivation, practical implementation of performance-oriented pay systems remains limited (Fair Wages and Salaries Commission, 2024). Given these dynamics and the limited empirical evidence on how motivation factors impact job performance specifically within the Greater Accra Region's public sector, a focused

investigation is required to generate evidence that can inform targeted human resource policies and performance improvement strategies.

### **1.2. Study Objectives**

- To examine the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors and the job performance of public sector employees in the Greater Accra Region.
- To identify the key motivational challenges affecting employee performance in enhancing productivity and service delivery in public sector institutions within the Greater Accra Region.

### **1.3. Study Questions**

- What is the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors and the job performance of public sector employees in the Greater Accra Region?
- What are the key motivational challenges affecting employee performance in public sector institutions in the Greater Accra Region?

### **1.4. Theoretical Framework**

Employee motivation was regarded as a key determinant of job performance in the public sector, and this study adopted Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory to examine the motivational drivers that influenced employees in the Greater Accra Region. Maslow's theory proposed that motivation occurred in a hierarchical sequence of needs beginning with physiological needs, progressing through safety, social, and esteem needs, and culminating in self-actualization whereby lower-level needs had to be substantially satisfied before higher-order needs became motivators of behaviour (Maslow, 1943/2023). According to this framework, employees were motivated to perform effectively only when their basic needs, such as adequate remuneration and job security, were met; as these needs were satisfied, higher-order needs such as recognition and personal growth further influenced commitment and job satisfaction.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory distinguished between hygiene factors and motivators, asserting that hygiene factors such as salary, working conditions, and organizational policies were necessary to prevent job dissatisfaction but did not on their own enhance satisfaction or performance, while motivators such as achievement, recognition, and opportunities for advancement actively contributed to job satisfaction and improved performance outcomes (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959/2023). This distinction emphasized that meeting basic work conditions was necessary, but fostering intrinsic motivators was equally important for enhancing employee engagement and productivity (Herzberg et al., 1959/2023). By integrating both frameworks, the study posited that addressing both fundamental and higher-order needs was essential for enhancing job performance. Specifically, attending to hygiene factors ensured that dissatisfaction was minimized, while promoting motivators enhanced intrinsic engagement, thereby improving organizational commitment and overall performance. This combined theoretical lens enabled a comprehensive understanding of the motivational influences on public sector employees in the Greater Accra Region and informed the development of strategies that both reduced dissatisfaction and promoted motivation through satisfying fundamental and higher-order needs.

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study lies in its potential to provide valuable insights into the relationship between employee motivation and job performance within the public sector, specifically in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. By examining how motivational factors—both intrinsic and extrinsic influence the efficiency, productivity, and commitment of public sector employees, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of workforce dynamics in government institutions. The findings are expected to inform policymakers, human resource practitioners, and public sector managers on effective strategies to enhance employee motivation, improve service delivery, and foster organizational performance. Additionally, the study may serve as a reference for future research in Ghana and similar contexts, highlighting practical interventions that can address challenges such as low employee morale, absenteeism, and high turnover rates. Ultimately, the research underscores the critical role of motivation in achieving sustainable public sector performance and advancing national development goals.

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## **2. Methodology**

This study adopted a quantitative research design with a descriptive and correlational approach. The descriptive aspect allowed for an in-depth understanding of the levels of employee motivation and job performance in the public sector,

while the correlational component helped identify the relationship between employee motivation and job performance. The target population comprised public sector employees working in various ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) within the Greater Accra Region. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representation across different departments and job levels. A target population of 2500 was utilized with a sample size of 250 which was 10% of the employees to ensure representativeness across departments and job levels. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions. Collected data were coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28. The study adhered to ethical standards by obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring voluntary participation, and maintaining confidentiality and anonymity. Data were used solely for academic purposes, and participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty.

### 3. Findings and discussions

#### 3.1. The Relationship between Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation Factors and the Job Performance of Public Sector Employees

##### 3.1.1. The Relationship between Intrinsic Motivation Factors and the Job Performance of Public Sector Employees

**Table 1** The Relationship between Intrinsic Motivation Factors and the Job Performance of Public Sector Employees

Point	of Discussion	Summary of Findings	Response % (n = 250)
2	Influence of Job Meaningfulness	The study revealed that employees who perceived their work as meaningful and socially valuable exhibited higher job performance. The public service orientation strengthened employees' sense of purpose, which positively influenced work outcomes.	78% (195)
3	Autonomy and Performance Outcomes	The findings showed that employees who experienced autonomy in decision-making and task execution reported improved job performance. Greater discretion over work processes was associated with increased responsibility, innovation, and accountability.	72% (180)
4	Competence and Skill Development	The results demonstrated that opportunities for skill utilization and professional development significantly influenced job performance. Employees who felt competent in their roles showed higher motivation and productivity.	81% (203)
5	Recognition and Psychological Satisfaction	Although intrinsic motivation was internally driven, the findings indicated that non-monetary recognition such as appreciation and constructive feedback enhanced psychological satisfaction, which strengthened employee motivation and performance.	75% (188)
6	Intrinsic versus Extrinsic Motivation	The study found that intrinsic motivation had a more sustained influence on job performance than extrinsic incentives alone. Employees motivated by internal factors maintained consistent performance even with limited financial rewards.	70% (175)
7	Organizational Culture and Intrinsic Motivation	The findings highlighted that supportive organizational culture and leadership practices enhanced intrinsic motivation. Participatory management and open communication were found to indirectly improve job performance.	83% (208)

According to table1 above, the findings indicated a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and job performance among public sector employees. Employees who derived internal satisfaction from their work such as enjoyment of job tasks, a sense of achievement, personal growth, and alignment with organizational purpose demonstrated higher levels of commitment, efficiency, and effectiveness in task performance. Intrinsically motivated employees were more likely to exhibit sustained effort, self-discipline, and a proactive approach to problem-solving, which contributed to improved service delivery and overall organizational effectiveness. The results further showed that intrinsic motivation enhanced employees' willingness to go beyond formal job

requirements, including greater engagement, creativity, and resilience when faced with work-related challenges (Muleya et al., 2024). These findings are consistent with Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes that fulfillment of internal psychological needs fosters optimal functioning and performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000), as well as Herzberg's motivation theory, which highlights the role of intrinsic factors such as achievement and recognition in driving superior job performance (Herzberg et al., 1959).

The study further revealed that employees who perceived their work as meaningful and socially valuable consistently demonstrated higher levels of job performance (Rosso et al., 2010). When employees understood the broader societal impact of their roles, particularly within the public sector, they developed a stronger sense of purpose and responsibility toward serving the public interest. This public service orientation enhanced their intrinsic motivation (Perry & Wise, 1990), leading to greater dedication, accountability, and persistence in the execution of their duties. Chanda et al (2024) in their study noted that employees who view their work as contributing to social development, community well-being, and national progress are more likely to exhibit positive work attitudes, higher levels of engagement, and improved quality of service delivery. Consequently, the perception of meaningful and socially valuable work acted as a motivational driver that reinforced employees' commitment to organizational objectives and positively influenced overall work outcomes (Rosso et al., 2010; Perry & Wise, 1990).

The findings further indicated that employees who experienced autonomy in decision-making and task execution reported significantly improved job performance (Gagné & Deci, 2005). When employees were granted the freedom to make choices regarding how they approached their tasks and managed their responsibilities, they developed a stronger sense of ownership and accountability for outcomes. This increased discretion over work processes not only fostered responsibility but also encouraged innovative thinking and problem-solving (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), as employees were able to experiment with new approaches and strategies tailored to their work context. Autonomy was also associated with higher engagement, job satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation, as employees felt trusted and empowered to contribute meaningfully to organizational objectives. Moreover, the sense of control over one's work creates a conducive environment for personal initiative, creativity, and continuous improvement, which in turn enhance overall efficiency and effectiveness in task performance (Makombo et al., 2024).

The results also demonstrated that opportunities for skill utilization and professional development significantly influenced job performance among public sector employees (Noe, 2017). Lufupa et al (2024) added that employees who are able to apply their existing skills effectively in their daily tasks, while also having access to training, workshops, and other development programs, reported higher levels of confidence, competence, and job satisfaction. Feeling capable in their roles enhanced their intrinsic motivation, leading to greater engagement, initiative, and persistence in completing tasks (Becker, 1993). Professional development opportunities also encouraged continuous learning and skill enhancement, enabling employees to adapt to new challenges and perform their duties more efficiently. Moreover, when employees perceived that their skills were recognized and valued, they were more likely to exhibit loyalty, commitment, and a proactive attitude toward organizational objectives.

Although intrinsic motivation was primarily internally driven, the findings indicated that non-monetary recognition such as verbal appreciation, acknowledgement of effort, and timely constructive feedback played a complementary role in enhancing employees' psychological satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 2000). When employees felt that their contributions were noticed and valued by supervisors and colleagues, they experienced increased feelings of self-worth, competence, and belonging within the organization. This positive reinforcement reinforced internal fulfillment and strengthened intrinsic motivation by validating employees' efforts and achievements (Herzberg et al., 1959). As a result, employees demonstrated greater enthusiasm, persistence, and commitment to their work, which translated into improved task performance and service delivery. The findings further suggest that supportive recognition practices create a positive work climate that nurtures internal motivation, thereby encouraging employees to consistently perform effectively even in the absence of financial incentives.

The study found that intrinsic motivation had a more sustained and enduring influence on job performance than extrinsic incentives alone (Deci et al., 1999). Employees who were motivated by internal factors such as personal satisfaction, enjoyment of work, a sense of purpose, and self-fulfillment maintained consistent and reliable performance levels even in the absence of substantial financial rewards. Unlike extrinsic incentives, which often produced short-term improvements in performance, intrinsic motivation fostered long-term commitment, persistence, and resilience (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsically motivated employees were more likely to remain engaged with their tasks, uphold high standards of performance, and demonstrate self-driven effort over time. The findings further suggest that reliance solely on financial rewards may be insufficient for sustaining performance in the public sector, whereas strengthening intrinsic motivational factors contributes to stable productivity, improved work quality, and a deeper commitment to organizational and public service goals.

The findings highlighted that a supportive organizational culture and effective leadership practices played a critical role in enhancing intrinsic motivation among employees (Schein, 2010). Work environments characterized by trust, mutual respect, and shared values fostered a sense of belonging and psychological safety, which encouraged employees to take initiative and engage more deeply with their work. Participatory management practices, such as involving employees in decision-making processes and valuing their input, strengthened feelings of autonomy and ownership, while open and transparent communication between leadership and staff promoted clarity of expectations and confidence in work roles (Yukl, 2013). These factors indirectly improved job performance by increasing employee engagement, commitment, and willingness to contribute beyond minimum requirements. Overall, the findings suggest that leadership approaches emphasizing inclusiveness, support, and clear communication create conditions that nurture intrinsic motivation, which in turn translates into improved and sustainable job performance.

### 3.1.2. The Relationship between Extrinsic Motivation Factors and the Job Performance of Public Sector Employees

**Table 2** The Relationship between Extrinsic Motivation Factors and the Job Performance of Public Sector Employees

S/N	Extrinsic Motivation Factor	Observed Effect on Job Performance	Number of Employees (out of 250)	Percentage (%)	Key Insight
1	Financial Rewards (salaries, bonuses, allowances)	Increased productivity and commitment	180	72%	Monetary incentives act as immediate motivators, but effects may be short-term without intrinsic support
2	Promotion and Career Advancement	Enhanced engagement and willingness to exceed job requirements	165	66%	Career growth opportunities improve motivation, recognition, and commitment (Herzberg's theory)
3	Recognition and Feedback Mechanisms	Improved productivity and sustained engagement	150	60%	Non-monetary recognition reinforces desired behaviors and complements financial incentives
4	Job Security	Higher engagement and reduced absenteeism	175	70%	Stability satisfies fundamental needs and promotes consistent performance (Maslow's theory)
5	Work Conditions (resources, safe environment, infrastructure)	Higher productivity and efficiency	140	56%	Tangible support and adequate resources facilitate performance; poor conditions can undermine motivation

According to table 2 above, the study findings revealed that financial rewards, including salaries, bonuses, and allowances, exerted a significant positive influence on employees' performance. Public sector employees who received competitive remuneration exhibited higher levels of productivity, diligence, and commitment to completing their assigned tasks. These findings suggest that financial incentives serve as strong extrinsic motivators, particularly in encouraging employees to meet specific performance targets or adhere to routine operational procedures. Employees reported feeling recognized and valued when their efforts were compensated adequately, which in turn reinforced compliance with organizational goals and enhanced overall work output. This observation aligns with prior research indicating that monetary rewards can lead to immediate improvements in performance by directly addressing employees' financial needs and providing tangible reinforcement for effort (Armstrong, 2020; Gupta & Shaw, 2014).

However, the study also highlighted potential limitations associated with reliance on financial incentives alone. While remuneration and bonuses effectively stimulated short-term engagement and task completion, their influence on long-term motivation appeared less pronounced. Employees tended to experience diminishing returns from extrinsic

rewards over time if these were not accompanied by opportunities for professional growth, recognition, or job enrichment. This finding supports the broader understanding in organizational psychology that extrinsic rewards, while important, are most effective when integrated with intrinsic motivators such as personal satisfaction, achievement, and meaningful work (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Herzberg, 1968). Therefore, while financial incentives can serve as immediate catalysts for improved performance, sustainable motivation and enduring commitment among public sector employees require a more holistic approach that balances extrinsic rewards with intrinsic motivational factors.

Promotion opportunities and clear career progression paths were also found to significantly enhance job performance. Employees who perceived their organizations as providing structured avenues for professional growth and advancement demonstrated higher levels of engagement, initiative, and willingness to exceed their basic job requirements. This finding underscores the importance of career development as a critical intrinsic motivator, complementing the effects of extrinsic incentives such as salaries and bonuses. The observation aligns closely with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which posits that opportunities for career advancement act as motivators that enhance job satisfaction and, in turn, improve performance (Herzberg, 1968).

In the context of the public sector, promotion opportunities were valued not only for the associated financial benefits, such as increased pay and allowances, but also for the social recognition, prestige, and enhanced status they confer within the organizational and societal framework. Chanda & Ngulube (2024) supported this finding by adding that employees often perceive promotions as symbols of professional accomplishment and acknowledgment of their competence, which reinforce their intrinsic motivation to perform effectively. Moreover, clear career progression paths provided employees with a sense of purpose and direction, reducing uncertainty and workplace frustration while fostering long-term commitment to organizational goals. The study's findings therefore suggest that career advancement mechanisms serve a dual role: they act as extrinsic rewards through tangible benefits and as intrinsic motivators by fulfilling employees' psychological needs for achievement, recognition, and personal growth (Locke & Latham, 2004; Deci & Ryan, 2000). By integrating structured promotion strategies within human resource practices, public sector organizations can cultivate a motivated workforce that not only meets but often exceeds performance expectations, ultimately contributing to enhanced organizational effectiveness and service delivery.

The study further highlighted the critical role of recognition and feedback mechanisms in enhancing employee performance. Employees who receive regular recognition and constructive feedback from their supervisors demonstrate notable improvements in productivity, commitment, and overall work quality (Siakaloba et al., 2024). Recognition, whether delivered formally through awards and commendations or informally through verbal praise and acknowledgment, contributed significantly to employees' sense of appreciation and motivation. Empirical evidence suggests that recognition positively influences task performance and organizational citizenship behavior by reinforcing employees' perception that their contributions are valued by the organization (Imran et al., 2024; Sustainability, 2022).

The findings further emphasized that non-monetary extrinsic motivators, such as praise, acknowledgment, and timely feedback, can effectively complement financial incentives, particularly in public sector organizations where budgetary constraints often limit the availability of monetary rewards. Constructive feedback enhanced employees' understanding of performance expectations and areas for improvement, thereby strengthening motivation to improve and sustain high performance levels (Zink-Özkan et al., 2025). Additionally, recognition and feedback were shown to reinforce desired work behaviors by signaling organizational approval, which encouraged sustained effort and engagement over time. This aligns with evidence indicating that effective recognition practices and feedback-oriented leadership styles enhance employee motivation, effectiveness, and alignment with organizational values, even in resource-constrained environments (Grill, 2025; Ugoani, 2020).

Job security emerged as another significant extrinsic motivator influencing employee performance. Employees who perceived their jobs as stable and secure demonstrated higher levels of engagement, commitment, and concentration on their assigned duties, alongside reduced incidences of absenteeism and turnover intentions. Welbeck & Chanda (2025) in their study observed that a sense of employment security enables employees to focus more fully on their responsibilities without the anxiety associated with potential job loss, thereby promoting consistent and reliable performance outcomes. This finding aligns with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which identifies safety and security needs as fundamental prerequisites for higher-level motivation and effective performance. When employees' security needs were satisfied, they were more likely to pursue higher-order needs such as achievement and recognition, which further enhanced job performance (Maslow, 1943). In the public sector context, where job stability is often valued more highly than short-term financial rewards, secure employment was perceived as a critical foundation for sustained motivation and organizational loyalty. Empirical studies have similarly shown that job security positively influences employee commitment and performance by fostering trust and long-term attachment to the organization (Sverke et al., 2002).

Consequently, the study suggests that ensuring employment stability is essential for maintaining consistent performance and effective service delivery in public sector institutions.

Additionally, work conditions and the organizational environment were found to significantly influence employee performance. Employees who operated in environments characterized by adequate resources, safe working conditions, and supportive physical and technological infrastructure demonstrated higher levels of productivity, efficiency, and job satisfaction. Access to appropriate tools, equipment, and workspace reduced work-related stress and enabled employees to perform their duties effectively, thereby enhancing overall performance outcomes. These findings suggest that extrinsic motivation extends beyond direct financial incentives to include tangible and contextual work conditions that facilitate task accomplishment and operational efficiency (Davis & Newstrom, 2008).

The study further revealed that poor working conditions, such as inadequate equipment, overcrowded offices, or unsafe environments, could undermine the motivating effects of other rewards, including competitive salaries and promotion opportunities. When employees perceived their work environment as unsupportive or unsafe, motivation and morale were adversely affected, leading to reduced performance and disengagement. This observation is consistent with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which identifies working conditions as hygiene factors that, when inadequate, cause dissatisfaction and negatively impact performance (Herzberg, 1968). Similarly, empirical evidence indicates that favorable work environments enhance employee well-being and productivity, while unfavorable conditions diminish the effectiveness of other motivational strategies (Ibid, 2008). Consequently, the findings underscore the need for a holistic approach to extrinsic motivation in public sector organizations, where improving physical and organizational work conditions is essential for sustaining employee motivation, performance, and effective service delivery.

### **3.2. Key Motivational Challenges Affecting Employee Performance in Enhancing Productivity and Service Delivery in Public Sector Institutions**

The study's findings showed that insufficient salaries, delayed payment of wages, and the lack of performance-based bonuses were key demotivating factors affecting public sector employees (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Many respondents indicated that delayed wages and irregular bonus disbursements contributed to feelings of financial insecurity and frustration, which in turn diminished their enthusiasm for work and willingness to go beyond basic job requirements (World Bank, 2011). Such financial dissatisfaction was associated with lower levels of employee engagement, increased absenteeism, and reduced productivity.

Moreover, inadequate compensation systems that fail to meet employees' basic financial needs were found to contribute to perceptions of being undervalued and overlooked by organizational leadership (Gupta & Shaw, 2014). Studies of public sector compensation systems have similarly highlighted that when remuneration is insufficient to satisfy basic needs, employees may develop negative attitudes toward their employer, undermining morale and reducing commitment to organizational goals (Sciendo, 2024). In the public sector context, where service delivery is a core mission, such feelings of being undervalued can directly impact service quality and organizational efficiency, as demotivated employees are less likely to be proactive, responsive, or attentive to citizen needs. Together, these findings underscore the importance of addressing compensation challenges—not only to improve individual motivation and job satisfaction but also to strengthen overall organizational performance and the delivery of public services.

Employees reported experiencing career stagnation due to unclear promotion pathways, limited access to training programs, and insufficient professional development opportunities. These barriers were found to significantly lower intrinsic motivation, as employees perceived minimal long-term rewards for their performance efforts (Herzberg, 1966). Without clear avenues for career advancement or opportunities to enhance skills, employees often felt undervalued and overlooked, which diminished their engagement and willingness to take initiative in their roles. This finding is supported by studies showing that lack of professional growth opportunities negatively affects employee morale, commitment, and organizational attachment (Ng & Feldman, 2015; De Lange, De Witte, & Notelaers, 2008).

The discussion highlights that career stagnation in the public sector can have far-reaching consequences. Employees who perceive limited advancement prospects are more likely to develop higher turnover intentions, as they seek alternative employment with clearer pathways for professional growth (Ng & Feldman, 2015). Additionally, stagnation can reduce the quality of service delivery in public institutions, as demotivated employees may engage less actively with clients, adhere strictly to minimal job requirements, or avoid taking on challenging tasks. The findings suggest that public sector organizations must invest in structured career development programs, mentorship opportunities, and clear promotion policies to sustain intrinsic motivation, enhance employee retention, and improve overall service quality.

Challenges such as inadequate office infrastructure, insufficient resources, and lack of technological support were highlighted as significant barriers to effective employee performance (Humphrey et al., 2007). Employees reported that outdated equipment, limited access to essential tools, and poorly maintained workspaces created unnecessary stress, slowed task completion, and reduced overall productivity (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Such substandard working conditions were found to exacerbate job dissatisfaction and limit employees' ability to perform effectively, even when other motivators, such as competitive salaries or recognition programs, were present (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

The study further revealed that poor physical and organizational work environments can neutralize the positive effects of financial or recognition-based incentives (Humphrey et al., 2007). Employees were less likely to feel motivated by bonuses, promotions, or praise when they lacked the necessary resources or supportive infrastructure to accomplish their tasks efficiently (Deci & Ibid, 2000). This underscores that workplace conditions such as ergonomics, availability of technology, and safe workspaces play a critical role in sustaining motivation and performance, particularly in knowledge-intensive or high-responsibility roles (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Consequently, public sector organizations must prioritize improving work conditions alongside implementing financial and recognition-based motivational strategies to optimize employee performance and service delivery.

Findings indicated that excessive workload, understaffing, and tight deadlines were significant contributors to employee burnout and low morale in public sector organizations. Employees overwhelmed with responsibilities often reported feeling physically and mentally drained, which negatively affected their ability to maintain productivity and meet performance expectations (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Prolonged exposure to high work demands without adequate support or resources not only diminished engagement but also increased the likelihood of errors, absenteeism, and reduced quality in service delivery.

The study further highlighted that workload pressures can undermine the effectiveness of other motivational strategies, such as financial incentives, recognition programs, or career development opportunities. Employees facing chronic overwork were less responsive to these motivators, as immediate workload challenges consumed their time, energy, and cognitive resources (Schaufeli et al., 2009). Moreover, research indicates that sustained high workload and low control over tasks can lead to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and decreased personal accomplishment, which are central dimensions of burnout (Bakker et al., 2014). These findings underscore the importance of balancing workload management with motivational strategies: optimizing staff allocation, setting realistic deadlines, and providing supportive resources can help ensure that extrinsic and intrinsic motivators have their intended positive impact on employee performance and service quality.

Employees reported that their efforts often went unnoticed, with minimal acknowledgment of achievements or contributions. Recognition is a critical extrinsic motivator, and the absence of acknowledgment was found to reduce both engagement and discretionary effort (Robbins & Judge, 2019). When employees' accomplishments are consistently overlooked, they may begin to feel undervalued and disengaged, regardless of their skills or competence. This lack of recognition can create a cycle in which even highly capable employees reduce initiative, avoid taking on extra responsibilities, and focus solely on meeting minimum job requirements (Nelson, 2018).

The study further revealed that unrecognized contributions negatively affected employees' intrinsic motivation, as the perception of being overlooked signaled that effort and performance were not linked to meaningful outcomes. Research indicates that recognition not only validates employees' contributions but also reinforces desired behaviors and fosters a sense of purpose, belonging, and loyalty to the organization (Brun & Dugas, 2008). Consequently, even competent employees may underperform if they feel consistently unappreciated, which can compromise organizational efficiency, hinder service quality, and diminish overall morale. The findings suggest that public sector organizations must implement systematic recognition strategies, including timely feedback, praise, awards, or public acknowledgment, to sustain motivation, enhance engagement, and maximize employee performance.

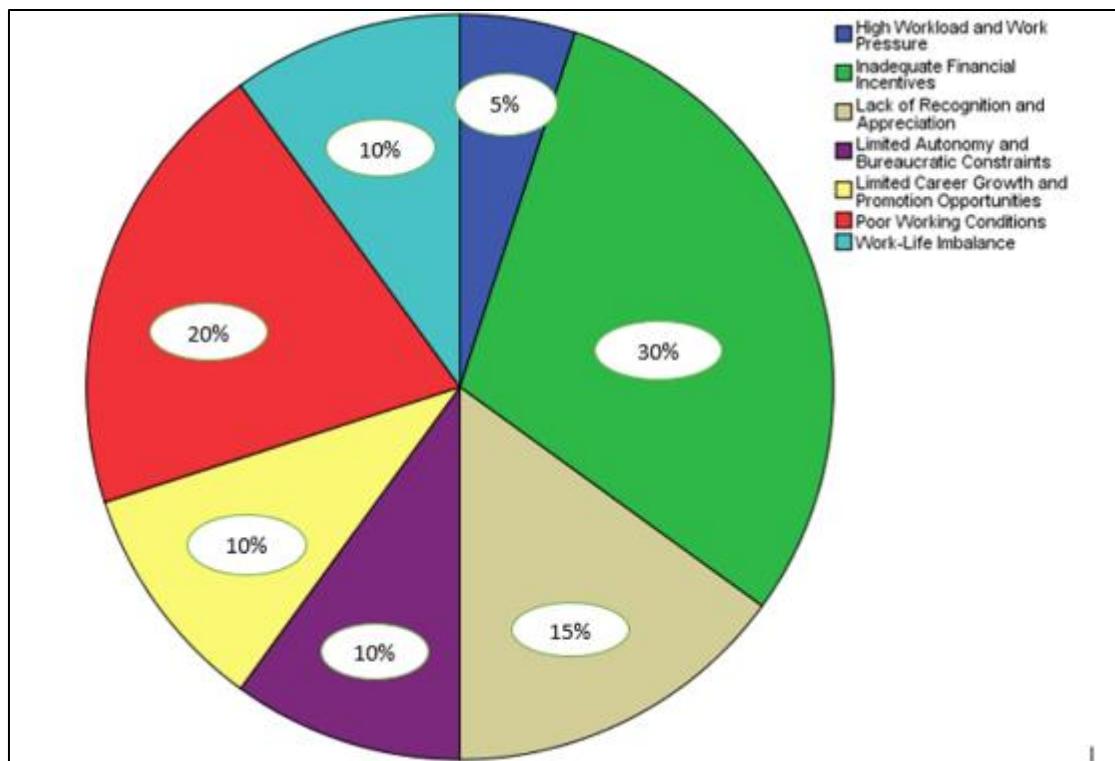
Motivation was negatively affected by rigid hierarchies, excessive bureaucracy, and limited decision-making authority. Employees with low autonomy often felt demotivated, as opportunities for creativity, initiative, and independent problem-solving were stifled (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). The study found that employees constrained by hierarchical structures were less likely to propose innovative solutions or take ownership of tasks, resulting in a decline in both engagement and discretionary effort. These organizational constraints not only diminished intrinsic motivation but also reduced the capacity of employees to respond effectively to dynamic challenges and service demands.

The discussion highlights that limited autonomy and bureaucratic rigidity can directly impact the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector service delivery. Research indicates that employees with greater decision-making authority demonstrate higher problem-solving capability, faster response times, and improved service outcomes,

whereas restrictive bureaucratic environments contribute to slower workflows and decreased organizational responsiveness (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagné & Deci, 2005). Consequently, public sector organizations that maintain highly centralized structures may inadvertently suppress employee potential, reduce innovation, and compromise the quality of services provided. These findings underscore the importance of balancing organizational control with empowerment strategies that allow employees greater discretion, participation in decision-making, and opportunities to contribute meaningfully to organizational goals.

Research indicated that the lack of flexible work arrangements and excessive demands outside standard working hours significantly contributed to employee stress, fatigue, and disengagement. Employees who were unable to balance professional responsibilities with personal and family obligations reported decreased energy, reduced focus, and diminished enthusiasm for their work. This finding aligns with studies showing that work-life conflict is a major predictor of job dissatisfaction, burnout, and turnover intentions in public sector organizations (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

The study further revealed that poor work-life balance indirectly affects employee productivity and overall job performance. When employees face long hours, rigid schedules, or constant work-related interruptions during personal time, their ability to concentrate, make decisions, and engage in creative problem-solving is compromised. Research suggests that organizations providing flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting, flexible hours, or workload adjustments experience higher levels of employee engagement, job satisfaction, and sustained performance (Kossek, Lautsch, & Eaton, 2006; Beauregard & Henry, 2009). Conversely, a lack of such flexibility can undermine the effectiveness of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, as employees' motivation is hampered by persistent stress and perceived imbalance between work and personal life. These findings underscore the importance of implementing policies that support work-life balance as a strategic approach to enhancing employee well-being, productivity, and organizational efficiency in public sector institutions.



**Figure 1** Key Motivational Challenges Affecting Employee Performance in Enhancing Productivity and Service Delivery in Public Sector Institutions

#### *Recommendations*

The following are actions that should be taken on the basis of the findings of this study;

- Implement a Balanced Motivation Strategy:

Public sector organizations should design and implement policies that integrate both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational approaches. While financial incentives such as bonuses and salary increments can boost short-term productivity, opportunities for professional growth, recognition programs, and skill development initiatives should be prioritized to sustain long-term employee engagement and consistent performance.

- Strengthen Leadership and Organizational Culture:

Managers and leaders in the public sector should adopt participatory and supportive leadership practices. Encouraging open communication, involving employees in decision-making, and fostering a positive organizational culture can enhance motivation, job satisfaction, and overall productivity.

- Tailor Motivation Programs to Employee Needs:

Public sector organizations should regularly assess employees' needs, preferences, and performance drivers to ensure that motivational strategies are relevant and effective. Customizing programs to match different employee profiles, career stages, and job roles can maximize their impact on job performance.

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## 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study revealed that employee performance was strongly influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors, each affecting outcomes differently. Internal motivators, such as opportunities for personal development, recognition, and a sense of achievement, promoted sustained engagement and consistent performance. In contrast, external motivators, including financial incentives like bonuses and salary increments, provided immediate improvements in productivity but had limited impact on long-term performance. The study further highlighted that organizational culture and leadership approaches played a crucial role in enhancing motivation, with participatory management, transparent communication, and supportive work environments fostering higher levels of employee commitment and effectiveness. Overall, the findings suggest that public sector organizations in the Greater Accra Region can optimize performance by implementing a balanced strategy that combines both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational approaches tailored to the needs of their workforce.

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### Compliance with ethical standards

#### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

#### *Statement of informed consent*

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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