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. MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF SELECTED FLOUR MILLS COMPANIES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of motivational strategies on organizational performance in selected flour milling companies in Nigeria. The strategies considered include compensation and benefits, employee recognition, training and development, positive work environment, and performance-based incentives. Guided by Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Vroom's Expectancy Theory, and Social Exchange Theory, the study adopts a survey research design with data collected from 393 respondents. Descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple regression analysis were employed for data analysis. Findings reveal that all motivational strategies significantly and positively influence organizational performance, with performance-based incentives having the strongest effect. The study concludes that effective implementation of motivational strategies is essential for sustaining high performance in Nigeria's flour milling industry. It recommends strengthening compensation systems, institutionalizing recognition programs, expanding training initiatives, and promoting supportive work environments.

Keywords: Motivational Strategies, Organizational Performance, Compensation, Recognition, Training, Incentives, Nigeria.

1.1 Introduction

In the contemporary business environment, organizational performance remains a critical determinant of long-term success and sustainability. Organizations operate in increasingly competitive and dynamic markets, requiring continuous improvement in efficiency, productivity, and employee engagement. One of the most significant drivers of organizational performance is employee motivation, as motivated employees are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of commitment, job satisfaction, and productivity (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020; Ryan & Deci, 2020).

The flour milling sector plays a vital role in Nigeria's agro-allied industry, contributing significantly to food security and economic development. However, the sector faces numerous challenges, including fluctuating market demands, competitive pressures, and evolving workforce expectations. These challenges necessitate the adoption of effective motivational strategies to sustain employee commitment and enhance organizational performance (Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2016).

Motivational strategies such as compensation and benefits, employee recognition, and training and development have been widely acknowledged as critical tools for improving employee performance. Compensation and benefits influence employee satisfaction and retention, while recognition enhances morale and encourages higher

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performance levels. Similarly, training and development equip employees with the necessary skills and competencies required to improve efficiency and productivity (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020; Kuvaas, 2006). Despite the recognized importance of these strategies, there remains a need for empirical evidence examining their combined impact within the Nigerian flour milling sector.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Despite the importance of motivational strategies in enhancing organizational performance, many organizations continue to experience low productivity, reduced employee engagement, and declining competitiveness due to inadequate implementation of these strategies. In the Nigerian flour milling industry, challenges related to employee motivation persist, potentially affecting operational efficiency and long-term sustainability.

Existing studies suggest that organizations often fail to fully utilize motivational strategies to improve performance outcomes. This limitation results in reduced employee commitment, lower productivity, and weakened organizational competitiveness (Judge et al., 2001; Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2016). Furthermore, there is a lack of sufficient empirical evidence on how specific motivational strategies—such as compensation, recognition, training, work environment, and incentives—collectively influence organizational performance within this sector.

This gap in knowledge makes it difficult for managers to design and implement effective, evidence-based motivational practices tailored to their organizational context. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by examining the impact of motivational strategies on organizational performance in selected flour milling companies in Nigeria.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of motivational strategies on organizational performance. Specifically, the study seeks to:

i. determine the effect of compensation and benefits on organizational performance
ii. examine the effect of employee recognition on organizational performance
iii. investigate the effect of training and development on organizational performance
iv. assess the effect of a positive work environment on organizational performance
v. evaluate the effect of performance-based incentives on organizational performance

1.4 Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

i. What is the effect of compensation and benefits on organizational performance?
ii. How does employee recognition influence organizational performance?
iii. What is the effect of training and development on organizational performance?
iv. How does a positive work environment affect organizational performance?
v. What is the effect of performance-based incentives on organizational performance?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are formulated:

i. $H0_1$: Compensation and benefits have no significant effect on organizational performance
ii. $H0_2$: Employee recognition has no significant effect on organizational performance
iii. $H0_3$: Training and development has no significant effect on organizational performance
iv. $H0_4$: Positive work environment has no significant effect on organizational performance
v. $H0_5$: Performance-based incentives have no significant effect on organizational performance

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study provides valuable insights for multiple stakeholders. For managers and business practitioners, it offers practical guidance on designing effective motivational strategies to enhance performance. For policymakers, it provides evidence to support policies that promote workforce productivity and organizational effectiveness. Additionally, the study contributes to academic literature by expanding knowledge on the relationship between motivational strategies and organizational performance within the Nigerian manufacturing sector.

2.1 Literature Review

2.2 Conceptual Review

Motivation is a fundamental psychological process that drives individuals to achieve goals and satisfy needs. In organizational contexts, motivation plays a critical role in enhancing employee productivity, job satisfaction, and overall organizational performance. Classical theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs emphasize that human needs range from basic physiological requirements to higher-order needs such as self-actualization, suggesting that organizations must adopt diverse motivational strategies to address varying employee expectations **(**Maslow, 1943; Ryan & Deci, 2020**).**

Motivational strategies in organizations typically include compensation and benefits, employee recognition, training and development, positive work environment, and performance-based incentives. Compensation and benefits provide financial security and influence employee satisfaction, while recognition fosters morale and reinforces desirable behaviors. Training and development enhance employees' competencies, enabling them to perform effectively and adapt to changing organizational demands **(**Armstrong & Taylor, 2020; Kuvaas, 2006**)**.

2.2.1 Concept of Motivational Strategies

Motivational strategies are structured approaches used by organizations to stimulate employee engagement, commitment, and productivity. The Self-Determination Theory highlights the importance of intrinsic motivators such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering sustainable motivation **(**Ryan & Deci, 2020). Similarly, Goal-Setting Theory emphasizes that specific and challenging goals enhance employee performance by providing direction and focus **(**Locke & Latham, 2002**).**

Effective motivational strategies require alignment with organizational objectives, understanding employee needs, provision of regular feedback, and the establishment of a supportive work culture. Organizations that integrate both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational approaches—such as recognition, rewards, and goal-setting—are more likely to achieve improved performance outcomes **(**Armstrong & Taylor, 2020**).**

2.2.2 Types of Motivational Strategies

Motivational strategies can be categorized into several key dimensions:

i. Compensation and Benefits: Financial and non-financial rewards that influence employee satisfaction and retention (Kuvaas, 2006).
ii. Employee Recognition: Formal and informal acknowledgment of employee contributions, which enhances morale and engagement (Robbins & Judge, 2017).
iii. Training and Development: Continuous skill enhancement initiatives that improve employee competence and organizational efficiency (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020).
iv. Autonomy and Empowerment: Providing employees with decision-making authority to foster ownership and innovation (Ryan & Deci, 2020).
v. Performance-Based Incentives: Rewards tied to measurable outcomes, encouraging higher productivity and goal attainment (Judge et al., 2001).

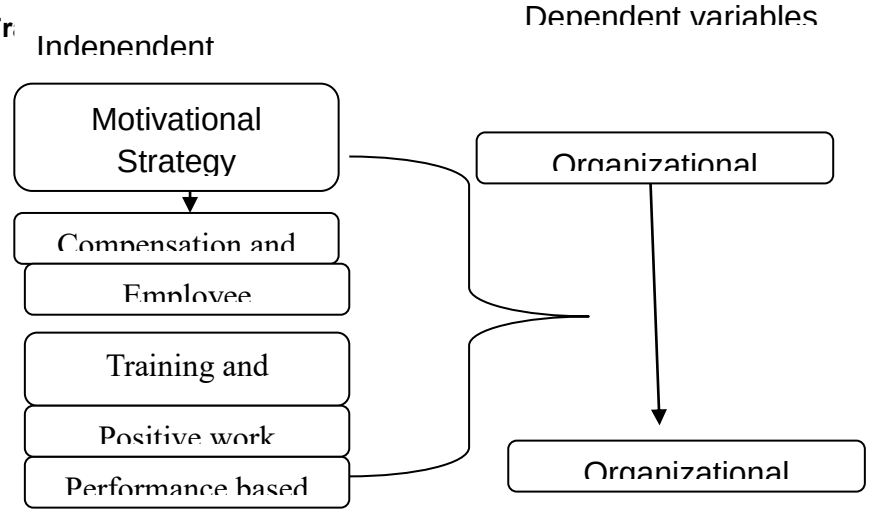
These strategies collectively contribute to improving employee performance and organizational effectiveness.

2,2.3 Motivational Strategies in Flour Milling Companies

The flour milling industry operates in a highly competitive and process-driven environment, requiring effective motivational strategies to sustain productivity and quality. In this sector, compensation structures, recognition systems, and training programs are particularly important due to the technical and operational nature of production processes.

Historically, the Nigerian flour milling industry has evolved from small-scale operations to a technologically advanced sector dominated by major firms. This transformation has increased the need for structured human resource practices, including motivational strategies that enhance workforce efficiency and organizational performance. Despite these developments, challenges such as high operational costs, workforce management issues, and competitive pressures persist, reinforcing the importance of effective motivation systems **(**Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2016**).** Tax incentives and tax holidays have been established to be major motivational strategies for both employees and employers in the industrial sector (Akpoghelie, 2022).

2.3 Conceptual Fr



This study is anchored on the relationship between motivational strategies (compensation and benefits, employee recognition, training and development, positive work environment, and performance-based incentives) as independent variables and organizational performance as the dependent variable. The framework assumes that effective implementation of these strategies leads to improved productivity, efficiency, and overall organizational outcomes.

2.3.1 Motivational Strategies and Organizational Performance

Compensation and Benefits

Compensation and benefits significantly influence employee motivation, job satisfaction, and retention. Well-structured compensation systems enhance employee commitment and productivity, while inadequate compensation can lead to dissatisfaction and high turnover rates **(**Kuvaas, 2006; Armstrong & Taylor, 2020**).**

Employee Recognition

Employee recognition plays a crucial role in enhancing motivation and organizational performance. Recognition programs increase employee engagement, improve productivity, and foster a positive organizational culture. Employees who feel valued are more likely to demonstrate commitment and contribute to organizational success **(**Robbins & Judge, 2017**).**

Training and Development

Training and development are essential for improving employee skills, enhancing efficiency, and fostering innovation. Organizations that invest in employee development are better positioned to adapt to technological changes and achieve competitive advantage **(**Armstrong & Taylor, 2020**).**

Positive Work Environment

A positive work environment encompasses physical conditions, psychosocial climate, communication systems, and work-life balance. Studies show that supportive work environments improve employee well-being, reduce turnover, and enhance productivity **(**Ryan & Deci, 2020**)**. In manufacturing sectors such as flour milling, workplace conditions significantly affect operational efficiency and performance outcomes.

Performance-Based Incentives

Performance-based incentives are powerful tools for driving employee motivation and aligning individual efforts with organizational goals. These incentives, whether financial or non-financial, enhance productivity, encourage innovation, and improve overall performance **(**Judge et al., 2001**).**

2.3.2 Organizational Performance

Organizational performance is a multidimensional construct encompassing financial outcomes, operational efficiency, employee productivity, customer satisfaction, and innovation. In manufacturing industries, performance can be measured through indicators such as output, quality, profitability, and employee retention **(**Armstrong & Taylor, 2020**)**.

Motivational strategies have been consistently linked to improved organizational performance. For instance, performance incentives enhance productivity, training improves efficiency, and recognition boosts employee engagement (Judge et al., 2001; Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2016**).**

2.4 Theoretical Review

Several theories provide a foundation for understanding motivational strategies and their impact on performance. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs explains that individuals are motivated by the desire to satisfy progressively higher levels of needs (**Maslow, 1943**). Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory distinguishes between hygiene factors and motivators, emphasizing intrinsic factors such as achievement and recognition **(**Herzberg, 1966**).**

Similarly, Expectancy Theory suggests that employees are motivated when they believe their efforts will lead to desirable outcome**s (**Vroom, 1964**)**, while Goal-Setting Theory highlights the role of clear and challenging goals in improving performance **(**Locke & Latham, 2002**)**. These theories collectively explain how motivational strategies influence employee behavior and organizational outcomes.

2.5 Empirical Review

Empirical studies consistently demonstrate a positive relationship between motivational strategies and organizational performance. Research indicates that training programs improve productivity, recognition enhances job satisfaction, and performance-based incentives drive efficiency and innovation **(**Judge et al., 2001; Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2016**).**

Studies conducted in both developed and developing economies show that employee motivation significantly influences organizational outcomes. In the Nigerian manufacturing sector, evidence suggests that compensation, recognition, training, and work environment are critical determinants of performance **(**Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2016**).**

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research design to examine the impact of motivational strategies on organizational performance in selected flour milling companies in Nigeria. Data were collected through a structured survey using questionnaires administered to employees across the selected firms. The quantitative approach is appropriate as it enables the use of statistical techniques to measure relationships among variables and generate objective, generalizable findings.
A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure adequate representation of departments and job levels within each mill. This design provides reliable numerical insights into how motivational strategies influence organizational performance .

3.2 Population and Sample

The population of the study comprises all full-time employees of six selected flour milling companies in Nigeria, covering functional areas such as production, maintenance, quality assurance, logistics/warehousing, sales/marketing, administration/HR, and management. The total estimated population is 3,000 employees**.**
The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula with a 5% margin of error. The base sample size of 353 was adjusted for a 10% non-response rate, resulting in a final sample size of 393 respondents**.**

3.3 Sampling Technique

A proportionate stratified random sampling method was utilized. The population was first divided into strata based on companies and departmental/job levels. Thereafter, simple random sampling was applied within each stratum to select respondents proportionately. This approach enhances representativeness and reduces sampling bias.

3.3.1 Sample Distribution Across Firms and Departments

Flour Mill	Sample Size	Departments / Job Levels	Allocation
Flour Mills of Nigeria Plc	66	Production	20
		QA / Maintenance	15
		Logistics / Warehousing	10
		Sales / Marketing	10
		Admin / HR	5
		Management	6
Honeywell Flour Mills Plc	66	Production	20
		QA / Maintenance	15
		Logistics / Warehousing	10
		Sales / Marketing	10
		Admin / HR	6
		Management	5
BUA Foods	66	Production	20
		QA / Maintenance	15
		Logistics / Warehousing	10
		Sales / Marketing	10
		Admin / HR	6
		Management	5
Olam Nigeria (Dangote Flour Mills)	66	Production	20

		QA / Maintenance	15
		Logistics / Warehousing	10
		Sales / Marketing	10
		Admin / HR	6
		Management	5
Golden Penny Flour Mills (UACN)	65	Production	20
		QA / Maintenance	15
		Logistics / Warehousing	10
		Sales / Marketing	10
		Admin / HR	5
		Management	5
Other Regional Mills	64	Production	20
		QA / Maintenance	15
		Logistics / Warehousing	10
		Sales / Marketing	10
		Admin / HR	5
		Management	4
Total	**393**		

This proportional allocation ensures balanced representation across firms and functional units.

3.4 Data Collection Method

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to capture information on motivational strategies (compensation and benefits, employee recognition, training and development, positive work environment, and performance-based incentives) and organizational performance. The instrument consisted of closed-ended questions measured on a Likert scale, allowing for quantitative analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques**.** **De**scriptive statistics—including means, frequencies, and percentages—were used to summarize the dataset.

Inferential techniques, specifically correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis, were employed to examine the relationships between motivational strategies and organizational performance, as well as to determine the strength and statistical significance of these relationships.

3.6 Validity of the Instruments

To ensure validity, the questionnaire was developed based on an extensive review of existing literature and subjected to expert evaluation by specialists in Human Resource Management and Organizational Behaviour.
Construct validity was further assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy **and** Bartlett's Test of Sphericity**.**

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Test	Value
KMO	0.812
Bartlett's Chi-Square	1420.561
Df	435
Sig.	0.000

The KMO value of 0.812 exceeds the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating sampling adequacy, while Bartlett's test is significant ($p < 0.001$), confirming the suitability of the data for factor analysis.

3.7 Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability was assessed using **Cronbach's Alpha** based on a pilot study involving 40 respondents.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Variable	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Remark
Compensation & Benefits	5	0.84	Reliable
Employee Recognition	5	0.82	Reliable
Training & Development	5	0.87	Reliable
Positive Work Environment	5	0.85	Reliable
Performance-Based Incentives	5	0.88	Reliable
Organizational Performance	5	0.83	Reliable
Overall Instrument	30	**0.91**	Highly Reliable

All values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency.

3.8 Reliability Diagnostics

Further reliability checks confirmed robustness of the instrument:

i. Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.81 to 0.88
ii. Item-total correlations ranged from 0.63 to 0.87
iii. Missing data were below **5%**
iv. No outliers were detected
v. Normality assumptions were satisfied ($p > 0.05$)

These results confirm that the instrument is statistically reliable and suitable for parametric analysis

4.0 Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Statistics of Respondents

The analysis was based on 393 valid responses**,** providing a strong dataset for statistical inference. The demographic profile shows a fairly balanced gender distribution, with 53.4% male and 46.6% female respondents**,** indicating adequate representation across genders.

In terms of marital status, 63.6% of respondents were married**,** while 36.4% were single, suggesting that a significant proportion of employees have family responsibilities that may influence work attitudes and commitment.

The age distribution indicates that the workforce is largely composed **of** young and middle-aged employees with 38.2% aged 31–40 years and 30.5% aged 21–30 years. This reflects a productive and active workforce demographic. Additionally, the majority of respondents possess considerable experience, with 30.5% having 6–10 years of experience**,** followed by 25.4% with 0–5 years.

Regarding organizational hierarchy, 50.9% of respondents were at the lower management level**,** 35.6% at middle management, and 13.5% at top management. This suggests that the study captured insights primarily from operational staff

who play a critical role in organizational performance.

4.2 Motivational Strategies and Organizational Performance

Compensation and Benefits

The findings indicate that compensation and benefits significantly influence organizational performance. A substantial proportion of respondents (over 73%) agreed that their organizations provide incentives based on individual performance, while approximately 77% confirmed that such incentives motivate them to achieve higher targets.

Furthermore, about 70% of respondents perceived compensation systems as fair, while over 74% agreed that incentives and bonuses enhance employee commitment. These findings demonstrate that compensation and benefits are critical drivers of motivation, loyalty, and performance outcomes.

Employee Recognition

Employee recognition emerged as a significant motivational factor, with between **72%** and 77% of respondents agreeing that recognition positively affects their performance. Employees reported that acknowledgment of their contributions enhances morale, increases motivation, and improves productivity.

Recognition from management was also found to positively influence departmental performance, indicating that non-financial rewards play a crucial role in enhancing organizational effectiveness.

Training and Development

The results show strong support for training and development as key drivers of organizational performance. More than **73% of respondents** agreed that training improves their skills and job performance, while approximately **75%** indicated that continuous learning opportunities enhance motivation and commitment.

These findings suggest that investment in employee development not only improves individual performance but also contributes significantly to organizational success.

Positive Work Environment

A positive work environment was found to have a strong impact on employee productivity and organizational performance. Approximately 75–77% of respondents agreed that their workplace is supportive, encourages teamwork, and enhances productivity.

Employees also reported feeling comfortable expressing ideas and concerns, which is essential for innovation and collaboration. These findings highlight the importance of organizational culture in driving performance.

Performance-Based Incentives

Performance-based incentives were identified as one of the most influential motivational strategies. Over 73% of respondents confirmed the availability of performance-based rewards, while **77.6%** indicated that such incentives motivate them to achieve higher targets.

Additionally, about 76.6% of respondents agreed that incentives positively impact organizational performance. These results underscore the effectiveness of incentive systems in driving employee motivation and organizational outcomes.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

Table 1: Correlation Matrix

Variable	CB	ER	TD	PWE	PBI	OP
CB	1	.642**	.588**	.601**	.655**	.701**
ER	.642**	1	.616**	.634**	.668**	.725**
TD	.588**	.616**	1	.648**	.602**	.694**
PWE	.601**	.634**	.648**	1	.663**	.712**
PBI	.655**	.668**	.602**	.663**	1	.738**

All variables show strong positive and significant relationships ($p < 0.01$) with organizational performance. Notably, performance-based incentives ($r = .738$) exhibit the strongest correlation, followed by employee recognition ($r = .725$) and positive work environment ($r = .712$).

These findings indicate that improvements in motivational strategies are closely associated with enhanced organizational performance.

4.4 Regression Analysis

Table 2: Multiple Regression Results

Predictor	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig.
Compensation & Benefits	0.198	4.02	.000
Employee Recognition	0.226	4.68	.000
Training & Development	0.182	3.96	.000
Positive Work Environment	0.203	4.20	.000
Performance-Based Incentives	0.252	5.67	.000

Model Summary:

- R = .823
- R^2 = .677
- Adjusted R^2 = .671

The regression model explains approximately 67.7% of the variance in organizational performance**,** indicating strong predictive power. All variables are statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

Among the predictors, performance-based incentives (β = 0.252) have the strongest effect, followed by employee recognition (β = 0.226) and positive work environment (β = 0.203). This suggests that incentive-driven and recognition-based strategies are the most impactful.

Model Fitness (ANOVA)

Table 3: ANOVA Results

Source	F-value	Sig.
Regression	170.32	.000

The ANOVA results indicate that the model is statistically significant **(**F = 170.32, p < 0.001**)**, confirming that the independent variables jointly explain variations in organizational performance.

4.5 Hypothesis Testing

All hypotheses were tested using regression analysis, with a significance level of 0.05.

i. H1: Compensation and benefits significantly influence performance
ii. H2: Employee recognition significantly influences performance
iii. H3: Training and development significantly influence performance
iv. H4: Positive work environment significantly influences performance
v. H5: Performance-based incentives significantly influence performance

Since all p-values are less than 0.01, all null hypotheses are rejected**,** confirming that motivational strategies significantly impact organizational performance.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study provide strong empirical evidence that motivational strategies are critical drivers of organizational performance in the flour milling industry. The results demonstrate that all five variables—compensation and benefits, employee recognition, training and development, positive work environment, and performance-based incentives—have significant positive effects on performance outcomes.

Notably, performance-based incentives emerged as the strongest predictor**,** indicating that employees are highly motivated by reward systems tied to performance. This supports the view that incentive-based structures enhance productivity and align individual efforts with organizational goals.

Employee recognition was also found to significantly influence performance, highlighting the importance of non-financial rewards in improving morale and engagement. Similarly, training and development contribute to skill enhancement and productivity, reinforcing the role of continuous learning in organizational success.

The significance of a positive work environment further emphasizes the role of organizational culture in shaping employee behavior and performance. Employees who operate in supportive and collaborative environments are more likely to be productive and committed.

Findings align with existing literature and confirm that organizations that effectively implement motivational strategies are more likely to achieve superior performance outcomes

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the impact of motivational strategies on organizational performance in selected flour milling companies in Nigeria. Drawing on data from 393 respondents and employing correlation and regression analysis, the findings provide strong empirical evidence that motivational strategies significantly influence organizational performance.

The results reveal that all the examined dimensions—compensation and benefits, employee recognition, training and development, positive work environment, and performance-based incentives—have positive and statistically significant effects on organizational performance. Among these, performance-based incentives emerged as the most influential predictor, indicating that reward systems tied to performance play a critical role in motivating employees and enhancing productivity.

Compensation and benefits were also found to significantly influence employee commitment and performance, reinforcing the importance of fair and competitive reward systems. Similarly, employee recognition contributes to improved morale and engagement, while training and development enhance employees' skills and adaptability in a dynamic industrial environment. Furthermore, a positive work environment was shown to foster collaboration, productivity, and overall organizational effectiveness.

The study concludes that motivational strategies are not merely supportive mechanisms but strategic drivers of organizational performance. Flour milling companies that adopt comprehensive and well-structured motivational systems are more likely to achieve sustained productivity, innovation, and competitive advantage.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

i. **Strengthening Compensation Systems:** Flour milling companies should implement competitive and equitable compensation structures that reflect employee contributions and industry standards, thereby enhancing commitment and reducing turnover.

ii. **Institutionalizing Recognition Practices:** Organizations should develop formal and informal recognition programs to acknowledge employee contributions, improve morale, and reinforce high performance.

iii. **Expanding Training and Development Initiatives:** Continuous training programs should be prioritized to enhance employees' technical and professional competencies, ensuring alignment with evolving industry demands.

iv. **Promoting a Positive Work Environment:** Management should foster safe, supportive, and collaborative workplaces by improving working conditions, employee welfare, and interdepartmental cooperation.

v. **Adopting Transparent Performance-Based Incentives:** Organizations should design and implement fair and trans incentive systems, such as bonuses and performance-linked rewards, to motivate employees and drive higher productivity.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Authenticity

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