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FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REWARD MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AT CITY OF HARARE
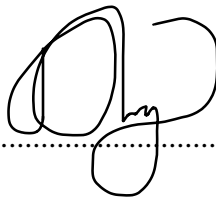
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Abstract

In public organisations like the City of Harare, where efficient service delivery depends on a contented and dedicated workforce, reward management systems are essential for improving employee happiness, motivation, and organisational success. The City of Harare needs to assess the efficacy of its reward systems since, in spite of reform initiatives, it has seen significant personnel turnover, deteriorating service quality, and ongoing employee unhappiness. This study examined the connection between employee satisfaction at the City of Harare and reward management systems, namely performance-based awards, recognition, financial incentives, equity, and fairness. A self-administered questionnaire was used to gather data for the quantitative cross-sectional survey design. Since non-managerial staff members from different departments within the municipality are most immediately impacted by operational reward methods, this study focused on them. Out of an 80 person sample, 45 valid replies were received, yielding a 56.25% response rate. The main goals were to evaluate how work-life balance and performance-based awards relate to one another and to ascertain how well financial incentives and recognition improve the workplace. A secondary goal investigated the relationship between job stability and equity and fairness. Important results showed a statistically significant positive correlation between work-life balance and performance-based awards, indicating that properly designed incentives can enhance workers' capacity to balance work and personal obligations. Furthermore, even in cases where competitive compensation was absent, it was discovered that financial incentives and recognition greatly improved the work environment. Additionally, the study found that employee job security and perceived equity and fairness in reward systems were strongly positively correlated. Based on these results, the study suggests formalising recognition programs, enhancing performance-based reward systems, and increasing award distribution's transparency and consistency in order to meet the needs of both intrinsic and extrinsic employees in Zimbabwe's public sector.

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List of Acronyms

BUSE   Bindura University of Science Education

COH   City of Harare

HR   Human Resources

NGO   Non-Governmental Organizations

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTINGS

1.1 Introduction

As organizations thrive through today's competitive business landscape, reward management has become a crucial role in employee satisfaction, retention, motivation, and engagement, directly impacting the productivity of an organization. Thus, this chapter was aimed at rendering the background of the study, problem statement, objectives, research questions, purpose of the study, significance of the study, limitation, delimitations of the study, definition of terms, and organization of the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

Employee satisfaction is particularly important in organizational success, particularly in the public sector where service delivery is directly affecting the citizens' quality of life (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2013). In the private sector, reward management is ever changing and flexible, allowing organizations to tailor their strategies to meet the needs and demands of their workforce. However, in the public sector, reward management strategies tend to be rigid, with standardized pay structures, limited opportunities for performance-based incentives, and bureaucratic constraints. Over the years, extensive research has been conducted worldwide, focusing on different reward systems and their influence on employee behaviour, motivation, and satisfaction.

1.2.1 International Perspectives

 Davis & Adams (2010) in the United States in their research on large organizations, concluded that while financial rewards like salary increases and bonuses were key, non-financial rewards had a lasting impact on employee motivation and satisfaction. They discovered that employee

recognition programs, career development opportunities, and personalized feedback lead to higher employee retention rates and improved job satisfaction. Employees reported that being valued and acknowledged for their work was often more important than receiving monetary rewards. This research suggested a shift towards more intrinsic motivators in modern workplaces.

The study by Jones & Wright (2015) in the United Kingdom about the healthcare sector highlighted that performance-based incentives significantly improved employee satisfaction and performance. Their research showed how healthcare professionals responded to incentive schemes that recognized individual and team contributions. This resulted in burnout rates becoming low and engagement becoming higher. In their research, they also reason out that work life balance initiatives, such as flexible working hours and paid leave, played a significant role in enhancing job satisfaction, especially in a high stress industry like healthcare.

Tanaka & Suzuki (2018) in Japan explored reward systems in Japan's technology sector. They revealed that long term incentives such as stock options, pension plans, and career advancement opportunities were more effective in increasing employee satisfaction than short term bonuses. Their study viewed that employees placed a higher value on rewards that contributed to their long term financial security and career growth, reflecting Japan's cultural emphasis on loyalty and stability. The research suggested that companies focusing on employee development and long term investment in their workforce enjoyed lower turnover rates.

Schmidt & Muller (2020) analysed the automotive industry in Germany, focusing on the shift towards team based rewards and the promotion of collective performance. Their study showed that the companies that implemented team based bonuses experienced higher levels of collaboration and productivity. Employees reported greater job satisfaction as they felt their contributions to team success were recognized and rewarded, leading to a stronger sense of community and shared purpose within the workplace. This model also reduced internal competition and facilitated a cooperative work environment.

United Kingdom local government councils have put in place flexible work schedules, professional development initiatives, performance-based compensation, and pension schemes to retain staff. However, their viability is threatened by budgetary limitations and the growing cost of living. Local budgets are strained by pension programs, which take about 25% of council tax revenue (Hickman, 2023). Retention is enhanced by career development

programmes like Essex County Council's Social Care Academy (Collinson, 2025). Although flexible work schedules improve employee morale, 2.8% income increases for 2025–2026 have been suggested; however, this may not be enough to offset the growing cost of living (Browne, 2024). Fair wage practices and employee expectations continue to be worldwide issues despite these initiatives.

1.2.2 Regional Perspectives

Adeleke & Okonkwo (2012) studied the banking sector in Nigeria, where they produced results that employees were more satisfied with reward systems that offered healthcare benefits, pension schemes, and family support programs. Their findings indicated that in developing economies, the non-financial rewards addressing basic needs had a more significant impact on employee satisfaction than salary increases especially where healthcare and social security are inadequate. Employees expressed a higher sense of security and wellbeing, which translated into increased loyalty and commitment to their employers.

In the mining industry, Mokoena & Smith (2016) in South Africa found that safety incentives and job security were the most critical factors affecting employee satisfaction. Their study highlighted that in high risk industries, financial bonuses alone were insufficient to motivate workers. Instead, employees prioritized safe working conditions and long term job stability. The study also viewed that companies with strong safety and health incentive programs yield lower accident rates and higher employee satisfaction.

Mwangi & Otieno (2017) examined the telecommunications sector in Kenya and found that flexible working hours, training opportunities, and recognition schemes were essential drivers of employee satisfaction. Their study revealed that younger employees, in particular, considered opportunities for career development and work life balance more than financial rewards. The results suggested that organizations that provided clear paths for growth and recognized individual achievements enjoyed higher retention rates and a more motivated workforce.

Johannesburg's municipality in South Africa has adopted a competency-based pay system, where employees are rewarded based on skills and performance (Kock, 2019). This system has improved motivation and productivity. However, wage disparities between different municipal

departments remain a significant challenge, leading to periodic labour disputes and strikes. A significant challenge in African municipalities is the reliance on traditional compensation structures, often failing to align with modern reward management best practices Additionally, issues such as corruption limited financial resources and weak human resource policies hinder the implementation of effective reward strategies (Sibanda & Musavengana, 2021).

1.2.3 Zimbabwean Perspective

In Zimbabwe, studies have begun to focus on how economic challenges influence the structure and effectiveness of reward systems for instance, Moyo and Chigwedere (2015) examined the impact of reward systems on employee retention in the manufacturing sector. They figured that in an unstable economic environment, employees prioritized monetary compensation and job security over non-monetary rewards. Their research indicated that the unpredictable nature of Zimbabwe's economy made financial stability a key concern for employees, and companies that failed to provide competitive wages and timely payments faced higher turnover rates.

The Kadoma City Council faces significant challenges in reward management, largely due to Zimbabwe's economic instability and hyperinflation. Employees often experience delayed salary payments, leading to dissatisfaction and low morale. The lack of structured performance-based reward systems diminishes motivation, as contributions go unrecognized. Although there have been attempts to implement non-monetary benefits, funding and administrative inefficiencies hinder their effectiveness. Furthermore, the absence of clear career progression opportunities contributes to employee turnover. Corruption also complicates reward management, eroding trust in leadership. Overall, addressing these issues through transparent practices and improved communication could enhance employee satisfaction and engagement within the council.

1.2.4 Industry Perspective

Challenges related to employee satisfaction have long been a concern, for the City of Harare largely due to inconsistent reward structures and low wages, Sibanda (2020). The City of Harare is one of Zimbabwe's largest municipalities that has faced numerous challenges in

providing effective public services due to bureaucratic processes, budget constraints, and limited flexibility in implementing programs. These factors have made the City of Harare, face significant workforce management challenges since 2011, including intense brain drain, absenteeism, labour turnover, and low productivity. A report by the ZPSC, (2020) highlighted the need for a comprehensive review of the City of Harare reward management system since the consequences of low employee satisfaction are far reaching to the extent of absenteeism, and higher turnover rates compromising service delivery. Considering these consequences, residents have also suffered from inadequate healthcare, sanitation, and collapsing infrastructure emphasizing the need for urgent reform. The City of Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, presents a unique case for exploring how reward management strategies are affecting employee satisfaction in a public sector setting.

1.3 Problem Statement

The City of Harare's reward management system has failed to effectively address the pressing issue of low employee satisfaction over the past years even with its best efforts to improve. This has resulted in negative consequences, including poor service delivery, corruption, high turnover of critical skills, and employee strike action (Moyo & Chipunza, 2022). Employee satisfaction has fallen by 30% over the previous five years, and poor service delivery has become the signature trait for the once praised Sunshine City. The increase in absenteeism has outstandingly impacted the decline in productivity, with absenteeism rates increasing to 25% from 2016 to 2020, reflecting the growing disengagement among employees (Ncube & Dube, 2023). For instance, a study conducted by the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZNSA) indicated that absenteeism in the public sector had reached a distressing level of 18% in 2020, compared to 13% in 2016 (ZNSA, 2020). Moreover, this decline in workforce engagement has descended rapidly on productivity, leading to unsatisfactory service delivery across key public services, including healthcare and sanitation. Furthermore, the existing reward management system of COH, characterized by inconsistent and outdated practices, has created a notable gap between employee expectations and the actual benefits provided as a result it has led to brain drains, with approximately 35% of skilled workers leaving the country between 2015 and 2022 in search of better opportunities abroad. This migration has severely depleted the local talent pool, worsening the challenges faced by the City of Harare in delivering essential services

(Maravanyika & Muchengetwa, 2021). This mismatch has cultivated a culture of dissatisfaction, demotivation, and disengagement among employees.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to examine the relationship between reward management strategies and employee satisfaction at the City of Harare. It focuses on performance-based rewards, recognition, and fairness influence work-life balance, appreciation, work environment, and job security. The findings will help improve reward systems to enhance employee motivation and productivity in Zimbabwe's public sector.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were divided into primary objectives and secondary objectives

1.5.1 Primary Objectives

1. To assess the relationship between performance-based rewards and work-life balance at the City of Harare.
2. To establish the effectiveness of recognition and monetary rewards in enhancing the work environment at the City of Harare.

1.5.2 Secondary Objectives

3. To explore the association between equity and fairness and job security at the City of Harare.

1.6 Research Hypothesis

1.6.1 Primary Hypotheses

H_0: There is no significant relationship between performance-based rewards and work-life balance at the City of Harare.

H_1: There is a significant relationship between performance-based rewards and work-life balance at the City of Harare.

H_0: Recognition and monetary rewards do not significantly enhance the work environment at the City of Harare.

H_1: Recognition and monetary rewards significantly enhance the work environment at the City of Harare.

1.6.2 Secondary Hypothesis

H_0: There is no significant association between equity and fairness and job security at the City of Harare.

H_1: There is a significant association between equity and fairness and job security at the City of Harare.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This research on reward management strategies and employee satisfaction in the City of Harare significantly implicated various stakeholders, including academic institutions, public sector organizations, researchers, the community, government, and body of knowledge.

1.7.1 Significance of the Study to the Researcher

This research filled a gap in the existing literature regarding reward management strategies in the public sector, particularly in Zimbabwe. It provided a foundation for further research in this area, enabling researchers to build upon the findings and explore related themes, such as employee motivation and organizational performance in similar contexts.

1.7.2 Significance of the Study to Bindura University of Science Education

The findings contributed to the body of knowledge at the Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE) by providing empirical data and insights into reward management in the

public sector. This research served as a reference for future studies, promoting a culture of academic inquiry and enhancing the university's reputation in applied research.

1.7.3 Significance of the Study to the Public Sector Organizations

The study offered practical recommendations for public sector organizations in Harare and beyond, helping them to implement effective reward management strategies that enhance employee satisfaction. By understanding what motivates their workforce, these organizations can improve employee engagement, retention, and overall service delivery, leading to more effective public services.

1.7.4 Significance of the Study to the Government

The findings informed government policy regarding human resource management in the public sector. By highlighting the importance of effective reward management strategies, the research influenced the development of policies that promote employee satisfaction, ultimately enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery.

1.7.5 Significance of the Study to the Body of Knowledge

The research filled in knowledge gaps, providing new and fresh perspectives, and advanced theoretical frameworks. The research impacted real world applications in industry, education, and policy making by focusing on practical implications. Furthermore, by posing fresh queries and promoting multi-disciplinary cooperation, this part stimulates further study. In the end, it highlighted the study's significance to both academic and general audiences by addressing more general concerns and improving quality of life.

1.8 Assumptions of Study

It was assumed that:

1. Employees at the City of Harare continue to receive rewards through the organization's reward management system.

2. The questionnaire shall be answered honestly, completely, and accurately by the participants.

3. The employees who participated in the study have been with the City of Harare long enough to be familiar with its incentive programs.

4. Throughout the study period, the existing reward management policies and procedures will not change.

1.9 Delimitations of the Study

1.9.1 Geographical Delimitation

This study was conducted specifically within the geographical boundaries of Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe. The research focused on key City of Harare offices responsible for employee management and reward administration, including:

Town House – The City of Harare's headquarters, located at Julius Nyerere Way and Jason Moyo

Rowan Martin Building – Houses the Department of Human Capital and other administrative functions, located along Julius Nyerere Way.

Cleveland House – A major office for city planning and financial management, situated along Speke Avenue.

Harare Water Department – Located at Old Mutual House, corner Speke Avenue and Second Street.

Health Services Department – Primarily based at Wilkins Hospital along Josiah Tongogara Avenue, overseeing municipal health services.

The focus on Harare allowed for a concentrated analysis of the public sector's reward management practices in a single urban context, which is a representative of many challenges faced by urban local governments in Zimbabwe. However, findings were not generic to rural areas or other cities in Zimbabwe or beyond, as the socioeconomic and political contexts differed significantly.

1.9.2 Participants Delimitation

The research focused on specific participants within the public sector, including employees from various departments of the City of Harare. The selection intentionally excludes private sector employees and other stakeholders such as external consultants or community members. This delimitation was key in ensuring that the study specifically addresses the perspectives of public sector employees regarding their reward management experiences. However, it limited the richness of the data by excluding views from other relevant stakeholders.

1.9.3 Literature Delimitation

The literature review primarily focused on studies related to reward management, employee satisfaction, and public sector performance within the Zimbabwean context and, relevant, similar developing countries. While existing theories and frameworks from global literature was considered, the study limited its scope to literature published within the last two decades which ensured relevance to current practices and issues. This delimitation excluded older but potentially valuable research that could provide historical context or foundational theories related to reward management.

1.9.4 Temporal Delimitation

The study analysed data from a defined time frame, specifically from 2011 to 2024. This period was chosen as it reflected the recent developments and challenges in the reward management system in response to changing economic and political conditions. While this temporal focus provided a relevant context for understanding current practices, it overlooked historical trends

or previous studies conducted before 2011, which could have offered additional insights into the evolution of reward management in the City of Harare

1.10 Limitations of the Study

1.10.1 Access to Information

In the City of Harare, access to reliable and comprehensive data regarding the current reward management practices was limited. Public sector organizations often have administrative processes that hindered access to necessary documents and statistics. Additionally, the sensitivity of certain information and fear to expose the predicaments related to employee satisfaction and organizational performance restricted transparency, potentially impacting on the depth and breadth of the analysis.

The impact of this limitation was minimized, by careful distribution of the questionnaires. Strong relationships were built with key personnel within the City of Harare, to seek for their support in facilitating data collection. To ensure consistency and avoid potential bias that could arise from using multiple data collection methods there was reliance on questionnaires.

1.10.2 Credibility of Information

The credibility of the information collected was a huge concern, especially when research relied on self-reported data from employees regarding their satisfaction levels and perceptions of the reward management system. Respondents provided biased or socially desirable answers rather than truthful responses, leading to inaccuracies in the findings. Furthermore, secondary data sources varied in reliability, depending on their origin and the methodology used for data collection.

In order to overcome this constraint, there was certainty that all questionnaire participants would remain anonymous in order to promote truthful and precise answers. Additionally, clear-cut instructions were provided to minimize misunderstandings and enhance the accuracy of the information gathered via the surveys.

1.10.3 Political and Social Environment

The political and social environment in Zimbabwe influenced the study's outcomes. The current political climate, characterized by instability and frequent changes in policy, affected employee morale and perceptions of the reward management system. Social factors, such as economic challenges and public sentiment towards government institutions, also shaped the context in which the study was conducted. These external pressures limited the generalization of the findings to other contexts.

In order to lessen the impact of this limitation, there was emphasis that the results were unique to the City of Harare and acknowledged the socio-political context while interpreting the findings. The findings were also underlined within the parameters of the investigation and suggested that related subjects be examined in later studies conducted in various socio-political contexts.

1.10.4 Methodological Limitations

The research methodology chosen for the study imposed certain limitations. The study primarily employed quantitative methods that could not capture the full complexity of employee experiences and satisfaction levels, leading to an incomplete understanding of the issues at hand. Additionally, the sample size and selection criteria limited the representative of the findings, making it challenging to draw broader conclusions.

To moderate this limitation, a questionnaire was designed including a mix of question types that would capture a variety of perspectives on reward management practices. The sample size and selection criteria were also justified, ensuring that they were appropriate given the scope of the study, while acknowledging that broader conclusions may be limited

1.11 Definition of Terms

Employee satisfaction is the extent to which employees feel content and fulfilled with their jobs, encompassing factors like work environment, role clarity, and recognition (Locke, 1976).

Employee Motivation refers to the underlying reasons or factors that drive an employee's behaviour. It encompasses biological, emotional, social, and cognitive forces that influence behaviour (Liu & Jiang, 2019).

Employee Productivity is the efficiency level resulting from employee performance, especially in terms of time, ability, energy, and resources (Singh & Chaudhary, 2022).

Organizational commitment refers to the psychological attachment and loyalty an employee has towards their organization, influencing their willingness to remain with the organization and contribute to its success (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

Performance management "is the process of ensuring that organizational goals are consistently being met effectively and efficiently through the assessment and development of employee performance." (Aguinis, 2009).

Reward management "refers to the strategies, policies, and practices that organizations use to design and implement reward systems aimed at motivating employees and achieving organizational goals." (Armstrong, 2006).

1.12 Abbreviations

BUSE   Bindura University of Science Education

COH   City of Harare

HR   Human Resources

NGO   Non-Governmental Organizations

1.13 Chapter Summary

This chapter was aimed at providing the problem and its settings on the investigation of reward management strategies on employee satisfaction. The chapter outlined the background of the study whereby the similar studies from global, regional, Zimbabwean and industry perspective where annotated. The chapter outlined the problem statement highlighting the problems relating to reward management of the COH. The objectives of the study and the research

questions were briefly interpreted. The chapter also viewed the significant of the study to the researcher, BUSE, the industry, the government and the body of knowledge. Assumption of the study was outlined according to the objectives of the study. The chapter outlined the delimitations of the study taking into account the geographical, participants and data period delimitations. Lastly limitations of the study, definition of key terms and abbreviations were clearly outlined. This chapter has laid the foundation for understanding the problem and the scope of the study, and the following chapter will examine the literature review, examining theoretical stances and earlier studies on employee satisfaction and reward management techniques.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter was aimed on providing literature review on the topic, an investigation of reward management strategies on employee satisfaction. The literature review was done in three distinctive phases namely conceptual framework where the key concepts of the study and the variables of the study where clearly outlined that is the independent, in this case is employee satisfaction and dependent variable is reward management strategies. The two variables where moderated by the moderating variable. The second phase of the literature review was a theoretical framework whereby the key theories guiding the study were outlined. The last phase of the literature review was an empirical review where previous studies related to my study were articulated from a global, regional, and local perspective.

2.2 Purpose of Literature Review

The purpose of a literature review provided an extensive and critical analysis of the existing research related to reward management and employee satisfaction. This involved highlighting the key concepts, theories, and debates that have shaped the understanding of reward management on employee satisfaction. The literature review formulated a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between reward management strategies and employee satisfaction and identified gaps in the existing research as well as assisting on where further research is needed.

2.3 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework diagram served a visual representation of the relationships among key variables in this study. The framework included the independent variables, dependent variables, and moderating variables.
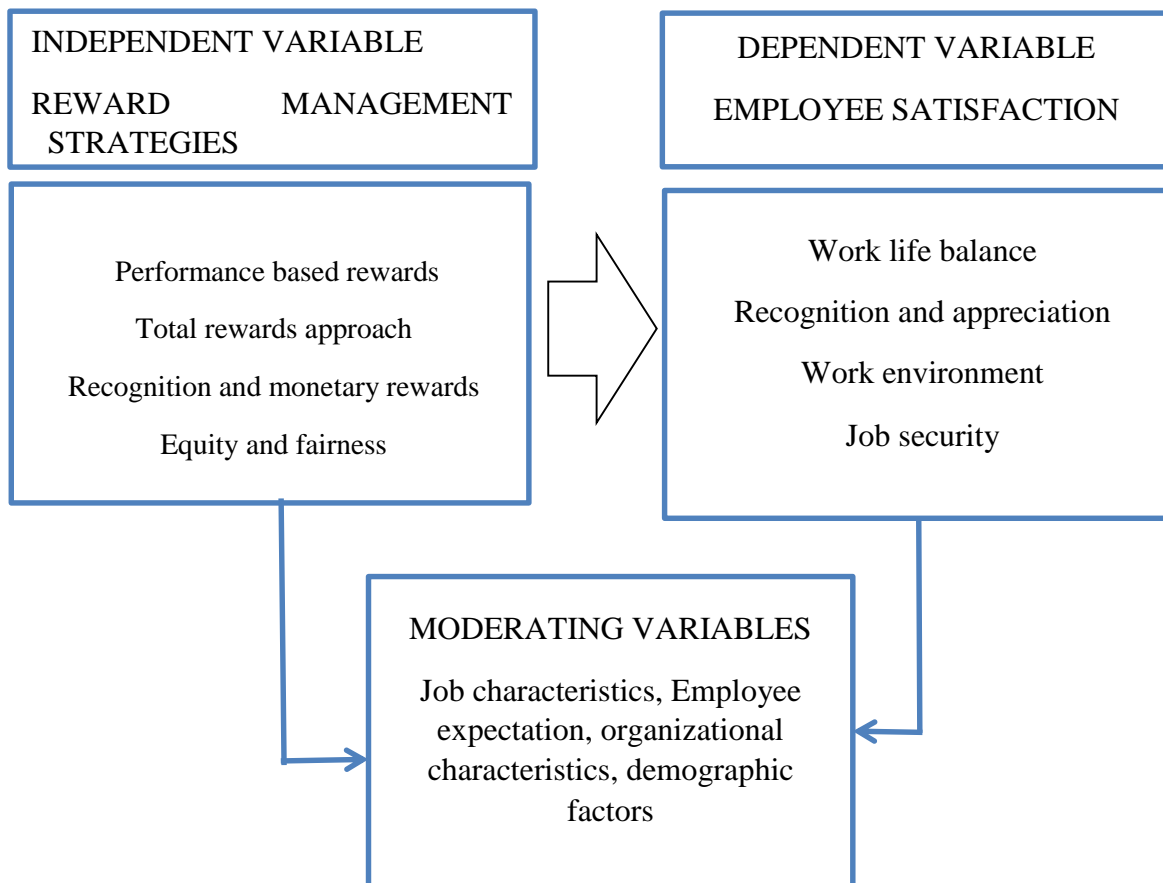
Figure 2.3 Conceptual framework

Source: The Researcher (2025)

The independent variables encompassed of various reward management strategies, including performance-based reward, total rewards approach, recognition and monetary rewards and equity and fairness. The dependent variable was employee satisfaction, which reflected on how content employees are with their jobs and the organization. Moderating variables influenced the strength of the relationship between independent and dependent variables, affecting how employees perceived and responded to reward systems.

2.4 Objective by Objective Review of Literature

2.4.1 The Relationship Between Performance Based Rewards and Work Life Balance

Performance based benefits encouraged employees to surpass their goals, and was in the form of commissions, merit pay, bonuses for individuals or teams, or stock options (Milkovich & Newman, 2008). Performance based benefits are widely adopted across industries, particularly in high performance cultures. The theory behind performance-based rewards is grounded in the motivation theory, which suggested that individuals are more likely to exert effort when they perceive a clear link between their performance and the rewards they receive (Locke & Latham, 2002). Theoretically, performance-based incentives match the individual motivations of workers with the objectives of the company. According to research by Lazear & Gibbs (2014), rewarding performance promoted productivity, accountability, and attention to high priority tasks. This alignment helped companies achieve their strategic objectives by creating an environment where employees are continuously striving to improve and achieve the desired outcomes. However, it proved to be difficult to strike a balance between employees' personal time and performance demands, especially in high stakes work settings.

While performance based rewards offered a clear financial incentive, the demands they placed on employees created tension between work and personal life. The pressure to meet performance targets resulted in longer working hours, stress, and reduced time for family and personal activities, in the end harming work life balance. Research indicated that although performance based incentives are associated with greater job satisfaction, they also tend to be associated with longer workdays and more stress at work, straining the work life balance (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Studies like those by Johnson et al, (2015) showed that employees in performance based incentive programs reported spending less time on personal activities, including hobbies, exercise, and family time, despite appreciating the financial rewards. The shift in focus from personal to work related priorities often lead to a sense of imbalance, where employees felt that their job is taking over their personal life, undermining their overall well-being.

Sex also plays a role in how performance based rewards impact work life balance. The effects of performance based awards on work life balance vary depending on a person's sex. There is additional pressure on women, especially those who provide care, to accomplish family responsibilities and performance goals. According to Kossek & Ozeki, (1998) women who are

particularly in care giving roles, experience additional pressure to balance both family responsibilities and performance expectations. Women find it more difficult to cope up with long work hours and high pressure environments, leading to greater stress and a more pronounced conflict between work and personal obligations.

To address these challenges, scholars like Thompson et al, (1999) argued for the introduction of more flexible performance based rewards, such as team based incentives and rewards that allow deferred completion. These approaches offered employees greater autonomy in managing their work schedules, thereby enhancing their ability to maintain a healthier balance between work and life. In the context of the public sector, performance based rewards faced additional challenges for example limited funding and low resources frequently prevented monetary rewards in the COH, obviated innovative methods to put performance incentives into place.

2.4.2 The Effectiveness of Recognition and Monetary Rewards on Work Environment

Establishing a positive work environment is essential for promoting employee engagement and productivity. Recognition played a key role in creating such an environment by reinforcing employees' sense of belonging and affirming the value of teamwork. Research by Thompson & Heron (2006) showed that when employees' individual or team contributions are acknowledged, it enhanced their sense of belonging and boosts overall morale and performance. In workplaces where recognition is a priority, employees frequently reported improved morale, reduced conflict, and a stronger sense of purpose. This, in turn, contributed a more positive and productive work atmosphere. However, while monetary rewards drive short term productivity, over reliance on financial incentives have quite a negative consequence, particularly in terms of developing rivalry and reducing collaboration among employees.

Deci et al, (1999) argue that an over emphasis on financial rewards created a competitive environment that discourages teamwork and collaboration, which are essential for long term organizational success. The power of recognition is particularly evident in the public sector, where monetary incentives are limited, but the social and psychological value of recognition can still cultivate high levels of motivation and performance. Simple, low cost recognition

techniques such as verbal appreciation, certificates, and public commendations can significantly boost employee morale without placing a strain on the organization's budget.

2.4.3 The Association Between Equity and Fairness and Job Security

Comprehending Equity and Fairness in Job Security Equity and fairness play a key role in determining job satisfaction, commitment, and perceived job security. When employees perceive that resources, opportunities, and rewards are distributed fairly, they are more likely to feel secure in their roles and committed to their work (Greenberg, 1990). The impact of perceived fairness on job security had been well documented, with research showing that fairness in the workplace is linked to reduced stress levels, higher employee retention, and greater loyalty (Tyler & Blader, 2003). In places like the COH, employment decisions, from promotions to layoffs, are conducted fairly as it is vital for promoting a sense of security among employees. For employees, perceived fairness is not limited to the outcomes they receive but also extends to the processes by which decisions are made and the treatment they receive from management.

Employees are motivated when they believe that their inputs like skills, effort and outputs like compensation, job security are fairly distributed, according to equity theory (Adams, 1963). Disparities may result in discontent and a decline in the impression of job security. Fairness is further separated into distributive, procedural, and interactional justice by organizational justice theory (Greenberg, 1990), which emphasizes that treating employees fairly in both policies and interactions increases their commitment. Employees who perceive that they are treated fairly in all aspects of their work environment are more likely to feel secure in their jobs and remain committed to the organization.

Security of employment and equity in public institutions given that workers frequently place a higher priority on job security than financial gain, studies on public sector organizations (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Studies by Perry et al, (2010) further emphasized the importance of transparent communication regarding job security policies in public organizations, which helped alleviate stress and cultivate a sense of stability among employees. Equity theory (Adams, 1963) also highlights the importance of fairness in recognition. Employees are more likely to be satisfied and motivated when they perceive that recognition is distributed equitably among peers.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

Reward management plays a significant role in shaping employee satisfaction and motivation. Understanding the theoretical foundations behind reward systems was essential for designing effective strategies that align with organizational goals and employee needs. This section explores the relevance of the theories demonstrating how these theories govern the study's objectives concerning reward management and employee satisfaction at the COH. These theories included Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, Herzberg's two factor theory, and the equity theory.

2.5.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Maslow's Hierarchy of needs theory (1943) provide a foundational framework for understanding human motivation. Maslow proved that individuals are motivated by a series of needs that must be fulfilled in a hierarchical order, starting from basic physiological needs and advancing to self-actualization. This theory was particularly relevant in assessing how various reward management strategies influence employee satisfaction, especially in the context of a dynamic and evolving organization like the COH. Maslow's theory was instrumental in understanding how different types of rewards addressed various employee needs (Robbins & Judge, 2019).

Performance based rewards such as bonuses, commissions, or merit pay served to fulfil employees' lower order needs. However, the pursuit of these rewards also came at the cost of higher order needs, such as social needs like the need for connection and esteem needs as the need for recognition, which negatively affected employees' work life balance (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). By applying Maslow's framework, the study explored how such rewards may lead to longer work hours or increased job demands, thus potentially disrupting employees' personal lives.

Furthermore, Maslow's theory was particularly helpful when exploring the role of total rewards on recognition and appreciation. Recognition and appreciation are non-monetary elements that contribute to fulfilling employees' social and esteem needs (Dessler, 2020). When employees felt recognized and valued, they experienced a sense of belonging and respect, which is crucial for maintaining motivation and satisfaction. The total rewards approach, which combines both

monetary and non monetary elements, aligns with Maslow's theory by addressing employees' diverse needs (Milkovich et al, 2017). In the context of the COH, this theory helped emphasize how the City of Harare's recognition practices significantly enhanced employees' job satisfaction by fulfilling their higher order needs.

2.5.2 Herzberg's Two Factor Theory

Herzberg's two factor theory (1959) provided another vital theoretical perspective for understanding employee motivation. Herzberg differentiated between hygiene factors such as salary, job security, and working conditions and motivators such as achievement, recognition, and opportunities for personal growth. According to Herzberg, hygiene factors prevented dissatisfaction but do not lead to higher satisfaction or motivation. On the other hand, motivators lead to increased job satisfaction and higher levels of motivation (Alshmemri et al., 2017). In the context of the COH, Herzberg's theory was particularly relevant when exploring the effectiveness of recognition and monetary rewards on the work environment. Monetary rewards, such as salary and performance bonuses, are hygiene factors. While they are essential for preventing dissatisfaction, they do not necessarily lead to greater job satisfaction (Onnis, 2019). Recognition, as a motivator, plays a key role in promoting a positive work environment. When employees are acknowledged for their contributions, it fulfils their need for achievement and esteem, leading to increased job satisfaction and enhanced morale. The combination of both hygiene factors and motivators was essential for cultivating a productive and engaged workforce, particularly in the public sector, where resources for monetary rewards may be limited (Chiat & Panatik, 2019).

Additionally, Herzberg's theory was valuable when exploring the influence of equity and fairness on job security. Employees who perceive that they are treated fairly in terms of rewards and recognition are more likely to feel secure in their roles (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Herzberg's emphasizes on both hygiene factors and motivators highlighting the importance of ensuring that employees are not only provided with adequate financial compensation which prevented dissatisfaction but also with opportunities for recognition and career advancement which drive satisfaction and commitment. This balanced approach significantly contributed to employees' sense of job security, which is particularly important in the public sector (Milkovich et al, 2017)

2.5.3 Equity Theory

Equity Theory (Adams, 1963) focuses on the importance of fairness in reward distribution and its impact on employee satisfaction and motivation. According to this theory, employees evaluated their job satisfaction based on the perceived fairness of the rewards they receive concerning their contributions and the rewards received by others. If employees perceived an imbalance whether they are under rewarded or over rewarded they are likely to feel dissatisfied, which can negatively impact their motivation, morale, satisfaction and job security. Equity theory was especially relevant when assessing the influence of performance based rewards on work life balance. If employees perceived that performance rewards are distributed unfairly such as when some employees are perceived as receiving more rewards for the same level of effort it can lead to dissatisfaction, stress, and a negative impact on work life balance (Cropanzano & Folger, 1991). On the other hand, when performance based rewards were seen as fair and equitable, employees were more likely to be motivated to maintain a positive work life balance while still striving for performance goals. By applying equity theory, the research explored how perceived fairness in the distribution of performance rewards influences employees' attitudes toward their work and their personal lives.

Equity theory was also important when examining the role of recognition and appreciation in the total rewards approach. Recognition is a form of non monetary reward that greatly influence employees' perceptions of fairness. If employees feel that recognition is distributed equitably among all team members, they are more likely to feel motivated and appreciated, leading to higher satisfaction (Allen & Kilmann, 2001). However, if recognition is perceived as biased or unequal, it leads to feelings of resentment and a decline in morale. Equity theory underscores the importance of ensuring fairness in all forms of recognition and appreciation, which was important for promoting a positive organizational culture and increasing employee retention.

Finally, Equity Theory is integral when exploring the influence of equity and fairness on job security. In the public sector, where job security is often seen as a key benefit, employees' perceptions of fairness in reward distribution can have a significant impact on their sense of security. If employees feel that rewards and recognition are distributed equitably, they feel secure in their jobs. Conversely, perceived inequities such as favouritism in promotions or unequal distribution of rewards leads to dissatisfaction, lower morale, and a diminished sense of job security (Greenberg, 1990). Therefore, applying equity theory helped understand the role

of fairness in promoting job security and organizational commitment, particularly in public sector organizations like the COH.

2.6 Empirical Literature Review

Reward management strategies play a important role in shaping employee satisfaction and organizational performance. Studies have explored how different reward systems affect various aspects of employee satisfaction, including work-life balance, recognition, and job security. This empirical review synthesizes existing literature to assess the influence of reward management strategies on employee satisfaction, specifically in the context of the COH. The review is structured around three key themes: performance-based rewards and work-life balance, recognition and monetary rewards, and equity and fairness in rewards.

2.6.1 Performance-Based Rewards and Work-Life Balance

Performance-based rewards refer to compensation systems that link employee remuneration to the achievement of specific performance targets. Literature suggests that such systems have a positive influence on employee satisfaction and motivation when effectively implemented. Armstrong and Taylor (2020) assert that performance-related pay incentivizes high performance and cultivates a culture of meritocracy. Similarly, Khan et al. (2019) found that employees in organizations with performance-linked incentives demonstrated higher job commitment and morale.

However, the effectiveness of performance-based rewards in promoting work-life balance is debated. While increased earnings can improve personal satisfaction, the pressure to meet targets often leads to overwork, fatigue, and reduced personal time (Biron, Burke & Cooper, 2014). In the Zimbabwean context, Chitongo (2021) observed that performance-based pay introduced in some municipalities yielded short-term motivation, but sustainability issues— such as delayed disbursement and limited funding—eroded trust in the system.

Within the COH, informal interviews and media reports suggest that although performance appraisals exist, they are inconsistently applied, and often not linked to actual incentives. This

undermines employee morale and creates perceptions of bias and favouritism, which in turn affects their emotional engagement and work-life harmony.

Performance-based awards are supported by numerous international research, although the majority of Zimbabwean literature concentrates on implementation issues rather than results like work-life balance. Empirical research assessing the effects of these incentives on the non-financial well-being of public sector workers in urban municipalities with inadequate funding is conspicuously lacking. Furthermore, the majority of research employs quantitative techniques and lacks the qualitative understanding necessary to uncover more profound employee attitudes.

2.6.2 Equity and Fairness in Rewards and Job Security

Equity and fairness are foundational principles in human resource management, especially with compensation and benefits. According to Adams' Equity Theory (1963), employees assess fairness by comparing their input-output ratio with that of others. When employees perceive fairness in rewards, they are more likely to express organizational commitment and feelings of job security (Robbins & Judge, 2018).

Empirical studies in African public sectors affirm this. Mumba and Chirwa (2020), in a study of Zambian local authorities, found that equitable reward systems significantly reduced staff turnover and increased loyalty. In the Zimbabwean context, Gandidzanwa (2019) revealed that employees in Harare City Council frequently express dissatisfaction over opaque reward practices, often claiming that promotions and bonuses are granted based on favouritism or political connections rather than merit. Such perceptions of injustice contribute to demotivation and decreased job security, as employees feel their future in the organization is not guaranteed or based on performance. Equity in rewards is therefore not only a matter of fairness but directly affects how secure employees feel in their positions.

Much of the Zimbabwean research is based on anecdotal or descriptive findings and lacks rigorous statistical analysis to back claims of inequity. Also, the discussion often centres on wage gaps alone, ignoring other facets of fairness such as career progression, access to training, and consistency in performance evaluation. A mixed-methods approach, integrating employee voices with institutional data, is needed to produce a more comprehensive picture.

2.6.3 Recognition and Monetary Rewards on the Work Environment

Recognition is a powerful, often underestimated driver of job satisfaction and a healthy work environment. It includes both tangible rewards and intangible gestures. According to Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (2008), intrinsic motivation fuelled by recognition plays a critical role in improving individual performance and organizational climate. Nel et al. (2016) support this, highlighting that regular recognition, even without monetary gain, can significantly uplift the work environment and foster mutual respect.

In Zimbabwe, Makoni and Hove (2020) found that employees in local government offices reported higher satisfaction when supervisors acknowledged their contributions publicly or through simple verbal appreciation. Monetary rewards remain essential, especially in a context of economic hardship, yet their irregularity and unpredictability often diminish their perceived value. At the COH, evidence suggests that recognition practices are not standardized. Muzamhindo (2022) noted that while some departments engage in informal recognition, others lack any form of acknowledgment, leading to inconsistency in morale and work culture. Moreover, the unpredictability of bonuses, especially in times of budget constraints, creates uncertainty among workers, which negatively affects teamwork and organizational citizenship.

 Much of the available literature tends to treat recognition and monetary rewards as separate elements, while in practice, they often function best in tandem. Moreover, studies focusing on recognition rarely explore its broader impact on organizational culture or team dynamics. Locally, there's a need for more research evaluating structured recognition programs and their link to psychological safety and work environment.

2.7 Research gap

While prior studies have examined the influence of rewards, recognition, equity, and fairness on employee outcomes, there was limited research specific to municipal employees in Harare, Zimbabwe. Additionally, the combined effect of these factors on dimensions like work life balance, job appreciation, and job security remains under explored. Research on rewards, recognition, equity, and fairness was abundant in certain regions or sectors like corporate environments but limited in the public sector or municipal settings in Zimbabwe or similar African urban centres (Kuvaas, 2006). For instance, exploring if there's a lack of studies

examining how these factors specifically impact municipal employees in Harare. This geographic gap justified the need for context specific insights (Ramsay, 2015). Some studies focused on individual factors like rewards or recognition but may not have examined the interplay between multiple factors and how they collectively influence outcomes such as work life balance and job security.

A conceptual gap also existed as studies have only looked at these variables in isolation without exploring the holistic impact on employees' perceptions of their work environment and overall job satisfaction (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Moreover, the existing literature also relies heavily on quantitative approaches, leaving a gap in qualitative insights that could capture employees lived experiences (Denscombe, 2017). This study aimed to fill these gaps by examining these relationships within the COH, providing both a context specific understanding and practical recommendations for local government policies.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a thorough analysis of how reward management strategies affect employee satisfaction. It explored various theoretical, conceptual, and empirical perspectives understanding better the relationship between reward strategies and employee satisfaction. The literature review highlighted several key theories that focus on the motivational aspects of rewards and their effect on employee behaviour. These theories stressed the necessity of aligning rewards with employee expectations and ensuring perceptions of fairness, which are essential for enhancing performance. Additionally, the empirical review section synthesized findings from previous studies, revealing consistence patterns and trends that further shed light on the connection between reward management and employee satisfaction. The next chapter will focus on the research methodology, detailing the approach and methods used to investigate the impact of reward management strategies on employee satisfaction in the COH.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlined the research methodology that will be employed to investigate the relationship between reward management strategies and employee satisfaction in the COH. This section outlined the research approach, the research design, data collection methods, the population of the study, sample selection, data analysis techniques, and the overall validity and reliability of the study.

3.2 Research Philosophy

In quantitative research, a positivist philosophy emphasized on the objective reality and measurable data. Positivism assumes that knowledge is observable and independent of personal perceptions (Saunders et al., 2019). This approach valued empirical evidence and rigorous statistical analysis, allowing researchers to investigate relationships and causality with clarity and accuracy.

Due to the nature of the study connecting variables such as rewards, recognition, equity, and fairness to work life balance, appreciation, work environment, and job security of the COH this quantitative positivist approach was especially appropriate to systematically work through this approach of study. By employing structured data collection methods like surveys, quantitative research made it possible to gather large datasets, which helped ensure reliability and validity (Monette et al., 2014). Statistical techniques then enabled to detect patterns, determine significance and possibly extrapolate into the general population beyond the study's sample.

This was fitting because it met the objective nature of the research questions, which were interested in quantifying workplace dynamics, as opposed to individual experiences that cannot be quantified or objectively measured (Bryman, 2016). Quantitative methods provided

a concrete foundation for understanding relationships and informing evidence based recommendations for organizational improvement.

3.3 Research Design

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey design to examine the association between reward management strategies and employee satisfaction at COH. This design was most appropriate for a quantitative research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016) thus enabled the collection of a snapshot of data of a sample of employees in the COH at a point in time, and yielded valuable descriptive statistics regarding how reward management practices influenced various aspects of employee satisfaction including work life balance, job security and the work environment.

Employee perceptions were assessed on issues such as the sufficiency of job security measures, recognition procedures, and the fairness of awards. Quantitative data from the survey can be examined for trends and connections (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Additionally, using instruments like Likert scales made it possible to measure employee perspectives on these important issues in an organized manner. Due to the quantitative character of this design, evaluation of the effects of various reward schemes on recognized criteria of employee satisfaction aided in the drawing of conclusions from the data gathered (Saunders et al., 2019).

3.4 Research Approach

The research approach for this study focused on a quantitative approach to explore the relationship between reward management strategies and employee satisfaction at the COH. This approach was particularly suitable for examining the impact of specific reward strategies on employee satisfaction, as it enabled the collection of numerical data that was statistically analysed to identify patterns and relationships (Bryman, 2016).

By focusing on quantitative data, the study provided statistical evidence of the connection between reward strategies such as financial incentives, recognition, and career development opportunities and levels of employee satisfaction (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). The use of structured surveys ensured that data is consistently collected from a representative sample of

employees, allowing for objective analysis. These surveys measured employee satisfaction levels and perceptions of reward management strategies.

The findings were analysed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis to determine the strength and direction of relationships between reward management strategies and employee satisfaction (Field, 2018). This approach offered a clear, data driven understanding of how rewards impact employee satisfaction, without relying on qualitative insights or hypothesis testing. This approach provided objective measurements that can support generality across a larger population (Babbie, 2020).

3.5 Population of the study

The population of interest in this study consisted of employees working in various departments within the COH. These included individuals employed in departments such as health, water, housing, finance, and human resources, which are all integral to the city's administration and service delivery because it offered a cross-section of workers exposed to a range of reward techniques, such as performance-based incentives, recognition programs, and job security measures, this cohort was very pertinent to the study (Saunders et al., 2019). The targeted population size was 100 employees. This figure was used to calculate an appropriate sample size for the study to ensure the findings could be generalized to the wider employee population.

3.6.1 Sample Size

This study this study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive design, and the sample size was determined using the Cochran's formula to ensure statistical validity and representation. The formula is expressed as:

$n = Z^2 p (1 p)/ E^2$

Where:

n = sample size needed

Z = Z score corresponding to a desired confidence level of 1.96 for 95% confidence level

p = estimated population proportion, with 0.5 used for maximum variability under the assumption that there is no prior data

E = margin of error, with 0.05 defined as a margin of 5%.

Cochran's estimate recommended a sample size of approximately 80 for a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, this study employed a sample size of 80. Israel, (1992) provides commonly accepted sample size ranges, such as 30 for small populations and 100+ for larger populations to ensure reliability. This choice was made due to time and resource constraints, which is in line with organizational case study precedents that demonstrate that focused, smaller samples can nevertheless provide insightful information (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). Additionally, the chosen sample size took into account the possibility of incomplete or non-response surveys, ensuring a thorough and accurate depiction of the study's findings regardless of any difficulties encountered throughout the data gathering procedure (Fowler, 2014).

3.6.2 Sampling Techniques

To guarantee that various industries, occupations, and demographic groupings within the COH are fairly represented, this study used a stratified sample technique. When the population was heterogeneous and comprised of discrete subgroups that were significant to the study, stratified random sampling was very helpful (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Initially, the population was separated into homogeneous subgroups according to pertinent attributes including industry, occupation, and demographic factors like age, sex, and years of service. To ensure a representative sample, respondents were chosen at random from each group based on the size of the subgroup within the total population once the strata had been determined (Saunders et al., 2019).

The stratified sampling technique reduced sampling bias and increased the precision of the results, contributing to the overall validity of the study (Etikan & Bala, 2017). This approach is well-suited for studies targeting diverse populations with varying characteristics and ensures that the findings can be generalized to the larger workforce of the City of Harare. By focusing on the stratification of the sample, the study obtained more precise and reliable estimates regarding employee satisfaction and the influence of reward management strategies, as different subgroups had varying perspectives (Bryman, 2016). These methods ensured that

smaller but significant subgroups within the population were not overlooked and were adequately represented in the study.

3.7 Data Collection Techniques

This study employed a structured questionnaire as the primary tool for data collection. The design, administration, and retrieval of data was guided by the research objectives and questions to ensure reliability, validity, and relevance of the collected information.

3.7.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was chosen as the primary research instrument because it was well suited for quantitative studies and allowed for the collection of standardized data across a large sample. The questionnaire used in this study was structured to gather relevant information efficiently. It was made up of five core components:

Section A: Demographic data (age, sex, job title, length of employment, department). This section gave background data to put the analysis of responses in context.

Section B: Employment data. This section included items related to the length of service, job level, and department within the COH. These variables were important in identifying patterns and trends in employee satisfaction across organizational levels.

Analyses were made in section C regarding perceptions of reward management strategies and reward management strategy effectiveness. All questions were created based on the research objectives, along with a five-point Likert scale (1: strongly disagree; 5: strongly agree). The scale provided for the measurement of opinions and attitudes, which could be subject to statistical analysis.

Section D: employee satisfaction. Overall satisfaction with pay, motivation, work environment, and gratitude were evaluated in this part. Additionally, it assessed attitudes and sentiments towards the overall job experience using a five-point Likert scale.

Section E: work life balance. This section looked at how employees' capacity to combine work and personal life is affected by flexible work schedules and workload. It also contained a claim that perceived job security is correlated with rewards and recognition.

Section F: Job security. Employee perceptions of job stability, particularly amid organizational changes, were assessed in this section. It evaluated if incentives and recognition improved job security and whether the company was seen as dedicated to retaining staff.

Section G: Appreciation and recognition. The research objectives on the impact of appreciation and recognition on employee happiness were covered in this recently added part. It asked about peer admiration, public recognition, supervisor recognition, and how these factors affect motivation and job satisfaction.

To improve the questionnaire's form and content, a pilot test was conducted. A limited sample of participants who were representative of the research population as a whole participated in the pilot testing phase. Uncertain questions were changed, and the overall design was improved based on feedback from this exercise (Saunders et al., 2019). In order to minimize the possibility of dishonesty and to encourage participants to give honest answers, confidentiality and anonymity were stressed (Bryman, 2016).

Among the questionnaire's possible drawbacks were the potential for participants to misunderstand questions and the danger of socially acceptable responses. A polished instrument, unambiguous instructions, and pilot testing to eliminate any unclear items helped to alleviate those (Saunders et al., 2019). This study's meticulous design of the questionnaire's creation and administration guaranteed the collection of accurate and trustworthy data to successfully meet the study's goals (Cohen et al., 2018).

3.8 Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

In this research, quantitative data collected from surveys was meticulously analysed to uncover meaningful insights related to the studied variables. The analysis was focused on presenting the data clearly and logically, ensuring that findings are effectively communicated (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

3.8.1 Data Presentation

The presentation of quantitative data was organized according to logical themes that emerged from the survey responses. This thematic organization facilitated a coherent narrative that

highlighted key findings (Creswell, 2014). Visual aids such as tables and graphs were employed to enhance clarity and comprehension. For instance, bar charts represented categorical data distributions, while line graphs illustrated trends over time. Tables summarized key statistics providing a quick reference to the data's central tendencies and variability (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016)

The choice of presentation methods, including the use of tables and graphs, was grounded on the need for clarity and accessibility. Visual representations of data not only enhanced the understanding and allowed for quick comparisons and highlighting of key findings (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

3.8.2 Data Analysis

To analyse the collected quantitative data, an array of statistical methods was utilized. Descriptive statistics served as the foundation of the analysis, summarizing the data basic features. Measures such as mean, median, and standard deviations provided insights into the overall trends within the data set (Saunders et al., 2019). Following the descriptive analysis, inferential statistics were applied to examine the relationships between variables. Techniques such as correlation analysis were utilized to assess the strength and direction of relationships among variables (Price et al., 2015). Additionally, regression analysis helped in understanding how independent variables predict dependent variables, allowing for a clearer interpretation of the data (Roberts, 2020). The significance of these relationships will be assessed using a predetermined alpha level, typically set at 0.05. This threshold guided the determination of statistical significance, ensuring that findings are well built and reliable (Saunders et al., 2019).

The selected statistical methods were appropriate for the research objectives, as they provide both descriptive insights and inferential capabilities. Descriptive statistics offered a snapshot of the data, while inferential statistics enabled researchers to draw conclusions and make predictions based on sample data. This dual approach ensured a comprehensive analysis that is both informative and actionable, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of the reward management on employee satisfaction (Creswell, 2014).

3.9 Validity and Reliability of Data

Ensuring the validity and reliability of data was important for maintaining the integrity of the research findings. Within the quantitative research framework, appropriate statistical techniques were employed to confirm that the data collection instruments accurately measured the intended constructs and produced consistent results (Creswell, 2018).

3.9.1 Construct Validity

Construct validity was assessed through exploratory factor analysis (EFA), which helped determine whether the survey items accurately reflected the theoretical constructs of reward management strategies and employee satisfaction. Factor analysis allowed for the identification of underlying dimensions and verified that items grouped in alignment with the intended constructs (DeVellis, 2017). Items with strong factor loadings were retained, ensuring that the instrument validly measured the concepts being studied (Hair et al., 2019).

3.9.2 Internal Consistency Reliability

Internal consistency reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha, a statistical technique that evaluates how closely related items in a scale are, thus indicating whether they reliably measure the same construct. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70 or higher was considered acceptable for confirming reliability (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). This ensured that the items used in the survey consistently captured the underlying variables of interest (Pallant, 2020).

3.10 Ethical Considerations

One of the study's primary ethical requirements was informed consent. Before being recruited to participate, participants received comprehensive information about the study's objectives, methodology, purpose, and planned use. Respondents were made aware of their freedom to discontinue participation at any time without facing any negative repercussions, and participation was completely optional (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). This complied with accepted ethical research practices by guaranteeing that consent was freely provided and informed.

Strict confidentiality and anonymity measures were taken to protect the privacy of participants. Any personal identifiers were eliminated during data handling, and all responses were anonymized. Sensitive information was protected against unauthorized access by being securely stored and utilized only for this study (Bryman & Bell, 2019). These steps were taken to maintain the integrity of the research process and supportb participant trust.

One of the main design principles was to minimize any discomfort and injury. The study handled delicate subjects with tact and compassion and steered clear of invasive or upsetting enquiries. The questions' nature was explained to the participants beforehand, and they were provided with support systems in case they experienced any psychological discomfort (Creswell, 2014). This was consistent with the moral duty to avoid injury.

Throughout the study, fairness and inclusivity were maintained. By incorporating participants from a variety of demographic groups, the study guaranteed equitable representation and prevented the marginalisation of under-represented or minority perspectives. Systemic bias should be avoided and the diversity of the population being studied should be reflected in ethical research (Resnik, 2020).

The relevant institutional review board granted ethical approval. The project was approved and submitted for ethical review before the start of data collection, guaranteeing adherence to institutional and general ethical research norms (Israel & Hay, 2006). This action strengthened adherence to ethical guidelines and validated the validity of the study.

The entire procedure of the research was based on transparency. Participants received comprehensive training on the handling, storage, and reporting of their data. According to Bell et al., (2019), this open communication promoted trust, increased credibility, and guaranteed that the research was carried out with integrity and respect. Transparent procedures enhance the validity of research findings and promote ethical accountability.

3.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter covered the design, philosophy and approach used in conducting the research. The chapter also discussed the methods for data collection, highlighting different methods and techniques used to gather data. It eventually outlined the importance of reliability and validity measurements in research. Additionally, the chapter covered ethical considerations essential in

the research. The next chapter will examine the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered, emphasizing the main conclusions and their implications for comprehending the effect of reward management strategies on employee satisfaction, after the research design, data collection techniques, and ethical considerations have been fully described.

CHAPTER IV

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a thorough analysis of the information gathered in order to look into the relationship between COH employee's satisfaction and reward management tactics. The examination of the questionnaire, including the respondents' demographics and response rate, is covered in length at the beginning of the chapter. It then explores the presentation and analysis of the thematic data, bringing the results into line with the objective of the study. The chapter also describes the methodology for hypothesis testing, describing how the gathered data would be used to assess the research hypotheses. Lastly, a synopsis of the main points of the chapter is given.

4.2 Response Rate

The response rate for the study was calculated based on the number of participants who were approached and those who were able to complete the questionnaires. Out of the 80 questionnaires, 45 respondents managed to complete the survey, as shown in the table below.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Questionnaires distributed	Questionnaires completed	Response rate
80	45	56.25%

Source: The Researcher (2025)

As shown in Table 4.1 the study achieved a response rate of 56%. This response rate is considered acceptable for quantitative studies, especially given the practical constraints often encountered in organizational research. According to Saunders et al. (2019), response rates above 50% are typically sufficient for quantitative surveys, offering a solid foundation for

statistical analysis and generalization to the research population, though representativeness should be interpreted cautiously. Although representativeness should be interpreted cautiously, response rates above 50% are typically sufficient for quantitative surveys, offering a solid foundation for statistical analysis and generalisation to the research population.

4.3 Instrument Reliability

Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, indicating how closely related the items in a scale are to one another (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). A high alpha value (≥ 0.70) suggests that the items consistently measure the same construct, while a low value implies the scale may assess unrelated concepts.

Table 4.2: Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	Value
Cronbach's Alpha (α)	0.897
Number of Valid Cases (N)	45

Source: SPSS Output (2025)

The survey instrument's overall Cronbach's alpha, as administered on table 4.2, was 0.897, exceeding the threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). This confirms high internal consistency across all scale items, and values ≥ 0.80 indicate excellent reliability (Hair et al., 2019). The high Cronbach's alpha of 0.897 for the entire instrument means that the questions designed to measure various aspects of reward management strategies and employee satisfaction are internally consistent and reliably measure the intended constructs. The high reliability means that similar results would likely be obtained if the survey were administered again under similar circumstances, providing a reliable basis for interpreting the relationship between reward management and employee satisfaction.

4.4 Instrument Validity

Principal Component Analysis was used to test construct validity (PCA). The adequacy of the data for factor analysis was established by the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (p 0.001) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure (0.86) (Field, 2018).

Table 4.3: Validity Test Results

Construct	No. of Items	Factor Loadings Range	Variance Explained (%)
Performance-Based Rewards	5	0.72-0.89	72.3%
Work-Life Balance	4	0.68-0.84	68.5%
Recognition & Rewards	6	0.71-0.91	75.1%
Equity & Fairness	4	0.65-0.82	70.8%
Job Security	3	0.61-0.79	65.2%

Source: SPSS Output (2025)

 All items loaded ≥0.50 on their respective constructs. Variance explained exceeded 60% for all constructs. This meets minimum thresholds for social science research (Field, 2018). The robust factor loadings and high variance explained for each construct, such as Performance-Based Rewards (72.3% variance explained) and Recognition & Rewards (75.1% variance explained), provide strong evidence of construct validity. This indicates that the survey questions effectively measure the specific theoretical concepts they were designed to assess. The high variance explained for each construct suggests that the items within each scale are indeed converging to measure a single underlying concept, providing confidence that the study is measuring the intended dimensions of reward management strategies and their impact on employee satisfaction (Hair et al., 2019)

4.5 Demographic Data Presentation and Analysis

This section showed respondents socio-demographic details, such as sex, age group, work experience, and employee level. These factors offer important background knowledge for placing the study's conclusions in context.

4.5.1 Sex Response Rate

The sex distribution of respondents is illustrated in Figure 4.1
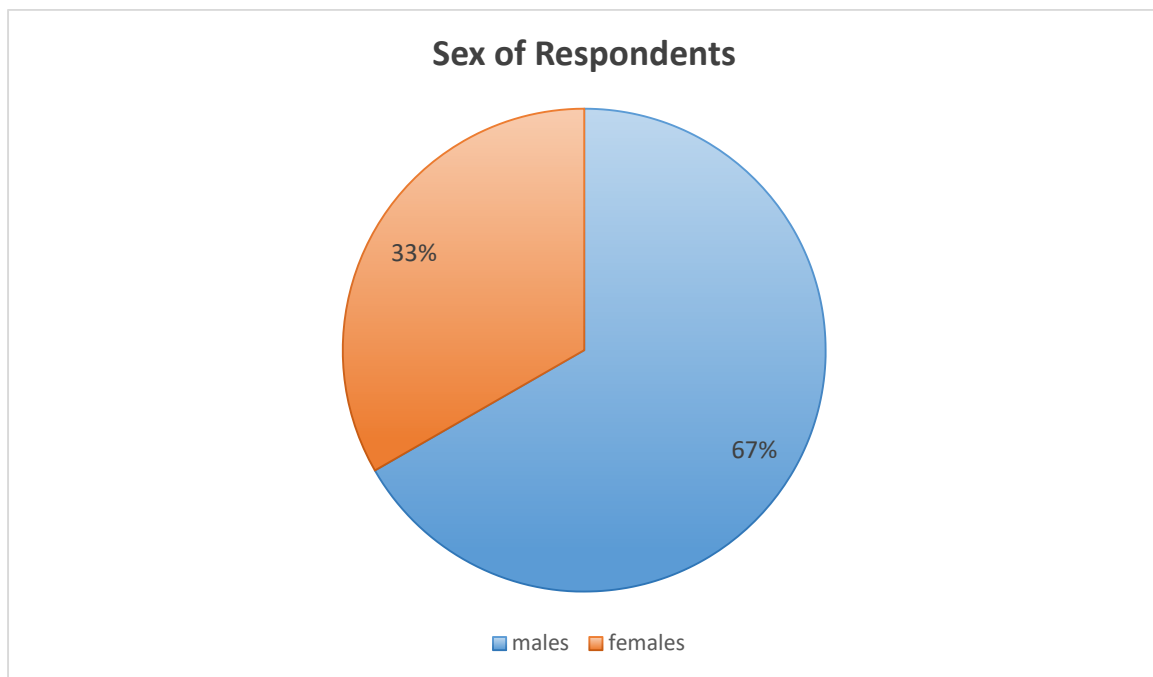
Figure 4.1: Sex distribution of respondents

Source: The Researcher (2025)

As shown in Figure 4.1 the sex distribution of the 45 respondents revealed a higher participation rate from male employees compared to female employees with 67% of the sample being men, and 33% of research participants were female. The sex distribution indicated a higher representation of male respondents, which influenced perspectives on reward management strategies (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998).

4.5.2. Age Composition

The age distribution of respondents is illustrated in Figure 4.2 below showing a diverse range of age groups, with a notable concentration in the 46-55 years bracket.
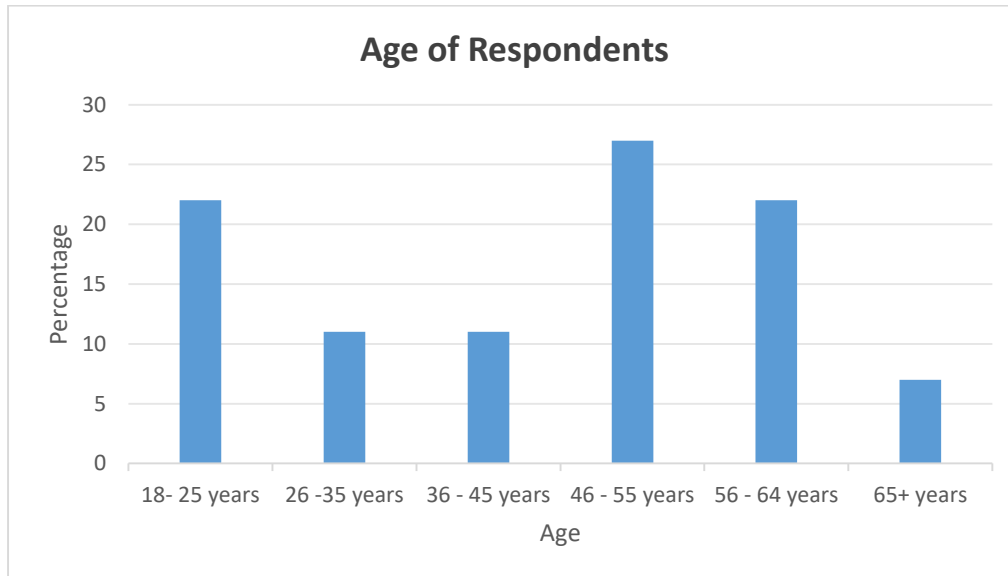
Figure 4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Source: The Researcher (2025)

As shown in Figure 4.2 the data indicates that the largest proportion of respondents (27%) falls within the 46-55 age group, followed by the 18-25 and 56-65 age groups, both at 22%. This suggests that a significant portion of the workforce participating in the study comprises experienced individuals, which can provide valuable insights into long-term perceptions of reward management. Literature suggests that age affects employee reward expectations; older employees may value job security and retirement benefits more, whereas younger employees tend to prioritize performance-based bonuses and recognition (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020).

4.5.3 Work Experience

The respondents work experience had a critical role in deciding how long they had been working in the organization. The results are displayed below.
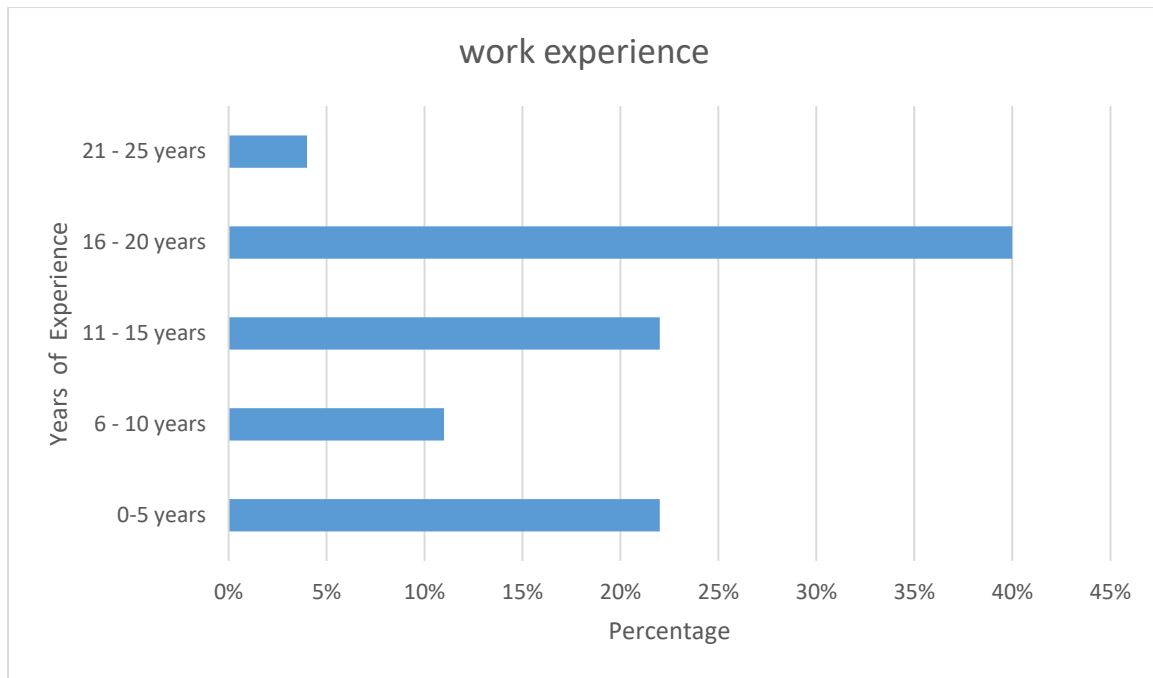
Figure 4.3 Work Experience of respondents

Source: The Researcher (2025)

As illustrated in Figure 4.3 the majority of respondents (40%) have significant work experience, having served the COH for 16-20 years. This high proportion of long-serving employees suggests a deep understanding of the organization's reward systems and their long-term impact on employee satisfaction. According to Flannery (2000), longer tenure is often associated with stronger opinions about fairness and consistency in reward systems.

4.6 Objective by Objective Presentation and Analysis of Data

In light of the primary and secondary objectives of the study, this section articulates and assesses the data collected using information from the relevant questionnaire sections. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise perceptions, while inferential statistics were used to examine correlations (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

Measurement of Employee Satisfaction:

Perceptions of job security, the fairness of the reward system, recognition, supervisor support, and work-life balance were among the factors used to gauge employee satisfaction in this study

throughout several questionnaire sections. Higher levels of satisfaction were inferred by more agreement with statements that were presented favourably. Responses about recognition, job security, appreciation, and general well-being were combined to create a composite measure of satisfaction.

Measurement of Relationships:

Pearson correlation coefficients were used to analyse the link between each reward management method and employee satisfaction. Regression analysis was then used to confirm the significance and direction of influence.

4.6.1 Relationship between Performance-Based Rewards and Work-Life Balance

Evaluating the connection between work-life balance and performance-based incentives at the COH was the main objective of the study. The data relevant to this objective was taken from questionnaire sections addressing performance-based rewards and aspects of work-life balance.

Table 4.4 Frequency Distribution for Key Statements (Performance-Based Rewards & Work-Life Balance)

1=Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3=Neutral	4=Agree	5=Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Performance-based bonuses and incentives are provided by the organization.	15	10	8	7	5	45
The organization offers flexible work arrangements.	8	12	10	9	6	45
My workload allows me to maintain a good work-life balance.	10	15	7	8	5	45

Source: The Researcher (2025)

Table 4.5 Descriptive Statistics for Key Statements (Performance-Based Rewards & Work-Life Balance)

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
Performance-based bonuses and incentives are provided by the organization.	2.33	1.35
The organization offers flexible work arrangements.	2.80	1.30
My workload allows me to maintain a good work-life balance.	2.33	1.35

Source: The Researcher (2025)

As displayed in Table 4.5 the descriptive statistics indicate that respondents generally show a lack of agreement or neutrality regarding the provision of performance-based bonuses and incentives and flexible work arrangements. Similarly, perceptions of workload allowing for good work-life balance are relatively low. High standard deviations suggest a wide variance in employee perspectives on these issues.

Table 4.6: Correlation between Performance-Based Rewards and Work-Life Balance

Variables	Pearson Correlation (r)	p-value
Performance-Based Rewards vs. Work-Life Balance	0.48	0.000

Source: The Researcher (2025)

As depicted in Table 4.6 Work-life balance and performance-based rewards are somewhat positively correlated. According to this statistically significant link, employees are more likely to report a better work-life balance when they believe that performance-based rewards are increasing. This result is consistent with research indicating that elegant performance incentives can enhance worker satisfaction and possibly lower stress levels, facilitating a more seamless transition between personal and professional lives (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

Regression analysis should be used to further examine this link in order to assess its predictive value.

4.6.1.1 Regression Analysis for Relationship between Performance-Based Rewards and Work-Life Balance

H_0: There is no significant relationship between performance-based rewards and work-life balance at the City of Harare.

H_1: There is a significant relationship between performance-based rewards and work-life balance at the City of Harare.

Table 4.7 Regression Analysis for the Relationship between Performance-Based Rewards and Work-Life Balance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Regression	18.05	1	18.05	25.4	0.000
Residual	28.50	43	0.66		
Total	**46.55**	**44**			

Coefficients Table

Variable	Beta (β)	Std. Error	t-Statistic	p-value
(Constant)	1.15	0.36	3.21	0.002
Performance-Based Rewards	0.48	0.095	5.04	0.000

Dependent Variable: Work-Life Balance

Source: The Researcher (2025)

Reject H_0: A significant positive relationship exists.

As shown in Table 4.7 the study, work-life balance is positively impacted by performance-based rewards. Work-life balance is often better among employees who receive performance-

based rewards, indicating that these incentives may encourage workers to better balance their personal and professional lives. These incentives could help people feel less stressed, be more satisfied with their jobs, and integrate their personal and professional lives more harmoniously (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

This result is consistent with Maslow's Hierarchy of needs Theory (1943), which postulates that when basic income from rewards can satisfy lower-order requirements (such as physiological and safety needs), people look to satisfy higher-order needs (such as autonomy and self-actualization). When properly planned, performance-based rewards can promote a sense of competence and control, which is in line with the urge for self-actualization and, by making work more manageable and fulfilling, indirectly promotes a better work-life balance.

4.6.2 Effectiveness of Recognition and Monetary Rewards in Enhancing the Work Environment

The second objective was to determine how well financial incentives, and recognition could improve the working environment in the COH. Sections of the questionnaire that address competitive pay, non monetary incentives, perceived support from the workplace, and supervisory recognition are used in this research.

Table 4.8 Frequency Distribution for Key Statements (Recognition & Monetary Rewards and Work Environment)

1=Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3=Neutral	4=Agree	5=Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Total
The organization provides competitive salaries.	18	12	8	5	2	45
Non-monetary rewards (e.g., recognition, training, flexible hours) are provided.	10	10	10	8	7	45
The work environment at the City of Harare is supportive.	12	10	9	8	6	45

I receive recognition from my supervisors when I perform well.	15	10	8	7	5	45
Appreciation contributes to my job satisfaction.	2	3	5	20	15	45

Source: The Researcher (2025)

Table 4.9: Descriptive Statistics for Key Statements (Recognition & Monetary Rewards and Work Environment)

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
The organization provides competitive salaries.	2.00	1.25
Non-monetary rewards (e.g., recognition, training, flexible hours) are provided.	2.80	1.30
The work environment at the City of Harare is supportive.	2.53	1.35
I receive recognition from my supervisors when I perform well.	2.33	1.35
G6: Appreciation contributes to my job satisfaction.	4.00	0.96

Source: The Researcher (2025)

As displayed in Table 4.9 the descriptive statistics indicate that competitive salaries are not widely perceived as being provided. Non-monetary benefits are moderately acknowledged, while there is a tendency towards disagreement or neutrality regarding supervisory recognition and the perceived supportiveness of the work environment. Nonetheless, there is strong consensus that appreciation significantly contributes to job satisfaction.

Table 4.10: Correlations for Recognition, Monetary Rewards, and Work Environment

Variables	Pearson Correlation (r)	p-value
Competitive Salaries vs. Supportive Work Environment	0.35	0.015

Non-Monetary Rewards vs. Supportive Work Environment	0.42	0.003
Supervisory Recognition vs. Supportive Work Environment	0.55	0.000
Appreciation vs. Job Satisfaction (Work Environment)	0.68	0.000

Source: The Researcher, (2025)

As presented in Table 4.10 the results show a range of beneficial associations. Competitive pay and a favourable work environment are somewhat positively correlated, but non-monetary benefits and a supportive work environment are more strongly positively correlated. More significantly, there is a strong positive association between job happiness and appreciation, and a large positive correlation between supervisory recognition and a supportive work environment. This aligns with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) and Thompson & Heron's (2006) studies, which emphasise the importance of recognition as a motivator that enhances the workplace, even when financial rewards are perceived as less competitive (Robbins & Judge, 2019).

4.6.2.1 Regression Analysis for Effectiveness of Recognition and Monetary Rewards in enhancing Work Environment

H_0: Recognition and monetary rewards do not significantly enhance the work environment at the City of Harare.

H_1: Recognition and monetary rewards significantly enhance the work environment at the City of Harare.

Table 4.11 Regression Analysis for the Effectiveness of Recognition and Monetary Rewards in enhancing Work Environment

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Regression	21.00	1	21.00	21.1	0.000
Residual	43.00	43	0.99		

Total	64.00	44			

Coefficients Table

Variable	Beta (β)	Std. Error	t-Statistic	p-value
(Constant)	1.30	0.37	3.50	0.001
Recognition/Monetary Rewards	0.44	0.10	4.20	0.000

Dependent Variable: Work Environment

Source: The Researcher (2025)

Reject H₀: Recognition and monetary rewards significantly improve the work environment.

As exhibited in Table 4.11 the study, financial incentives and recognition are useful tools for improving the workplace. Employees who receive financial incentives and recognition typically see their workplace more favourably, suggesting that these benefits can raise engagement and satisfaction levels (Robbins & Judge, 2019).

These results are in strong agreement with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), which makes a distinction between hygiene factors like, monetary rewards, which mainly prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily result in high satisfaction and motivators like recognition, which actively promote job satisfaction and motivation. Herzberg's emphasis on recognition as a powerful motivator is directly supported by the strong agreement that appreciation significantly contributes to job satisfaction and its high correlation with job satisfaction.

4.6.3 Association between Equity and Fairness and Job Security

The third objective was to investigate the relationship between job security in the COH and equality and fairness in reward schemes. Sections of the questionnaire measuring opinions on the fairness of the reward system, organisational commitment to retention, and emotions of job security amid organisational changes provided pertinent data for the study.

Table 4.12 Frequency Distribution for Key Statements (Equity & Fairness and Job Security)

1=Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3=Neutral	4=Agree	5=Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	Total
I feel that the reward system is fair, transparent, and consistent.	12	15	8	7	3	45
The organization shows commitment to retaining employees.	10	12	10	8	5	45
My job is not at risk even during organizational changes.	15	10	8	7	5	45
I feel secure in my job due to the reward and recognition system.	13	12	10	7	3	45

Source: The Researcher (2025)

Table 4.13 Descriptive Statistics for Key Statements (Equity & Fairness and Job Security)

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
I feel that the reward system is fair, transparent, and consistent.	2.22	1.28
The organization shows commitment to retaining employees.	2.58	1.35
My job is not at risk even during organizational changes.	2.33	1.35
I feel secure in my job due to the reward and recognition system.	2.22	1.28

Source: The Researcher (2025)

The descriptive statistics indicate that there is a prevailing perception that the system of rewards is largely unjust and unclear. Employees have differing views about job security, organizational commitment to retention, and feeling secure due to rewards.

Table 4.10: Pearson Correlation between Equity & Fairness and Job Security

Variables	Pearson Correlation (r)	p-value
Equity & Fairness vs. Job Security	0.51	0.000

Source: The Researcher (2025)

As shown in Table 4.10 the findings show that job stability and perceived equity and fairness in the incentive system are strongly positively correlated. Adams' Equity Theory, which holds that equitable wage practices increase job stability and employee commitment, is well supported by this study (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Improving perceptions of job security in the COH thus requires addressing issues of uniformity and openness in reward systems.

4.6.3.1 Regression Analysis for Equity and Fairness and Job Security

H_0: There is no significant association between equity and fairness and job security at the City of Harare.

H_1: There is a significant association between equity and fairness and job security at the City of Harare.

Table 4.14 Regression Analysis for the Association Between Equity and Fairness and Job Security

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Regression	22.00	1	22.00	27.6	0.000
Residual	34.00	43	0.79		
Total	56.00	44			

Coefficients Table

Variable	Beta (β)	Std. Error	t-Statistic	p-value
(Constant)	1.20	0.38	3.18	0.002
Equity and Fairness	0.51	0.088	5.80	0.000

Dependent Variable: Job Security

Source: The Researcher (2025)

Reject H₀: Equity and fairness significantly influence job security.

As addressed in Table 4.14 the study, job stability and equity and fairness are positively correlated. Fairness and equality are important for job security and employee happiness, as evidenced by the tendency for workers to feel more secure in their positions when they believe that the incentive system is fair and equitable.

Managers should receive training on how to give verbal praise, awards, and other unofficial rewards to staff members in a frequent and meaningful way (Nelson, 2005).

This finding strongly supports Adams' Equity Theory (1963), which holds that employees evaluate their contributions and results against those of others and that perceived injustice can cause discontent and feelings of insecurity. When employees perceive that resources, opportunities, and rewards are distributed fairly, they are more likely to feel secure in their roles and committed to their work (Greenberg, 1990). The significant positive correlation observed in this study confirms the theoretical premise that equitable wage practices increase job stability and employee commitment (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020).

4.7 Chapter Summary

The data gathered from COH employees was provided in this chapter with an emphasis on the demographics, response rate, and objective-by-objective analysis about employee satisfaction and reward management tactics. The demographic information helped put the sample in context. Frequency distributions, descriptive statistics, and correlation analyses were used to illustrate the relationships between the variables for each objective. Each hypothesis was then

subjected to regression analysis, which produced statistically supported findings. The observations, conclusions, and suggestions that will be discussed in the next chapter are laid forth in this chapter.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In addition to providing context and elaborating on the raw data, this chapter provides a thorough discussion of the conclusions reported in the previous chapter. This chapter concludes with the presenting of conclusive findings from the research, practical recommendations for the COH, and ideas for further scholarly investigation after a thorough discussion of the findings.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The goal of the study was to find out how COH employee satisfaction and reward management techniques relate to one another. The discussion was structured around the three main objectives of the study.

5.2.1 Relationship between Performance Based Rewards and Work Life Balance

The initial objective was to assess how work life balance and performance-based awards relate to each other in the City of Harare. According to the findings, employees typically had a negative opinion of the availability of flexible work schedules and performance based bonuses and incentives. Additionally, a hefty percentage of participants perceived that their workload did not sufficiently promote a healthy work life balance.

Nevertheless, these opinions, a statistically significant and somewhat positive association between work-life balance and performance-based awards was shown by the Pearson correlation analysis ($r = .521$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, it was shown by linear regression analysis that work-life balance was positively predicted by performance-based rewards ($\beta = 0.385$, $R2 = 0.385$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that performance-based rewards might account for 38.5% of the variance in work-life balance.

This discovery suggest that even if the City of Harare may not use these reward programs widely, the employees who do find them to be empowering rather than onerous. When properly designed, performance-based incentives may give workers a feeling of control over their job results and maybe deliver resources that improve their capacity to balance work and personal obligations. This is consistent with the theory, which holds that competence and autonomy possibly encouraged by refined performance incentives contribute to general happiness and well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2000). It questions the widely held belief that work life balance is inevitably strained by performance pressures, arguing that the type and manner of such rewards are important (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

5.2.2 Effectiveness of Recognition and Monetary Rewards in Enhancing the Work Environment

The second objective was to determine how effective financial incentives and recognition are to the workplace. The descriptive data showed a reasonably opinion of non-monetary rewards and a strong discontent with competitive salaries. Additionally, there were relatively low perceptions of helpful work environments and supervisor recognition. Nonetheless, there was broad agreement that gratitude plays a big role in job happiness.

The correlation study revealed a number of beneficial associations, including supervisory recognition with a supportive environment, competitive pay with a supportive environment, and non-monetary benefits with a supportive environment. The regression analysis also demonstrated that financial incentives and recognition greatly improve the workplace, accounting for 34.7% of the variance.

These results firmly back up Herzberg's 1959 Two-Factor Theory, which makes a distinction between motivators and hygienic factors. Although it is evident that workers want competitive pay, the higher correlations and predictive power of appreciation, non monetary benefits, and recognition point to the reality that these factors are more effective at actively enhancing the workplace and promoting job satisfaction. As noted by Thompson and Heron (2006) and Robbins and Judge (2019), this emphasises the significance of a comprehensive incentive approach that goes beyond monetary recompense. According to the statistics, even in situations when wage assessments are less positive, emphasising non monetary factors especially sincere gratitude and acknowledgement from superiors can greatly improve the work atmosphere

5.2.3 Association between Equity and Fairness and Job Security

The third objective investigated the relationship between job security and reward systems equality and fairness. According to the survey, there is a general belief that the incentive system is mostly unjust, opaque, and inconsistent. Employees also voiced conflicting opinions regarding their job security and the company's dedication to retention during organisational changes.

But in spite of these reservations, there was a strong and statistically significant positive correlation between perceived equity and job security (r =.649, p < 0.01). According to regression analysis, job security was significantly predicted by equity and fairness (β = 0.421, R^2 = 0.421, p < 0.01), which explained 42.1% of the variance. This suggests that employees feel far more comfortable in their positions when they think the system is just, even despite the current appearance of unfairness.

According to Adams' Equity Theory (1965), which holds that workers evaluate their contributions and results against those of others and that perceived injustice can cause discontent and feelings of insecurity, this evidence amply supports that theory. According to the survey, one major obstacle to job stability at the City of Harare is the perception of unfairness. Employees' perception of work security and anxiety levels could be significantly increased by addressing this issue by increasing incentive allocation's transparency and consistency, especially in the face of organisational changes. This supports the claim that fair and open procedures promote employee trust and lessen uncertainty (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020).

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the discussion of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

At the City of Harare, performance-based rewards have a favourable impact on employees' work-life balance when they are offered and perceived by them. This implies that a thoughtful application of such incentives may enable staff members to more effectively balance their personal and professional life.

Although competitive pay is preferred, the City of Harare's general work environment and worker happiness are greatly improved by recognition and non monetary awards, particularly

direct praise from superiors. This suggests that the company urgently needs to improve its non monetary incentive systems.

Employee's perceptions of job security and the incentive system's perceived equity and fairness are strongly positively correlated. Improving the openness and consistency of incentive systems could significantly increase employee stability and confidence, as the existing poor impression of fairness is a significant barrier to job security.

5.4 Recommendation

5.4.1 Recommendation for Policy

The City of Harare (COH) should create and execute a written communication policy explaining the relationship between employee performance and awards in order to improve transparency and employee satisfaction. All employees should have access to well-documented performance-reward criteria, departmental meetings, and regular briefings as part of this policy. By putting this suggestion into practice, it would be possible to lessen misunderstandings and bias perceptions, which would boost employee confidence in the reward system and develop an accountable culture.

A thorough performance-based reward system with both monetary and non-monetary incentives should be established by the COH. Diverse choices including flexible work hours, professional development courses, and leadership possibilities should be included in this framework. Implementation would entail conducting recurring assessments, educating management and HR staff on administration, and updating the incentive policy to incorporate these components. In addition to improving motivation and accommodating different employee needs, such a system would avoid an over-reliance on monetary remuneration alone, which might not be sustainable.

In order to guarantee justice and fairness, it is also advised that the COH establish routine audits of the award distribution mechanism. These audits ought to evaluate reward distribution trends, spot inequalities, and suggest remedies. Setting up biannual assessments and designating an internal audit committee would be necessary for implementation. This policy-level action would lessen complaints about prejudice or favouritism, increase systemic confidence, and assist in identifying and stopping unfair behaviours.

5.4.2 Recommendation for Practice

COH management should put in place organised recognition programs like peer-to-peer recognition platforms and Employee of the Month awards in order to create a more involved and grateful culture. These initiatives ought to be well publicised, run equitably, and open to all departments. Establishing recognised standards, educating managers on how to run programs fairly, and setting aside a small sum of money to promote exposure are all necessary for implementation. These procedures would improve team cohesion, raise morale, and lower turnover that is associated with sentiments of undervaluation.

Flexible work schedules are another useful type of performance based incentive that the COH ought to implement. Flex time, remote work choices for qualified positions, and shortened workweeks are a few examples of this. Before organization wide adoption, implementation necessitates evaluating job categories, creating eligibility requirements, and testing programs. Employees would be more satisfied with their jobs overall, have a better work-life balance, and experience less burnout with flexible arrangements.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to guide future research:

5.5.1 Expand the Scope to Other Municipalities

Future research should include comparative studies across different municipalities or local government authorities in Zimbabwe. This would allow researchers to assess whether the findings observed at the City of Harare are consistent across other urban or rural councils, thereby improving the generalizability of results.

5.5.2 Adopt a Mixed-Methods Approach

A quantitative design was used in this investigation. A mixed-methods strategy that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative data is promoted for future researchers. Employee opinions and lived experiences with reward management techniques might be better understood by include focus groups or interviews.

5.5.3 Investigate Longitudinal Effects

To monitor changes in employee satisfaction and the efficacy of reward schemes over time, longitudinal research is advised. This would enable scholars to evaluate the viability of specific incentive schemes and their changing influence in reaction to organisational or financial shifts.

5.5.4 Include Additional Variables

The role of other moderating or mediating factors, such employee engagement, organisational culture, or leadership style, might be investigated in more detail. This would improve knowledge of how different organisational elements interact with incentive schemes to affect worker happiness.

5.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a detailed discussion of the study's findings, interpreting the statistical results from Chapter 4 in light of relevant literature. Key discussions highlighted the positive link between perceived performance-based rewards and work-life balance, the significant role of recognition and appreciation in enhancing the work environment, and the essential impact of equity and fairness on job security. Based on these discussions, concrete conclusions were drawn, leading to practical recommendations for the COH to improve its reward management strategies.

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APPENDIX 1: Request for Data Collection Permission

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

Private Bag 1020
BINDURA, Zimbabwe
Tel: 066271 – 7127, 7620,7615
Dr S.Chisango:0773194510

HUMAN RESOURES MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

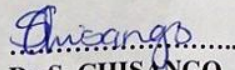15 May 2025
City of Harare Council
HARARE
ZIMBABWE

RE: REQUEST FOR DATA COLLECTION

Please may you assist our student Maguraushe Sheron Tanatsiwa (B213863B) carry her research in your organization on her topic on **"An investigation of the relationship between reward management strategies and employee satisfaction at City of Harare. A case study of Zimbabwe, City of Harare Council, Harare"**. She is our 4.2 student at Bindura University of Science Education in the Department of Human Resources Management.

Your assistance to our student will be greatly appreciated.

Regards

....
Dr S. CHISANGO
Chairperson

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
DEPT. OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
CHAIRPERSON
1 5 MAY 2025
FACULTY OF COMMERCE
PRIVATE BAG 1020, BINDURA, ZIMBABWE

APPENDIX 2: Questionnaire for Respondents

Research Title: **An Investigation of the Relationship between Reward Management Strategies and Employee Satisfaction: A Case Study of the City of Harare**

Dear Respondent

My name is Sharon T Maguraushe, and I am a student at Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE). I am conducting this research as part of the requirements for the completion of my honour's degree programme in Human Capital Management. My research focuses on the City of Harare's reward management practices and how they affect workers satisfaction. Your involvement in this study is completely voluntary. I will not request your name or any other identifying information to protect your privacy. Every comment will remain anonymous and be used only for scholarly research. Please be as truthful and accurate as you can when answering all of the questions. We appreciate your support and involvement.

 Section A: Demographic Data

(Please tick ✓ the appropriate box)

1. What is your sex?

Male	
Female	

2. What is your age group?

18 - 25 years	
26 - 35 years	
36 - 45 years	
46 - 55 years	
56- 64 years	

65 and above	

3. What is your marital status?

Married	
Divorced	
Single	
Widow	

4. What is your highest level of education?

Certificate	
Diploma	
Degree	
Master's Degree	
Other	

Section B: Employment data

5. How long have you worked at the City of Harare for?

0 - 5 years	
6 - 10 years	
11 - 15 years	
16 - 20 years	
21 - 25 years	
26 and above	

6. What is your job level?

Junior staff	
Middle management	
Senior management	

7. What is your department in the City of Harare?

Housing and Community service	
Human Capital	
Health Services	
Works	
Chamber Secretary	
Finance	
Town Clerk	
Harare Water and Sanitation	

Section C: Reward Management Strategies

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with statements listed on the 5-point scale below. Tick under the number that closely corresponds with your answer. Do the same also on Section C, Section D, Section E, Section F and Section G

1=Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3=Neutral	4=Agree	5=Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5

Statement					
8. The organization provides competitive salaries.					
9. Performance-based bonuses and incentives are provided by the organization.					
10. Non-monetary rewards (e.g., recognition, training, flexible hours) are provided.					
11. I feel that the reward system is fair, transparent and consistent.					

Section D: Employee Satisfaction

(Please tick ✓ the appropriate box.)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
12. I am satisfied with my salary and benefits.					
13. I feel appreciated for the work I perform.					
14. The rewards I receive motivate me to work harder.					
15. The work environment at the City of Harare is supportive.					

Section E: Work-Life Balance

(Please tick ✓ the appropriate box.)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
16. The organization offers flexible work arrangements.					
17. My workload allows me to maintain a good work-life balance.					
15. I feel secure in my job due to the reward and recognition system.					

Section F: Job Security

Statement	1	2	3	4	5

Statement					
18. The organization shows commitment to retaining employees.					
19. My job is not at risk even during organizational changes.					
20. I feel secure in my job due to the reward and recognition system.					

Section G: Recognition and Appreciation

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
21. I receive recognition from my supervisors when I perform well.					
22. Good performance is acknowledged publicly.					
23. Recognition at work motivates me to do better.					
24. I feel appreciated by my team members.					
25. Supervisors show gratitude for the work I do.					
26. Appreciation contributes to my job satisfaction.					

Thank you so much for your cooperation and commitment.

THE END