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Assessing the Effectiveness of Human Resource Recruitment Strategies on Employee Performance: A Case Study of Lusaka City Council

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Abstract

The primary objective of the study was to evaluate how recruitment strategies influence employee performance at LCC. The specific objectives are: (i) to identify the human resource recruitment strategies currently employed by Lusaka City Council; (ii) to assess the effectiveness of existing recruitment practices in attracting and retaining competent personnel; (iii) to evaluate the relationship between recruitment strategies and employee performance outcomes; and (iv) to examine the challenges LCC faces in implementing effective recruitment strategies and their implications on performance. A case study exploratory research design was adopted, using a mixed methodology for primary data collection and analysis. Data was gathered through structured questionnaires administered to selected LCC employees and human resource personnel. The collected data was entered and analyzed using STATA software. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and means were used to summarize the findings, while Chi-square tests was applied to determine the association between recruitment strategies and employee performance outcomes. Lusaka City Council relies mainly on digital recruitment channels, with online portals and social media each used by 35% of respondents, while internal promotion accounts for 25% and agencies 10%. Work experience is the dominant selection criterion at 40%, and mixed assessment methods are used in 60% of cases. Internship and graduate programs are limited for 50% of

respondents, and job descriptions are customized in 50% of departments. External recruitment and graduate trainee programs are the most common strategies at 100%, while social media is the leading advertising method at 100%. Statistical tests show significant links between merit-based recruitment and employee commitment, and between advertising methods and perceived effectiveness ($p = 0.000$). Quarterly performance checks dominate at 45%, communication skills link with performance at 32%, and work experience links at 45%. Internal promotion supports retention at 40%, and online postings attract competent staff at 30%. Technical staff show the highest retention at 30%. Recruitment challenges include bureaucratic delays at 35%, lack of qualified candidates at 30%, and limited budget at 20%, while long processes affect performance at 30%. Approval procedures cause most delays at 45%, and low salary offers reduce attraction at 35%. Streamlined recruitment processes are the most recommended improvement at 40%. To address these challenges, the study recommends strengthening merit-based recruitment, aligning hiring with job expectations, improving communication and transparency, implementing structured onboarding, and monitoring recruitment outcomes. It also calls for addressing resource and political challenges, gathering employee feedback, and leveraging technology to enhance efficiency and fairness in the recruitment process.

Keywords: Effect, Human Resource Recruitment Strategies, Employee Performance

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Human Resource (HR) recruitment strategies play a pivotal role in determining the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of an organization's workforce (Huda, 2025) ^[9]. Recruitment strategies refer to the approaches and techniques used by organizations to attract, identify, and select individuals with the necessary qualifications, skills, and attributes to fill job vacancies (Natsir, 2024). Common strategies include internal recruitment, external recruitment, employee referrals, use of employment agencies, e-recruitment, head-hunting, and campus recruitment, among others. The choice and execution of these strategies significantly

influence employee performance outcomes such as productivity, motivation, job satisfaction, and retention (Musaba, 2024).

Globally, organizations both in the public and private sectors have increasingly adopted strategic recruitment approaches aimed at achieving a competitive edge through human capital (Kareska, 2023). In developed countries, recruitment has shifted from traditional methods to competency-based recruitment, performance-based hiring, and technology-driven approaches such as the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data analytics in recruitment processes (Ahmad, 2020).

In Zambia, recruitment in the public sector is governed by key policy instruments such as the Employment Act, the Public Service Management Division (PSMD) Guidelines, the Public Service Code of Ethics, and the Public Service Commission Regulations (Zulu, 2023). These policies advocate for transparency, competence, equal opportunity, and adherence to established procedures in the recruitment of public servants (Ntalasha, 2024) ^[20].

Lusaka City Council, as the administrative body responsible for the capital city, plays a crucial role in service delivery to a rapidly growing urban population (Nashoni, 2021) ^[17]. To meet its mandate effectively, the Council requires a skilled, motivated, and high-performing workforce. Yet, reports and anecdotal evidence point to issues such as nepotism, delays in recruitment, poor workforce planning, and skills mismatches, all of which compromise the performance of employees and the efficiency of service delivery (Chifunda, 2021) ^[4].

Therefore, this study sought to assess the impact of human resource recruitment strategies on employee performance outcomes, focusing on Lusaka City Council as a case study. It aims to explore how current recruitment practices affect employee performance, identify existing gaps, and propose strategies to align recruitment efforts with institutional performance goals. The findings of this study will contribute to policy reform, strategic planning, and capacity-building in public sector human resource management.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Despite the existence of human resource policies and recruitment guidelines in the Zambian public sector, employee performance in many local authorities remains below expectations (Shamizhinga, 2020) ^[21]. Lusaka City Council (LCC), the largest municipal authority in Zambia, continues to face challenges in service delivery, largely attributed to poor recruitment practices and ineffective human resource planning (Mubiana, 2024) ^[11]. Recruitment strategies at LCC have been reported to lack transparency, objectivity, and strategic alignment with the council's performance goals, resulting in a workforce that is often ill-equipped, demotivated, and underperforming. A 2022 Auditor General's Report on Local Authorities revealed that LCC has employed staff in positions without following established recruitment guidelines, leading to inefficiencies and skill mismatches (Mwiinde, 2024) ^[16]. Furthermore, the report highlighted that 36% of LCC employees lacked the qualifications required for the positions they occupied, directly affecting the council's capacity to meet urban service delivery demands (Chifunda, 2021) ^[4]. These inefficiencies have significant consequences, including poor urban sanitation, delayed infrastructure projects, and low public confidence in municipal governance. The prevailing

gap lies in the limited empirical research examining how specific recruitment strategies impact employee performance outcomes within local councils, particularly at Lusaka City Council. Most existing studies have focused broadly on HRM challenges in the public sector but have not adequately explored the recruitment-performance linkage in a local government context (Brunetto, 2020). This problem calls for urgent attention. With Lusaka's population at 3,079,964 residents (CSO, 2023) and urban demands continuously rising, the council's human resource capacity must be optimized to ensure effective and responsive service delivery (Mulenga, 2023) ^[13]. There is a critical need to assess whether current recruitment strategies at LCC are fostering high-performing, competent employees or contributing to systemic inefficiencies.

1.3 General Objectives

To assess the effectiveness of human resource recruitment strategies on employee performance at Lusaka City Council.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

1. Identify Lusaka City Council's recruitment strategies.
2. Evaluate their impact on employee performance.
3. Assess effectiveness in attracting and retaining talent.
4. Examine challenges affecting recruitment and performance.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is designed to examine the relationship between human resource recruitment strategies and employee performance outcomes at Lusaka City Council. The dependent variable is employee performance, measured through outcomes such as job satisfaction, productivity, competency levels, service delivery quality, and employee retention.

The framework also incorporates mediating variables in the form of recruitment challenges, such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, limited financial or human resources, political interference, and skills mismatches. Furthermore, organizational factors such as budget availability, technological infrastructure, and leadership support are considered as moderating variables that can strengthen or weaken the relationship between recruitment strategies and employee performance.

This framework aligns with the study's objectives by facilitating an investigation into the types of recruitment strategies currently employed, their effectiveness in attracting and retaining competent staff, the challenges encountered during implementation, and how these factors collectively influence employee performance at Lusaka City Council.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Human resource recruitment strategies

Human resource recruitment strategies refer to the deliberate plans, policies, and practices that organizations implement to attract, select, and retain qualified individuals who fit both the job and organizational culture (Mwambela, 2024) ^[15]. Recruitment is a foundational component of human resource management (HRM) and is vital to ensuring that an organization has the right people in the right roles.

Internal recruitment refers to the process of identifying and selecting candidates for job vacancies from within the existing workforce of an organization (Vasile, 2020). This strategy encompasses methods such as promotions, lateral

transfers, reassignments, and internal job postings. External recruitment refers to the process of attracting, identifying, and hiring candidates from outside an organization to fill vacancies (Alwi, 2022).

Outsourcing the recruitment function and utilizing professional recruitment agencies has become an increasingly common strategy among organizations seeking to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in talent acquisition (Nayak, 2021) ^[19]. Employee referral programs have become an increasingly popular human resource recruitment strategy in both private and public sector organizations due to their potential to significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of hiring processes (Gerson, 2020) ^[6].

2.2 The relationship between recruitment strategies and employee performance

The relationship between recruitment strategies and employee performance outcomes is fundamental in determining an organization's success and long-term sustainability (Chimakati, 2023). Recruitment strategies play a critical role in shaping the quality of the workforce, and consequently, the performance outcomes of employees. Effective recruitment strategies ensure that an organization attracts individuals whose skills, values, and competencies align with the job requirements, organizational culture, and performance expectations (Holbeche, 2022) ^[8]. This alignment, in turn, influences the employee's ability to perform their role effectively and contribute positively to the organization's goals (Pandya, 2021).

One of the primary ways in which recruitment strategies influence employee performance outcomes is through the quality of hire (Sisneros, 2025) ^[22]. A well-designed recruitment strategy ensures that only the most qualified and capable candidates are selected for roles. When employees are well-matched to their roles, they are more likely to perform well and achieve the desired outcomes (Holbeche, 2022).

Another critical factor in the recruitment-performance relationship is employee fit. Recruitment strategies such as internal recruitment and employee referral programs often focus on finding individuals who are already familiar with the organization's culture and values (Liekovuri, 2024). This fit, in turn, enhances their job performance, as employees who feel comfortable in their roles and align with the organizational culture are more likely to perform at their best (Pandya, 2021).

2.3 The effectiveness of existing recruitment practices in attracting and retaining competent personnel

The effectiveness of existing recruitment practices in attracting and retaining competent personnel is a critical factor for organizations aiming to enhance their workforce and improve overall performance (Vasile, 2020). Recruitment practices that are well-designed and properly executed can significantly contribute to an organization's ability to attract highly skilled individuals, match them with the right roles, and ensure their long-term retention (Solanki, 2024).

One of the primary indicators of effective recruitment is the ability to attract a diverse and qualified talent pool. To achieve this, organizations must employ recruitment strategies that reach a broad audience, use various channels, and emphasize the specific skills and qualifications required for the job (Gilch, 2021). This helps the organization access

a diverse talent pool with the necessary skills and experiences, which is essential for addressing the wide variety of challenges the council faces in urban governance (Hampongo, 2020).

Another key aspect of effective recruitment is ensuring that the process itself is transparent, unbiased, and fair (Holbeche, 2022) ^[8]. Transparent recruitment practices help to build trust with potential candidates, especially when they know that the selection process is based on merit and qualifications rather than favoritism or nepotism. Transparent recruitment practices can also help in attracting competent individuals who are confident that their qualifications and abilities will be evaluated objectively, leading to a higher number of high-quality applicants (Sisneros, 2025) ^[22].

Moreover, the use of appropriate assessment techniques is vital for identifying candidates who will thrive in the roles for which they are being considered. Common assessment methods include structured interviews, competency-based tests, and situational judgment tests, which are designed to evaluate a candidate's skills, behaviors, and potential fit for the role (Sisneros, 2025) ^[22].

2.4 The effectiveness of existing recruitment practices in attracting and retaining competent personnel

One of the most significant challenges in implementing effective recruitment strategies is the issue of talent shortages, which has become increasingly prevalent across various industries, particularly in specialized fields (Kwok, 2022).

The shortage of qualified candidates has far-reaching implications for employee performance. When recruitment efforts fall short in attracting skilled and experienced individuals, companies may resort to hiring underqualified employees simply to fill positions (Kwok, 2022).

Bias in the recruitment process is a significant challenge that many organizations face, whether these biases are conscious or unconscious. Implicit biases those attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner can manifest in various forms during recruitment (Mwambela, 2024) ^[15].

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted an exploratory case study, utilizing a mixed method approach.

3.2 Target Population

The target population for this study consisted of employees at the Lusaka City Council.

3.3 Sample Size

The study consisted of 100 employees at the Lusaka City Council.

3.4 Sampling

Convenience sampling approach was used to select the study sample.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

The main data collection method for this study was a structured questionnaire containing closed-ended questions.

4. Result Presentation

4.1 Presentation of results on background characteristics of the respondents

Out of the 100 respondents, 60% were female and 40% were male.

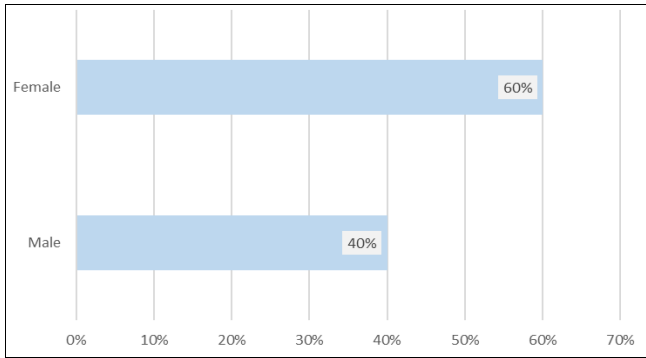


Fig 4.1.1: Gender

The age distribution shows that the largest group of respondents (50%) were aged between 40 and 49 years. The 22–29 and 30–39 age groups each made up 20% of the respondents, while only 10% were aged 50 and above.

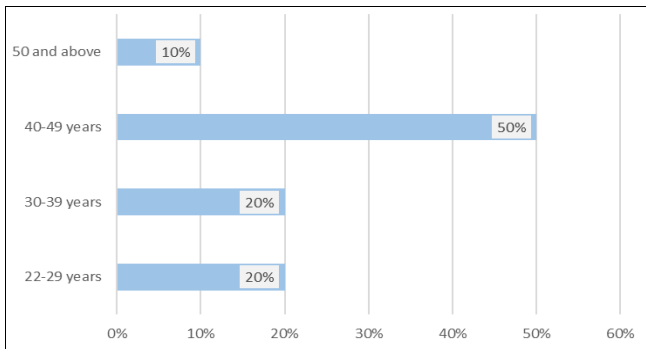


Fig 4.1.2: Age

Most respondents (59%) reported being married. 21% were divorced, and 20% were single.

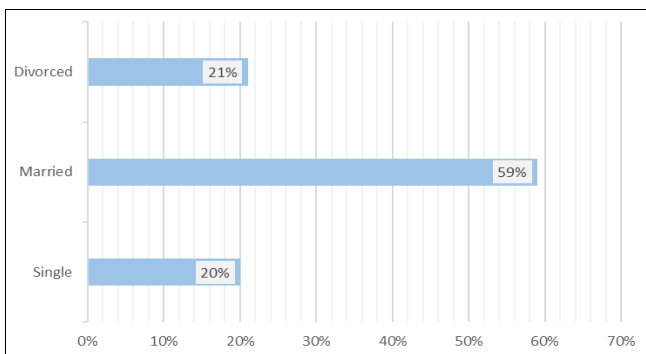


Fig 4.1.3: Marital Status

Regarding education, 40% of the respondents held a Bachelor’s degree, while 30% had a Diploma or Certificate, and another 30% had only a General Certificate of Secondary Education. This shows that most participants had attained tertiary education.

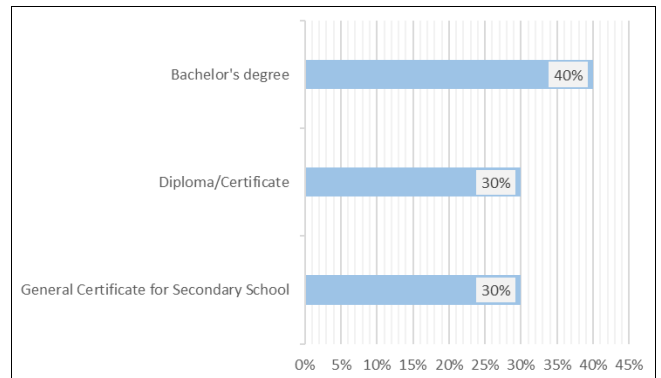


Fig 4.1.4: Education Level

4.2 Recruitment Strategies at Lusaka City Council

Online job portals account for 35% of recruitment activity, followed by newspaper advertisements at 30%. Internal promotion accounts for 25%, while agencies account for 10%.

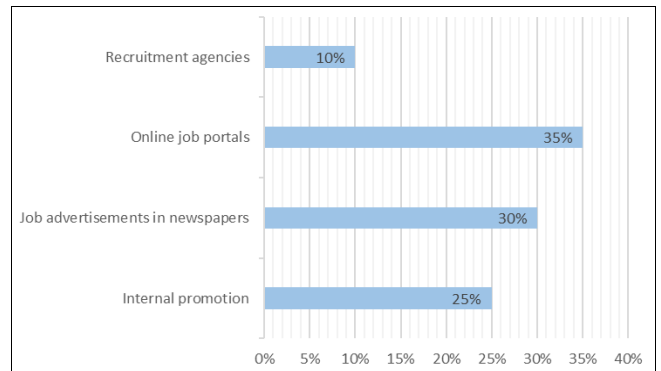


Fig 4.2.1: Recruitment Channels

Work experience forms the main selection criterion at 40%. Skills and competencies account for 30%, academic qualifications account for 20%, and references account for 10%. The dominance of work experience shows that past work records guide hiring decisions.

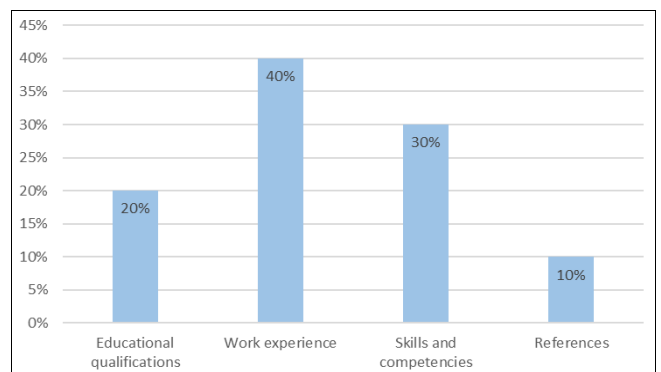


Fig 4.2.2: Selection Criteria

Fifty percent of respondents report that internship or graduate programs are limited and irregular. Twenty percent state that they offer structured pathways. Another 20% indicate that such programs are not applicable, and 10% note that they are outsourced.

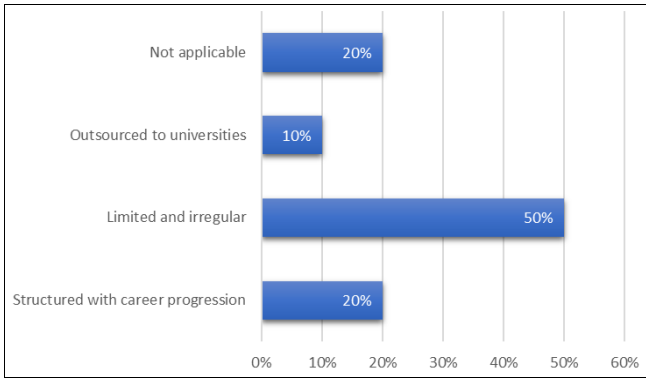


Fig 4.2.3: Internship and Graduate Programs

Online platforms through social media account for 35% of job advertising. Newspaper advertising accounts for 30%, the Council website accounts for 25%, and word of mouth accounts for 10%. This pattern shows that recruitment communication uses both online and traditional channels.

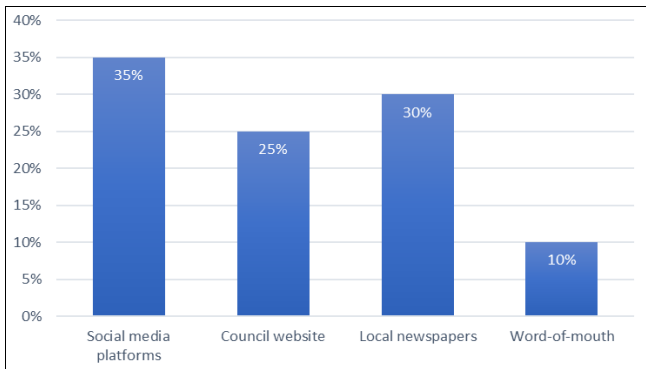


Fig 4.2.4: Recruitment Communication Channels

A combination of tests and interviews accounts for 60% of selection processes. Interviews alone account for 20%, assessment centers for 10%, and written tests alone for 10%. The combined method shows the Council’s preference for a mixed evaluation format. This allows assessment of both cognitive and practical abilities.

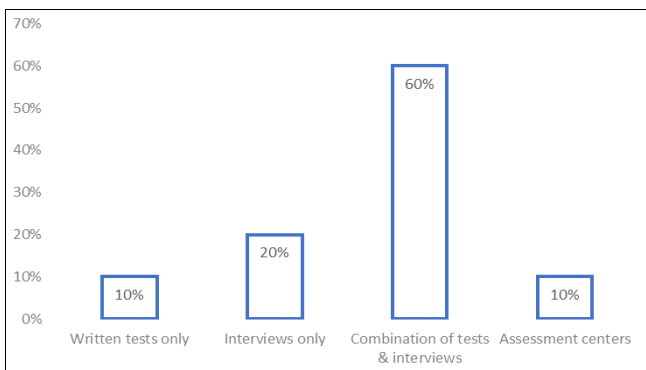


Fig 4.2.5: Selection Methods

The HR department makes hiring decisions in 50% of cases. Department heads and senior management each contribute 20%. External consultants contribute 10%. The dominance of HR shows central control over recruitment. The smaller share from external consultants shows limited outsourcing.

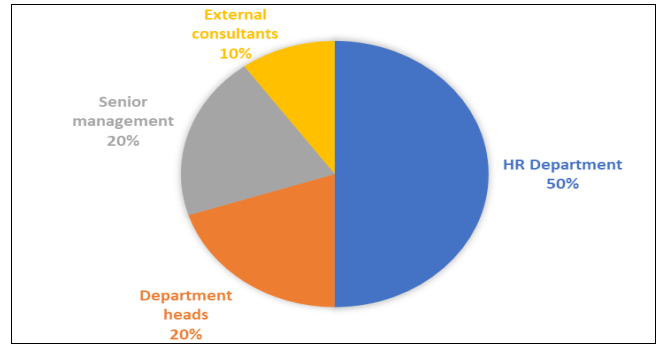


Fig 4.2.6: Decision-Making Authority in Recruitment

Referrals and online applications each contribute 30% of candidate sources. Internal employees contribute 20%, and job fairs contribute 20%. The equal share of online applications and referrals shows a balance between external and relationship based sourcing. Job fairs and internal mobility play smaller roles.

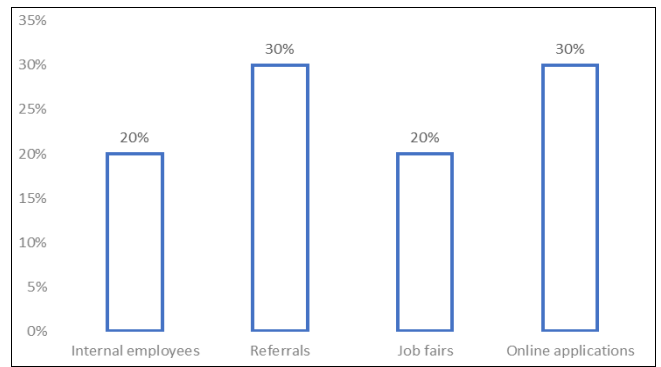


Fig 4.2.7: Candidate Sourcing Methods

Half of respondents state that job descriptions are customized by departments. Standard templates account for 25%. Unstructured or undocumented descriptions account for 15%. Outsourcing accounts for 10%. This shows that customization is the main approach used to define job roles.

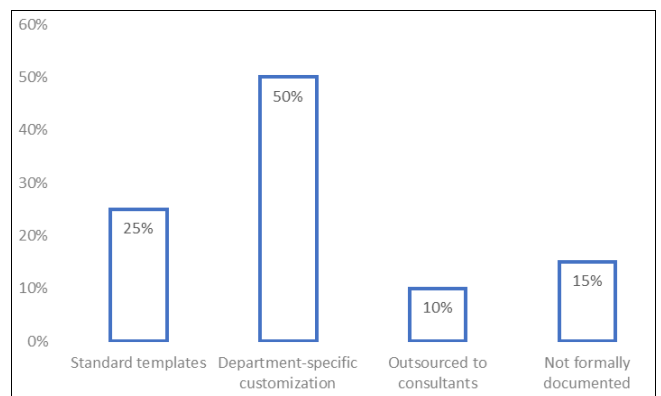


Fig 4.2.8: Job Description Practices

A Chi-Square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between how merit-based recruitment affects employee motivation and how recruitment practices influence employee commitment at Lusaka City Council. These results suggest that employees

who feel motivated by fair, merit-based recruitment practices are more likely to demonstrate stronger commitment to the organization.

Table 4.3.3: The relationship between how merit-based recruitment affects employee motivation and how recruitment practices influence employee commitment at Lusaka City Council

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	100.000 ^a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	134.602	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	82.938	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	100		

Respondents identified external recruitment and graduate trainee programs as the most frequently used recruitment strategies, each selected by 100% of respondents. Internal recruitment was also widely used, selected by 80%. Recruitment through government agencies (60%) and outsourced recruitment (30%) were less commonly used.

Table 4.2.1: Most Commonly Used Recruitment Strategies at Lusaka City Council

Recruitment Strategy		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Recruitment Strategy	Internal recruitment	80	21.6%	80.0%
	External recruitment	100	27.0%	100.0%
	Outsourced recruitment	30	8.1%	30.0%
	Recruitment through government Agencies	60	16.2%	60.0%
	Graduate trainee programs	100	27.0%	100.0%
Total		370	100.0%	370.0%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

The most common method of advertising job vacancies was through social media platforms (100%), followed by the official government website (90%). Radio announcements (70%) and print media (60%) were also used, while job fairs or career expos were the least utilized (10%).

Table 4.2.2: Common Methods Used to Advertise Job Vacancies

	Responses		Percent of Cases	
	N	Percent		
Official government website	90	27.3%	90.0%	
Print media	60	18.2%	60.0%	
Radio announcement	70	21.2%	70.0%	
Social medial platforms	100	30.3%	100.0%	
Job fairs or career expos	10	3.0%	10.0%	
Total	330	100.0%	330.0%	

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

The findings suggest a significant association between the advertising method and perceived effectiveness. Digital platforms such as official government websites and social media were more frequently linked with responses indicating that external advertisements were “very effective,” while traditional methods like print media, radio announcements, and job fairs were more commonly associated with lower effectiveness ratings, including “ineffective” and “neutral.”

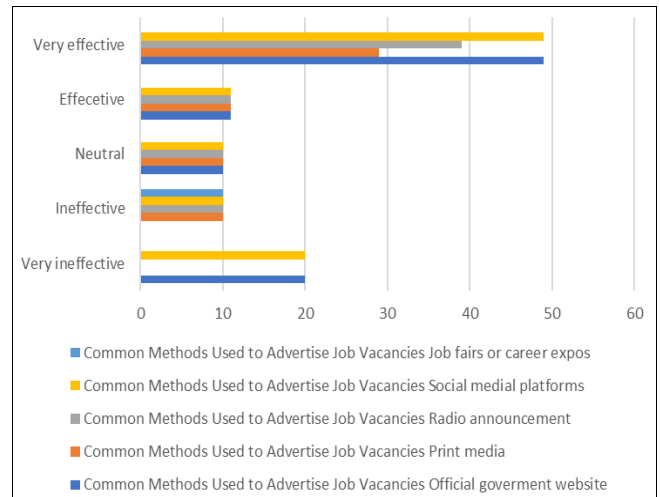


Fig 4.2.9: The relationship between the methods used to advertise job vacancies and the perceived effectiveness of external advertisements in attracting qualified candidates at Lusaka City Council

4.3 Link Between Recruitment Strategies and Employee Performance

Quarterly performance checks are carried out for 45% of new recruits. Biannual checks account for 30%. Annual checks account for 15% and monthly checks for 10%. This shows that performance monitoring takes place on regular cycles that allow the Council to respond to performance issues in a structured way.

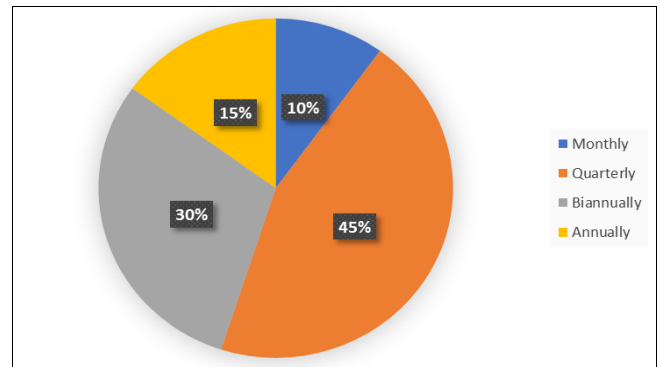


Fig 4.3.1: Frequency of Performance Monitoring

Communication skills link with strong performance at 32%. Technical skills link at 28%. Leadership and problem solving both link at 20%. This shows that communication ability helps staff perform well across departments.

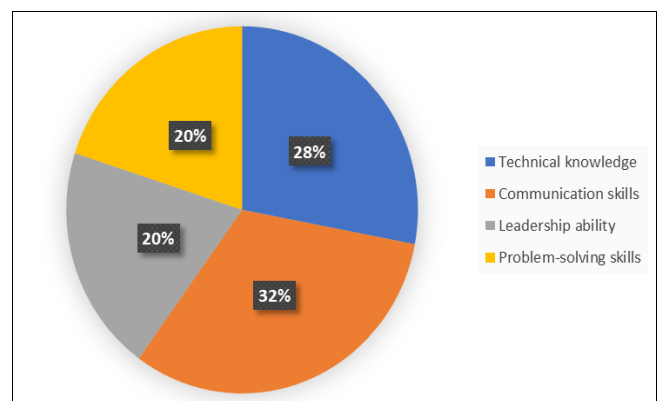


Fig 4.3.2: Skills Linked to Employee Performance

Internal promotions link with retention at 40%. Referrals link at 30%, online recruitment at 20%, and job fairs at 10%. This shows that employees who join through internal pathways or personal referral arrangements tend to stay longer.

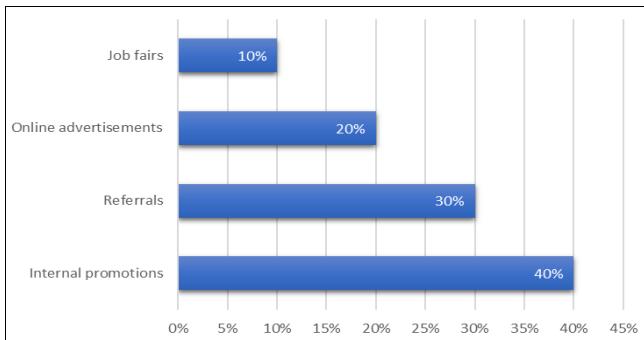


Fig 4.3.3: Recruitment Source and Employee Retention

Interviews predict performance at 35%. Practical tasks predict at 30%. Written tests predict at 25%. References predict at 10%. This shows that interviews provide useful information about how applicants will perform in the workplace.

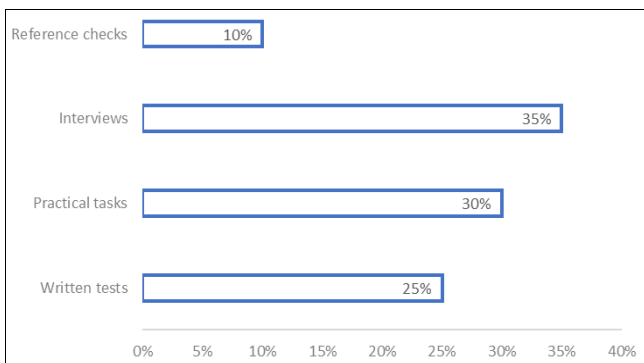


Fig 4.3.4: Selection Tools Predicting Performance

Work experience shows the strongest link with performance at 45%. Educational background and soft skills each account for 20%. Certifications account for 15%. This shows that prior work exposure influences how staff handle their tasks.

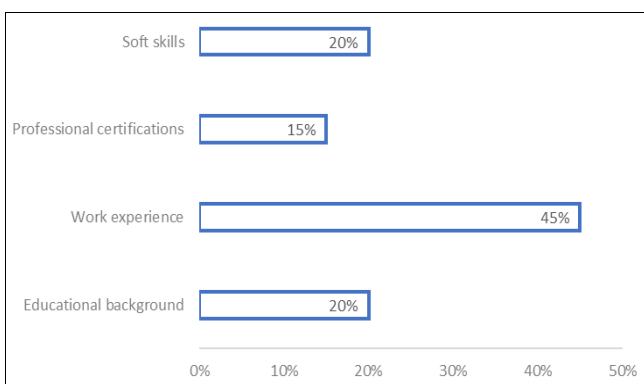


Fig 4.3.5: Factors Influencing Employee Performance

Performance improvement is highest in administrative and technical units at 30% each. Finance accounts for 22% and human resources for 18%. This shows that recruitment strategies support stronger output in units with direct service

or operational roles.

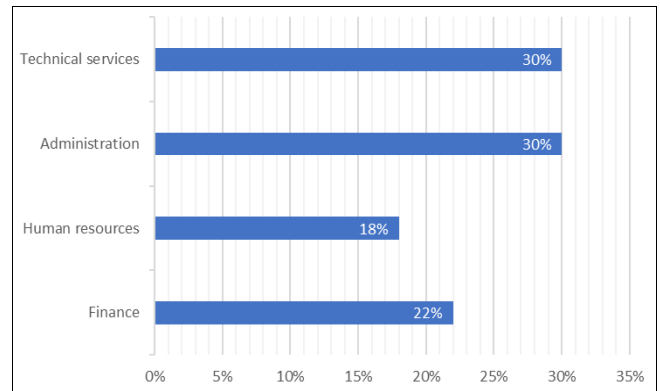


Fig 4.3.6: Performance Improvement by Department

A Chi-Square test of independence was conducted to assess the relationship between how well recruitment strategies align with job performance expectations and the ability of newly recruited employees to meet performance targets within the first year at Lusaka City Council. The test produced a Pearson Chi-Square value of 152.414 with 4 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant association between the two variables. The Likelihood Ratio (167.673, p = 0.000) and Linear-by-Linear Association (29.892, p = 0.002) also confirmed this significance. The crosstab results show that employees recruited under strategies that are perceived to align well with job expectations (“Often”) were more likely to perform significantly within the first year, while those under “Sometimes” or “Rarely” aligned strategies showed weaker early performance.

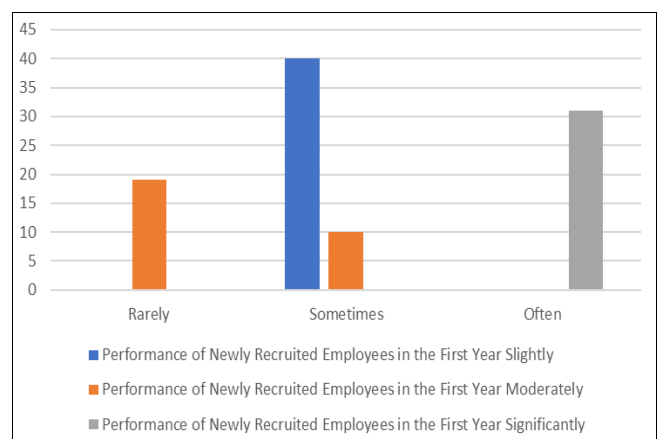


Fig 4.3.7: The relationship between how well recruitment strategies align with job performance expectations and the ability of newly recruited employees to meet performance targets within the first year at Lusaka City Council

4.4 Effectiveness of Recruitment Practices in Attracting and Retaining Competent Personnel

Salary and benefits attract 35% of competent candidates, indicating that financial terms are a key factor shaping interest in Council vacancies. Career development attracts 30% and shows that growth prospects influence decisions almost as much as pay. Job security attracts 20%, reflecting the importance of long-term stability for many applicants. Work-life balance attracts 15%, suggesting that personal schedule needs influence a smaller share of applicants.

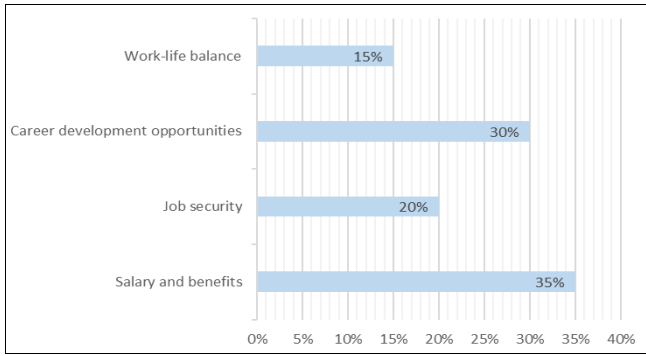


Fig 4.4.1: Attraction Factors for Competent Candidates

42% of respondents view the Council as moderately competitive in the labour market. 30% view it as less competitive, which signals concerns about pay, progression, or working conditions. 18% view it as very competitive, meaning some staff see strong organisational advantages. 10% view it as not competitive, pointing to dissatisfaction with current employment conditions.

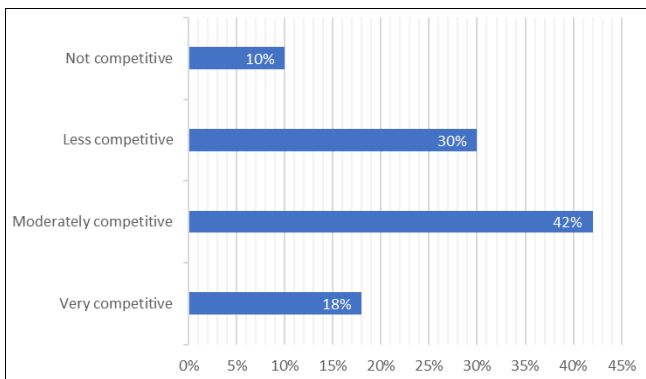


Fig 4.4.2: Perceived Competitiveness of the Council in the Labour Market

Career progression pathways support retention at 35%, showing that opportunities for growth motivate employees to stay. Competitive pay follows at 30%, indicating that salary also plays a key role in retaining staff. Recognition supports retention at 20 percent by reinforcing commitment among employees who feel valued.

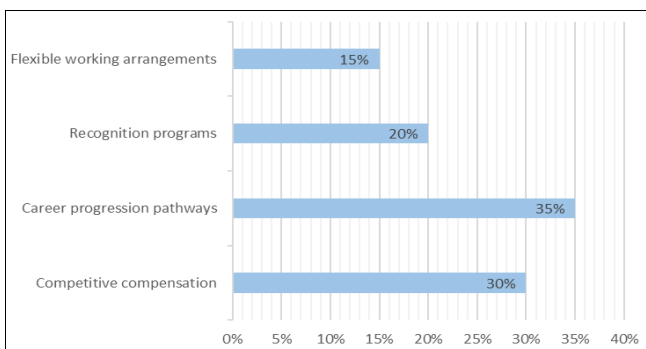


Fig 4.4.3: Factors Supporting Employee Retention

Online postings attract competent staff at 30%, making digital platforms the most effective source of applicants. Internal promotion attracts 28% and shows that internal growth opportunities generate strong interest among staff. Referrals attract 22%, indicating that employees play a meaningful role in sourcing talent.

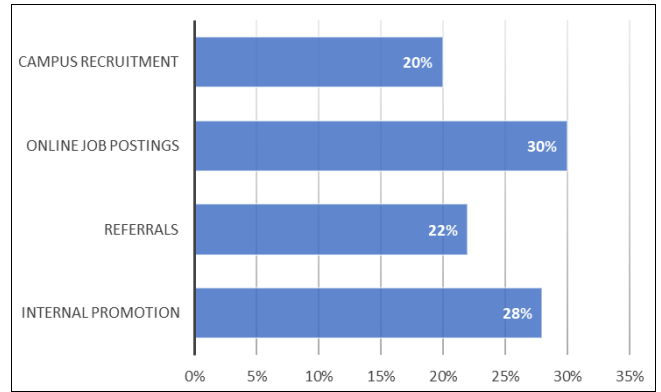


Fig 4.4.4: Channels Attracting Competent Staff

Technical staff show the highest retention at 30%, which suggests that specialised roles create stability through skill requirements. Administration and management each show retention at 25%, showing balanced retention in administrative and leadership functions. Support staff show 20%, which may reflect higher turnover in lower-grade positions.

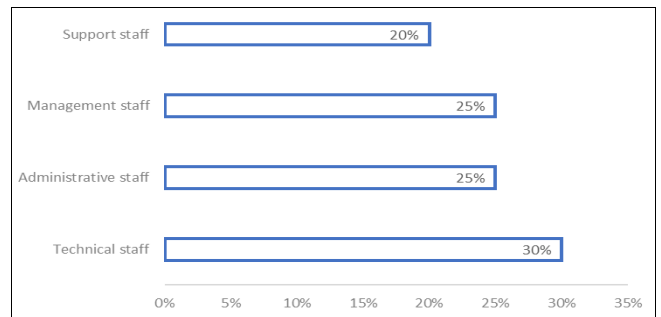


Fig 4.4.5: Retention Levels by Staff Category

4.5 Challenges in Implementing Recruitment Strategies and Their Impact on Employee Performance

Bureaucratic delays occur most often at 35%, making them the leading recruitment challenge. Lack of qualified candidates follows at 30%, limited budget at 20%, and poor advertising reach at 15%. These findings show that administrative delays form the major constraint.

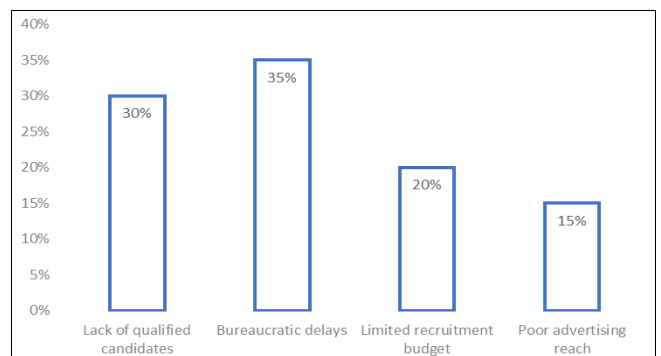


Fig 4.5.1: Recruitment Challenges

Long recruitment processes affect performance at 30%, making delays the main factor influencing output. Unclear job descriptions and weak screening each account for 25%. Limited HR training accounts for 20%. These results show that delays shape performance outcomes the most.

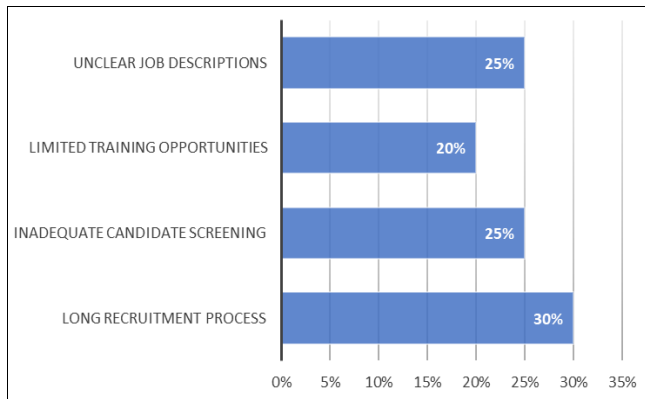


Fig 4.5.2: Factors Affecting Performance During Recruitment

Approval procedures cause delays at 45 %, making them the main factor slowing recruitment. HR staffing shortages cause 25 %, while delays from external consultants and candidate unavailability each account for 15 %. These results show that approval stages drive most recruitment delays.

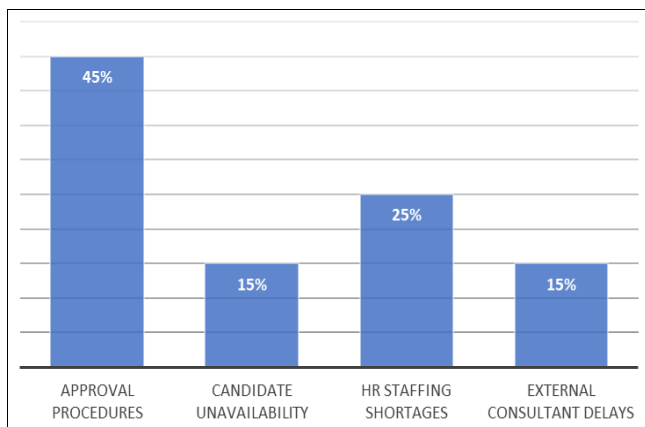


Fig 4.5.3: Causes of Recruitment Delays

Increased workload for existing staff appears in 40 % of responses, showing that understaffing places pressure on employees. Lower productivity appears in 25 %, reduced motivation in 20 %, and combined effects in 15 %. These findings link workload pressure to performance outcomes.

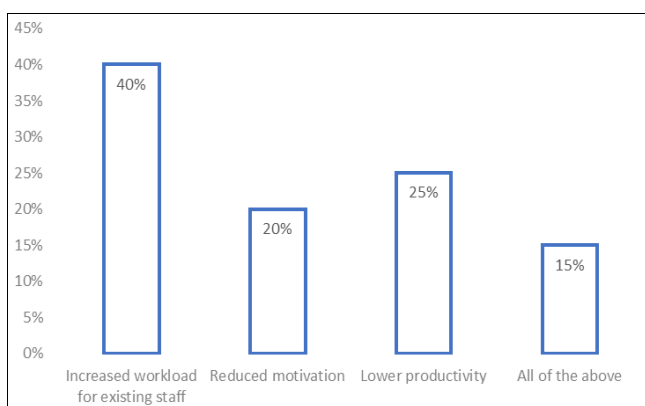


Fig 4.5.4: Effects of Understaffing on Performance

Low salary offers affect attraction at 35 %, public image challenges at 25 %, limited progression at 25 %, and location issues at 15 %. These results show that salary limitations influence attraction the most.

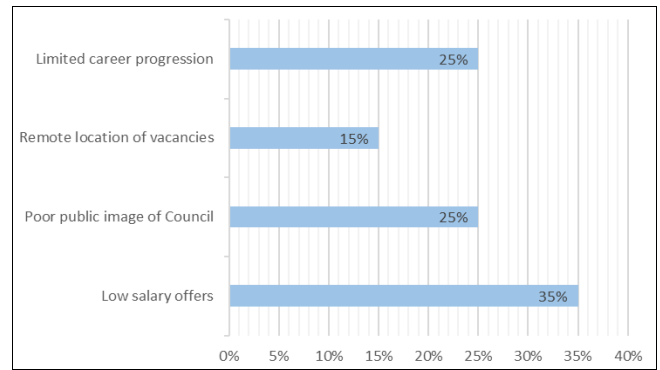


Fig 4.5.5: Factors Affecting Attraction of Candidates

A streamlined recruitment process addresses challenges at 40 %. Budget increases help at 25 %, stronger employer branding helps at 20 %, and improved assessment helps at 15 %. These results show that process improvement is viewed as the most effective intervention.

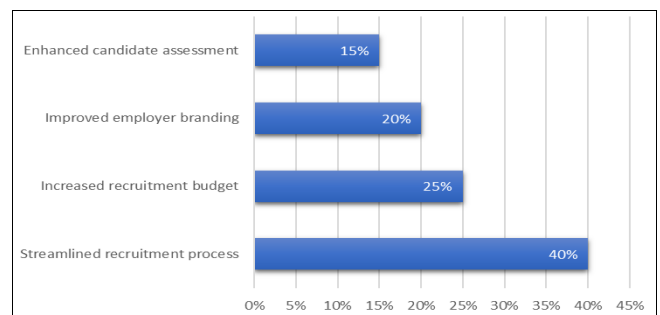


Fig 4.5.6: Strategies to Address Recruitment Challenges

5. Discussion

The study found that Lusaka City Council uses a combination of internal and external recruitment, with external hiring and graduate programs dominating. Recruitment relies on digital platforms and traditional media to reach a broad audience, with work experience, skills, and academic qualifications serving as primary selection criteria. Structured interviews and practical tests are the main assessment methods, while HR retains central control over decisions. Referrals and internal promotions support retention and cultural fit. The Council shows emerging competency-based recruitment elements, though experience-based hiring remains dominant. Overall, recruitment strategies are moderately structured, balancing internal continuity with external innovation while facing limitations in advanced assessment tools and structured graduate programs.

Recruitment alignment strongly influences employee performance, with work experience, communication, and technical skills being key predictors. Internal recruitment and referrals enhance retention and organizational fit, while online recruitment requires stronger onboarding for external hires. Performance monitoring through quarterly or biannual reviews ensures that employees meet expectations, and recruitment methods aligned with job requirements correlate with higher first-year performance. Departments with clear competency requirements, such as administration and technical units, show higher performance gains, confirming that well-aligned recruitment strategies improve productivity, engagement, and long-term organizational outcomes.

Recruitment effectiveness is influenced by financial incentives, career development opportunities, job security, and recruitment channels. Online postings, internal promotions, and referrals attract competent candidates, with technical staff showing higher retention than support roles. Career progression, competitive pay, and internal mobility contribute to retention, while perceived organizational competitiveness and limited resources reduce attraction potential. Structured selection methods, such as interviews and practical tasks, improve candidate-job fit. Overall, effective recruitment practices at the Council support the attraction of skilled personnel and retention, though challenges remain in pay competitiveness and structured early career development programs.

The Council faces talent shortages, bureaucratic delays, limited resources, weak employer branding, and inadequate screening as primary recruitment challenges. These factors reduce candidate quality, extend vacancies, increase workloads for existing staff, and lower overall productivity and motivation. Bias and unclear job descriptions further weaken hiring outcomes. Strategies to address these challenges include streamlining recruitment processes, increasing budget allocations, strengthening employer branding, and improving assessment methods. Addressing these constraints is critical for enhancing employee performance, organizational efficiency, and long-term retention of skilled personnel.

6. Conclusion

The study shows that recruitment at Lusaka City Council is shaped by strong reliance on digital platforms, experience based selection, and departmental flexibility in defining job roles. Recruitment strategies such as external hiring, graduate trainee programs, and online advertising play major roles in reaching potential candidates, while internal promotion continues to support retention. The statistical results indicate that fair and merit based recruitment strengthens both employee motivation and commitment, and that effective advertising methods improve the ability to attract qualified applicants. Recruitment practices also link with performance outcomes, with communication skills, technical skills, and work experience showing strong associations with early job performance. The findings also highlight several challenges. Bureaucratic delays, limited budgets, and shortages of qualified applicants reduce the efficiency of the recruitment process and affect staff performance through increased workloads and reduced productivity. Approval procedures account for most delays, and low salary offers weaken attraction in key positions. Respondents indicate that streamlined recruitment systems, improved employer branding, and increased budget allocations would address many of these constraints.

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