

Influence of Motivation Strategies on the Professional Performance of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique: Case of Members Assigned to the Canine Unit (2021-2023)

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ABSTRACT: This article addresses the situation of motivation of members of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique (PRM), the objective is to evaluate the influence of the motivation strategies adopted by the General Command on the professional performance of members in service in the Canine Unit. The study is qualitative and descriptive, to obtain the data, the techniques of interview and documentary research were used and the subjects participating in the research, are 19 among women and men members of the PRM in service in the Canine Unit selected using the technique for intentional convenience, therefore, with this method, results were obtained that show the existence and implementation of different working conditions, such as recognition and appreciation of work, continuous training, as well as actions of integration and strengthening of team spirit, in this context, it was concluded that with the efforts of reforms in the motivation policies at the level of the General Command of the PRM in the improvement of working conditions, they positively influence professional performance, However, it is suggested that structured programs should be adopted to provide even better working conditions, in order to increase the motivation of professionals.

KEYWORDS: Motivation, Professional Performance, Canine Unit.

INTRODUCTION

Motivation is a determining factor in professional performance, especially in areas of high responsibility, such as public safety. In the context of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique, the motivation of the officers, particularly those who work in the Canine Unit, is essential to ensure the effectiveness of operations and the safety of the population.

According to Maslow (1943), human motivation is organized into a hierarchy of needs, where basic needs must be met before the individual can focus on higher needs, such as professional fulfillment. In addition, intrinsic motivation, which refers to the desire to perform a task because of the pleasure and satisfaction it provides, is particularly relevant. According to Deci and Ryan (2000), intrinsic motivation is linked to engagement and persistence in challenging tasks. Intrinsically motivated PRM agents tend to demonstrate greater commitment and resilience, essential characteristics in high-pressure situations.

On the other hand, a lack of motivation can lead to poor performance, resulting in disinterest and even inappropriate behavior. Nhantumbo's (2023) research highlights that demotivation among police officers can be attributed to factors such as lack of resources, institutional support, and recognition, which can negatively impact the effectiveness of law enforcement operations.

The theme on motivation in the professional performance of PRM agents, in particular the Canine Unit, is developed at a time when the Government observes a pause in the process of promotions and progressions in the civil service, which raises questions about its influence on the achievement of satisfactory results.

Now, it is important to note that the performance of the Mozambican Public Administration (MPA), from the perspective of organizational management, depends on and is associated with the motivation of employees. This reality occurs in any organization, regardless of its work nature. In this context, the main purpose of this research is to evaluate the influence of motivation strategies

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Influence of Motivation Strategies on the Professional Performance of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique: Case of Members Assigned to the Canine Unit (2021-2023)

on the performance of the Mozambican Public Administration (MPA), specifically of the members of the PRM in service in the Canine Unit.

It is a police unit, in which motivation plays a fundamental role, considering that the activity of Police Officers is related to society, that is, to the public, in different contexts.

To understand the theme, descriptive qualitative research was used, having as techniques and instruments of data collection, bibliographic research, documentary, interview, and the application of the interview script. The objective was operationalized through the case study, with the members of the PRM on duty in the Canine Unit, the information obtained was analyzed through the content analysis technique.

The research covered the period between 2021 and 2023, as it was a period in which the mass training of PRM members, their assignment and framing in various police units was improved, with the Canine Unit being one of the institutions that benefited from these actions. On the other hand, the choice for this location weighed the fact that it presents multiple determining factors in the motivation of its agents, from the best working conditions to fair rewards, since according to data from an exploratory research, there is a controversial framework, where on the one hand, the General Command of the PRM hopes to achieve its objectives and goals and on the other hand, the Agents aim to receive better salaries, which depend in part on the change of their professional categories, as well as the specialty allowance, since it is a Special Unit.

A set of mechanisms that aim to increase motivation within the corporation stands out, with emphasis on the implementation of a model of vehicles with tents to protect agents during work; the permanent dialogue that has taken place between hierarchical superiors and their subordinates, which creates a rapprochement between the top and the bottom.

However, despite all this set of actions aimed at raising motivation within the corporation, particularly in the members assigned to the PRM Canine Unit, there are cases of lack of demotivation in these agents, which raises multiple questions about the influence of motivation, hence the following starting question: **To what extent do the motivation strategies implemented by the PRM General Command influence the professional performance of the members in service in the Canine Unit?**

The general objective of the research is to evaluate the influence of the motivation strategies implemented by the General Command of the PRM on the professional performance of the members assigned to the Canine Unit, and to achieve this objective, the following specific objectives were established: To identify the motivation strategies that influence the professional performance of the members of the PRM assigned to the Canine Unit; Describe the challenges faced by PRM agents in their professional performance; To assess how the motivation strategies implemented by the PRM General Command influence the professional performance of the members in service in the Canine Unit; and Propose strategies that can improve the motivation and professional performance of PRM members in the Canine Unit.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Definition of concepts

For a better understanding of the phenomenon, motivation and professional performance were taken as concepts.

Motivation

It is an emotional state that manifests itself in the individual, influencing personality, direction, and persistence to achieve objectives and goals. Thus, it can be inferred that leaders have a great responsibility in motivating the members of their organizations, with the purpose of ensuring the intensity, direction, and persistence of employees at work.

For Chiavenato (1999, p. 412), motivation is the "process that leads someone to behave to achieve organizational objectives while seeking to achieve their own individual objectives".

Motivation can also be defined as "a kind of internal force that emerges, regulates and sustains all our most important actions. However, it is evident that motivation is an internal experience that cannot be studied directly" (Vernon, 1973 apud Todorov and Moreira, 2005, p. 120).

In this vein, Lobos (2013) understands that motivation is something that drives an individual to act in a certain way and in this context, the motive and the value stand out, and the motive corresponds to temporary conditions associated with a certain specific objective and the value is the representation or image of what the individual needs.

In turn, Moura (2020), understands that motivation is a fundamental factor in the organizational environment, since employees achieve greater and better performance and well-being, when they feel optimally motivated.

This positioning reveals that the individual is the center and most responsible for the production processes and the provision of services. Therefore, it is important to constantly improve their well-being, thus avoiding falling asleep or failing to meet organizational results.

Therefore, motivation is currently one of the most discussed topics in the organizational area, as organizations have begun to realize that, in order to survive in the competitive market, it is necessary to know people's needs in order to maintain a good relationship with their employees.

Influence of Motivation Strategies on the Professional Performance of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique: Case of Members Assigned to the Canine Unit (2021-2023)

Professional performance

According to Sink and Tuttle (1993), performance is the creation of futuristic visions, which are intended to be achieved, to plan, to evaluate the state in which the organization is at the moment. Thus, it can be inferred that performance concerns the ability of an individual to perform, at work or in the organization, influenced by motivation.

Professional performance means the ability of the individual or organization to perform. In other words, it corresponds to the achievement of goals, good individuality, and organizational results.

For Chiavenato (1992, p. 181), performance is "the process related to the execution of work through people, and it is related to individual skills and motivation to perform a certain task." With the functions that everyone performs, it is not enough to have only skills to perform well.

PRM Canine Unit

According to Article 29 of Decree 58/2019, of July 1, which amends the Organic Statute of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique, the Canine Unit of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique (PRM) is a specialized division that uses trained dogs for various security functions, such as patrolling, mass control, search, rescue and rescue, drug detection, explosives and other illicit materials, contributing significantly to the fulfillment of police missions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Motivation is a core concept in organizational psychology and the study of human behavior, especially in professional contexts. In the field of public security, the motivation of police officers is crucial to ensure the effectiveness of operations, and the quality of the service provided to society. Understanding the role of motivation in the professional performance of members of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique is, therefore, a topic of great relevance.

Theories of Motivation

Several theories address motivation and its impact on performance. Maslow's Theory of the Hierarchy of Needs (1943) is one of the best known. According to Maslow, human needs are organized in a hierarchy that ranges from physiological needs to needs for self-actualization. In order for an individual to be able to focus on higher needs, such as professional fulfillment, it is necessary that their basic needs be met. In the police context, this implies that adequate working conditions and recognition are fundamental to performance.

In addition, Deci and Ryan's (2000) Theory of Motivation and Self-Determination Theory emphasize the importance of intrinsic motivation, which is the desire to perform a task because of the pleasure and satisfaction it provides. Intrinsically motivated police officers tend to demonstrate greater commitment and resilience, essential characteristics in high-pressure and high-risk situations.

Motivational Factors in the Police Context

In the context of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique, several factors can influence the motivation of police officers. Mavhunga's (2022) research points out that the recognition and appreciation of the work done are essential to increase the morale and performance of police officers. Recognition programs, positive feedback, and incentives can contribute significantly to the intrinsic motivation of police force members.

On the other hand, the lack of resources, institutional support, and inadequate working conditions can lead to demotivation. Nhantumbo (2023) highlights that demotivation among police officers can result in unsatisfactory performance, negatively impacting the effectiveness of police operations and public safety.

The Importance of Motivation

Motivation not only affects individual performance but also has implications for organizational effectiveness. Motivated police officers are more likely to engage in proactive behaviors, to collaborate with colleagues, and to engage in community service. According to research by Silva (2021), motivation is directly related to job satisfaction and talent retention in the police, which is crucial for building a competent and committed police force.

Bureaucratic Theory

TB imposes the creation of written standards, necessary and indispensable for the performance of activities in organizations. This model was created by Max Weber³ in the twentieth century, with the purpose of eliminating failures and gaps in production processes, associated with the lack of knowledge of work standards in organizations. In Weber's view, the achievement of the objectives and goals of organizations requires the formulation of a set of norms or rules for the orientation of workers, so that their

³Max Weber (1864-1920) was a researcher and professor in Freiburg, Heidelberg and Munich, Germany. <https://www.deutschland.de/pt-br/topic/conhecimento/humanidade-ciencia/max-weber-pioneiro-da-sociologia>.

Influence of Motivation Strategies on the Professional Performance of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique: Case of Members Assigned to the Canine Unit (2021-2023)

performance is free of failures. In this context, each task has rules defined in advance and subsequently applied within the scope of organizational performance.

TB presupposes the existence of written norms, defined by a formal system of rules and a cycle of division of labor. The theoretical advantage lies in rationality, in terms of organizational competence, however, the achievement of objectives depends on the correct interpretation of the rules and the degree of satisfaction of human resources (Lemes, 2012).

It is on this basis that the mission of the Police Agents is manifested, compliance with rules, norms, as a way of ensuring public order and tranquility. However, in the exercise of their duties, the police should in principle observe or respect human rights, the action of which is still a challenge. It is a principle associated with human relations, whose theory we develop in the next paragraph.

Human Relations Theory (HRT)

HRT emerged in the twentieth century, in Chicago, USA, as a model of opposition to the Classical Theory and results from Hawthorne's experiment, conducted in a factory. In this process, the protagonism of the tests conducted by Elton Mayo in a production line stands out, the results of which contributed immensely to the valorization of man as a social being. For, previous theoretical models ignored the figure of man, which was compared to a simple work instrument. For Mayo, the motivation of man is fundamental, for greater disposition and performance of the organization.

In this context, it is relevant that organizations prioritize: **i)** the motivation of individuals; **(ii)** adoption of appropriate leadership style; and **iii)** organizational communication and group dynamics.

The school of human relations revolutionized the work activities in public administration, making them democratic and humanized, considering that individuals are merely social beings. Therefore, there is a need to observe human rights, from working hours, working conditions, wages and other determinants of organizational performance.

In this context, the American psychologist Abraham Maslow (1908-1970), conceived in the context of human motivation: the theory of the hierarchy of needs, according to which there is a hierarchy of five categories of needs in each human being. Therefore, for the satisfaction of the individual, it is necessary to identify the category of their needs. However, in the satisfaction of one need, another naturally arises on a cyclical basis.

In view of the above, it can be inferred that TB and HRT are models that fit perfectly into the context of this research, for the following reasons: TB consists of the application of regulations, rules or procedures in the exercise of activities, as is the case in the Maputo City Command, where police officers act in function and in compliance with the law.

In the same perspective, HRT is applicable, because in police action there is a need to comply with the Human Rights that citizens assist, that is, it is pertinent that police officers are guided by the principles of human relations.

In the context of these theories, organizational motivation is an extremely hot theme in public administration. For Moura (2020), organizational motivation is a relevant factor, whose impact is reflected in organizational results. On the other hand, he recognizes that motivation is equally crucial for the successful development of organizations.

In other words, the focus of organizations is associated with human resources, and it is around them that motivation must be developed, to ensure the success of organizational performance, in competitive terms and in the context of satisfying the interests of customers.

Corroborating, Cunha & Rodrigues (2022) argue that an organization can only be successful if it has competent, capable, and motivated people, because the success of any company is linked to people.

For Gomes, Seco and Cardoso (2023), motivation is an attribute of the effective human resources management process. Because, throughout the evolution of administration, the preponderance of individuals as actors driving the achievement of objectives and goals has been remarkable. In addition, theories have emerged throughout history that have imposed themselves and elevated the status of the worker as a social being, thus opposing the classical theories that considered the individual as only an instrument of work.

From Robbins' (2008) perspective, there are two motivation variables that influence organizational performance, namely:

- Internal or intrinsic motivation, which develops in the individual himself, such as predispositions, interests, values and capacities.
- On the other hand, there is external or extrinsic motivation, developed in the environment that surrounds the individual.

If we look at Maslow's (1943) theory of motivation, which suggests the hierarchization of human needs, where basic needs must be met before the individual can focus on higher needs, such as professional fulfillment, it implies in the police context adequate working conditions and recognition are fundamental for performance. In addition, intrinsically motivated police officers tend to demonstrate greater commitment and resilience, essential characteristics in high-pressure situations.

In this context, the previous presentations clearly show the current relevance of the combination of the motivational factor in organizations, as an indispensable condition for their survival and competitiveness. It is a recognition that organizations are made up of people and that they function and develop from them.

Likewise, the literature listed above is meritorious, as it constitutes the support of the present study.

Influence of Motivation Strategies on the Professional Performance of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique: Case of Members Assigned to the Canine Unit (2021-2023)

It is found that the authors converge in the approach to motivation, that it is important for organizational survival and competitiveness.

With this development, still subject to improvement or contributions, we move on to the theoretical assumptions.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF STUDY RESULTS

FINDINGS

Presentation of the object of study

This study took place at the level of the General Command of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique, specifically in the Canine Unit, during the period from 2021 to 2023.

In light of Decree 58/2019, of July 1, the Canine Unit of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique (PRM) is a specialized division that uses trained dogs for various security functions, such as patrolling, mass control, search and rescue, detection of drugs, explosives and other illicit materials, contributing significantly to the fulfillment of police missions.

Among several attributions, it is up to this police specialty to conduct actions to maintain Public Order and Security, which require the use of canine technique; ensure the inspection of passengers and goods at airports, ports, garrets and other terminals.

The study site covers the physical facilities, training environments and operational areas of the Canine Unit, as well as the organizational and institutional context of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique. The choice of this environment allowed a deep understanding of the motivational strategies adopted by managers and how they influence the professional performance of the members assigned to the unit.

By analyzing this space, it was possible to understand the internal dynamics, the available resources and the conditions that favor or hinder the motivation and performance of PRM agents and their dogs, thus contributing to the development of more effective management and motivation strategies in the police force.

For a triangulation between the data collected from the bibliographic research and the interviews, 19 members of the PRM, 12 men and 07 women, were selected from the total staff, and the main criterion considered for this selection was the minimum length of service of 05 years, as it was considered to be in the interval of the period of the course of study (2021-2023) and that they could present faithful and credible data, looking at the professional experience they have.

They were coded according to their categories or ranks, with Group A: Superintendent Officers (03); Group B: Inspector Officers (04); Group C: Sergeants (05) and Group D: Police guards (07). In addition to this coding, in order to protect the integrity of the interview participants, enumeration was used to designate each of the interviewees.

Presentation and discussion of the results

Once the information was collected based on the instruments and techniques previously mentioned, it was presented, analyzed and interpreted. Thus, the data analysis and treatment plan were elaborated based on the triangulation of data obtained from various sources, seeking to bring the materialization of the specific objectives of the study and the answer to the starting question.

Thus, given the objective of the study, four (04) significant units were identified to respond to the objectives set, which are described below.

Motivation strategies that influence the professional performance of PRM members assigned to the Canine Unit

Asked about the strategies implemented by the General Command of the PRM (CGPRM) and whether they guarantee motivation, most of the participants made it known that the General Command of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique has adopted several strategies to motivate its members and strengthen the performance of the team. Among the main actions described by the participants, the recognition and appreciation of work, continuous training, as well as integration and team spirit strengthening actions stand out.

In addition, members reported that public recognition and performance rewards have a positive impact on motivation, as they encourage greater dedication to daily activities. In addition, the offer of constant training and qualifications is seen as a strategy that demonstrates the institution's commitment to professional development, which increases the engagement of members in their work routine.

Another crucial point mentioned was the psychological support and transparent communication by command, which contributed to creating a more motivating and collaborative work environment. Interviewees also highlighted those motivational actions involving the recognition of individual and collective effort, as well as the strengthening of the sense of belonging to the unit, which have been essential to maintain the high performance of the members.

Finally, the results indicate that the strategies adopted by the General Command of the PRM have been effective in promoting greater motivation, although there is room for further improvement, especially in the implementation of more diversified incentives and in the maintenance of a work environment that values the well-being of agents and their dogs.

Influence of Motivation Strategies on the Professional Performance of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique: Case of Members Assigned to the Canine Unit (2021-2023)

On the other hand, research such as that of Mavhunga (2022) points out that the recognition and appreciation of the work done are essential to increase the morale and performance of police officers. Recognition programs, positive feedback, and incentives can contribute significantly to the intrinsic motivation of police force members.

Furthermore, the lack of resources, institutional support and inadequate working conditions can lead to demotivation. Nhantumbo (2023) highlights that demotivation among police officers can result in unsatisfactory performance, negatively impacting the effectiveness of police operations and public safety.

Now, these data reinforce the idea of the importance of adopting better motivation strategies, where it not only affects individual performance, but also has implications for organizational effectiveness. Motivated police officers are more likely to engage in proactive behaviors, collaborate with colleagues, and engage in community service.

Challenges faced by the PRM agents of the Canine Unit in their professional performance in relation to their motivation at work.

Regarding the point alluded to, the interviewees revealed several challenges that impact both professional performance and motivation at work. One of the main obstacles pointed out was the lack of adequate resources, such as equipment, facilities and training materials, which makes it difficult to conduct their activities efficiently and safely. Another challenge highlighted was the work overload, which often results in long hours and physical and emotional fatigue, especially at times of high operational work, affecting the motivation and well-being of both agents and dogs. In addition, some interviewees mentioned difficulties related to professional appreciation, such as the perception that their efforts are not properly recognized or rewarded, which can decrease engagement and enthusiasm for work. Respondents also reported that the lack of specific training or constant updates impairs the development of their skills and confidence in performing complex tasks, negatively impacting motivation. Finally, issues related to the work environment, such as insufficient communication and limited support from leadership, were pointed out as factors that make it difficult to maintain high motivation and good performance. Despite these challenges, the agents showed interest in improvements and highlighted the importance of actions that promote greater appreciation, support and adequate resources so that they can perform their duties with more motivation and efficiency.

In the context of the literary approaches addressed, Maslow's Theory of the Hierarchy of Needs (1943) is one of the best known. According to Maslow, human needs are organized in a hierarchy that ranges from physiological needs to needs for self-actualization. In order for an individual to be able to focus on higher needs, such as professional fulfillment, it is necessary that their basic needs be met. In the police context, this implies that adequate working conditions and recognition are fundamental to performance.

Canine Unit agents face unique challenges that can impact their motivation. According to Herzberg (1966), factors such as recognition, responsibility, and growth opportunities are essential to increase job satisfaction. In interviews conducted with the agents, it was observed that those who received positive feedback about their work with the dogs had greater commitment and efficiency in the operative actions, compared to those who did not receive such recognition.

These data points to some challenges such as the need to invest in adequate material resources, recognition, training, psychological support and management that value the well-being of professionals.

How the motivation strategies implemented by the PRM General Command influence the performance of the members of the Canine Unit

Motivation is a crucial factor that influences professional performance, especially in areas of high responsibility such as public safety. In the context of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique, particularly among the officers of the Canine Unit, understanding the role of motivation can offer valuable insights for improving the performance and effectiveness of police operations.

The motivation strategies implemented by the PRM General Command have a positive impact on the performance of the members of the Canine Unit. When leadership promotes incentives, recognition, and a work environment that values effort and dedication, members and their dogs feel more engaged and motivated to perform their duties with excellence. This motivation increases confidence, improves cooperation among team members, and encourages the pursuit of continuous improvement, which in turn is reflected in more efficient performance in conducting tasks such as patrolling, searching, and detecting illicit substances. In addition, successful motivation strategies help reduce stress and emotional exhaustion, promoting a healthier and more productive work environment.

However, studies indicate that intrinsic motivation that comes from within the individual is particularly effective in challenging environments (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Agents in the Canine Unit reported feeling a strong emotional connection with their dogs, which not only increases their job satisfaction but also improves effectiveness on missions. The relationship between agents and dogs is fundamental. In addition, the more agents feel motivated by this connection, they tend to perform their tasks with more dedication and attention to detail.

Thus, it appears that motivation plays a crucial role in the professional performance of the members of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique, especially among the officers of the Canine Unit. The research showed that intrinsic factors, such as personal satisfaction and recognition of work, as well as extrinsic factors, such as financial incentives and adequate working conditions,

Influence of Motivation Strategies on the Professional Performance of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique: Case of Members Assigned to the Canine Unit (2021-2023)

directly influence the effectiveness and dedication of these professionals. Understanding these dynamics is essential for the implementation of strategies that aim not only to improve individual performance, but also to strengthen the police institution as a whole.

The data collected showed that motivated agents tend to present better results in their daily activities, reflecting on the quality of the service provided to the community. Therefore, it is imperative that police leaders take a proactive approach in identifying and promoting motivational factors that can positively impact the morale and productivity of their members.

Strategies that can be implemented to improve the motivation and professional performance of the members of the PRM of the Canine Unit

Among the various strategies that can be implemented in order to improve the motivation and professional performance of PRM agents on duty in the Canine Unit, the following can be highlighted:

Recognition and Appreciation: Create recognition programs, such as certificates, awards, honorable mentions, to value the effort and results achieved by members and their dogs.

Continuous capacity building: Offer training, workshops, and refresher courses to enhance technical and tactical skills, demonstrating the institution's commitment to professional development.

Financial incentives and benefits: Implement bonuses, bonuses, or other benefits that reward good performance and commitment from members.

Positive work environment: To foster a culture of respect, cooperation, and mutual support, where members feel valued and motivated to contribute.

Participation in decisions: Involve members in decisions related to operations and training, increasing the sense of belonging and responsibility.

Implement wellness programs: Offer psychological support, leisure activities, and physical and mental health care, helping to reduce stress and improve overall well-being.

Set clear and challenging goals: Establish specific, measurable, and achievable goals, encouraging members to put in the effort and notice their progress.

Implementing these strategies can create a more motivating environment, elevating the performance of Canine Unit members and contributing to the success of police operations.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Considerations

The research revealed that motivation strategies play a key role in improving the professional performance of members of the Republic of Mozambique Police, especially in the Canine Unit. The results indicate that actions such as recognition, continuous training, incentives and a positive work environment contribute significantly to increasing the engagement, efficiency and satisfaction of members and their dogs in the fulfillment of their duties. In addition, the implementation of motivational strategies aligned with the needs and expectations of members proved to be essential to promote a healthier and more productive organizational climate. The survey also highlighted the importance of committed leadership and institutional policies that encourage the professional development and well-being of the members of the Canine Unit, hence the need for the PRM to continue investing in motivation strategies, adapting them to the particularities of the local context, to strengthen the performance of its team and, consequently, improve the effectiveness of police operations. These actions can contribute to a more motivated, efficient police force committed to the safety and well-being of Mozambican society.

Suggestions

Improvement of Working Conditions: Physical and psychological working conditions must be constantly evaluated and improved. Adequate environments and sufficient resources are key to ensuring that agents feel valued and motivated.

Continuous feedback: Establishing communication channels where agents can express their opinions and suggestions about the work environment can contribute to a more positive and collaborative organizational climate.

Promotion of psychological well-being: Implementing programs aimed at the mental health of members is essential, considering the emotional demands of the profession. Psychological support can help maintain high levels of motivation and performance.

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**Influence of Motivation Strategies on the Professional Performance of the Police of the Republic of Mozambique:
Case of Members Assigned to the Canine Unit (2021-2023)**

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