



DOI:10.5281/zenodo.14009856

# **The Use Of Performance Appraisal And Reward System In Enhancing Employee Performance In Secondary Schools**

**(A Case Study Of Public Secondary Schools In Delta State)**

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## **ABSTRACT**

One of the greatest ways to ensure outstanding employee performance is to establish protocols for performance review and rewards. The lack of prompt feedback to the appraisee and the utilisation of the technique for targeting a subordinate are two significant issues confronting the performance assessment method, exacerbating the situation with a haphazard reward system. This study investigated the implementation of performance appraisal and reward systems in improving employee performance in secondary schools. The research employed a descriptive phenomenological methodology. The research tool employed in this study is the questionnaire. The study's population comprised all 322 public senior secondary schools within the three Senatorial Districts of Delta State. All educators and administrators in the 322 Public Senior Secondary Schools in the three Senatorial Districts of Delta State. The entire sample for this study consists of 100 participants, all of whom are teachers from public senior secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria. Nonetheless, only 98 of the 100 surveys were deemed pertinent for our research. Consequently, the findings indicate a substantial correlation between performance rating methodologies and employee performance. The data indicated a substantial correlation between the reward system and employee performance. Based on the findings of this study the paper recommends that first, it is crucial to ask for the complete cooperation of ministry of education and principal to ensure that teacher's performance appraisals are effective. Also, public schools must create and support thorough training programmes for ministry of education and principals who are in charge of conducting performance assessments in public secondary schools, government ministries, departments, and agencies to solve the managers' haphazard attitude to evaluating teachers in public secondary schools.

**Keywords:** Performance Appraisal, Reward System, Employee Performance, Secondary Schools

## **INTRODUCTION**

One of the greatest ways to ensure outstanding employee performance is to establish protocols for performance review and rewards. Assessment of a company's employees' performance through performance appraisal is common (Wamundila, 2019; Etalong & Chikeleze, 2022). When employees are the subject of routine reviews and assessments, an organisation may thrive and subsequently become more productive. Work continues to be regularly evaluated as part of performance assessment process for workers. A company may use this strategy to get a competitive edge over rivals (Alice & Oluoch, 2019). Individual performance is critical for a company to operate efficiently. A person's approach to work is greatly influenced by the compensation offered. A worker succeeds when they do the assignments that are necessary for their position. A company's ability to survive and grow is significantly influenced by individual job performance (Unachukwu, Ihueze & Onyali, 2018; Swai & Malingumu, 2022; Iremeka, Ezepue, Ede & Amaeze, 2023).

According to Jauhar, Hassan Ullah, Uddin, and Sanyal, one of the most crucial, if not the most crucial responsibilities managers of those organisations have is ensuring that the people who make up their entities perform at a high level (2021). These arguments support the hypothesis that employee performance and business performance are positively correlated, with employees doing better the more successful a firm is. Creating appropriate pay systems is crucial for both public and private organisations to recognise employees' achievements and promote improved performance (Bello & Jakada, 2017; Arimie & Orobosa, 2023).

Performance appraisal is the process of evaluating a teacher's, a section's, or a unit's performance. It encourages objective skill evaluation, conformance to guiding values, and deference to rules. Performance appraisals enhance instructors' understanding of the requirements of the teaching profession (Alice & Oluoch, 2019; Unachukwu & Orji, 2021). According to Kareithi (2018), decision-makers can use the results of performance reviews as a reference for making decisions about pay, promotions, termination, downsizing, and employee retention. In light of this, it is hoped that the principal would handle this situation with the impacted staff members in an open, fair, and impartial manner. The concerned educators would be happy with the outcome if the principal carried out the evaluation process in an impersonal manner. This could benefit the teachers in ensuring they receive the proper incentives (Nkeobuna & Ugoani, 2020; Mohammed & Alredaisy, 2023).

#### Statement of the Problem

Many schools have failed to get a competitive edge due to their inability to adopt an effective performance appraisal plan and incentive system (Obisi, 2011). Numerous Nigerian organisations exhibit inadequate organisational appraisal processes (Sajuyigbe, 2017). Performance evaluation is a Human Resource Management Practice (HRMP) that has been extensively studied in both developed and developing countries, and it is seen as a crucial motivator (Senyah, Coffie & Adu-Pakoh, 2016). The lack of timely feedback for the appraisee and the misuse of the procedure for targeting a subordinate are two significant issues confronting the performance evaluation method, exacerbating the situation with a haphazard compensation system (Sajuyigbe, 2020).

The method of award allocation by the principal in public secondary schools can either incentivise or disincentivise a teacher. Their sense of belonging to the school community may be enhanced if the teacher participated in the award-making process (Mito, Ajowi & Aloba, 2020; Nvene, Yusuf & Shuaibu, 2022). Significant deficiencies in Nigerian secondary schools include the performance assessment process, characterised by insufficient employee involvement in establishing institutional objectives, ambiguity regarding organisational expectations and goals, inadequate employee input on performance appraisal results, and deficiencies in the management of the reward system (Karak & Sen, 2019). Notwithstanding the existence of reliable studies on the matter, secondary schools have been entirely overlooked. This inconsistency in the literature must be rectified. This research aims to address the existing vacuum in literature by investigating the use of performance appraisal and reward systems to improve employee performance in secondary schools.

#### Purpose of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the implementation of performance appraisal and reward systems in improving employee performance in public secondary schools in Delta State. Additional aims include:

1. analyse the correlation between performance appraisal techniques and employee performance in public secondary schools within Delta State.
2. assess the correlation between the reward system and employee performance in public secondary schools inside Delta State.

#### Research Questions

The following research questions are presented for this paper:

1. What is the relationship between performance appraisal methods and employee performance in public secondary schools in Delta State?
2. Is there any relationship between reward system and employee performance in public secondary schools in Delta State?

#### Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses have stated and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between performance appraisal methods and employee performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between reward system and employee performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

## Literature Review

### Theoretical Framework

This work is grounded in MBO theory (Drucker, 1995). Management by Objectives (MBO) is a prevalent contemporary management strategy, deeply embedded in all schools of management thought. This is regarded as an endeavour to amalgamate many management theories into a singular new management philosophy (Ngu, 1994). The MBO strategy is based on particular performance objectives that are typically established collaboratively between supervisors and subordinates. Establishing precise, quantifiable objectives and employing them to evaluate and analyse performance are fundamental principles of the MBO methodology in performance management. The core concept of MBO is to ensure that all individuals within the organisation understand their roles and responsibilities in achieving the company's objectives (Oborlah et al., 2021).

Udoji (1974) asserts that MBO requires managers and employees within an organisation to concur on objectives pertaining to the primary tasks of their team members. Subsequently, performance requirements for acceptable work are formulated alongside an action plan to achieve the intended goals in those domains. Based on this basis, actual outcomes are assessed using a system against the anticipated objectives and criteria. Consequently, a correlation exists between the performance of managers and the objectives of their particular units, ultimately aligning with the organization's aims. All managers inside the organisation can attain a common set of objectives due to the manner in which their actions are organised, guided, and monitored.

In summary, MBO commences with issue identification, and according to MBO principles, participants must be directly and actively engaged from this initial stage to comprehend the problem and the objectives to be achieved. Subsequently, each participant in the MBO program is encouraged to fully utilise their initiative and capabilities, demonstrating commitment to both their own objectives and the overarching aims of the program. Each participant is encouraged to evaluate their performance both regularly and finally within the designated time limits (Ngu, 1994).

### Concept of Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal, as articulated by Wamundila (2019), refers to the techniques utilised by a company to evaluate employee performance. This requires evaluating performance and conveying it through feedback. Kamau, Bula, and Oringo (2018) assert that performance appraisal is a method for evaluating an instructor's or a cohort of instructors' effectiveness and advancement in a specific task, along with their potential for future development. Kareithi (2018) and Manzoor, Wei, and Asif (2021) characterise performance appraisal as a structured process encompassing goal-setting, performance evaluation, feedback provision, and performance enhancement planning. Formal techniques employed in workplaces to assess employees' contributions, characteristics, and potential are termed performance appraisals. Organisations conduct performance appraisals with several approaches. Teacher performance evaluations are conducted on a term or annual basis to assess achievements relative to established objectives.

Traditional performance appraisal methods include rating scales, numerical scales indicating an employee's job performance, checklists, binary questions concerning employee performance, behaviour-anchored rating scales that delineate desirable or undesirable behaviours affecting performance ratings, the field review method involving external observation and assessment, and confidential evaluations conducted by supervisors (Jepngetich et al., 2021; Etalong & Chikeleze, 2022). Performance appraisal is a technique for enhancing outcomes and overseeing performance. The objective is to link organisational goals and objectives with individual teacher aspirations, so enhancing instructors' performance in accordance with student requirements, rather than simply monitoring performance. The performance appraisal process must be equitable, featuring explicitly defined objectives, evaluations, feedback for assessed personnel, and performance enhancement plans to foster overall productivity (Alice & Oluoch, 2019; Arimie & Orobosa, 2023).

### Concept of Reward System

A reward system consists of interrelated financial and non-financial incentive practices and processes that are incorporated into a comprehensive rewards plan, facilitating successful reward administration for the benefit of both the company and its employees (Armstrong, 2014). A reward system consists

of interrelated systems and processes that enable effective incentive management for the advantage of the organisation and its personnel. Systems theory is fundamentally based on principles that examine interaction, structure, and interconnectedness (Bawalla & Nafiu, 2018). Miller and Rice contend that a reward system may have attributes of both open and closed systems. Iremeka, Ezepue, Ede, and Amaeze (2023) define a reward system as a collection of systems for allocating monetary and non-monetary benefits within the framework of an employment relationship. Dima, Gehan, and Waffaa (2020) assert that not all forms of returns are directly associated with performance management systems.

### **Concept of Employee Performance**

Performance within an organisational context is generally characterised by the degree to which an individual commits their efforts to fulfilling the objectives of that organisation. According to Arimie and Orobosa (2023), employees constitute the principal source of competitive advantage in service-oriented enterprises. Furthermore, the commitment performance model perceives individuals as resources and assets, attributing value to their input. In reality, it exerts a substantial positive influence on an organization's performance. It is primarily seen as an employee's performance, whether favourable or unfavourable. Jepngetich et al. (2021) assert that an employee's performance mostly comprises the following factors: quantity of production, quality of output, timeliness of output, job commitment, and collaborative spirit. Nkeobuna and Ugoani (2020) assert that enhanced employee performance may also be contingent upon improved organisational performance. Performance denotes the manner in which an individual fulfils the responsibilities of their role. An exemplary performance results from diligence, aptitude, and guidance. Consequently, all financial and non-financial advantages that an employee receives in return for their labour or services can be characterised as employee performance. It includes his base income along with various monetary and non-monetary awards and incentives. This influences his overall societal integration (Kamau et al., 2018; Mito, Ajowi & Aloka, 2020).

### **Relationship between Teachers' Rewards and their Performance**

Jepngetich et al. (2021) assert that every educational institution, regardless of level or size, would be at risk if the workforce, particularly teachers, were indiscriminately hired, inadequately compensated, unacknowledged for incidental contributions, and deprived of additional benefits or incentives. When a rural or urban school is staffed by apathetic and fatigued educators, the scenario she depicted is unlikely to alter. If teacher-related concerns, such as compensation, are not prioritised in human resource management inside our schools, it is likely that educational policies and ideals will stay only aspirational. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1998) mandated a "highly motivated, conscientious, and successful" teaching staff throughout all educational levels. Management and operational challenges have been identified in reports by Jauhar et al. (2021) and Iremeka et al. (2023). The concerns encompass significant financial challenges, a lack of Herzberg motivators, and inadequate hygiene incentive packages, especially those that are material and monetary, or their whole absence. The inadequate salary package and inconsistent payment schedule adversely affect the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom.

Peterson (2003, referenced in Arimie and Orobosa, 2023) asserts that contemporary educational systems are deficient in rewards for professional endeavours and often hinder teachers' efforts to enhance their professional development and improve student learning outcomes. He identifies these factors as those functioning inside the educational system that, if not accessible to instructors, would impede performance and induce stress, unhappiness, and frustration, ultimately diminishing student learning. This indicates that teacher incentives encompass factors that promote, target, and maintain teachers' conduct towards excellent academic achievement, job satisfaction, and employment stability (Ndu, 2004). Despite the significant significance of educators in the educational system, Bawalla and Nafiu (2018) lamented that substantial data indicates instructors are not provided with the necessary support and welfare. The welfare of educators should be regarded as a genuine impetus for the persistence of the teaching profession and the educational system.

## **METHODOLOGY**

A descriptive phenomenological technique was employed. Phenomenological inquiry examines how individuals interpret experiences and convert them into consciousness, including their perceptions, descriptions, emotions, judgments, recollections, and understanding of those experiences (Patton,

2002). The research tool employed in this study is the questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised two portions, A and B. Section A of the questionnaire included the respondent's personal information. Section B of the questionnaire employs a 4-point Likert scale, where 4 denotes strong agreement and 1 indicates severe disagreement. The study's population comprised all 322 public senior secondary schools within the three Senatorial Districts of Delta State. All educators and administrators in the 322 Public Senior Secondary Schools in the three Senatorial Districts of Delta State. The entire sample for this study consists of 100 participants, all of whom are teachers from public senior secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria. Nonetheless, only 98 of the 100 surveys were deemed pertinent for our research.

**PRESENTATION OF RESULTS**

**Analysis of Research Questions**

**Table 1:** Relationship between performance appraisal methods and employee performance

Variables	Mean	SD	R	R2	R%	Decision
Performance appraisal method	3.59	.58	.845	.632	69%	Positive relationship
Employee performance	2.52	.22				

Table 1 illustrates the correlation between performance appraisal methods and employee performance. The mean and standard deviation for performance appraisal methods were 3.59 and 0.58, respectively, while those for employee performance were 2.52 and 0.22. The correlation coefficient between the two variables was 0.845, indicating a positive relationship, with a  $r^2$  value of 0.632, suggesting that employee performance is explained by 63.2%. Therefore, a positive relationship exists between performance appraisal methods and employee performance in public secondary schools in Delta State. The significance of this relationship was evaluated in Table 2.

**Table 2: Correlations** between performance appraisal methods and employee performance

		Performance appraisal methods	Employee performance
Performance appraisal methods	Pearson Correlation	1	.721**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	98	98
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.7210**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	98	98

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (Z-tailed).

**Table 3:** Relationship between reward system and employee performance

Variables	Mean	SD	R	R2	R%	Decision
Reward system	3.45	.53	.833	.621	65.2	Positive relationship
Employee performance	2.62	.29				

Table 3 illustrates the correlation between the reward system and employee performance. The mean and standard deviation for the work environment were 3.45 and 0.53, respectively, while those for employee performance were 2.62 and 0.29. The correlation coefficient between the two variables was 0.833, indicating a positive relationship, with a  $r^2$  value of 0.621, suggesting that employee performance is influenced by 65.2%. Therefore, there exists a positive correlation between the reward system and employee performance in public secondary schools in Delta State. The significance of this relationship was evaluated in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Correlations reward system and employee performance

		Reward system	Employee performance
Reward system	Pearson Correlation	1	.840**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	98	98
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.840**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	98	98

\* \*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation study demonstrated the magnitude and orientation of the linear association between the reward system and employee performance. A Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.840 signifies a strong, positive, and statistically significant association between the two variables. Thus, we assert the presence of a substantial correlation between the reward system and employee performance.

### DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Upon analysing the surveys and testing hypotheses via Pearson Correlation with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 23.0), the following conclusions were drawn: The preliminary hypothesis suggested a significant relationship between the performance evaluation method and employee performance. This suggests that a rise in performance rating methods employed by principals is associated with improved teacher performance. This aligns with Udoka (2018), whose study revealed a significant positive association between teacher evaluations and teacher performance. The discovery corresponds with Kareithi (2018), who recorded a significant positive link between goal-setting methodologies, performance feedback strategies, and educators' performance. The similarity of the results from the three studies may be ascribed to their implementation in secondary schools. The hypothesis results demonstrated a significant association between the performance appraisal method and employee performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

The assessment of instructors' performance must be conducted with complete integrity; else, its fundamental purpose will be undermined. Principals in Delta State have shown that the consistent and equitable application of performance appraisal methods is crucial and leads to enhancements in teachers' performance. This research advocates for principals to execute staff performance evaluations with complete honesty and objectivity. If this procedure.

The results demonstrated a positive and moderate correlation between the reward system and employee performance in public secondary schools in Delta State. Improvements in teacher remuneration may stimulate enhanced performance among educators. The findings support a concurrent study by Uwannah, Eteete, and Mark (2019), which demonstrated a significant combined effect of work environment and compensation on teachers' productivity, with compensation having a more meaningful impact than the work environment. The findings of this study correspond with those of Obiekwe and Mbanefo (2019), which demonstrated a considerable positive and significant association between teachers' opinions of principals' staff incentive methods, staff relations practices, and their work performance. All investigations were conducted in Deltatate, and a period of one year may be inadequate to alter the conclusions. The examination of the hypothesis revealed a significant association between the reward system and employee performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Positive reinforcement functions as a catalyst for performance enhancement. This demonstrates that rewards, when distributed equitably and suitably, reliably incentivize recipients to fulfill their obligations. The proverb 'to whom much is given, much is expected' reflects the benefits that educators obtain from the principal's influence. Principals who sufficiently reward instructors for their commitment will surely attract educators eager to collaborate and accomplish pertinent goals within the school. This results from the documented favorable association between rewards and instructors' performance when implemented appropriately.

### CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of performance appraisal and reward systems on staff performance in public secondary schools. The study concludes that because performance appraisals not only motivate employees to produce better work but also determine an employee's reward or compensation, they are

beneficial. Public institutions in Nigeria have had a great deal of trouble with their performance appraisal systems, which contradicts MBO theory. An unreliable grading system does not provide enough details to identify potential employees for reward. Moreover, the inadequate evaluation processes hinder the identification of employees' skill deficiencies and the necessity for suitable training levels.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this, the subsequent recommendations are presented.

- Initially, it is imperative to secure the full participation of management, stakeholders, and principals to guarantee the efficacy of employee performance appraisals. Specific considerations for the upper echelons of public organisations must be taken into account when designing an assessment framework.
- Organisations must establish and endorse comprehensive training programs for principals, who are responsible for conducting performance evaluations in government ministries, departments, and agencies, to address the managers' erratic approach to assessing teachers in public secondary schools.
- Additionally, such training provides verbal and written material on how to interpret rating scales, create and modify job descriptions, document performance, give useful feedback, and conduct performance appraisal interviews. As opposed to being one-time, the training programme should be continual.
- To be effective and affect employee behaviour, links between conduct and reward must be transparent and viewed by employees as equitable. Performance appraisal methods ought to point out areas for improvement that individuals need to develop to advance personally and professionally.
- Ultimately, the recruitment process must uphold the principle of meritocracy to ensure objectivity and fairness in performance evaluations inside Nigerian public secondary schools.

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