

Influence of Feedback Provision on Teachers' Attitude towards Performance Appraisal in Public Primary Schools in Homa-Bay Sub County, Kenya

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Abstract:- This study examined the influence of feedback provision on teachers' attitudes towards performance appraisal in public primary schools in Homa-Bay Sub-County, Kenya. The appraisal of teachers' performance in public schools in Kenya was initiated by the Teachers Service Commission in 2016. However, the initiative received resistance from the teachers' unions rendering its implementation to be suspended temporarily until May 2016. Teachers' performance evaluation guides improvement of teaching skills, to recognize and reinforce teaching excellence, to help teachers focus on student outcomes, and to plan in service education activities. Even so, there is a dearth of information regarding the factors influencing public primary school teachers' attitudes towards performance appraisal in Homa-Bay Sub County. Therefore, the study specifically sought to: determine the influence of feedback provision on teachers' attitudes towards performance appraisal in public primary schools in Homa-Bay Sub-County. The study was guided by goal setting theory. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised of 1 CSO 57 head teachers and 548 teachers from 57 public primary schools. A sample size of 26 head teachers and 133 teachers were selected for inclusion in the study through simple random sampling. Therefore, a total of 160 respondents took part in the study. Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect data from one CSO, 26 head teachers and 133 teachers. Structured and semi-structured interviews were conducted through interview guides. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics through SPSS and results presented in tables, while the qualitative data was analyzed thematically. The study revealed that both head teachers and teachers strongly agreed that feedback is only given to them when they ask. This is seen in the highest mean rating of 4.48. The second which was agreed by most head teachers and teachers was that feedback has led to negative attitude towards performance appraisal. This was evidenced by the overall mean rate of 4.08.

Keywords:- Influence, Feedback, Appraisal, Primary School, Teachers, Head Teachers, Curriculum Support Officer (CSO).

I. INTRODUCTION

Employee performance plays an essential role in sustaining operational activities within organizations (Armstrong, 2006). As such, the viability of organizations is often closely tied to substantial investments in human resources (Chakanyuka, 2014). Given this context, it is crucial for labor forces in both educational and corporate environments to be organized, motivated, and focused on overcoming specific objectives (Emojong, 2004). The key to harnessing an effective labor force is often found in performance evaluations, a critical element within the performance management frameworks of both public and private institutions (President's Council, 1987). Performance appraisal dates back years ago and on the whole, effectiveness of self-appraisal has been documented in the past in high reaches of organizations (Rollison, 2015).

Although some research findings outline the existence of employee appraisal in organizations' performance management systems (Bezuiden, 2006), a number of studies demonstrate a relationship between employees' attitudes, perceptions and performance appraisal. For example, a study by Daniel, Daniel and Bill (2006) found that if performance appraisal is well conducted and followed, employees in an organization will have a positive attitude towards the exercise. These findings were also mirrored on other studies that alluded to the way positive employee performance appraisal outcome are intertwined with how it is conducted by organizations (Pulakos, 2009). In a parallel vein, Richardson and Manroop (2011) have shown that workforce effectiveness is shaped by how employees perceive and interpret organizational culture, the work environment, and peer interactions. In this framework, organizational variables are evaluated in conjunction with performance outcomes. This leads to an ongoing reconfiguration of performance assessment and management mechanisms, taking into account the broader organizational landscape.

One limitation of such aforementioned studies is a focus on organizational factors outside the school settings rather than on close study of how teachers' attitudes towards performance appraisal are related to school factors. This

means that research has not adequately exposed the relationship between primary schools’ feedback provision towards performance appraisal. If primary school educators and researchers want a better understanding of teachers’ behavior and school factors related to performance appraisal success, then examining how the role of teachers’ attitudes towards the initiative is critical.

The mindset teachers hold towards performance evaluations significantly impacts their teaching effectiveness and, consequently, their students’ academic results. For instance, Monyatsi (2006) found a meaningful correlation between teachers’ attitudes towards performance appraisal and student outcomes in standardized tests. Oyaro (2016) underscored the interpersonal nature of appraisal processes and the potential for negative perceptions, emphasizing the necessity for those conducting the appraisals to foster positive views about them. It’s crucial to clearly communicate to teachers the role of evaluations in improving both teaching and learning.

As for the current appraisal system managed by the Teachers Service Commission, it often falls short of its intended purposes. Due to the demanding schedules teachers face, appraisal forms are hastily completed, sometimes with missing sections. In some instances, teachers even outsource the task of completing these forms. The soft copies are then sent to the central office, where they often remain unutilized until the next term. The absence of employer feedback further widens the gap between the evaluation system’s intended objectives and its actual implementation, a disconnect that has also been noted by Chepkwony & Oloko (2014).

Research has not adequately exposed the relationship between primary schools’ feedback provision, appraisal ratings and teachers’ attitudes towards performance appraisal. If primary school educators and researchers want a better understanding of teachers’ behavior and school factors related

to performance appraisal success, then examining how the role of teachers’ attitudes towards the initiative is critical.

The Halo effect is a cognitive bias that can occur in the performance appraisal where a manager’s overall impression of a worker affects their evaluation of specific aspects of that worker’s performance. The studies previously cited bear similarities to the present research, particularly in emphasizing the significance of teacher performance evaluations for educational institutions and student outcomes. However, a notable research gap exists regarding how different appraisal rating methods affect teachers’ perceptions of the evaluation process. A critical factor known to shape the effectiveness of performance evaluations is the attitude that teachers hold towards these systems, as indicated by Monyatsi, Steyn, & Kamper (2006).

In a Kenyan study, it was found that principals were ill-prepared to oversee performance appraisals, leading to numerous procedural errors and, consequently, fostering negative views among teachers towards the evaluation system (Nyatera, 2011). The existing literature offers limited insight into how performance appraisals can be leveraged to motivate teachers effectively. The present study aims to address this gap by examining the influence of feedback provisions on teachers’ attitudes towards performance appraisals, focusing on public primary schools in Homa-Bay Sub-County, Homa-Bay County, Kenya.

➤ *Research Objective*

To determine the influence of feedback provision on teachers’ attitudes towards performance appraisal in public primary schools in Homa-Bay Sub-County

➤ *Conceptual Framework*

The conceptual framework adopted for this study was based on the assumption that certain aspects occurring in school can affect feedback provisions on teachers’ attitude towards performance appraisal.

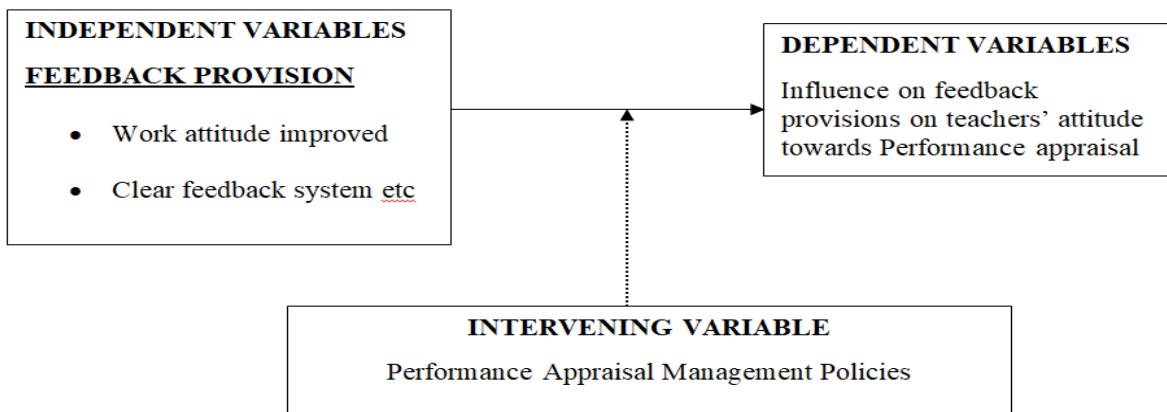


Fig 1: Shows the Influence of Feedback Provisions on Teachers’ Attitude towards Performance Appraisal.

The study sought to explore the feedback provisions that affect teachers’ attitude towards an existing performance appraisal system. The dependent variable therefore is teachers’ attitude towards performance appraisal, while the independent variables are feedback for teachers on appraisal. The intervening variable is the performance appraisal management policies.

comprehensive data set that could be analyzed both numerically and thematically. The research was carried out in the Sub-County of Homa-Bay, located within the larger Homa-Bay County. For this research, a sample of 160 respondents was chosen, consisting of 1 CSO, 26 head teachers, and 133 teachers. A larger sample size enhances the accuracy of the conclusions and generalizations that can be made. The following table outlines the distribution of the sample for this study.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, the mixed-methods paradigm was considered most appropriate, as it allowed for a

Table 1: Sample Size

Respondents	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique	Sampling Method
SCQASO	1	1	Purposive Sampling	Questionnaire
Head teachers	45	26	Random sampling	Questionnaire
Teachers	203	133	Random sampling	Questionnaire

Source: Researcher (2023)

For the purpose of data gathering, a set of questionnaires and an interview guide were used. This qualitative component of the research involved a limited number of participants, making the semi-structured interviews an appropriate method. The interview guide was chosen for its flexibility and adaptability in small-scale research, allowing for the uncovering of viewpoints that might not be captured through questionnaires alone (Gorsuch, 2002). Two head teachers and ten teachers were picked randomly, and one senior official was selected through intentional sampling for piloting. To strengthen both the face-to-face and content validity, and to pinpoint any ambiguous or unclear elements in the questionnaires, these tools were reviewed by three specialized academicians in the Education Department at Mount Kenya University. These experts specialized in Educational Administration, and their feedback was integrated into the final versions of both the structured and semi-structured questionnaires to ensure their suitability for effective data

collection. The data collected during these pilot runs were then subjected to Pearson's correlation coefficient to assess reliability. The study employed a mixed-methods approach to analyze the data gathered. Numerical data was processed using SPSS software to perform descriptive statistical analyses. On the other hand, data obtained through qualitative means was examined through thematic analysis aligned with the research objectives.

III. RESULTS

The objective of this study was to determine the influence of feedback on the attitude of teachers towards performance appraisal. To achieve this objective, head teachers and teachers were asked to respond to aspects of feedback that they face in their endeavor to undertake and implement performance appraisal in public primary schools in Homa-Bay Sub County. The results are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Feedback and its Effects on Teachers’ Attitude towards Performance Appraisal in Public Primary Schools. Head Teachers (n=26) and Teachers (n=133)

ASPECTS	RESPONDENTS	RATINGS					SCORE	M.R	OMR
		1	2	3	4	5			
Feedback is only when asked	HT	0	0	0	7	19	123	4.73	4.48
	T	0	0	6	66	62	589	4.43	
Feedback may assist to improve the work output of the teacher	HT	6	15	5	0	0	51	1.96	2.30
	T	18	61	42	12	0	314	2.36	
Feedback has led to negative attitude towards P.A	HT	0	0	7	10	9	106	4.08	4.08
	T	0	1	28	64	40	543	4.08	
Feedback system in our school is clear in its purpose	HT	3	13	9	1	0	60	2.31	2.64
	T	8	48	52	25	0	360	2.71	
Feedback is effectively focused on professional development of a teacher	HT	3	22	1	0	0	50	1.92	2.56
	T	17	49	36	21	10	356	2.68	
TOTAL OMR									3.21

Key: HT-Head Teacher T-Teacher MR-Mean Rating OMR-Overall Mean Rating

➤ *Interpretation of Mean Ratings*

1.00-1.44=Strongly Disagree

1.45-2.44=Disagree

2.45-3.44=Neutral

3.45-4.44=Agree

4.45-5.0=Strongly Agree

From table 2, it can be observed that the low frequency of feedback was rated highest by both the head teachers and the teachers who strongly agreed with mean ratings of 4.73 and 4.43 respectively, with the overall mean rating at 4.48. This was followed by feedback leading to a negative attitude which was rated at 4.08 by both the head teachers and teachers with an overall mean of 4.08. On the question whether feedback in the school was clear in its purpose, head teachers' responses rated at 2.31 and those of teachers rated at 2.71. Whether feedback is effectively focused on teachers' development, head teachers rated at 1.2 and teachers rated at 2.68. This gave an overall mean rate of 2.56. The rating of whether feedback may assist to improve learning was rated at 1.6 for head teachers and 2.30 for teachers with the overall mean of 2.30.

The high rating of 4.48, indicating strong agreement on the infrequency of feedback, aligns with global findings. For instance, an OECD 2009 report corroborated that teachers across different countries, including developed nations like Ireland, Portugal, and Australia, rarely receive timely feedback.

Similarly, Muli's 2011 study observed that despite regular performance appraisals, many teachers failed to receive valuable feedback from their employers, which could otherwise enhance their performance. This resonates with the sentiment that timely and appropriate feedback can indeed improve a teacher's output.

Performance appraisals (PAs) offer benefits beyond evaluation; they provide crucial communication lines between supervisors and employees, making the latter feel valued and integral to the organization. Several studies have indicated that employee participation, clear goals, and regular feedback positively affect job satisfaction, which in turn has been linked to productivity (Nathan et al., 1991; Fletcher & Williams, 1996; Judge et al., 2001; Patterson et al., 2004; Whitman et al., 2010).

Giles and Mossholder's 1990 research highlights that employee satisfaction can be a comprehensive measure of how individuals react to feedback from performance appraisals. Measures focused on cognitive elements, such as perceived utility and accuracy, are shown to correlate positively with overall satisfaction. Given that performance appraisals often underpin significant organizational decisions, an employee's satisfaction with received feedback can be an indicator of their sense of recognition, status, and future growth within the

organization (Taylor et al., 1984). Therefore, the level of satisfaction with performance appraisal feedback is an essential variable in understanding future job and organizational attitudes.

➤ *SCQASO 2 Reiterated that:*

“Teachers have unfavorable views against TPAD because they believe that TPAD is merely a punitive and repressive measure that was put into place by the Teachers Service Commission. These teachers believe that TPAD was put into place by the Teachers Service Commission. Instructors despise being evaluated because they believe that the purpose of the teacher performance mechanism is to have instructors disciplined by the Teachers Service Commission since it is utilized as a fault-finding method for teachers' inefficiency and underperformance.”

Based on their connection with the appraiser and the fact that the results are not utilized in crucial decision making, such as promotions to administrative jobs, promotions to the next work group, motivation, and compensation increments, the instructors regard the system as a manner of victimizing them (Wanzare, 2012).

Stronge (1991), as cited in Mo Corners and McCommick (1998), provides support for the idea that for an evaluation process to be successful, it is beneficial for everyone participating to have an understanding of the scheme's overall goal. According to Monyantisi (2003), the absence of a distinct aim renders the performance review process at educational institutions a pointless activity.

When school principals and other appraisers conduct teacher performance appraisal as a mechanical exercise, teachers will simply view it as an event that must be endured; as a result, teacher performance appraisal becomes little more than a time-consuming charade. This finding is therefore consistent with the report made by Stronge and Turcker (2003) that when school principals and other appraisers conduct teacher performance appraisal as a mechanical exercise, teachers will simply view it as an event that must be endured. In the same vein, the above finding of the present study also agrees with the finding of the study that was conducted in the United States by Darling-Hammond et al., (2013). That study reported that critics of teacher performance appraisal however view it as a mechanical and a perfunctory exercise that has no meaning in the educational life, despite its important contribution in instructional improvement and teachers' professional development. In the same vein, the above finding of the present study also agrees with the finding of that study.

➤ *SCQASO 1 Reiterated that:*

“The vast majority of educators are not fans of the performance evaluation process, as they believe it to be nothing more than an unnecessary time-consuming procedure,

the outcomes of which have not been used to improving educators' working conditions”.

The interview response provided by SCQASO 1 mirrors a report made by Bartlett (2000) in Britain. Both sources suggest that teacher performance appraisal data often emphasizes accountability for performance while neglecting the equally important function of promoting teacher growth and development.

These findings are consistent with a study conducted by Monyantsi et al. (2006) in Botswana. In both studies, teachers view an effective performance appraisal system as one that prioritizes improvement. Such a system is seen as an opportunity for teachers to enhance their knowledge, skills, and confidence in their professional roles.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The study revealed that both head teachers and teachers strongly agreed that feedback is only given to them when they ask. This is seen in the highest mean rating of 4.48. The second which was agreed by most head teachers and teachers was that feedback has led to negative attitude towards performance appraisal. This was evidenced by the overall mean rate of 4.08. The study also revealed that on the aspect of whether feedback in their school is clear in its purpose and whether feedback is focused on professional development of a teacher, the mean ratings were neutral with overall mean ratings of 2.64 and 2.56 respectively. The least rate was that head teacher and teachers both disagreed that agreed aspect was that feedback may be assist to improve the teachers' work output which was rated overall at 2.30. The results of this research are consistent with the findings of another study carried out by Chepkwony and Olok (2014). That other study discovered that instructors do not get feedback from their employers on their performance assessments, and as a result, the primary goal of implementing performance appraisals is not realized. The findings of this study are consistent with those findings. This creates a gap between the end that is wanted and the actual practice that is carried out.

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