

## **Compliance to Performance Appraisal in Public Primary Schools in Gilgil Sub-County in Kenya**

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**Abstract:** Performance appraisal (P.A) is being seen as an important tool in performance management of teachers and educators all over the World. In Kenya, even though the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) has introduced performance appraisal in public primary schools, its uptake by teachers' seems sluggish. Studies indicate that P.A can be effective and efficient only if it is properly applied and owned by teachers (appraisees). This study sought to establish the compliance status of performance appraisal in public primary schools in Gilgil Sub-County in Kenya. The study found that school's compliance status with Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) Programme is fairly and positively correlated with performance appraisal and performance appraisal feedback, and is strongly and positively correlated with performance appraisal evaluation.

**Key words:** Performance appraisal, performance evaluation, performance feedback, schools' compliance

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### **I. Introduction**

An important part of managing people is to let them know how they are performing. This can be achieved through a systematic procedure of employee' performance evaluation, referred to as performance appraisal. Okumbe (2001) defines performance appraisal (P.A) as the process of arriving at judgement about an individual's past or present performance against the background of their work environment and their future potential for the organization.

Pathania, Kumar and Pathak (2011) state that performance appraisal is primarily used as a device to measure the standards set by the management of its employees. It entails a process of assessing, summarizing and developing the work of an employee on both qualitative as well as quantitative terms. Normally, immediate senior or some expert does the performance appraisal of an employee using various rating systems employed in order to recognize the potentials and deficiencies of an employee. Performance appraisal has been considered as the most significant and indispensable tool of an organization. It is highly useful in making decisions regarding various personal aspects such as promotion and merit increase. Performance measures also link information gathering and decision-making process that provide a basis for judging the effectiveness of personnel's functions.

Daft (2008) asserts that organizations, schools included, are constantly changing in attempt to become market driven. For instance, performance appraisals are crucial for career and succession development, they provide a recognised and recorded assessment of an individual routine and sketch for potential enlargement (Jabeen, 2011). Yee and Chen (2009) on the other hand contend that performance appraisal evaluates employees' present and previous output within laid down standards, but it also provides feedback on employees' performance in order to motivate and to improve on their job performance and satisfaction.

Performance appraisal is therefore indispensable for the effectual supervision of staff (Jabeen, 2011). It is an important factor in identifying the people's talents and capacities and its results can make them aware of advancements, plans and goals (Hamis, 2010). In addition, employees' participation in target setting, makes them to be intrinsically motivated because of the value it provides them, for instance, a feeling of accomplishment or sense of personal satisfaction (Wong, Guo & Lui 2010).

Participation in target setting is seen as an interaction between the leader and the follower in the context of leadership; which Spillane (2006) describes as a system of practice comprised of a collection of interacting components. Participation is thus seen as a conduit of exchange through which employees are able to provide information to their superiors and for superiors to utilize the information (Wong et al., 2010). There are

many methods of performance appraisal but the most important output from them should be assessment of the workers (teachers) training requirements so as to enable them improve their performance.

In Kenya, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) which is the constitutional body that is mandated to employ and manage teachers in public schools introduced an open performance appraisal system for teachers in January 2016 to strengthen supervision and to continuously monitor their performance in curriculum implementation at the institutional level (TSC, 2016). TSC notes that the appraisal system shall be used to provide feedback, improve communication, and clarify roles and responsibilities. It goes on to state that the Commission shall in administering the performance appraisal system: require heads of institutions to provide oversight role in the performance appraisal for the teachers in their respective institutions; use performance appraisal reports for purposes of promotion, deployment and other rewards as may be prescribed from time to time; identify training needs and take corrective measures in cases of unsatisfactory performance; and develop and review criteria, guidelines and tools for performance appraisal from time to time, which shall be accessible in the Commission's website or as the Commission may advise. TSC further notes that the purpose of this performance appraisal will be to review and improve teaching standards through a systemic appraisal approach, with a view to evaluate teachers' performance and promote professional development for enhanced learning out comes.

## **II. Objective**

- i. To establish the teachers' compliance status with the Performance Appraisal Programme

## **III. Literature Review**

### **3.1 Factors affecting employees' compliance to performance appraisal**

Hedge and Teachout (2000) conducted a study to examine the predictors of compliance to performance appraisal by employees and supervisors. The study found out that trust associated with raters and the appraisal process were significant predictors of appraisal compliance for both job incumbents and supervisors.

Similarly, Mani (2002) carried out a study to examine employee attitudes related to appraisal. The study established that trust in supervisors was important for determining satisfaction with the appraisal system. Execution of performance appraisal and the evaluation process means that underlying assumptions to performance appraisal exist. Davis and Landa (1999) in their study found out that, during the evaluation process, the absence of fair procedures increases distress because the results of performance appraisal are essentially outside the control of the employee.

Beletskiy (2011) asserts that the way as well as the frequency of conducting performance appraisal in an entity determines the appraisal effectiveness. For instance, the nature of design characteristics used influences employees' perception on the process of performance appraisal. This influences the visibility, validity and fairness of performance appraisal practices thus affecting the effectiveness of the appraisal in determining performance standards, core competences, and communicating the standards and competencies to employees.

A study was conducted to investigate what individuals considered as the most decisive factor in a 'particularly fair or unfair performance evaluation'. The study used an open-ended questionnaire. The findings from the study by Greenberg (2006) revealed that well trained appraisers have the ability to make an accurate evaluation of subordinate's performance. This results to an important influence on fairness perceptions. Training of appraisers has an effect on effectiveness of performance appraisal. It should explain how the judges interpret any normative data that they are given. Because errors are well-ingrained habits. Tziner and Kopelman (2002) state that extensive training is necessary for avoiding such errors. Therefore, the training should provide trainees with broad opportunities to practice the specified skills, provide trainees with feedback on their practice appraisal performance, and that a comprehensive acquaintance with the appropriate behaviours to be observed.

Kemunto (2013) conducted a study on perceived factors affecting the effectiveness of performance appraisal at the Teachers' Service Commission in Kenya. Her study found out that there are seven main factors that affect the effectiveness of performance appraisal at TSC. They include: lack of knowledge of appraise, lack of clarity on the parameters used, lack of communication to enhance feedback on performance, lack of feedback, personal differences between appraisers and appraisee, modern and complicated appraisal systems and collective responsibility in organizational activities.

Boswell and Boudreau (2000) observe that the attitude of employees about the performance appraisal practices determines the effectiveness of the appraisal process. The staffs' perceptions of fairness of the appraisal practices are very critical aspects that contribute to effectiveness of the performance process. In scenarios where the performance practices are seen and believed to be partial and extraneous, subordinates become dissatisfied with the performance appraisal process. Given that subordinates' reaction to performance appraisal practices plays a significant role in the acceptance and effectiveness of the performance appraisal process, severe dissatisfaction and perceptions of unfairness and inequality in the ratings may lead to the failure of performance appraisal.

### **3.2 Perception of employees towards performance appraisal**

Perception refers simply to the attitude of somebody on something. Perception can be positive or negative depending on one's feelings about the thing in question. Negative perception according to Agesa (2009) exists on performance appraisal where the teachers being appraised are uncomfortable, distressed and as a result it becomes a potential cause of tension between the appraiser and the appraisee. It also happens when there is no trust making them believe that they may not benefit from the process. When there is no trust, teachers will also not be able to share or reveal their weaknesses since they may feel that the process is carried out to victimise them. It can also be due to job insecurity or uncertainty which occurs when the teacher does not understand the P.A process. This affects them making them demotivated. A demotivated teacher will therefore not perform and achieve the set goals.

To solve the problem of negative teacher perception the Ministry of Education (2000a) advises that the appraiser needs to have discussions with the appraisees so as to lay the foundation for appraisal. Discussions will make the appraisees have confidence so that they can share openly and even question the appraiser on areas they are not clear with.

Agesa (2009) also argues that performance appraisal in school is often based upon the head teacher's perception of the teacher's performance and therefore teachers are evaluated subjectively rather than objectively. When it is done this way then it is influenced by likeability, previous mistakes or success made by the teacher or relations between the appraiser and the appraisee. This kind of evaluation will influence the perception of the teacher negatively or positively depending on which side the teacher belongs, thus resulting to a demotivated or motivated teacher.

Biswanath, (2010) notes that matters discussed during the P.A process should be treated with confidentiality and not as a means of making comparisons against other teachers because the discussion of the evaluation can have both negative as well as positive motivational consequences on the teachers depending on how it is handled. This makes it a very sensitive matter that requires a lot of involvement by all and also its handling should be in a friendly way so that teachers can have positive perception.

It is therefore important to note that for positive perception of teachers to be realised several aspects must be considered which include, teacher involvement, conducive working environment, mutual trust and making the appraisal process objective and not subjective. The appraiser must also be neutral when carrying out the process. In addition there should be a clear policy on P.A and teachers should be made to understand the process fully so as to enhance their perception. Confidentiality must also be enhanced. This research will therefore aim at establishing the perception of teachers on P.A and the reasons for the perceptions they hold. The findings may be instrumental in supporting a P.A process that is acceptable by all sides and one that will facilitate performance improvement on the side of the teacher.

## **IV. Methodology**

The study employed descriptive survey research design with the targeted population comprising of 70 head teachers, 70 deputy head teachers and 651 teachers in all the 70 public primary schools in Gilgil Sub-County. The total sample size was 360 respondents. Questionnaires were used as research instruments to collect data and they were piloted in three public primary schools in the same sub-county but which were not included in the final sample. The Cronbach Alpha with a minimum threshold of 0.7 was used for checking internal consistency of the instrument. The overall reliability of the head teachers' questionnaire was 0.83, deputy head teachers 0.76 while teachers 0.89 which was above the minimum threshold of 0.70 thus the questionnaires were deemed acceptable for the research. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequencies, means and standard deviations. Correlation analysis was used for inferential statistics.

## **V. Findings**

### **5.1 School's Compliance Status with TPAD Programme**

The study sought to establish the schools' compliance status with the TPAD programme by TSC in public primary schools in Gilgil Sub-County, Nakuru. Various metrics involving the appraiser and appraisee were used for this examination including target setting meetings, agreement on performance targets, adherence to appraisal activities calendar, maintenance of professional records, planning for termly lesson observations, end of term appraisal rating meeting, generation of development plan generated for the next term. The results of the distribution of responses by respondents on various statements are shown on Table 1.

More than half of the respondents were inclined to agree that at the beginning of each term there is a target setting meeting held in their school (59.2%) and performance targets to be addressed are usually agreed upon by the appraiser and appraisee then documented (57.6%). Additionally, respondents strongly agreed that at the beginning of each term there is a target setting meeting held in their school (31.5%) and performance targets to be addressed are usually agreed upon by the appraiser and appraisee then documented (31.2%). Respondents who were inclined to disagree with the statement at the beginning of each term there is a target setting meeting

held in my school were 3.9% and those inclined to strongly disagree were 2.3%. Respondents who tended to disagree with the statement performance targets to be addressed are usually agreed upon by the appraiser and appraisee then documented were 3.2% and those who tended to strongly disagree were 4.2% of the respondents.

**Table 1:** Frequency Distributions for School’s Compliance Status with TPAD Programme

	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	U Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)
At the beginning of each term there is a target setting meeting held in my school	98 (31.5%)	184 (59.2%)	10 (3.2%)	12 (3.9%)	7 (2.3%)
Performance targets to be addressed are usually agreed upon by the appraiser and appraisee then documented	97 (31.2%)	179 (57.6%)	12 (3.9%)	10 (3.2%)	13 (4.2%)
The appraisal activities calendar is well adhered to by the appraiser and appraisee	72 (23.2%)	201 (64.6%)	8 (2.6%)	19 (6.1%)	11 (3.5%)
Appraiser and appraisee ensure that all the required professional records are maintained	121 (38.9%)	171 (55.0%)	4 (1.3%)	6 (1.9%)	9 (2.9%)
Appraiser and appraisee plan for termly lesson observations	69 (22.2%)	204 (65.6%)	6 (1.9%)	19 (6.1%)	13 (4.2%)
During end of term, appraisal rating meeting is held where teacher’s performance is evaluated against the performance competency areas and appraisal rating agreed upon	68 (21.9%)	193 (62.1%)	23 (7.4%)	14 (4.5%)	13 (4.2%)
Areas that require support and development during the following term are identified and a development plan generated	64 (20.6%)	157 (50.5%)	52 (16.7s)	22 (7.1%)	16 (5.1%)

About three fifths of the respondents were inclined to agree with the statement the appraisal activities calendar is well adhered to by the appraiser and appraisee (64.6%), appraiser and appraisee plan for termly lesson observations, during end of term (65.6%), and appraisal rating meeting is held where teacher’s performance is evaluated against the performance competency areas and appraisal rating agreed upon (62.1%). Further, 23.2%, 22.2%, 21.9% were inclined to agree with the statement the appraisal activities calendar is well adhered to by the appraiser and appraisee, appraiser and appraisee plan for termly lesson observations, during end of term, and appraisal rating meeting is held where teacher’s performance is evaluated against the performance competency areas and appraisal rating agreed upon respectively.

Most of the respondents were inclined to agree with the statement appraiser and appraisee ensure that all the required professional records are maintained (55.0%) and areas that require support and development during the following term are identified and a development plan generated (50.5%). On the other hand, few respondents were inclined to disagree and strongly disagree with the statement appraiser and appraisee ensure that all the required professional records are maintained (Disagree=19.0%; Strongly disagree=29.0%) and areas that require support and development during the following term are identified and a development plan generated (Disagree=7.1%; 5.1%=Strongly Disagree). Respondents who were undecided on the statement areas that require support and development during the following term are identified and a development plan generated were 16.7%.

The study sought to determine the level of agreement, on average, with statements relating to the compliance status of public primary schools in Gilgil Sub-County, Nakuru with TPAD Programme. The mean scores and standard deviations for each of the indicators for this variable are presented in Table 4.8. The mean scores for all the metrics were between 3.5 and 4.5. According to (Ruppert, 2004), mean scores in this range for a five point Likert scale questions with five points can be interpreted as an indication that respondents on average agree with the statements.

**Table 2:** Means and Standard Deviations for School’s Compliance Status with TPAD Programme

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
At the beginning of each term there is a target setting meeting held in my school	311	1.00	5.00	4.14	0.83
Performance targets to be addressed are usually agreed upon by the appraiser and appraisee then documented	311	1.00	5.00	4.08	0.92
The appraisal activities calendar is well adhered to by the appraiser and appraisee	311	1.00	5.00	3.98	0.91

Appraiser and appraisee ensure that all the required professional records are maintained	311	1.00	5.00	4.25	0.82
Appraiser and appraisee plan for termly lesson observations	311	1.00	5.00	3.96	0.93
During end of term, appraisal rating meeting is held where teacher's performance is evaluated against the Performance Competency Areas and appraisal rating agreed upon	311	1.00	5.00	3.93	0.92
Areas that require support and development during the following term are identified and a development plan generated	311	1.00	5.00	3.74	1.03
Valid N (listwise)	311				

The standard deviations for all statements apart from areas that require support and development during the following term are identified and a development plan generated (1.03) were in the range between 0.5 and 1. This indicates a moderate variation of responses around the mean which was interpreted as respondents having moderate consensus on the influence of the given statement on teacher motivation in public primary schools in Gilgil Sub-County, Nakuru (Ruppert, 2004).

Respondents on average tended to agree as well as have moderate consensus that there is a target setting meeting held in the schools in Gilgil Sub-County, Nakuru (mean=4.14; Std.dev.=0.83) , performance targets to be addressed are usually agreed upon by the appraiser and appraisee then documented (mean=4.18; std.dev.=0.92). According to Locke and Latham (2002), target or goal setting and reflection have been found to have a powerful impact on action. This is a fact that is reaffirmed by Timperley, (2011) who insists that target setting is central to the development of a self-regulated learning, capacity and this assists teachers to identify what they need to do to improve their practices and to know what is expected of them.

Similarly, respondents on average tended to agree and have moderate consensus that the appraisal activities calendar are well adhered to by the appraiser and appraisee (mean=3.98; std.dev.=0.91), appraiser and appraisee ensure that all the required professional records are maintained (mean=4.25; std.dev.=0.82), appraiser and appraisee plan for termly lesson observations (mean=3.96; std.dev.=0.93), and during end of term, appraisal rating meeting is held where teacher's performance is evaluated against the performance competency areas and appraisal rating agreed upon (mean=3.93; Std.dev.=0.92) .

The standard deviation for areas that require support and development during the following term are identified and a development plan generated was 1.03. This meant that there was a wide variation of responses (standard deviation above 1) around the mean indicating a lack of consensus on the given statement. Thus, respondents had a wide diversity of views although on average they tended to agree that areas that require support and development during the following term are identified and a development plan generated in public primary schools in Gilgil Sub-County, Nakuru. The appraiser and appraisee ensuring that all the required professional records are maintained was perceived to have greater influence on teacher motivation in public primary schools in Gilgil Sub-County, Nakuru as it scored a higher mean and low standard deviation amongst the statements of the schools' compliance status with the TPAD programme matrix.

Correlation analysis was used to establish if there were possible connections between the variables. The strength of association between two variables and the direction of the relationship were determined using the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) which varies between +1 and -1. A value of ± 1 indicates a perfect degree of association between the two variables but as the correlation coefficient value goes towards 0 the relationship between the two variables is weaker. The direction of the relationship is indicated by the sign of the coefficient with a + sign indicating a positive relationship and a – sign indicating a negative relationship. Results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Pearson Correlation Coefficients**

	School's compliance status	Performance appraisal	Performance appraisal evaluation	Performance appraisal feedback
School's compliance status with TPAD Programme	1	.686**	.708**	.436**
Performance appraisal	.686**	1	.703**	.518**
Performance appraisal evaluation	.708**	.703**	1	.643**
Performance appraisal feedback	.436**	.518**	.643**	1

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

There was a fair positive correlation between school's compliance status with TPAD Programme and performance appraisal (r=0.686), school's compliance status with TPAD Programme and performance appraisal feedback (r=0.436), performance appraisal evaluation and performance appraisal (r=0.643), and performance appraisal feedback and performance appraisal (r=0.518). There was a strong positive correlation between school's compliance status with TPAD Programme and performance appraisal evaluation (r=0.708) and performance appraisal and performance appraisal evaluation (r=0.703).

## VI. Conclusion

The mean scores for all the metrics were between 3.5 and 4.5 which was an indication that respondents on average agreed with the statements. Respondents on average tended to agree as well as have moderate consensus that there is a target setting meeting held in the schools in Gilgil Sub-County, Nakuru, performance targets to be addressed are usually agreed upon by the appraiser and appraisee then documented, and the appraisal activities calendar are well adhered to by the appraiser and appraisee, and appraiser and appraisee ensure that all the required professional records are maintained. Similarly, respondents on average tended to agree and have moderate consensus that appraiser and appraisee plan for termly lesson observations and during end of term, appraisal rating meeting is held where teacher's performance is evaluated against the performance competency areas and appraisal rating agreed upon. Respondents had a wide diversity of views although on average they tended to agree that areas that require support and development during the following term are identified and a development plan generated in public primary schools in Gilgil Sub-County, Nakuru. The appraiser and appraisee ensuring that all the required professional records are maintained was perceived to have greater influence on teacher motivation in public primary schools in Gilgil Sub-County, Nakuru due to a higher mean and low standard deviation.

The study concludes that school's compliance status with TPAD Programme is fairly and positively correlated with performance appraisal and performance appraisal feedback. Also, the school's compliance status with TPAD Programme is strongly and positively correlated with performance appraisal evaluation.

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