

Citation: Muthuri, A. M; Momanyi, M & Nduku, E. (2019). Conducting Performance Appraisal in Public Technical Training Institutions within Nairobi Region, Kenya. *Journal of Popular Education in Africa*. 3(5), 18 – 41.

Conducting Performance Appraisal in Public Technical Training Institutions within Nairobi Region, Kenya

By

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to establish how lecturers' Performance Appraisal (PA) is conducted in public Technical Training Institutions within Nairobi region. The study sought to establish the goals of performance appraisal, the efficiency of the methods used in appraisal and key considerations when conducting performance appraisal. A convergent Parallel Mixed-Method Research Design guided the study. Cross-sectional survey and phenomenology approaches were employed. Cluster, stratified simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to select 190 Technical Training Institute lecturers, 4 principals, 4 Teachers Service Commission County Directors and 2 Technical, Vocational Education and Training County Directors. Questionnaires and interviews guides collected data. Cronbach's Alpha technique was used to determine reliability of the questionnaire items. The quantifiable data was analyzed using SPSS version 23 while the qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis and presented using narratives and direct quotes. Key findings were that goals of performance appraisal were for determining rewards, promotion and development. The Teachers Service Commission Appraisal Form, peers and target setting were used to evaluate lecturers. The study concluded that performance appraisal was not effectively done technical institutions. The study recommended that the Principal Secretary for Vocational and Technical Training in the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the TSC or any other body from which lecturers/trainers are drawn should as a matter of urgency establish and train a dedicated team on performance appraisal to handle lecturers PA matters, development of PA policies/ guidelines at ministry level and cascading the same to the Board of Governors.

Keywords: Kenya, Conducting performance appraisal, Public Technical Training Institutions, Nairobi region

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Introduction

The desire to implement formal performance appraisals stems from the idea that appraisal of employees helps to accomplish multifaceted roles that enrich the performance of organizations. One of the critical needs in today's world is a well-educated and skilled workforce capable of addressing the ever-changing competitive global challenges with effective, practical, and sustainable solutions. Hence, Stronge, Ward & Grant (2011) stress the importance of lecturers' commitment and effectiveness in pursuit of quality education and training are unquestionable.

People are the lifeblood of higher institutions of learning including technical institutes, colleges and universities. Without the students, lecturers and administrators such institutions cannot exist. The lecturers constitute a primary resource hence their development contributes to the core existence of the institutions. This is why Okello (2011) emphasizes that due to the paramount importance associated with the human resource in tertiary institutions, it is crucial to understand how well they perform in their various roles and capacities.

Performance appraisals provide opportunities to Human Resource (HR) managers to identify areas of job responsibility that employees should address thereby contributing to the professional development of employees. In order to achieve this noble goal, Pulakos, Hanson and Moye (2015) notes that employees are entitled to a carefully planned evaluation because the process is often dependent on the appraisers' decisions on the appraisal feedback. Therefore, regular appraisal of employees, particularly in TTIs, is a necessary practice in ensuring a strong teaching workforce.

In tertiary institutions, the typical practices of assessing and evaluating performance are often based on students. These practices often revolve around questions about how students perform academically and their adaptability to the higher education learning setting (Biggs, 2011). By overly focusing on students, a critical area involving the appraisal of lecturers in tertiary institutions is left unaddressed. Lecturers are employed to help the tertiary institutions accomplish their goals. Therefore, one of the dilemmas in tertiary institutions is whether or not lecturers are held accountable in fulfilling their responsibilities and whether the appraisal systems in place have any value addition to their effectiveness.

Kagema and Irungu (2018) conducted a study on analysis of Teacher Performance Appraisals and their Influence on Teacher Performance in Secondary Schools in Kenya. Their study found out that teacher appraisals were unfavorable to teachers because of lack of streamlining of policies on teacher appraisals, promotion, transfers and recognition on improved performance of students. A major finding in this study was lack of a tool that shows utmost objectivity in the appraisal process. In case of fall-outs between supervisors and the teacher, the results of appraisal were biased. Further, there lacked a mechanism for teacher recognition of their relative achievement in improved test scores in the standardized examinations.

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Statement of the Problem

The importance of lecturers' commitment and effectiveness to provide quality education and training is unquestionable. Globally, institutions require highly qualified, educated and competent human resource capable of understanding the challenges of life and providing practical solutions. Kenyan Technical Training Institutions have the mandate of providing education and training that help to bridge the skills gaps in the labor market. The lecturers in these institutions are expected to play a key role in providing the country with highly trained and competent youths who can play a major role in development.

A report by Masese (2017) on assessment of TSC Performance Appraisal raised concerns that in most cases, lack of proper documentation on teachers' classroom work such as lesson attendance and lesson observation reports for second term 2017 showed bare failures by the teachers to justify their work. Some of the teachers' targets were overrated with no or little evidence to show for it coupled with incomplete and varied schemes of work. Some teachers were well versed with the Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) while others had no clear understanding of the same. The report further indicated that the TSC County Directors, TSC Sub County Directors, and Curriculum Support Officers did not know the number of schools or teachers they had and there were instances of performance management copies not having been countersigned by the County Director. Further, there was no evidence of the CDs supervision of the sub-county directors and curriculum support officers. Besides, there was no evidence to show that the CDs had mechanism to supervise SCDs and CSOs in TPAD implementation programme at both secondary schools and at the TTIs. The failure by TSC to provide a mechanism to supervise and hold the lecturers accountable in their teaching functions creates lapses in performance appraisal in Public TTIs.

Further Gichuki (2015) found out that the appraisal process was not effective in achieving its desired goals in public secondary schools in both Naivasha and Gilgil Districts, Kenya. This is because administrators' performance appraisal was by observation and self evaluation. That is why most teachers viewed appraisers in their schools as ineffective due to lack of requisite skills for conducting performance appraisal. It is on the basis of these limitations by Teachers Service Commission to provide a mechanism to supervise the lecturers that this study sought to establish how lecturers' performance appraisal is conducted in public Technical Training Institutions.

Review of Related Literature

Various studies have been conducted on performance appraisal. For instance, Stronge, Ward and Grant (2011) did a study on what makes good teachers good. They performed a cross-case analysis to determine the connection that exists between teachers' effectiveness and achievement of students. Two years of student test scores in reading and math from 307 fifth-grade teachers from three public school districts in a state in the Southeastern United States were included in the study. The study conducted regression analysis, hierarchical linear modeling to determine student growth in the sample in order to predict expected achievement level for each child. They noted that because teaching is developmental in nature, assessment of teachers should be

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considered vital and that any remarkable change in education cannot be achieved without effective teachers. That documentation of teachers' evaluations important not only for transparency and accountability reasons, but also aids in improving their instructional practice. Similarly, Danielson (2010) indicated that it is crucial to have a valid and reliable Performance appraisal system for teachers in order to routinely establish quality instructional practice. Ensuring a credible evaluation process fosters communication between the school administrators and the teachers.

Annamalai, Abdullah, and Alazidiyeen (2010) conducted a study on the mediating effects of perceived organization support on the relationship between organization justices, trust and performance appraisal in Malaysian secondary schools. Their findings were that organization justice had a positive influence on both teachers' trust towards the organization and teachers' satisfaction in performance appraisal. This study was carried out in a different context at Malaysian secondary schools and the findings may not inform the situation at the Technical Training Institutions in Kenya.

In another study, Hellrung and Hartig (2013) conducted a critical review of empirical evidence from a wide range of studies in an attempt to address the question regarding the interplay between the appraisal feedback and teachers' performance in Germany. The researchers explored the teacher's views and understanding of various dimensions of appraisal feedback, such as the purpose of their feedback, and the impact of their performance evaluations on the performance of students. Having laid the criteria for selecting the appropriate studies, the researchers settled on 52 studies that addressed the objectives of their study. The researchers proceeded to group the selected groups according to three thematic areas namely; understanding, purpose, and student performance.

Key findings indicated that teachers encountered difficulties in grasping the concept of performance appraisal especially when external supervisors are in charge of implementing the evaluations. As pertains to the purpose of the feedback at the end of the performance appraisal, the researchers found that there is often lack of adequate time to facilitate the review of the feedback obtained from the appraisal of teachers. The lack of time contributed to the poor understanding of performance appraisal among teachers and proper utilization of the feedback after the appraisals. This earlier study reviewed other studies while the current study gathered primary data from lecturers, principals, and County Directors of TSC & TVET.

Tshabalala and Mapolisa (2013) conducted a study to investigate the problems faced by heads of schools and teachers in the implementation of performance appraisal in Nkayi District, Zimbabwe. The descriptive survey design was used to conduct the study. The target population comprised all the 1100 primary and secondary school teachers from Nkayi District in Matabeleland North Province of Zimbabwe. The key findings were that; at the beginning of the appraisal period the appraisee formulated the objectives of the period with the assistance of the supervisor, the teachers took an active role in setting up their production targets and self evaluation on their achievements was encouraged, an appraisal form was used to appraise the teachers, the heads of the schools conducted the appraisal and rated the teachers by giving a judgment on their performance. Formulation of objectives, target setting, a standard form, rating by head teachers and self evaluation as the methods of appraising teachers in primary and

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secondary schools. The current study was carried out in TTIs in Nairobi region, which is of a higher level of education and training. This study further employed more elaborate methodology and conceptually explored further on how PAs affect motivation of lecturers and students' learning outcomes.

A study by Sualihu (2014) on effectiveness of performance appraisal systems: A study of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology found out that the KNUST has in place an appraisal system, and this was largely acknowledged by all categories of participants. Other findings included: there were key performance criteria developed and clearly identified in the appraisal system, the criteria was developed in consultation with workers and appraisers and there was support from the various stakeholders on the institution's appraisal system. In addition, the study established that most employees showed cooperation in the appraisal process, most staff believed that feedback informed their performance and that the appraisal system was relevant and never a waste of time. Moreover, the process helped in identifying systematic factors that hinder effective performance. This study paid more attention on effectiveness of PA systems as opposed to the current study which looked at the influence of PA on lecturers' motivation and students' learning outcomes. In addition, the study was conducted in Ghana whereas the current one was conducted in Kenya.

Research Design and Methodology

The study adopted a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. The study targeted all lecturers, principals, Teachers Service Commission and County directors in seven Public Technical Training Institutions in Nairobi region, Kenya. Cluster, stratified simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to select study participants. Data collection instruments were Questionnaires and Interview guides and were subjected to both content and face validity. Cronbach's Alpha technique was used to determine reliability of the questionnaire items reliability for qualitative items was determined in terms of their trustworthiness. The quantifiable data was analyzed using SPSS version 23 to generate frequencies and percentages that summarized quantitative data. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis and presented in narrative form and direct quotes.

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Data Analysis, Presentation and Discussion of The Findings

Goals Of Performance Appraisals In The Institutions

The participants were asked to respond to a set of items intended to describe the goals of performance appraisal in their institutions. The frequencies of their responses were computed and displayed in a table. The results obtained are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Lecturers Responses on Goals of Performance Appraisals in the Institutions

Goals of Performance Appraisals in the Institutions	<i>f</i>	%
Determine payment and rewards	32	19.4%
Provide basis for disciplinary action	48	27.6%
Determine upgrading and promotion	82	48.2%
Review performance	97	56.5%
Set targets for future performance	102	60.0%
Determine training and development	111	65.3%

Table 1 show that 65.3% of participants stated that their institutions conducted appraisals for assessing their training and development needs. More than half (60%) of the lecturers reported that their institutions did appraisals in order to set targets for future performance. The results also show that 56.5% of the participants were convinced that their institutions conducted appraisals for reviewing of employee performance.

The findings also indicated that nearly half (48.2%) of the participants regarded performance appraisals as tools for determining job upgrading and promotion. Further, 27.6% claimed their institutions sought to provide basis for disciplinary action through the performance appraisal. About 19.4% of the participants said that their institutions conduct performance appraisals with the aim of evaluating employee payment and rewards. This is in agreement with Taaliu (2010) who indicated that education profession provides limited opportunities for career advancements and is one of the most poorly paid careers in Kenya. The results showed that appraisal of lecturers' performance serves different purposes but key among them is to identify the training and development needs of the lecturers. When asked about the objectives of conducting performance appraisal of lecturers in their institutes, principal A reported that;

Through performance appraisal my institute is able to ensure teaching and learning is going on well and effectively. We are also able to minimize complaints from learners and it enables teachers to have morale. The appraisals are also fairly done. In addition, academic performance is improved and the results are also used as a benchmarking tool for performance improvement purposes (Principal A, personal communication, July 10, 2017).

With similar sentiments, principal B identified a number of key reasons for appraising lecturers in the institute. In particular, the principal explained the reasons as follows;

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Through lecturers' performance appraisal, my institute is able to ensure that the national examination performance is good. A target of 75% pass rate keeps the lecturers focused on their work thus attracting higher enrolments and this leads to higher customer satisfaction index (Principal B, personal communication, July 11, 2017).

These findings indicate that the goals of performance appraisal in Nairobi region TTIs are anchored on ensuring splendid academic performance of students. Therefore, the targets around this goal are set to be realistic and achievable. There was also similarity in opinion between the principals when questioned further on their views regarding the role of training and development in achieving the performance appraisal goals. Principal A stated that training and development allows capacity building among the lecturers thereby facilitating better understanding of the main barriers inhibiting their full potential. Regarding the same principal B noted that there is need for personal development to improve on performance and also noted that the employer is not involved in staff development and it's an initiative by the institution.

These findings are in agreement with the propositions of the social cognitive theory that stipulates that mastery experiences, if given more weight, is effective in shaping influence on personality and therefore boost on institution performance. In essence, mastery experiences provide progressive successes, which build efficacy. People who can overcome obstacles and find success become relatively assured performers, but outright failure, especially early and repeated failures, can disrupt self-efficacy growth or even create a negative capability assessment (Cook & Artino, 2016). This therefore connotes the need for lecturers in Nairobi TTIs to gain practical job skills by having the relevant education background, having their own basic tools, resources for training, and in-service and pre-service training practices that help in improving instructional quality. These findings concur with Omboi (2011) who established that PA systems have a positive effect on the output of workers. In addition, he found out that employee performance was influenced by a series of other factors including; level of training, performance-based rewards, and organizational objectives. The study further found that knowledge and skills, appraisals, and career development affected the performance of the employees although to a moderate scale.

The principals were asked how they feel about the use of PA as a tool for job promotion. Their responses demonstrated strong agreement with the idea. The principals affirmed that performance appraisal is closely linked to job promotion. The principals also noted that PA is a tool for determining payments and rewards. Principal A argued that since PA brings about the job promotion of an employee then it has to be associated with monetary rewards as well. These finding are in line with the evidence presented by Abu-Doleh and Weir (2007) who established that performance appraisal systems in the Jordanian private and public organizations contained four distinct elements namely; documentation of the role and duties of the appraisers and lecturers, inclusion of other parties other than the lecturers' supervisors, use of the appraisal feedback to address performance challenges facing the appraises, the developmental

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requirements and desires of the lecturers, using appraisal feedback for reward and remuneration decisions, and enhancing communication of feedback to the lecturers.

Methods used in Conducting Performance Appraisal

The study sought to determine the methods and practices used to conduct performance appraisal. The data obtained from the interviews with the Principals, TSC County Directors and the TVET County Directors identified the following main methods of carrying out the appraisals at the TTIs:

Teachers Service Commission Appraisal Form used in the secondary school system because TSC had not yet developed a specific appraisal Form for the Technical Institutes lecturers. Target setting was another method used in the process of appraisals. Information obtained from interviews of Principals, TSC County Directors and the TVET County Directors indicated that institutions had set targets that cascaded from the top management to the departments and to individual lecturers. Also Institution based appraisal is often used to conduct the appraisals at the Technical Training Institutions. All Key informants interviewed agreed that institutions have the responsibility to set targets and ensure that the appraisals are conducted through internal supervision. The TSC County Director indicated that, “It is upon institutions’ principals to ensure that the lecturers performed their duties and that they are continually supervised and appraised.” That TTIs BoGs are responsible for all human resource matters and usually follow with the principal to ensure that the lecturers do their work as they demand for students’ results in board meetings.”

Management by Objectives is another method used in Appraisal. The meetings are held at the beginning of each term where they plan and set goals for the term. Departmental heads draw objectives from what is agreed upon in the staff meetings and uses these to set targets with individual lecturers. According to the Principals, meetings are held at the start of the **each term** where the principal meets the lecturers and initiates the process of appraisals and encourages HoDs to roll out the target setting at the departmental level. The HoDs then hold departmental meetings to set targets with their lecturers. Follow-up meetings are held to ensure that the lecturers are working towards meeting the set targets but the major appraisal meetings are held mid-year and at the end of the year. Principal A and B indicated that supervision of lecturers is left to the HoDs as this helps them to assume higher responsibilities. Besides motivation, McGregor posits that this is proper alignment of job responsibilities with human desires and this leads to improved employee productivity. The principals may not be able to supervise all the lecturers and therefore cascading of targets to the HoDs is a way of motivating them. This is also a principle in performance appraisal practices as it may be impossible for the principal to supervise the large number of lecturers in the TTI effectively.

The participants were asked to indicate who does performance appraisal. They pointed out that the principal, heads of department, other lecturers, and TSC administered performance appraisals in their institutions.

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Table 2: Lecturers' Responses on Frequency of Appraisals Administered by Principals (n=170)

Frequency of Principals Administration of PA	<i>f</i>	%
Never	95	54.9%
Once every two years	2	1.2%
Once per year	25	14.1%
Twice per year	17	10.5%
3 or more times per year	29	18.1%
Monthly	2	1.2%
Total	170	100

Source: Field data

Table 2 shows that majority (54.9%) of the lecturers never got performance appraisals from the principals of their respective institutions while 18.1% of the participants reported that the appraisals were done at least 3 or more times annually. Another 14.1% stated that the appraisals were conducted once per year while 10.5% reported appraisals administered twice per year. The findings indicate an average undertaking of the Performance Appraisal despite the fact that the role of the principal is to facilitate growth, development, and the success of lecturers. Performance appraisal is one of the primary means for deepening content knowledge for the new or struggling teachers (Marsh & Farrell, 2015). Intensive performance appraisal programs have the power to increase the knowledge base of teachers and improve their instructional strategies (Fullan, 2014).

A front-line supervisor who interacts frequently with lecturers is likely to be the most suitable person to appraise lecturers. In TTIs and other academic institutions, the principal is the immediate supervisor responsible for providing direct instructions and supervision to all the staff. Besides, principals are more likely to engage with lecturers on a daily basis hence have direct knowledge of the lecturers' job and work environment. The results have however shown that principals of TTIs within Nairobi region rarely conduct performance appraisal of lecturers. This finding contrasts the work of Range, Duncan, Scherz & Haines (2012) who observed that principals are best suited in appraising teachers due to their ability to identify deficiencies of teachers related to their skills.

Further, the study also offers contrasting findings with those of Tschannen-Moran, and Gareis (2015) in terms of principals' critical role in conducting performance appraisal of lecturers. The scholars observed that principals have the capacity to design tailor made appraisal forms for their teachers owing to the regular interaction between the two parties. This is in agreement with principal A and B who said that they had adjusted the TPAD in an effort to make it suit the TTIs performance areas. Such appraisal plans are able to target specific skills that lack in their teachers and address the key areas in which they need improvement. Accordingly, there is a strong ground to strongly argue that principals of TTIs within Nairobi region need to take an active role in administering lecturers' performance appraisals.

The study further sought to determine the frequency of conducting appraisals using the HoDs. Thus the participants reported on the frequency of appraisals conducted by the HoD in the

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Technical Training Institutions they worked for. The results of these responses are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Lecturers’ Responses on Frequency of Performance Appraisals Administered by HoD

	(n=170)	
Frequency of HoDs Administration of PA	f	%
Never	62	36.4%
Once every two years	2	1.2%
One per year	21	12.4%
Twice per year	17	10%
3 or more times per year	45	26.5%
Monthly	23	13.5%
Total	170	100%

Source: Field data

Table 3 shows that 36.4% of the participants had never received performance appraisals from their HoDs. In cases where the HoDs conducted appraisals, 26.5% of the participants claimed the appraisals were done 3 or more times annually, 13.5% reported the appraisals were done monthly, 12.4% stated once per year, 10% reported twice per year.

Based on the results, it is clear that not all TTIs within Nairobi region involve the HoDs in conducting the performance appraisal of lecturers. This suggests that performance appraisal by HoDs may not be a mandatory affair in some of the institutes. It is also evident that the appraisal of lecturers by HoDs in TTIs within Nairobi region is carried out periodically at regular intervals that vary. The variations could be attributed to the fact that performance appraisals in these institutes serves different purposes or is conducted at different stages of a lecturers’ career. These variations also, show lack of consistency in terms of duration taken by various institutions in undertaking the appraisals and are rather irregular and are not well coordinated.

Owing to the finding that HoDs conduct performance appraisals of lecturers in a majority of TTIs within Nairobi region to some level, it is clear indication that performance appraisals do exist in the sampled institutes. In addition, as previously mentioned, the immediate supervisor of an appraisee is the most suitable individual to conduct performance appraisal, thus the role of HoDs in this capacity is justified. This finding is in line with a study by Owusu-ansah, Samuel, and Ashirifia (2014) who found that immediate supervisors were in charge of administering most appraisals of staff working at the University of Cape Coast. Through descriptive statistics, the study found that majority (76.8%) of the participants attested existence of an effective PA system at the university designed specifically for the librarians. Further, the results of the study showed that most of the librarians (70.2%) indicated that their immediate supervisor was in charge of administering the evaluations.

The study also sought data on whether the lecturers conducted performance appraisal. Data from the participants also indicated that other lecturers conducted performance appraisals in their

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institutions. The responses were summarized using frequencies and percentages. Table 4 shows how frequent other lecturers conducted these appraisals.

Table 4: Responses on Frequency of PAs Administered by Lecturers on their peers (n=170)

Frequency of other Lecturers Administration of PAs on their Peers	f	%
Never	116	68.2%
Once every two years	4	2.4%
One per year	9	5.3%
Twice per year	3	1.8%
3 or more times per year	26	15.3%
Monthly	12	7%
Total	170	100%

Source: Field data

Table 4 shows that more than half of the lecturers (68.2%) had never received performance appraisals from other lecturers. It also shows that 15.3% of the participants received appraisals from fellow lecturers at least thrice per year. Closely following this cohort was the group of participants that received appraisals on a monthly basis (7%).

The results also indicated that lecturers appraisals based on reviews by colleague lecturers happens only a few times in TTIs in Nairobi region (31.8%). This form of appraisal represents a peer-review model. Peer review models involve a peer teacher observing a teacher and offering evaluative information to the teacher. Based on these results, it is evident that the use of peer appraisal in TTIs within Nairobi region is not common. There are various reasons why peer appraisal may not be a more common form of performance appraisal in TTIs. One of the reasons is fear that peer reviewers can infiltrate on role of the principal as the key instructional leader in an educational institution. Additionally, it can be argued that owing to the fact that peer reviewers are teachers' co-workers; the evaluations may be characterized by prejudice or inability to make hardline decisions. A great deal of teachers views the idea of peer review as troublesome due to the fact that it contravenes the professional conduct of teachers. Some teachers decline peer appraisals because they put teachers against one another (Jonson & Fiarman, 2012).

The low involvement of practicing academic staff as performance appraisers has also been highlighted by Johnson and Firaman (2012). The two scholars noted that peer review models are also proving to be controversial in schools hence not widely used. In contrast, Smagorinsky (2014) noted that some people advocate for peer evaluation of teachers because it gives teachers a voice in who does and who does not belong in their faculty.

As pertains to the Teachers Service Commission, the participants were asked to report on how regularly their employer conducted performance in their respective institutions. To analyze

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the lecturers' responses, frequencies and percentages were used. The results of these responses are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Lecturers' Responses on Frequency of Performance Appraisals Administered by TSC

(n=170)

Frequency of Performance Appraisals Administered by TSC	f	%
Never	126	74.2%
Once every two years	7	4.1%
One per year	13	7.6%
Twice per year	4	2.4%
3 or more times per year	15	8.8%
Monthly	5	2.9%
Total	170	100.0

Source: Field data

From Table 5 it is evident that, more than two-thirds of the participants (74.2%) had never been appraised by the TSC. The TSC is the body responsible for employment of lecturers in the TTIs. This is clear indication that performance appraisal of lecturers by the TSC is hardly conducted in public TTIs within Nairobi region. The results also show that 8.8% of the participants received TSC appraisal at least thrice per year, followed closely by 7.6% that were appraised only once a year and 4.1% once every two years.

These results indicate that performance appraisal is underutilized by the TSC in evaluating lecturers in TTIs within Nairobi region. As the body mandated with the employment of lecturers, the TSC must recognize that performance appraisals have a huge effect on how lecturers are motivated and satisfied with their work. When conducted correctly and frequently, appraisals by the employer (TSC) can stimulate the performance of the lecturers, provide an opportunity to resolve grievances, and strengthen bonds with the lecturers. Rare appraisals may not be enough for the TSC to understand how well the lecturers are performing or whether they are satisfied and this could have a huge impact on their motivation.

Further, there is no official system of performance appraisal in TTIs within Nairobi region. The TSC as the employer is expected to play a major role in evaluation of lecturers' performance. However, an indication by 71.2% of participants shows that they have never received appraisal from the same. It was also noted that a majority of Nairobi region TTIs have adopted their own system of performance appraisals overseen by different stakeholders ranging from fellow lecturers to TSC officials. When requested to report on how PA is implemented in his institution, principal A pointed out that:

Performance appraisal forms are issued out to lecturers through the HoDs. Lecturers fill in the forms and set targets with HoDs. After filling targets, they do

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self-assessment and sit down with their HoDs to agree if any moderation is required. Then the issues raised are brought to me for comment. The lecturers are involved throughout the assessment process (Principal A, personal communication, July 10, 2017).

The lecturers had indicated that the heads of departments had appraised them at various intervals as shown in table 3. This shows that the responses from lecturers and the principal are in agreement that heads of departments were involved in performance appraisal. Principal B was also asked to describe the exact method used during the performance appraisal processes. The principal responded:

Performance appraisal forms are issued out to lecturers through the HoDs. HoDs appraise the lecturers. The HoDs are appraised by the Deputy Principal. Lecturers fill in the forms and set targets with HoDs. After filling the appraisal forms, at the beginning of each term, a staff meeting is set for all the teaching staff and the responsibility of monitoring performance is cascaded to departmental heads (Principal B, personal communication, July 11, 2017).

Based on the principals' comments, it is clear that performance appraisal in public TTIs within Nairobi region involve a series of parties including the lecturers, the HODs, the principal, and the deputy principal who act as the facilitators of the entire process. Owing to the considerably large number of parties involved in the performance appraisal exercise, the researcher gathered information on how much time was spent to complete the process. In their response, the principals reported that the time taken varies considerably due to the target setting and self-assessment activities involved.

In the same vein, both principal A and B were asked the frequency in which performance appraisals in their institutions are conducted. The principals reported that lecturers' performance appraisals are conducted once per term along with a summative one at the end of an academic year. The principals also added that their institutes have their own calendar of events in which performance appraisal is scheduled as a continuous activity. Based on these comments it is evident that lecturers' appraisal plans in the institutions are strictly adhered to and continually conducted during the year. It is also apparent that the principals agreed with the policy of performance appraisal and saw value in it.

The interviews also revealed that the Nairobi region TTIs hold appraisal meetings on a regular basis and in an evenly spread fashion because the appraisals are treated as continuous assessments of the lecturers. To accomplish this, the principals reported that their institutes ensured the targets for the appraisals were set at the commencement of a new term on the grounds of common areas such as curriculum delivery and previous performance. However, the frequencies and timing of appraisal varied in different institutions. This was an attestation that the TSC had not streamlined PAs in the TTIs thus the varied responses on the persons responsible and schedules for appraisals. On this matter principal B commented that;

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It is at the beginning of the term based on common areas such as curriculum delivery and previous performances. PA is usually done once per term and a summative one at the end of the year. The mid-year reviews and their system of rating depend on the strengths and weaknesses of a class. The rating is on a range of 1 to 10, 1 being the lowest rating and 10 the highest rating (Principal B, personal communication, July 11, 2017).

On the other hand, principal A indicated;

The review of performance is done when examination results are out and at the end of a Performance Contract period, that is, end of the year. For the rating the principal looks at the targets set then from there they are able to rate and check whether there is an improvement (Principal A, personal communication, July 10, 2017).

The two Nairobi region County Directors shared their opinions about the performance appraisal processes, how it is implemented, and their general views regarding the effectiveness of the process. The TVET County Director observed that the appraisal of lecturers is primarily a function of the TSC although the TVET County Director participates in performance reviews presented in BOG meetings. On the other hand, the TSC County Director reported that performance appraisal of lecturers is a responsibility of the TTI administrators. However, there was a disagreement between the county officials on the person in charge of implementing the appraisals in the TTIs. While the TVET County Director reported that the CDTSC was responsible for overseeing the implementation of the appraisal process, the TSC County Director claimed it was the immediate supervisors' duty.

The lack of clear guidelines on who should appraise the lecturers is a major weakness in the operations of TTIs. The TSC, as the employer failed to provide clear policy on the matter. Using forms that were designed for secondary schools shows total disregard of the TVET sector by TSC. This lapse explains the relatively low pass rates recorded in most departments in TTIs. Even though the BOG participates in disciplinary matters of teachers, the authority and power to dismiss a teacher rests with the TSC. The principals manage major resources provided by the Ministry of Education yet they are controlled by their employer TSC. This confusion and conflicting of roles has caused a lot of damage in controlling work performance and appraisals therewith in the TTIs.

The performance appraisal system adopted by a particular institution plays a crucial role in the monitoring process of lecturers. When asked about the type of appraisal system used by TTIs in Nairobi region, the TVET County Director reported that the institutes used forms designed for secondary schools but customized the same for TVET institutions. On the other hand, the TSC County director claimed that the Nairobi region TTIs used the TPAD appraisal system. These TPAD forms were designed for primary and secondary teachers and therefore do not address the demands of the TTIs. To assess the lecturers in TTIs, the assessment tool needed to address the number of graduates who have acquired demand driven skills and competencies

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for gainful employment/ self-employment. As such, it is apparent that TTIs in Nairobi region lack a standardized method of performance appraisal for their lecturers. Each TTI reviews the TPAD form in its own way thus lacking uniformity in the way the TTI lecturers are appraised. DeNisi (2011) emphasized that in order to attain successful outcomes from PA systems, the evaluation instruments used should be dependable, fair, and steady. For instance, the appraisal materials used should comply with Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) or standard documents and must be viewed as ideal and rightful in the eyes of appraises. Therefore, agreement on the criterion for appraisal is not chaotic given that all the stakeholders involved engage in proper negotiation that lead to everyone being satisfied with the criterion. Additionally, Nielsen (2014) stressed the strong impact of PAs, when he asserted that in the event that appraisal feedback fails to align with organizational targets, it is a sign that an organization should make some readjustments to its operations.

Sharing the same views, Chen, Eberly, Chiang, Farh, and Cheng (2014) in their study established that trust between participants of an evaluation process is a critical component during PAs and that trust is positively associated with successful PA systems. Goal setting theory makes clear that an individual's motivation will be strengthened when performance goals are clearly defined. This clarity allows individuals to determine the value they attribute to particular goals and assess how likely they are to achieve them with increased effort. If systems become too complex, they run the risk of resulting in a lack of clarity and a corresponding decrease in motivation. As such, lecturers' view on the accuracy and fairness of the measures is essential to building on their motivation and subsequently their students' learning outcomes.

Maharaj (2014) study showed that while the majority of supervisors indicated they acquired training, it was not comprehensive as only 34% of the participants pointed out they received intensive training. However, the supervisors reported they took up the task of administrating appraisals as part of their job description and that it helped improve their interactions with the academic staff. Most of the participants perceived the role as a chance to offer coaching and mentorship to the teachers. This study sought to establish how lecturers' PA was conducted in the public TTIs in Nairobi region.

Efficiency of Performance Appraisal Methods

To further determine the efficiency of the methods of performance appraisals utilized by TTIs in Nairobi region, the researcher asked the participants to rate the efficiency of the performance appraisal methods used in their respective institutions. Their responses are presented in Table 6.

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Table 6: Lecturers’ Ratings on Efficiency of Performance Appraisal Methods (n=170)

Efficiency of PA Methods	f	%
Efficient	68	40.0%
Somehow efficient	22	12.9%
Not efficient	43	25.3%
Very inefficient	37	21.8%
Total	170	100%

Source: Field data

Table 6 shows that 40% of the lecturers considered the method of appraisal used in their institutions as efficient while, 12.9% of the participants viewed their modes of appraisal as somehow efficient. Another 25.3% rated their appraisal methods as not efficient, while 21.8% reported their methods as very inefficient. These findings suggest that performance appraisal methods were viewed as balanced between efficient and inefficient. More than half (52.9%) of the lecturer participants viewed them as efficient.

The TVET County Director suggested a look at the productivity of lecturers by extending the PA targets to the number of trainees that get engaged in gainful employment after the training. This could be done through tracer studies to identify graduates who are actively engaged and gainfully utilizing their competencies in the job market.

A similar conclusion was reached by Colville and Millner (2011) who found out that although implementation of performance appraisals in an organization can be complex, such practices are reasonable as they provide effective means for delivering organizational strategies and goals. Given the complexity of teaching, it has historically been challenging to develop measures for evaluating teacher’s practices as part of performance appraisal systems. Often referred to as the “nature of teaching” hypothesis, the fundamental challenge in determining teacher quality has always been how to clearly define outcomes and separate the impact of the teacher from other influences on student learning (Jez & Wassmer, 2015).

Key Considerations when Conducting Appraisals

The study sought to establish the participants’ views on the key factors considered when their respective institutions conduct performance appraisals. The participants were requested to rate their opinion on a 5- point Likert-scale ranging from 1 to 5 where 1 represented “I do not know” and 5 represented “considered with high importance.” Table 6 presents the participants’ responses.

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Table 6: Lecturers’ Responses on Key Considerations when Conducting Performance Appraisal

(n=170)

Key Considerations when Conducting PA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	know it was considered	Not considered at all	Considered with low importance	Considered with moderate	Considered with high importance	Mean	Std. Deviation
Student test scores	<i>f</i> %	35 20.6%	10 5.8%	20 11.8%	42 24.7%	63 37.1%	3.52	1.54
Retention and pass rates of students	<i>f</i> %	33 19.4%	17 10.0%	23 13.5%	43 25.3%	54 31.8%	3.4	1.5
Student feedback on my teaching	<i>f</i> %	42 24.8%	17 10.0%	31 18.2%	47 27.6%	33 19.4%	3.07	1.47
Feedback from other stakeholders (parents, guardians)	<i>f</i> %	57 33.5%	22 12.9%	31 18.3%	40 23.5%	20 11.8%	2.67	1.44
How well I work with the principal	<i>f</i> %	51 30.0%	21 12.1%	19 11.5%	43 25.2%	36 21.2%	2.95	1.56
How well I work with the head of department	<i>f</i> %	41 24.1%	13 7.4%	20 11.8%	43 25.5%	53 31.2%	3.34	1.56
How well I work with my fellow teachers	<i>f</i> %	42 24.7%	13 7.1%	22 13.3%	42 24.9%	51 30.0%	3.29	1.56
Direct appraisal of my classroom teachers	<i>f</i> %	41 24.1%	21 12.4%	25 14.7%	48 28.2%	35 20.6%	3.09	1.48
Appraisal from students	<i>f</i> %	46 27.1%	23 13.5%	23 13.5%	38 22.4%	40 23.5%	3.02	1.55
Knowledge and understanding of my main subject field	<i>f</i> %	41 24.1%	21 12.4%	20 11.7%	36 21.2%	52 30.6%	3.22	1.58
Class room management	<i>f</i> %	37 21.8%	28 16.5%	19 11.1%	37 21.8%	49 28.8%	3.19	1.54

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Student discipline and behaviour	<i>f</i>	34	28	21	46	41	3.19	1.48
	%	20.0%	16.5%	12.3%	27.1%	24.1%		
Teaching in a multicultural set up	<i>f</i>	39	35	21	37	38	3.00	1.50
	%	22.9%	20.6%	12.4%	21.7%	22.4%		
Relation with students affairs	<i>f</i>	27	25	28	43	47	3.34	1.43
	%	15.9%	14.7%	16.5%	25.3%	27.6%		

Source: Field data

Table 6 show that a majority of the lecturers considered student scores with high importance during appraisals ($M=3.52$), as well as; retention and pass rates of students ($M=3.4$); how the lecturers worked with the HODs and their relation with students ($M=3.4$). Additionally, the results showed that a majority of the participants perceived how well they work with other lecturers as a highly important consideration during performance appraisals ($M=3.29$), together with their knowledge and understanding their area of expertise ($M=3.22$) and their classroom management practices ($M=3.19$).

A greater fraction of the participants reported that they viewed student discipline and behavior as a moderate factor during appraisals as indicated by a mean of 3.19. Comparably, majority of the lecturers considered direct appraisal of their classroom teaching as moderately important during appraisals as indicated by 3.09, as well as, students' feedback on their teaching ($M=3.07$). Further, the results showed that most of the participants did not consider appraisal from students as an important factor ($M=3.02$), as well as other factors including; teaching in a multicultural set up ($M=3.00$), how well the participants worked with the principals ($M=2.95$), and feedback from other stakeholders such as parents and guardians ($M=2.67$).

The study findings indicate that student results are the most widely considered factors when conducting performance appraisals ($M=3.52$). Learning outcomes of students plays a vital role in learning institutions and use these results for teacher evaluations as a quantitative data resource. This concurs with Zhang and Ng (2011), who says that principals regard student examination scores as more significant and realistic than other sources of information. This is because most educators and principals believe that the main objective of the teacher appraisal is to progress students' learning and education. Some principals noted that performance appraisal was done to assess the performance of individual lecturers and identify gaps which needed to be closed. He further indicated that as the institution reviewed the Quality Management System (QMS), they would incorporate the relevant appraisal elements provided by TSC.

The finding on the link between PA and student performance concur with Darling-Hammond (2014) who found that policy investment in the quality of teachers is related to improvements in student performance.

At the end of a performance appraisal, lecturers should be able to know the difference they have made in comparison to the expected changes. Therefore, the findings of the study suggest that students' learning outcomes remain to be one of the key aspect during performance

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appraisal of lecturers in TTIs within Nairobi region. These findings are congruent with the evidence presented by Molefe (2010). In particular, he set out to investigate the key attributes for basing performance appraisals of lecturers in selected colleges in South Africa, USA, Australia, UK, and Nigeria. The study found out that student-lecturer relation among other factors was one of the most critical elements when assessing the performance of lecturers in colleges.

The study findings indicated that the framework of standards applied during appraisal of lecturers in TTIs within Nairobi region also focus on student learning outcomes. These findings are in line with those of Klassen, Tze, Betts and Gordon (2011) who embarked on a study to examine students' learning outcomes. In their findings, the scholars found that majority of variation associated with teacher appraisal in the elementary schools was accounted for by discussions pertaining to how students would be engaged in their learning. In conclusion, the researchers noted that the findings of the study pointed towards the critical role played by performance appraisal in providing better instructional environments that ultimately improve student achievements.

Another study by James and McCormick (2009) sought to find out the learning methods of teachers. Their findings indicated that majority of the teachers put more weight on the value of opportunities geared towards enhancing their classroom management practices. In other related studies, Halkos and Bousinakis (2010) and Westover et al. (2010) found that the level of employee productivity was directly proportional to the level of employee contentment. And that a positive perception about performance appraisal contributed to increased worker satisfaction.

Summary, Conclusions And Recommendations

On the question on how Performance Appraisal was conducted in the public Technical Training Institutions in Nairobi region, it was found that a TSC Appraisal Form similar to the one used in the secondary school system is the one that was used to appraise lecturers in the TTIs. Each institution revised this appraisal tool to suit their situation of the Technical Training set up. Target setting was another method used in the process of appraisals at the TTIs. They also use institution based appraisal to conduct the appraisals. The TTIs also use meetings which are held at the start of the each term where the principal meets the lecturers and initiates the process of appraisals and encourages HODs to set target at the departmental level with follow-up meetings held to ensure that lecturers are working towards meeting the set targets.

Conclusions

It was concluded that there was no performance appraisal tool that the TSC had developed to cater for the TTIs settings, the staff involved in conducting performance appraisal (Who Conducts PA) of lecturers in TTIs within Nairobi region included several people. These were; the principals, HoDs, fellow lecturers, and the TSC. Of these people, the HODs played a major role in appraising individual lecturers.

Recommendations

The Principal Secretary in charge of Vocational and Technical Training (PS-VTT) in collaboration with the Teachers Service Commission or any other body from which

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lecturers/trainers are drawn should as a matter of urgency establish and train a dedicated team on performance appraisal. The two should work together immediately to create a directorate or unit to deal with matters of lecturers' performance appraisal and motivation. This team would be trained on performance appraisal as a discipline in order to develop appropriate performance appraisal material design, content and pedagogy. Most lecturers were found to rely on HoDs who had a one day sensitization by TSC. This could compromise on the quality of PA conducted.

At the institutional level, the BoGs are responsible for development of institutional policies. Therefore, this study recommends that the BoGs of TTIs should as a matter of urgency develops performance appraisal and motivation guidelines that ensure fairness to all lecturers. BoGs in consultation with the TTIs principals should seek alternative means of providing for resources to motivate lecturers since funding is a major challenge. These include Income Generating Activities (IGA) in each department. Proceeds from these ventures should be used to motivate lecturers and also improve the work environment. Such programmes should also be managed in a transparent and accountable manner and should not compromise quality training. These activities should also be carried out after working hours and weekends so that trainees don't lose on learning hours.

Principals should make it mandatory for all lecturers joining their institutions to acquire ICT skills and encourage them to own laptops for those without. The principals could explore collaborations with private sector so that lecturers can purchase these laptops at negotiated subsidized prices. These devices will be used to host the performance appraisal system that is linked to individual TTIs lecturers and each would have a password to access his/her performance appraisal platform. This would make it easier for them to communicate with their supervisors. In order to improve access to performance appraisal platform through computers, principals in consultation with BoGs should invest on necessary facilities such as internet connectivity and computers. They should also ensure newly employed lecturers have requisite skills to use the e-performance appraisal system through continuous training.

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